

AN INTERMEDIATE JUMP SHIFT

After three passes, you have a standard 1♦ opening with this hand:

S	South
♠	K62
♥	86
♦	AK76
♣	QJ95

You have a hand that could open 1NT, but for the fact that you have only 13 HCP. The opponents are silent (for a change) and your partner responds 2♥. This is an unusual bid. Traditionally, it shows a very strong hand with hearts. It can also be played as a very weak hand with hearts. This pair was playing it as an intermediate strength hand with hearts. It also confirms good support for opener's diamonds. Since North couldn't open, he must be showing about 11-12 points. He may have only 5 hearts, but they are strong.

This bid is what you want to hear. You're hand lacks heart stoppers and you may have close to the 25 points needed for a notrump game. You rebid 3NT and hope for the best.

West leads the ♠A and you see this dummy. Plan your play.

N	North
♠	J3
♥	AKJ103
♦	Q852
♣	108

West leads ♠A

S	South
♠	K62
♥	86
♦	AK76
♣	QJ95

This was a furtuitous lead, since it gives you a spade stopper. It would have been better for the defenders to let East lead a spade when he gets in.

Counting your top tricks, there is 1 spade (given the lead), 2 hearts and 4 diamonds if they split in the expected 3-2 or if the $\heartsuit J$ falls under your top honors. You only need 2 more tricks which can come from hearts. The only problem will be to take those 9 tricks before the defenders take five.

You play a low spade from dummy and East signals encouragement with the $\spadesuit 7$. West now switches to the $\clubsuit K$, which holds, and then returns to spades. East puts up the $\spadesuit Q$. Should you win this? No. The rule of 7 says you should hold up twice. Subtracting your total number of spades from 7, equals the number of hold ups. You have already held up once on the initial lead. This will make sure East is out of spades if he wins the heart finesse, should you use it.

East switches to the $\clubsuit A$ and another club. He realizes you must have the $\spadesuit K$ for your 3NT bid. You win and realize they have already taken 4 tricks. You can't lose any more.

Do you want to take the heart finesse and risk the contract? You don't want to if you can help it. You now have two extra club tricks you hadn't counted on. You should test the diamonds. There may be 4 tricks available in that suit. If the $\heartsuit J$ doesn't fall, you can fall back on the heart finesse. Fortunately, the diamonds do break 3-2 and you make your 3NT contract.

This is the entire deal:

	N North \spadesuit J3 \heartsuit AKJ103 \diamonds Q852 \clubsuit 108	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>1\diamonds</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>2\heartsuit</td> <td>P</td> <td>3NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	P	P	1 \diamonds	P	2 \heartsuit	P	3NT	P	P	P	
	W	N	E	S														
	P	P	P	1 \diamonds														
	P	2 \heartsuit	P	3NT														
P	P	P																
W West \spadesuit A10985 \heartsuit 7542 \diamonds J104 \clubsuit K	E East \spadesuit Q74 \heartsuit Q9 \diamonds 93 \clubsuit A76432																	
S South \spadesuit K62 \heartsuit 86 \diamonds AK76 \clubsuit QJ95	3NT S NS: 0 EW: 0																	

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/ycvprgg2>, or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. Alternatively, by

clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.

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