

BAD SPITS REQUIRE A REPLAN

You are dealt the following hand as South:

South
 ♠ 43
 ♥ 105
 ♦ AJ864
 ♣ A763

Your partner dealt and opens 1♥. The opponents are silent throughout. You haven't got the strength to respond at the 2-level, so you must bid 1NT. Partner rebids his hearts and it's back to you. Should you pass or bid on?

Your partner's response tends to show a 6-card suit and minimum points – 12 to 15. However, you're your 9 HCP are pomotable. You have a 5-card diamond suit with two honors; you have two Aces and a doubleton spade. These all are positives. The only negative you have is you have only 2 hearts. But your partner has shown six. A 6-2 fit isn't that bad. I would invite with 3♥. If you do, your partner passes.

East lead the ♣Q. Take over for North:

North
 ♠ A2
 ♥ K98643
 ♦ K52
 ♣ J4

East
 ♣ Q

South
 ♠ 43
 ♥ 105
 ♦ AJ864
 ♣ A763

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥
All Pass			

When you see partner's hand you don't blame him for rejecting the game invitation. You have some work to do in the trump suit. You have a possible loser in each of the non-trump suits. You must avoid too many losers in hearts. Win the ♣A in the dummy and led to your ♥K if West plays low. The ♥Q falls from East under the ♥K. Uh-oh. It looks like a 4-1 trump split. Just what you need!

You are now missing the ♥AJ7. If you can take 4 hearts and can successfully finesse the ♦J, you can take 9 tricks: four hearts, three diamonds, one spade and one club. Your plan should be to force out the ♥AJ with the ♥10. You can then capture the last heart from West and finesse the ♦J.

Lead a heart to dummy's ♥10 which West will take and return a club to East's ♣J. East does best by switching to a spade, knocking out your ♠A. Lead another high heart to West's ♥A. He may play another heart, putting you back in your hand. Now you lead your ♦K. You see West drop the ♦Q under your ♦K. Now you can take the next two top diamonds and use the two remaining trump to gather your nine tricks.

Here is the entire deal:

D 13	N North ♠ A2 ♥ K98643 ♦ K52 ♣ J4	<table border="1"> <tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1♥</td><td>P</td><td>1NT</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>3♥</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S		1♥	P	1NT	P	2♥	P	3♥	P	P	P	
	W	N	E	S														
	1♥	P	1NT															
P	2♥	P	3♥															
P	P	P																
W West ♠ KJ876 ♥ AJ72 ♦ Q ♣ 952		E East ♠ Q1095 ♥ Q ♦ 10973 ♣ KQ108																
	S South ♠ 43 ♥ 105 ♦ AJ864 ♣ A763																	
		3♥ N NS: 0 EW: 0																

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/jd478ax> , 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.