

♠♥♦♣ BE CAREFUL HOW YOU PLAY ♠♥♦♣

You dealt yourself this 16 HCP balanced hand.

S	South
♠	A94
♥	K4
♦	A973
♣	KQ54

You open 1NT and partner raises you to 3NT. West leads the ♠Q and you see this dummy.

N	North
♠	K8
♥	976
♦	KJ1064
♣	A72

West leads ♠Q

S	South
♠	A94
♥	K4
♦	A973
♣	KQ54

Since you are in a notrump contract, you count your top tricks; those you can take without giving up a trick. You have 2 spades, 2 diamonds and 3 club tricks. You have various paths to the two extra tricks you need. You can finesse the ♥K and if the ♥A is in East, you get a heart tricks. However, if the finesse loses to the ♥A in West, you will lose at least 5 hearts.

You can play the top clubs, and if they break 3-3, you get an extra club trick. But you still need one more trick,

The safest suit to attack, of course, is diamonds. But, you are missing the ♦Q, and if East wins that trick, she can make the obvious switch to hearts, trapping your ♥K and leading to a 2 trick set – or worse. The secret of this deal is to finesse the ♦J by leading the ♦J to your hand. Even if West holds the ♦Q, he cannot hurt you with hearts. Your ♥K will always be a stopper and you will take 2 extra tricks in diamonds.

As the cards lay, the finesse works and you will make three extra diamond tricks as well as the ♥K because you can end play West if he holds onto his 4 clubs. If he discards a club on one of your diamonds, you will take an extra club. This deal should produce 11 tricks.

Look at the entire deal:

<table border="1"> <tr><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>D</td></tr> </table>	11	D	<table border="1"> <tr><th>N North</th></tr> <tr><td>♠ K8</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ 976</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ KJ1064</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ A72</td></tr> </table>	N North	♠ K8	♥ 976	♦ KJ1064	♣ A72	<table border="1"> <tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>3NT</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S				1NT	P	3NT	P	P	P			
	11																								
	D																								
	N North																								
♠ K8																									
♥ 976																									
♦ KJ1064																									
♣ A72																									
W	N	E	S																						
			1NT																						
P	3NT	P	P																						
P																									
<table border="1"> <tr><th>W West</th></tr> <tr><td>♠ QJ1062</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ A82</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ 5</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ J983</td></tr> </table>	W West	♠ QJ1062	♥ A82	♦ 5	♣ J983		<table border="1"> <tr><th>E East</th></tr> <tr><td>♠ 753</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ QJ1053</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ Q82</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ 106</td></tr> </table>	E East	♠ 753	♥ QJ1053	♦ Q82	♣ 106													
W West																									
♠ QJ1062																									
♥ A82																									
♦ 5																									
♣ J983																									
E East																									
♠ 753																									
♥ QJ1053																									
♦ Q82																									
♣ 106																									
	<table border="1"> <tr><th>S South</th></tr> <tr><td>♠ A94</td></tr> <tr><td>♥ K4</td></tr> <tr><td>♦ A973</td></tr> <tr><td>♣ KQ54</td></tr> </table>	S South	♠ A94	♥ K4	♦ A973	♣ KQ54																			
S South																									
♠ A94																									
♥ K4																									
♦ A973																									
♣ KQ54																									
		<table border="1"> <tr><td>3NT S</td><td>NS: 0 EW: 0</td></tr> </table>	3NT S	NS: 0 EW: 0																					
3NT S	NS: 0 EW: 0																								

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

<https://tinyurl.com/tsvev8g>, 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.

© David Germaine 2019