

♠♥♦♣ **COMBINING YOUR CHANCES** ♠♥♦♣

You dealt this very nice hand:

S	South
♠	AKQ
♥	AQ42
♦	J5
♣	AQ74

You have 22 HCP. However, your ♦J is a one point downgrade. You open 2NT.

Your partner responded 3♣. You and she are using Puppet Stayman over 2NT openings. This allows you to open 2NT with a 5-card major. Her response of 3♣ is asking if you have a 5-card major. You don't have one, but you do have a 4-card major. This calls for a 3♦ rebid. If she has a 4-card major, she will bid the other major and you correct to the 8-card fit – right-siding the contract. If you didn't have a 4-card major, you would have simply bid 3NT. Your partner rebids 3NT.

West leads the ♦7. Plan your play.

N	North
♠	65432
♥	765
♦	A9
♣	K65

West leads ♦7

S	South
♠	AKQ
♥	AQ42
♦	J5
♣	AQ74

The opponents have found the best lead, from their standpoint. You have 8 top tricks, but you have possibilities in all of the other suits. If Spades break 3-2, you have 2 extra

Spade tricks. If the ♥K is on side, your finesse of the ♥Q will give you an extra trick. And if Clubs break 3-3, you will get an extra trick there.

Win the ♦A and start with a test of the Spades. West shows out on the second Spade. There goes that possibility.

Next, go to the Clubs and play the ♣AQ and lead up the ♣K in dummy. You want to play in that order so you will be in dummy to take the Heart finesse, should that be necessary.

Fortunately, you find the clubs breaking 3-3 (35% probability), because the Heart finesse would have failed.

When you make your plan before you play the first card from dummy, go beyond the first thing that occurs to you. Many times there are multiply options and more times than not, they must be played in the correct order.

This is the full deal:

11 D	N North	W N E S
	♠ 65432 ♥ 765 ♦ A9 ♣ K65	P 3♣ P 3♦ P 3NT P P P
W West	E East	
♠ 10 ♥ K1083 ♦ K10872 ♣ 1098	♠ J987 ♥ J9 ♦ Q643 ♣ J32	
	S South	
	♠ AKQ ♥ AQ42 ♦ J5 ♣ AQ74	3NT S NS: 0 EW: 0

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

<https://tinyurl.com/y9wyar63>, 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.