

## DO LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH

You are the dealer and you give yourself this hand.

S	South
♠	83
♥	AK8
♦	A85
♣	KJ962

You open 1NT and partner immediately raises you to 3NT. Short and sweet.

West leads the ♠6. How do you make your contract with this dummy?

N	North
♠	AQ4
♥	1043
♦	K762
♣	Q105

West leads ♠6

S	South
♠	83
♥	AK8
♦	A85
♣	KJ962

Counting your top tricks, you have 1 spade, 2 hearts and 2 diamonds. You have 5 tricks and you need four more, which of course can come from the clubs. The club suit is 1 trick away from being set up. In what order are you going to play the suits? What are you going to play to the first trick?

You might be lured into taking the first spade finesse. If West led from the ♠K (entirely possible), you should be able to take the 4 clubs and the ♠Q will give you an overtrick.

But stop and consider what will happen if the ♠K is on your right. This is also entirely possible. East will win and lead another spade, knocking out your ♠A.

Now, if West also holds the ♣A, he will clear the spades, taking 4 spade tricks and the top club.

The spade finesse is an illusion. You don't need it. Play low from dummy and let East win with whatever card beats your ♠8. If he returns a spade, you gain two spade stoppers and you can safely knock out the ♣A and take your 10 tricks. East does best not returning a spade, but by switching to hearts or diamonds. If he does you will always get your 9 tricks.

Look at the entire deal:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">11</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">D</div>	<b>N North</b> ♠ AQ4 ♥ 1043 ♦ K762 ♣ Q105	<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>3NT</td> <td>P</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>P</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	3NT	P	1NT	P			P
	W	N	E	S										
P	3NT	P	1NT											
P			P											
<b>W West</b> ♠ J9762 ♥ J75 ♦ Q4 ♣ A83		<b>E East</b> ♠ K105 ♥ Q962 ♦ J1093 ♣ 74												
	<b>S South</b> ♠ 83 ♥ AK8 ♦ A85 ♣ KJ962													
		3NT S      NS: 0 EW: 0												

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

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