

## HELPING EACH OTHER OUT

East, the dealer, passed and this is your hand:

<b>S</b>	South
♠	106
♥	AQ62
♦	AQ107
♣	972

Nobody is vulnerable and you have only 12 HCP. Some would pass this hand in 2<sup>nd</sup> position. But you meet several tests for opening 1♦. You have a total of 3 quick tricks: 1½ in each of the red suits. You also meet the rule of 20. Your HCP plus the length of your two longest suits equals 20. If you were using Losing Trick Count, you would total 7 losers: 2 spades, 1 heart, 1 diamond and 3 clubs. An average opening hand has a losing trick count of 7. There is nothing arguing for a pass.

Your partner responds 1♥ and you raise him with your 4 hearts. He goes on to bid 2♠. What do you think this is?

Your partner has extra values and thinks that game is a possibility. He is asking for help in the spade suit. This is called a "long suit game try". He is asking for honor cards in spades that can fill in holes in his own hand. You don't have that kind of help, but you do have help in diamonds. You can make what is called a "counter game try" by bidding 3. This says you would like to get to game, you don't have help in spades, but you do have assistance in diamonds. Partner, bid game if you think the diamonds will help instead of spade.

Now North rebids 3NT. This is the bidding so far:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	Pass	??

Would you pass or pull to 4♥?

Your partner is saying he has clubs and spades stopped, and has a relatively flat hand. He is merely suggesting an alternate contract where only 9 tricks will be needed for game. He is also unsure whether you have 3 or 4 hearts and he is saying that he has only 4 of them.

In match point scoring, 4♥ outscores 3NT if you only take the minimum number of tricks in each contract. Since you have four hearts, you should opt for the major suit game. Now you are in 4♥.

East leads the ♥4 and you put down your hand. Take over for North and plan the play:

<b>S</b>	South
♠	106
♥	AQ62
♦	AQ107
♣	972

East leads ♥4

<b>N</b>	North
♠	AJ72
♥	K1085
♦	93
♣	A104

East thought he was cutting down on the ruffs with his small heart lead. Actually, this was advantageous for you because it helps you find the ♥J.

With the lead, you count no heart losers, assuming you get a normal 3-2 break. You do have 3 spades losers, 1 diamond loser and 2 club losers. There are 3 too many losers in your hand. You will need some luck and careful play.

The dummy's diamond suggests a double finesse. If the opponents' diamond break 3-3 with their two honors split between East and West, you can take 3 diamonds and discard a 2 clubs in the dummy.

While you are in your hand, you lead the ♦9 and let it run. It loses to East's ♦K. He returns a club which you win with the ♣A and pull trump, ending in your hand. Now you lead the ♦3 finessing the ♦10. This holds and you discard those two clubs on the ♦AQ. You can ruff a spade with dummy's remaining trump. You lose 1 diamond, 1 spade and 1 club – scoring +120

With most leads, 3NT will just take 9 tricks for a inferior score of +400.

This is the entire deal:

14	<b>N</b> North	W	N	E	S
	♠ AJ72			P	1♦
	♥ K1085	P	1♥	P	2♥
	♦ 93	P	2♠	P	3♦
	♣ A104	P	3NT	P	4♥
		P	P	P	
<b>W</b> West		<b>E</b> East			
♠ Q9854		♠ K3			
♥ J93		♥ 74			
♦ K86		♦ J542			
♣ Q3		♣ KJ865			
	<b>S</b> South				
	♠ 106				
	♥ AQ62				
	♦ AQ107				
	♣ 972				
		4♥ N		NS: 0	EW: 0

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

<http://tinyurl.com/y7mqdapy> , 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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