

LOOKING FOR TWO TRICKS

S	South
♠	KJ53
♥	A1092
♦	A63
♣	A3

Your partner dealt and passes. RHO passes also, and it's your turn to bid. You have a perfect 1NT opener; 16 HCP and balanced distribution. Your partner raises you to 3NT, and West leads the ♣K. How would you plan the play?

N	North
♠	AQ6
♥	Q85
♦	74
♣	J9854

West leads the ♣K

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♠	KJ53
♥	A1092
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As in all notrump contracts, you must count your top winners and determine how many additional tricks you need to fulfill your contract. You have 4 spades and one trick in each of the other suits; 7 in all. That means you need two more and they can come from clubs.

Do you see a problem? You will have to lose the lead twice in order to set the club suit up. The opponents will switch to diamonds and once you ♦A is knocked out, you will lose enough diamonds to set your contract.

It is much safer to look to the hearts. As long as the two missing heart honors are split between East and West, you are assured of two extra heart tricks.

Win the ♣A and go to the dummy in spades, running the ♥8. This loses to West's ♥J. He will switch to diamonds, but you will win the ♦A and go back to the dummy in spades and play the ♥Q. East will cover with the ♥K but you will win you're ♥A, and your two remaining hearts are then winners.

This is the entire deal:

2		N North	W N E S
		♠ AQ6	P P 1NT
		♥ Q85	P 3NT P
		♦ 74	P
		♣ J9854	
W West		E East	
♠ 92		♠ 10874	
♥ J7		♥ K643	
♦ QJ108		♦ K952	
♣ KQ1076		♣ 2	
	S South		
	♠ KJ53		
	♥ A1092		
	♦ A63		
	♣ A3		
		3NT S	NS: 0 EW: 0

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/ycm8rfqd>, 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.