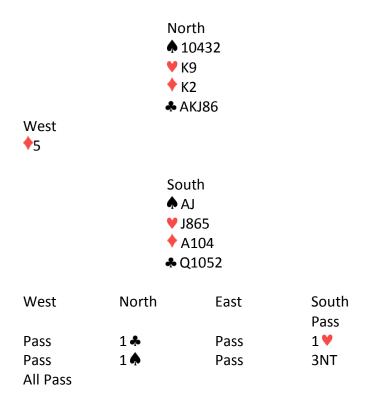
## MAKE A PLAN & TEST IT

You are the dealer with this hand. You are both vulnerable. Would you open?



You have 12 HCP and no distrubutional points. You almost have enough to open but the vulnerablity is against you and you pass. Your partner opens 1♣ and the bid comes back to you. You respond 1♥ and partner rebids 1♠. You see there is no fit, but you have enough points to make a game in notrump. You jump to 3NT and everyone passes out.

West leads the  $\diamondsuit$ 5. What is your plan?

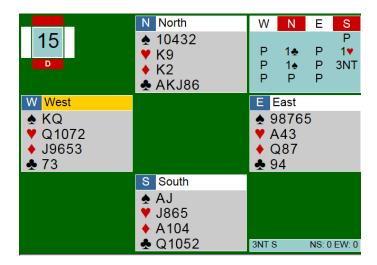


The first item on the agenda, is to count top tricks. One spade, 2 diamonds and 5 clubs. You need one more trick. There are two possibilities. One is obviously, the heart finesse. That has a 50% probability of success. There other options is to get an extra trick from the spades.

The heart finesse is easy to take. The spade suit requires more planning. You are missing two spade honors. You need either the a missing honor to be singleton and fall under the  $\triangle$ A; or the  $\triangle$ KQ to be doubleton. True, this is a long shot, but it is worth a try before you resort to the heart finesse. You can test the spade by playing the  $\triangle$ A and seeing if an honor falls. If it doesn't, then lead to the  $\bigvee$  K.

Fortunately, West drops the  $\triangle Q$  under the  $\triangle A$ . Now it was just a case of forcing out the  $\triangle K$  with the  $\triangle J$  and using the  $\triangle J$ 0 for the  $\mathcal{G}^{th}$  trick.

Here is the entire hand:



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

http://tinyurl.com/qycelhu 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.