

SCRAMBLING FOR A PART SCORE

East is the dealer and with this hand, sitting South, you should open 1♦.

S	South
♠	AJ2
♥	1096
♦	QJ86
♣	KQ9

You hear your LHO overcall 1♥ and your partner responds with 1NT. So far, you know that partner has between 6-10 points and has heart stopper(s). You have a minimum balanced hand and 1NT is high enough. You pass.

West perseveres with 2♠ and partner bids again with 3♦. Now East wakes up and raises his partner to 3♠. What should you do now? You have a fit in diamonds and your partner has limited your heart losers with his 1NT response. You have two losers in each of the black suits. But since partner took a second bid at the 3-level when vulnerable, he must be at the top of his range. You take a chance and bid 4♦. This becomes the final contract.

West leads the ♠K, and this dummy comes down:

N	North
♠	8
♥	AK43
♦	107432
♣	J84

S	South
♠	AJ2
♥	1096
♦	QJ86
♣	KQ9

What is your plan?

You can ruff your two spade losers in the dummy. You have only 1 unavoidable club loser, but you must be careful with hearts. You have seven hearts and West overcalled, promising at least five. That means East has, at most, one heart. You must go right to work on eliminating trump.

Win the ♠A and lead a small trump. East will win the ♦K and return a spade or heart. Win either return and lead another trump to the ♦A. Now you can force out the ♣A and you have plenty of trump to take care of the other suits. You make your 4♦ contract.

This is the full deal:

	N North ♠ 8 ♥ AK43 ♦ 107432 ♣ J84	W N E S 1♥ 1NT P 1♦ 2♣ 3♦ 3♣ 4♦ P P P
	W West ♠ KQ65 ♥ QJ872 ♦ A9 ♣ A7	E East ♠ 109743 ♥ 5 ♦ K5 ♣ 106532
	S South ♠ AJ2 ♥ 1096 ♦ QJ86 ♣ KQ9	4♦ S NS: 0 EW: 0

As you can see, West has no problem making 3 and can even make 4 with careful play. He has only 1 spade loser if he finesses through South. In addition, there is 1 heart and 1 club loser.

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

<http://tinyurl.com/zp7t3ct> 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