

♠♥♦♣ TAKE EXTRA TIME ♠♥♦♣

You are the dealer and you are blessed with this 19 HCP hand:

S	South
♠	AKQ
♥	A9
♦	Q7543
♣	A84

You open 1♦ and your partner responds 2♦. What is your next bid?

You have 5 tricks outside of diamonds. You should feel relatively confident that you can mine 4 more tricks from the diamond suit, since partner is showing at least 4 diamonds himself. Your rebid is 3NT.

West leads the ♥Q. What is your plan?

N	North
♠	762
♥	73
♦	AK92
♣	7652

West leads ♥Q

S	South
♠	AKQ
♥	A9
♦	Q7543
♣	A84

This looks like you can make an overtick. With even a 3-1 break in diamonds you can run them for 5 tricks; plus the 5 outside tricks.

What could go wrong?

This is always the time to stop and think. Carelessly playing the diamonds from the top could lead to disaster if they break 4-0. One of the defenders will take the 4th diamond and run the rest of their hearts.

Consider the alternatives. The diamonds can all be in the East or in the West. If they are all in the East, you will be set. There is no finesse available in your South hand. The only finesse is through West. So, you must assume that they will break 4-0 with West holding all the diamonds.

Win the ♥A. Then lead the ♦Q and take a look. If East shows out, you will always get a finesse of the dummy's ♦9 – as long as you leave the ♦AK in the dummy.

Taking your time and considering what could go wrong, is always a good habit to adopt.

This is the full deal:

	N North	W	N	E	S
	♠ 762				♠ 1♦
	♥ 73		P	2♦	P 3NT
	♦ AK92		P	P	P
	♣ 7652				
W West		E East			
♠ 1083		♠ J954			
♥ QJ102		♥ K8654			
♦ J1086		♦			
♣ KJ		♣ Q1093			
	S South				
	♠ AKQ				
	♥ A9				
	♦ Q7543				
	♣ A84				
			3NT S		NS: 0 EW: 0

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

<https://tinyurl.com/y3ryehxq> , 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.