

## THE RIGHT WAY

You are sitting South and open 1NT. Your partner jumps to 3NT.

North  
♠874  
♥AQ8  
♦AJ106  
♣K73

South  
♠KJ5  
♥J1096  
♦K9  
♣AQJ8

West leads out the ♠3. How can you ensure your contract?

When North hears you open 1NT he becomes excited. He has 14 HCP himself. But slam is out of the question. With no 4-card major, the contract will have to be played in notrump and notrump contracts are usually made on the basis of point count. A small slam requires 33 HCP and North should know that the maximum combined points count is 31 HCP. There are no long suits to provide extra tricks, so he should settle for game.

The first thing every declarer in notrump must do is count his top tricks. You have 1 spade trick (given the lead), 1 heart 2 diamonds and 4 clubs; 8 in all. You have several possibilities for your 9<sup>th</sup> trick. If you run the ♦9 and the ♦Q is in West, you not only get an extra diamond trick, you probably make 2 overtricks. If the heart finesse is on side, you also have 3 extra tricks.

The big problem here is that if either finesse loses, it will lose to the East hand, who has become the dangerous opponent. As soon as East gets in he will lead a spade through your remaining honor, into the teeth of West's obvious ♠AQ tenace. The defenders will take 4 spades and 1 trick in a red suit.

You must figure out a way of picking up that extra trick without letting East get on lead. The only way is to win the initial spade lead, go to the dummy in clubs and lead a low diamond to the ♦9 in your hand!

You don't care if this loses to the ♦Q because West can't hurt you. He will probably lead a heart to get East on lead so he can lead his spade through your honor. But you will not bite. You'll go up with you ♥A and take the remaining three diamonds, starting with the ♦A

(squashing the  $\heartsuit$ K) to go along with your one spade and four clubs. You give up the promise of overtricks but guarantee your contract. **It was all a matter of picking the right way to finesse.** This is the complete board:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">11</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">D</div>		<b>N</b> North $\spadesuit$ 874 $\heartsuit$ AQ8 $\diamondsuit$ AJ106 $\clubsuit$ K73	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S				1NT	P	3NT	P	P	P			
		W	N	E	S														
			1NT																
P	3NT	P	P																
P																			
<b>W</b> West $\spadesuit$ AQ932 $\heartsuit$ 75 $\diamondsuit$ Q843 $\clubsuit$ 106	<b>E</b> East $\spadesuit$ 106 $\heartsuit$ K432 $\diamondsuit$ 752 $\clubsuit$ 9542																		
		<b>S</b> South $\spadesuit$ KJ5 $\heartsuit$ J1096 $\diamondsuit$ K9 $\clubsuit$ AQJ8	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>3NT S</td> <td>NS: 0 EW: 0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	3NT S	NS: 0 EW: 0														
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If you would like to see the whole hand played out, click on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/kkzfi9f> or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick.