

USING THE WESTERN CUEBID

You are sitting in the South with this hand:

S	South
♠	AK4
♥	52
♦	1082
♣	AK854

As dealer, you have a choice of opening bids. You have 14 HCP and a nice 5-card club suit that adds another point. Using a range of 15-17 points you could open 1NT. But since your red suits are so weak, you might opt for a 1♣ bid.

Say you do open 1♣ and you hear your partner respond 1♦. You intend to rebid 1NT, but before you can, your LHO overcalls 2♥. You dearly wish to play this in 2NT or 3NT but you are worried about hearts. There is a way to find out if partner has a heart stopper. It is the cuebid of 3♥. This cuebid has a special meaning and a special name: the western cuebid. It asks partner if he has a stopper in the opponent's suit and if he does, it asks him to bid 3NT. If he doesn't have the stopper, he bids something else – whatever is appropriate for his holdings.

Here is how the bidding progresses:

West	North	East	South
			1♣
Pass	1♦	2♥	3♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Your partner is playing the contract in 3NT and he naturally gets a ♥Q lead:

This is the full deal.

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center; width: 30px; margin: 0 auto;">3</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center; width: 30px; margin: 0 auto;">D</div>	N North ♠ J98 ♥ A10 ♦ AJ765 ♣ QJ9	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="width: 10%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">W</th> <th style="width: 15%;">N</th> <th style="width: 15%;">E</th> <th style="width: 15%;">S</th> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		W	N	E	S	P	1♦	2♥	3♥	1♣	P	3NT	P	P	P	P				
		W	N	E	S																	
P	1♦	2♥	3♥	1♣																		
P	3NT	P	P	P																		
P																						
W West ♠ Q652 ♥ K8 ♦ K943 ♣ 1062	E East ♠ 1073 ♥ QJ97643 ♦ Q ♣ 73	S South ♠ AK4 ♥ 52 ♦ 1082 ♣ AK854																				

3NT N NS: 0 EW: 0

Taking the North position, you count your top tricks. You have 2 spades, 1 diamond and 5 clubs. You only have 1 heart stopper but that is enough for the 9th trick. You take your winners and run.

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

<http://tinyurl.com/gnuvvlr> 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