

♠♥♦♣ INTRODUCING SPIRAL ♠♥♦♣

Your partner open 1♦ and you respond 1♠. This is your hand:

S	South
♠	K943
♥	K5
♦	Q
♣	QJ10654

Your partner rebids 2♠. This normally shows exactly 4-card spade support. However, there are many hands where partner will bid 2♠ with only 3 spades. He may have a hand that can't rebid 1NT. For example, he may have a minimum hand with a singleton in clubs or hearts. Supporting responder's major with only 3 cards makes a lot of sense. Oftentimes, responder will have 5 cards in his major; or he may have 4 very strong cards, where a major suit game is very possible.

You have a hand that borders on opening strength. You have 11 HCP and a quality 6-card club suit. Your singleton is in partner's opening suit, and partner could well have honors in hearts.

You can find out a lot about opener's hand by using the "Spiral" convention. When opener supports responder's major with a single raise, a bid of 2NT by the responder is artificial and asks for more information about opener's hand. It is very similar to the 2NT response to the weak-2 opening, call Ogust. In fact, the same responses can be used:

- 3♣ Minimum Hand and 3-card support
- 3♦ Minimum Hand and 4-card support
- 3♥ Strong Hand and 3-card support
- 3♠ Strong Hand with 4-card support

Over your 2NT asking bid, partner rebids 3♥. He is saying he has only 3 spades but otherwise, a good hand with extras. You feel you have enough strength between the two of you to be a game, but you are unsure of your ability to make a game in 4♠. You can bid 3NT and give your partner the option of playing in either game contract.

North passes 3NT and you get a low diamond lead from West.

The dummy comes down and you must plan for 9 tricks.

N	North
♠	A75
♥	AQ63
♦	J10874
♣	K

West leads ♦ 5

S	South
♠	K943
♥	K5
♦	Q
♣	QJ10654

Your partner's hand is pretty much what you suspected. You count 2 spade and 3 heart winners and the possibility of several minor suit tricks once the top honors are forced out. You are glad they didn't start with one of your major suits.

You play low from dummy and East wins the ♦ A. He switches to a club, sensing a vulnerability in dummy's singleton. West wins the ♣ A and switches, himself, to a heart. You can win and force out the ♦ K, claiming 10 tricks.

This is the full deal:

D	N North	W	N	E	S
	♠ A75		1♦	P	1♠
	♥ AQ63		P	2♠	P 2NT
	♦ J10874		P	3♥	P 3NT
	♣ K		P	P	P
W West		E East			
♠ J62		♠ Q108			
♥ 107		♥ J9842			
♦ K965		♦ A32			
♣ A932		♣ 87			
	S South				
	♠ K943				
	♥ K5				
	♦ Q				
	♣ QJ10654				
			3NT S		NS: 0 EW: 0

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

<https://tinyurl.com/y2m39zc2>, 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.