

## ♠♥♦♣ DEFENDING AGAINST NOTRUMP ♠♥♦♣

Your partner is the dealer and passes. Easts opens 1♦ and you pass with this hand:

S	South
♠	J109
♥	KJ84
♦	A54
♣	653

Your LHO responds 1NT and partner, again, passes. East jumps to 3NT. Partner leads the ♠8 and you see this dummy:

North leads ♠8

E	East
♠	Q2
♥	Q109
♦	KQJ109
♣	AKQ

S	South
♠	J109
♥	KJ84
♦	A54
♣	653

The declarer puts up dummy's ♠Q and starts on Diamonds. What are your thoughts? What are you going to do at trick 2? At trick 3?

Let's start with the opening lead. The ♠8 must be the "top of nothing." Of the 6 cards higher than the ♠8, you can see four of them. Therefore, the ♠8 can't be 4<sup>th</sup> down. That means West has the ♠A and ♠K.

You can count 6 top tricks in the black suits for the Declarer. Once West clears the ♦A, he will have another 4 Diamond tricks, making an overtrick.

Who has the ♥A? If West had it, he would have had at least 11 points, given that he also has the ♠AK. That is too strong for a 1NT response. Therefore, your partner must hold the ♥A. Fortunately, you hold the ♥KJ over dummy's ♥Q10. It is imperative that you hop up with that ♦A and switch to Hearts.

Which Heart will you lead? With 4 Hearts, you lead the ♥4 to partner's ♥A and since it is a low card, you are promising at least 1 honor. Your low lead also request partner to return Hearts. If you had led a high card, you would be asking for another Spade.

As you can see, you will scoop up 4 Hearts, which, along with the **♦ A**, sets 3NT.

This is the entire deal:

D	N North	W	N	E	S
	♠ 87543		P	1♦	P
	♥ A72		1NT	P	3NT
	♦ 72		P	P	P
	♣ 1094				
W West		E East			
♠ AK6		♠ Q2			
♥ 653		♥ Q109			
♦ 863		♦ KQJ109			
♣ J872		♣ AKQ			
S South					
♠ J109					
♥ KJ84					
♦ A54					
♣ 653					
			3NT W		NS: 0 EW: 0

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

<https://tinyurl.com/y3o2m5mg>, or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. If you don't want to see the opponents hands, click on the white area in the South hand before you start.

Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.