

♠♥♦♣ WATCH OUT FOR DANGER ♠♥♦♣

You are the dealer and open 1NT:

S	South
♠	K85
♥	KQ74
♦	A1083
♣	A8

Your partner raises to 3NT and you receive the ♠6 lead from West. What is your best line of play to make your contract. Hint: The ♠Q wins the first trick.

N	North
♠	Q4
♥	A5
♦	J954
♣	KQ975

West's Lead: ♠6

S	South
♠	K85
♥	KQ74
♦	A1083
♣	A8

The first thing you do in a notrump contact is count your top tricks. You have 1 Spade (given the lead), 3 Hearts, 1 Diamond and 3 Clubs. You only need one more trick to fulfill your contract. Where will it come from?

You only have six hearts so that suit doesn't seem very profitable. You have eight diamonds and with an expected 3-2 break, you could get two extra tricks from the suit. Also, you have 7 Clubs and if they break 3-3, you can pick up two extra tricks, there.

At first glance, this doesn't look like a difficult hand. Have you noticed the big danger here?

The danger is if East gets the lead. He will lead a high Spade back to his partner through your ♠K74 and you will lose at least 4 Spades. East is the Dangerous Opponent, and therefore, you must keep East off lead. You can survive a Spade lead from West, and in fact, you would welcome a Spade lead from West. That would give you the extra trick needed when you take your ♠K.

Finessing against East in Diamonds might score if the outstanding ♦ KQ are split. Leading a Diamond from dummy and capturing East's Diamond honor will put the lead back in West when West wins the other Diamond honor. But what if East has both Diamond honors? Then you are doomed.

A higher probability exists in the Club suit. You can get the one extra trick even if Clubs breaks in the more probable 4-2. The line is to arrange to lose the first Club trick to West. Go to the dummy's A and lead a low club to your hand. Cover whatever East plays and allow West to win the trick. Now, whatever West comes back with, you can win and take all the remaining Clubs from the top.

This is the entire deal:

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You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/yxvgb9da>, 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.