

♠♥♦♣ COMPETING AGAINST THE WEAK-2 ♠♥♦♣

You are sitting in the South seat and your LHO opens a weak 2♠. This is passed out to you. You are now in the balancing seat and can open with less than an opening strength hand. You can borrow a king or 3 points from partner in this position. Here, though, you have no need to borrow:

| | |
|---|--------|
| S | South |
| ♠ | AK6 |
| ♥ | 3 |
| ♦ | AQ1072 |
| ♣ | A1043 |

You have 17 HCP with a quality 5-card suit and warrant a takeout double in any position. You are too strong for a simple overcall. This double is passed to your partner who offers 3♥. This is an ambiguous call; it could be as low as zero points or as high as 10 or 11 points. There is a convention that some pairs use to sort out the meaning of this ambiguous advance. It's called Lebensohl over a Weak Two. With a weak hand of less than 8 points, partner would have bid 2NT, requiring you to bid 3♣. Any non-jump bid by him is a weak bid and only wants to play there.

Whether or not you are playing this Lebensohl convention, you want to be in 3NT and hearing that partner has stoppers in hearts, you simply move to game in notrump. This is the bidding:

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 2♠ | Pass | Pass | Dbl |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

West leads the ♠Q and you see this dummy:

| N | North |
|---|-------|
| ♠ | 73 |
| ♥ | Q9852 |
| ♦ | 864 |
| ♣ | KQ7 |

West leads ♠Q

| S | South |
|---|--------|
| ♠ | AK6 |
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| ♦ | AQ1072 |
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As in all notrump contracts, you start by counting winners. You have 2 spades, 1 diamond and 3 clubs. You need three more tricks, and they can come from hearts or diamonds. Which suit do you think holds more potential? Yes, the diamonds. You have 8 diamonds but only 6 hearts; your diamonds are missing only the ♦K and ♦J, whereas your hearts lack the ♥AKJ10.

How are you going to play the diamonds? You want to take a repeated finesse against the two outstanding honors. If the suit breaks 3-2 and at least one of the honors is in East, you will have no trouble; if the suit breaks 4-1, which is more likely, given West's 6-card spade suit, you need both honors to be in East.

You need two entries to the dummy, which will come through the club suit. Win the first spade lead (you don't want a heart switch) and go to dummy to take your first finesse of the ♦10. That will win and go back to dummy with the other club honor to take the finesse of the ♦Q. Both are successful, but you find that East did start with 4 diamonds. You can now take your ♦A and give up a diamond to East's ♦K. He will probably lead his remaining spade back to his partner and you can take your nine tricks. You get a bonus because the club suit breaks 3-3 and you make a 10th trick with your ♣10.

Look at the entire deal:

|  | N North ♠ 73 ♥ Q9852 ♦ 864 ♣ KQ7 | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2♠</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>X</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>P</td> <td>3NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | W | N | E | S | 2♠ | P | P | X | P | 3♥ | P | 3NT | P | P | P | |
|---|---|--|-----|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|----|---|-----|---|---|---|--|
| | W | N | E | S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2♠ | P | P | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| P | 3♥ | P | 3NT | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| P | P | P | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W West ♠ QJ10954 ♥ KJ4 ♦ 3 ♣ J95 | E East ♠ 82 ♥ A1076 ♦ KJ95 ♣ 862 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S South ♠ AK6 ♥ 3 ♦ AQ1072 ♣ A1043 | | 3NT S NS: 0 EW: 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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

http://tinyurl.com/y6hcfv5_, 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.

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