

♠♥♦♣ DON'T SETTLE ♠♥♦♣

You pick up this nice 16 HCP hand and before you can get the 1NT bid out, your partner opens 1♣.

S	South
♠	Q98
♥	KJ6
♦	AKQ
♣	J1096

You have no 4-card Major and your black suits look a little dodgy. What else could you respond other than 3NT. This ends the auction and West leads the ♥10.

N	North
♠	A1052
♥	AQ2
♦	64
♣	Q732

West Leads: ♥10

S	South
♠	Q98
♥	KJ6
♦	AKQ
♣	J1096

All notrump hands start the same way: Count your winners and make a plan to get any more necessary for your contract. Then look for overtricks.

You have 1 Spade, 3 Hearts and 3 Diamonds. That's a total of 7 and you need 2 more to make your contract. You can always promote two Club winners. There is really no problem making 3NT

If you're playing this hand in a duplicate game, you must realize that everyone else is going to be playing this deal in 3NT. That is the normal contract and taking 9 tricks will only produce an average score, at best; and most likely a much lower score.

You have to find a way to make extra tricks. Assuming you are going to promote the 2 extra Club tricks, the only other suit you have to work with is the Spades. You are missing the ♠K and ♠J. The best way to play this suit is to take a double finesse, leading a low Spade from your hand and ducking in the dummy. But even if both finesses lose, you can still promote the ♠Q to go along with the ♠A or 10 tricks.

This is the entire deal:

<div> <div>D</div> <div></div> </div>		<div>N North</div> <div> ♠A1052 ♥AQ2 ♦64 ♣Q732 </div>			
<div>W West</div> <div> ♠KJ74 ♥10973 ♦1085 ♣54 </div>		<div>W N E S</div> <div> 1♣ Pass 3NT PassPassPass </div>	<div>E East</div> <div> ♠63 ♥854 ♦J9732 ♣AK8 </div>		
		<div>S South</div> <div> ♠Q98 ♥KJ6 ♦AKQ ♣J1096 </div>			<div>3NT South</div> <div>00</div>

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

<https://tinyurl.com/z2y8md66>, 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.