

♠♥♦♣ CHANGE OF PLANS ♠♥♦♣

You are South have dealt yourself this hand:

S	South
♠	QJ
♥	AQ6
♦	QJ962
♣	AK2

With 19 HCP and a 5-card Diamond suit, you may be thinking of opening 2NT. But you should downgrade the hand slightly, because of the doubleton Spade honors. You open 1♦, planning to show your strength on your second bid.

Thankfully, your partner bids 1♠ and you rebid 2NT. This shows a hand too strong to open 1NT and too weak to open 2NT. This goldilocks hand should hold 18-19 points. Partner raises you to 3NT and you get a low Heart lead:

N	North
♠	AK109
♥	98
♦	54
♣	107654

West's Lead: ♥4

S	South
♠	QJ
♥	AQ6
♦	QJ962
♣	AK2

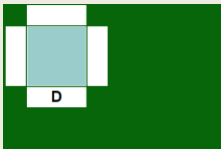
Given the lead, you have 4 Spades, 2 Hearts and 2 Clubs. You only need 1 more trick. On the surface, this doesn't seem very difficult to take at least 9 tricks.

Your longest suit is Clubs. Then this should be the suit on which to start your work. You play low on the Heart lead and East puts up the ♥K. Since you only have 5 Hearts yourself, you play to the expected 5-3 fit, and duck the lead. You win the Heart continuation and play the ♣AK. Here you get the bad news. East shows out on the 2nd Club, discarding a Spade. West still holds the ♠QJ and you will need 3

entries to the dummy to set up the 5th Club. Not only do you not have 3 entries, by the time you would have set up the final Club, West would take 2 more Heart tricks.

There is a possibility of a throw in play against East. Assuming West led from a 5-card Heart suit, East started with 3 Hearts and 1 Club. He already discarded 1 Spade. If you play a third Heart and then the 4 Spade tricks, East could well be left with only Diamonds. Since there are only 6 Diamonds outstanding, East must hold 5 of them and West should not be able to get into the lead. East can take his ♦ AK but will have to lead another Diamond for your 9th trick.

This is the entire deal:

		N North ♠ AK109 ♥ 98 ♦ 54 ♣ 107654	W N E S P 1♠ P 1♦ P 3NT P 2NT P P
		W West ♠ 652 ♥ J7542 ♦ 3 ♣ QJ93	E East ♠ 8743 ♥ K103 ♦ AK1087 ♣ 8
		S South ♠ QJ ♥ AQ6 ♦ QJ962 ♣ AK2	3NT S NS: 0 EW: 0

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/23jkykt2>, 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.