

## Entry Management

	North	
	♠ Q J 4	
	♥ 6 5 3	
	♦ K Q J 10 3	
	♣ 7 4	
West		East
♠ 10 9 8 6		♠ K 7 5
♥ Q J 7		♥ 10 9 8 2
♦ 8 2		♦ A 6 5
♣ Q 8 3 2		♣ J 10 9
	South	
	♠ A 3 2	
	♥ A K 4	
	♦ 9 7 4	
	♣ A K 6 5	

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	all pass	

West leads the ♠ 10. How can you be sure of making your contract?

The lead of the ♠ 10 allowed the declarer to take a “free finesse” on the first trick. The ♠ J won when East correctly played low. A very good play by East that doomed the 3NT contract.

When declarer attacked Diamonds, East held up the Ace until the third round. Since defence could prevent declarer from getting to dummy with the ♠ Q, South ended up winning only 8 tricks, two in each suit.

Declarer made the fatal mistake on the first trick. Rather than taking the free finesse, declarer should play the ♠ 4 from dummy and win the first trick with the Ace. Now after driving out the ♦ A, declarer has a guaranteed spade entry to dummy no matter which defender has the ♠ K as the ♠ Q and ♠ J are both still in dummy.

This line of play will result in 10 tricks since declarer can not be prevented from taking 4 diamond tricks. The play of the ♠ 4 from dummy on the first trick is necessary when the defender with the ♦ A has three or more diamonds. If the ♦ A is held singleton or doubleton by either defender, it is impossible to hold up till the third round. In this situation declarer can win 10 tricks even if he makes the wrong play at the first trick.

Even if West held the ♠ K it will still have been necessary for declarer to win the first trick with the Ace in order to ensure an entry. Playing a spade honour from dummy at trick 1 would win that trick but there would be no further dummy entries in the spade suit

Even though free finesses are hard to resist, they often gain nothing. On this hand, after the spade lead, irrespective of where the king is located, declarer will always win exactly 2 spade tricks. Declarer must not weaken the spade honours in dummy.

South probably made his error before he adjusted his seat and got comfortable as declarer! It is essential to get into the habit of studying dummy and planning the play for the whole hand, not just the suit lead, before playing a card from dummy.

**The important features to consider on this hand are:**

- 1 The long diamond suit in dummy
- 2 Only 2 honours in dummy outside of the diamond suit have the potential to serve as an entry.
- 3 The spade ace may interfere with communication.