

Playing Too fast...the consequences!

Dealer: N Vul: Both	North ♠ A ♥ K 9 3 ♦ Q J 9 7 6 4 ♣ A K 6	
	South ♠ K 8 7 ♥ J 7 5 2 ♦ A 3 2 ♣ J 7 5	

Lead: ♠ Q

Bidding:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Playing in a pair game against competent opponents, you are doing nicely until this hand comes along. With both sides vulnerable, your side bids to three notrump.

The auction is one of those Standard American sequences that leaves no one satisfied. North has too good a hand to rebid two diamonds and the suit is a bit poor to bid three diamonds. The K93 of hearts are tempting too, but there is no way to do everything. North falls back on three diamonds, which is the bid that most players would make.

South, holding a diamond honor and fair points, has a pretty routine three notrump bid. South has to make a few wishes of his own, but this is the way that you have to bid hands like this.

West leads the queen of spades, won nicely by dummy's ace. This start doesn't hurt you any. Three notrump is virtually cold against all but the cruelest lie of the cards. Actually, South should be wondering how many tricks he should play for. On a good day, he might take two spades, a heart, six diamonds, and three clubs. This is optimistic, for sure, but it could happen.

At trick two, South starts diamonds, leading the queen for a finesse. It wins, East and West both following with little diamonds. Only the king and ten are remaining. This means that the really nasty distribution does not exist. Three notrump is going to make. At trick two, South led another diamond and captured East's ten with the ace, West showing out.

South suddenly got hit with the urge to think. What is South thinking about now?

South is thinking that he isn't so safe in three notrump any more. He proceeded to prove the wisdom of that thought. South saw that taking the king of spades now would be fruitless since that would establish a ton of tricks for the opponents. He tried something else. South led a third round of diamonds to East's king. South prayed for a spade return but East seemed to be doing some thinking of his own and wasn't listening to South. East returned the ten of clubs. South's efforts from this point on failed and after it was all over, East-West marked up plus one hundred

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<p>West ♠ Q J 10 5 3 ♥ 10 8 4 ♦ 5 ♣ Q 8 3 2</p>		<p>East ♠ 9 6 4 2 ♥ A Q 6 ♦ K 10 8 ♣ 10 9 4</p>

	South	
	♠ K 8 7	
	♥ J 7 5 2	
	♦ A 3 2	
	♣ J 7 5	

Lead: ♠ Q

Bidding:

WEST	NORT H	EAST	SOUT H
	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Looking at all four hands, you can probably see a way to make three notrump after giving East his diamond trick.

Looking at all four hands after the fact is not a good way to play bridge. Do you see a way to make three notrump that feels right during the play? In other words, how should South have played the hand without looking at all four hands?

The answer is remarkably simple. Taking the diamond finesse was right, but the remainder of the play was filled with greed. South should have led a small diamond from dummy at trick three and when East follows with the ten, LET HIM HAVE THE TRICK! Now South can come to his hand with the ace of diamonds, cash the king of spades, and then take the rest of his winners. Since the opponents have spade tricks waiting, South will have to play his winners from the top. With nothing good happening, he is held to his nine tricks. A minimum result, but much better than the one South got in practice.