

# BRIDGE HAND OF THE MONTH

	N	E	S	W
♠109875			1NT	P
♥975			3♠**	P
♦AK	2♥*	P		
♣1094	4♣	All Pass		

  

♠K62	♠3
♥AQ84	♥K1032
♦642	♦J985
♣Q853	♣J62

  

♠AQJ4
♥J6
♦Q1073
♣AK7

Once South opens 1NT she is no longer in charge of this auction. She is asked questions, i.e: Stayman – “do you have a 4-card major?” 2NT – “are you at the top or bottom of your range?” Or she just does what she is told i.e: 2♥\* - “please bid spades.”

\*\*The only real option the NT'er has is to explain that she has the BEST possible hand for partner's suit – 4-card support and 17 points.

3♠ certainly helps North evaluate her 7 points and poor spade suit. She should go for the game in spades. (If South's hearts and spades were reversed game would not be as desirable a contract).

West leads the club 3.

North is the master hand because it holds the long trump.

Always count losers in a suit contract. 1 spade (possibly), 2 hearts (ruff the third one with the “short trump”), 0 diamonds and 1 club. Assuming the worst case, the spade finesse will lose, declarer must eliminate one loser. There is uneven length in diamonds and an extra winner. Therefore a loser can be discarded from either North's hearts or clubs.

A discard of the heart 5 will not accomplish anything since there will still be 2 heart losers. A discard of the club 4 will eliminate North's club loser.

- Win the Ace of clubs at trick one.
- Cash North's Ace and King of diamonds (getting them out of the way so the Queen can be played later).
- Try the spade finesse by leading the 10 and letting it pass.
- Win the return when possible, pull trump.
- Cash Queen of diamonds and discard the losing club.

The losers now are the King of spades and the 2 hearts that the defense always had.

Help partner evaluate her hand when you have the most she can possibly hope for. Make a good plan and stick to it!