

40. Avoiding 3 NT without a stopper

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	♠ J7 ♥ K43 ♦ K76 ♣ AQ1063		
♠ Q6543 ♥ Q82 ♦ Q105 ♣ 54			♠ AK8 ♥ J1097 ♦ 9842 ♣ 87
♠ 1092 ♥ A65 ♦ AJ3 ♣ KJ92			
	W N E S		
			1 ♣
P	2 ♣	P	2 ♥
P	3 ♣	All Pass	
--North-South Vulnerable--			

The bidding:

South, with 13 high card points, opens one club, his better minor. North, without a four or five-card major, chooses to raise his partner with five-card support. He has the required ten or more points for an inverted minor raise. He bids two clubs.

South bids two hearts because he has hearts stopped but not spades. Neither does North, so North decides to play three clubs. If North had a spade stopper, he either bids three notrump or two spades depending who he thinks should get the opening lead.

The contract: Three Clubs by South

The opening lead: The four of spades

The play:

The defense take the first two spade tricks and declarer ruffs the third. Even if a spade is not the normal lead from West's hand, the lead of the ace is a must since the opponents are not in three notrump because of spades.

South draws trump and then cashes the ace then the king of hearts. A little heart is then played and West wins the queen. He is endplayed. He has to play diamonds for the declarer or give declarer a sluff-and-a-ruff. A sluff-and-a-ruff is seldom right so he plays a diamond hoping partner has the jack. He does not and declarer makes 4 clubs.

The result: Three clubs plus one for +130

Notes:

-If North South are in 3NT, they will be set one trick. The defense can grab five spade tricks before declarer can cash his nine winners.

-If West had AQ543 of spades, he would have bid it at the one-level and made the lead clear if partner was on lead.