

## When All Else Fails

Optimistic North-South bidding lands South in a seemingly hopeless three notrump. But one good thing about such contracts is that it's so much fun when they make! You will need to put on your hornswoggling shoes for this one.

West leads the ♣10 and declarer holds up his ace. East continues the suit, and it looks safe for declarer to win that one (surely West is now out of clubs). Can declarer make nine tricks if East holds the ♦A? No, if East has that card then the contract will be down on the run of the clubs. So, if declarer is to make three notrump, he must assume that West has the ♦A. Next question. Where is the ♦Q? If

West has the ♦A, then declarer can safely assume that, in order for East to have his opening bid, he must hold all the missing queens, including the ♦Q.

Things are looking bleak, but perhaps East's ♦Q is singleton, will that help? No, the ♦Q will fall under the king, but West has the spots and will get two diamond tricks, giving declarer no more than eight total tricks.

When all else fails, declarer must rely on a defensive error. Can you see a way to put East to the test? Yes, there's a neat little swindle in the cards! After winning the ♣A, declarer crosses to dummy's ♥K and leads a low diamond! If East is not at the top of his game he will routinely play low, and declarer's ten will force the ace. Later, the ♦Q falls under the king, and declarer has four diamond tricks and nine altogether!

**Board 14**  
East Deals  
None Vul

♠ J 10 7 3 2	♠ A 9 5	♠ Q 8									
♥ 10 7 2	♥ K 8 5 4	♥ Q J 9									
♦ A 9 8	♦ K J 6 5 3	♦ Q 7									
♣ 10 2	♣ Q	♣ K J 9 8 4 3									
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W		E									
	S										
	♠ K 6 4										
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	♦ 10 4 2										
	♣ A 7 6 5										

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Dbl	1 ♣	Pass
Pass	3 NT	2 ♣	2 NT
3 NT by South		All pass	
Lead: ♣ 10			