

THE DOUBLE FINESSE

S	South
♠	KJ102
♥	AK107
♦	Q
♣	A962

Your RHO passes and it's your bid. You have a classic three suited hand, 4-4-4-1, Some partnerships have conventional opening bids to show this distribution, but lacking that, you should just open your 4-card minor. Partner responds 1♥, hitting one of your 4-card majors. You want to show agreement with that suit and indicate your 17 dummy points. You make an invitational jump rebid of 3♥. Partner has enough to carry on to game.

East leads the ♦J. Take over from North and plan the play:

N	North
♠	Q43
♥	Q864
♦	A32
♣	Q104

East: ♦J

S	South
♠	KJ102
♥	AK107
♦	Q
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You have an unavoidable spade loser and if trump behave, you don't lose any hearts. You can ruff any diamond leads once you take the ♦A and it's just clubs you should concentrate on. You are missing the ♣K and ♣J. If they are both in West or are split, you will not lose more than 1 club. You make your contract either way, but it's always better to make an overtrick if you don't have to risk your contract.

Your plan should be to win the $\heartsuit A$ and immediately pull trump to make sure you don't lose any unexpected tricks. Hearts do split 3-2 and now you should lead up to the $\clubsuit A$, catching one of the missing honors if it is singleton. Then lead up to the $\clubsuit 10$ in your hand. You plan to go back to the dummy and lead up to the $\clubsuit Q$. This is a double finesse and when executing it, you should always finesse the lower card first. If the missing honors are split, the finesse will work half the time if you always finesse the lower card first. If you sometimes finesse the higher card first and sometimes the lower card, you interfere with the probabilities and you can reduce that probability to zero!

As it turns out, the $\clubsuit J$ falls on the second club lead and you make your contract with one overtrick.

This is the entire deal:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">2</div>		N North \spadesuit Q43 \heartsuit Q864 \diamondsuit A32 \clubsuit Q104	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>P</td> <td>1\clubsuit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>1\heartsuit</td> <td>P</td> <td>3\heartsuit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>4\heartsuit</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td></td> <td>P</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	W	N	E	S			P	1 \clubsuit	P	1 \heartsuit	P	3 \heartsuit	P	4 \heartsuit	P	P	P		P	
W	N	E	S																				
		P	1 \clubsuit																				
P	1 \heartsuit	P	3 \heartsuit																				
P	4 \heartsuit	P	P																				
P		P																					
W West \spadesuit A975 \heartsuit 52 \diamondsuit K9864 \clubsuit J3		E East \spadesuit 86 \heartsuit J93 \diamondsuit J1075 \clubsuit K875																					
	S South \spadesuit KJ102 \heartsuit AK107 \diamondsuit Q \clubsuit A962		4 \heartsuit N NS: 0 EW: 0																				

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/y73cwtmu> , or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.