

## Learning Points – Like Reading Tea Leaves

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### E Deals

#### None Vul

Mike

♠ 72
♥ Q1054
♦ J632
♣ 643
N
W 14 E
S
♠ K9864
♥ K3
♦ AK10
♣ Q97

Steve

♠ AQ53		♠ J10
♥ J2		♥ A9876
♦ Q9875		♦ 4
♣ A8		♣ KJ1052

#### Duplimate:

EW: 2♦, 2♠,  
3N, 4♣, 4♥

East	South	West	North
Pass	1♠	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	Pass

Passed Out

North Led the ♥4

length in a weak hand we pass and balance later.

We might overcall with hands slightly stronger than 16 HCP if doing so eliminates rebid problems or the risk that opponents bidding will obscure our suit.

In general, the more HCP you hold in partner's suit when they overcall, the more likely their overcall is on solid opening values. Here East's singleton diamond is unhelpful.

West's 2NT showed extras and texture. Here extras simply means 13-15 HCP. East's 3♣ continued the search for the right strain. There is a small inference that NT isn't what East wants to hear. West's 3 NT sounds hopeful and resigned. You have to play well enough to make hope pay off.

### The Play

Declarer can count 4 winners. A successful finesse in clubs might bring home 5 tricks if the suit breaks well. Spades should play for 3 tricks based on South's opening bid. 3 spades 5 clubs and 1 heart make 9 tricks. West ducks the opening lead to South, who promptly cashes 2 top diamonds then switches to a small spade (a club switch would much worse). Declarer let the spade ride to the table, then back analysis with conviction. The ♣J was led and passed. A small club to the Ace and a heart back to the board enabled declarer to deliver the plan.

3NT by West making 3 for +400 was worth 9 Matchpoints out of 11.

### Postmortem

If south continues a 3<sup>rd</sup> diamond at trick 4, declarer can come to 9 tricks by 3 clubs, 2 diamonds, 3 spades and 1 heart. Try it!

Sometime we make our own tight places – play challenges where one false step can lead to a bad result. Here we reached 3NT on a total of 22 HCP, with 2 7-card fits and 2 6-card fits. This is time to think, not worry. Look for clues and you'll find a way.

### The Bidding

While Mike and I play Precision, we use standard competitive bidding principles. An overcall in a minor should show an opening hand, or a great suit if less than opening strength.

Advancer needs constructive values to bid at all. While our convention card shows 6-16 HCP for a simple overcall, this range does not apply to all situations.

We are more likely to overcall in the low end of the range after partner passes, and where our defense will be helped by the bid or we can preempt useful levels of bidding by opponents. In every case holding 6-9 HCP, the majority of these points will be in the overcall suit - NO EXCEPTIONS. With headless