

North opens 1♠, 2 passes then partner doubles, North rebids 2♠

E	med029
♠	Q108
♥	1073
♦	K8763
♣	98

You have a weak hand, diamonds will have to be bid at the 3 level. Partner doesn't have to be very strong for the double in 4th seat, so maybe the best option is to pass. Partner doubles again, North passes and now you are obliged to bid 3♦. Partner passes and North comes in with 3♠.

Is it worth a double?

We are expecting North to have AK to 6 in spades, so the Q♠ is worth a trick in defence. Partner didn't show any interest in diamonds but should have some holding in the other suits. We have described our hand- weak with diamonds, best option is to pass and let partner double if they wish.

3♠ is passed out- what to lead?

There is an argument for the club, but you might be finessing partner. I chose to lead 4th diamond, hoping to find partner with Qx or Ax

D	roman2020	W	N	E	S
9		1♠	P	P	
		X 2♠	P	P	
		X P	3♦	P	
		P 3♠	P	P	
		P			
W	m27evans	E	med029		
		♠	Q108		
		♥	1073		
		♦	K8763		
		♣	98		
	S	gdalrymple			
	♠	4			
	♥	9864			
	♦	J954			
	♣	J432			
		3♠ N		NS: 0 EW: 0	

Martin won the AD and played AK♥, North ruffing the second round. Declarer now played Q♦, K, 5, 2. We now have a very good picture of the hand.

Martins started AKJ52 hearts and the A2 diamonds. Declarer has shown 1 heart and 2 diamonds, with likely 6 or 7 spades they have 3 or 4 clubs. Declarers shape is likely 6-1-2-3 and Martin 3-5-2-3.

There no danger in leading a heart now- North can't get to dummy and will have to lead away from the clubs in hand at some point.

Declarer ruffs the heart and now play J♠. There is an argument for playing low here in case partner has a singleton honour, but we know he should have at least 2 spades unless North started 8 spades. I played Q♠ which held with Martin playing low.

This is the position with defence having won 4 tricks:

D	N roman2020	W	N	E	S
9			1♠	P	P
		X	2♠	P	P
		X	P	3♦	P
		P	3♠	P	P
		D			
W m27evans		E med029			
		♠ 108			
		♥			
		♦ 873			
		♣ 98			
	S gdalrymple				
	♠				
	♥ 8				
	♦ J9				
	♣ J432				
		3♠ N	NS: 2 EW: 4		

Martin must hold the A♠ or K♠, otherwise declarer would have lead a higher honour rather than the J♠. There is now a trump promotion available- lead a diamond, Martin can ruff high- either the K♠ will knock out the A♠ and establish the 10♠, or he wins the Ace and leads a heart through declarer allowing me to win the 10♠! The full hand:

D	N roman2020	W	N	E	S
9	♠ KJ6532		1♠	P	P
	♥ Q	X	2♠	P	P
	♦ Q10	X	P	3♦	P
	♣ AQ106	P	3♠	P	P
		D			
W m27evans		E med029			
♠ A97		♠ Q108			
♥ AKJ52		♥ 1073			
♦ A2		♦ K8763			
♣ K75		♣ 98			
	S gdalrymple				
	♠ 4				
	♥ 9864				
	♦ J954				
	♣ J432				
		3♠ N	NS: 0 EW: 0		

In fact Martin ruffed with the 9♠- declarer chose to duck allowing Martin to lead back a heart for a ruff, a further diamond was ruffed with the A and a final heart was also ruffed. The 7♦ puts declarer in hand to lead away from their clubs for 5 off- shame we didn't double!