

**Partial Answer
by Roger Lord**

**Dealer: East
Vul: Both**

	North		
	♠ AK1074		
	♥ J105		
	♦ 4		
	♣ J1064		
West		East	
♠ J985		♠ Q62	
♥ Q32		♥ 87	
♦ QJ107		♦ A985	
♣ Q5		♣ AK82	
	South		
	♠ 3		
	♥ AK964		
	♦ K632		
	♣ 973		

East	South	West	North
1 Diamond	1 Heart	Double	2 Hearts
Pass	Pass	3 Diamonds	Pass
Pass	3 Hearts	All Pass	

Contract: Three Hearts

Opening Lead: Diamond Queen

You are East. Cover the South and West cards. South is declarer at three hearts on the bidding shown. Your partner West leads the diamond queen, and you take the ace. How do you defend?

When this deal was played in a local matchpoint session, East switched routinely to the club king and ace, which dropped her partner's queen-doubleton and set up dummy's jack. East led a third club, which West ruffed. West exited with a spade, won by dummy's ace, and South sluffed a diamond on the spade king. South came to hand with a high heart, ruffed his remaining small diamond, and guessed to pick up West's trump queen. Three hearts made three for plus 140 North-South.

West's heart queen had been a natural trump trick, but it was wasted by the ruff of the third club after the honor crash. Had East not led clubs at all, declarer could have sluffed a club on the spade king and arranged to ruff both small diamonds in dummy. As it can be seen in the diagram, the winning defense at trick two was for East to underlead the club ace-king, win the club return and cash the third club, and wait for the heart queen-third to take the setting trick.

How does East know that her partner has the club queen? She doesn't. But she can figure that the described defense offers the best chance of setting the contract. For one other losing possibility, East might imagine that West has the ace or king of trumps rather than the queen, but perhaps the bidding makes that less likely—in that case, South, with such a flimsy heart holding, might not have ventured the three heart bid.

In the auction, West made a negative double and, over LHO's competitive two hearts, raised partner's diamonds to the three-level. Many players fear to raise a minor-suit opening bid, such as in this example, with fewer than five cards, lest opener have just a three-card suit. This reticence is often unreasonable, as it can obstruct profitable competition. Besides, on this specific auction, it is inconceivable for opener to have fewer than four diamonds. Why? 1. East cannot have more than three spades—with four, she would have bid two spades due to partner's negative double. 2. East cannot have more than three hearts, because the opponents must have seven or more hearts for their bid and raise (and you have three). 3. On a three-card holding, East would not open one diamond with longer clubs—that is, with 3-3-3-4 distribution, she would open one club, not one diamond.