$_{13}$♠ Q J 6 ♥ J 9 3 ♦ A 7 ♣ A J 6 5 3

N

W   **E**

S

$_{11}$♠ 7 4 ♥ K T ♦ K Q T 5 4 2 ♣ K 8 2

W	N	E	S
–	–	PASS	1♦
2♦	3♣	PASS	3♦
PASS	3♠	3NT	all pass

Lead: 5♠, E takes with the king and plays 6♥. W takes with the queen and plays A♠ and 8♠ (E follows with 9♠ and 3♠). We take the third spade with Q♠. What do you do next?

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By the left opponent Michaels bid, we know that he started with 5 spades and 5 hearts. If he also has 3♣, it means that we can take at most 4 diamond (as they are divided 0-5), but we can also try to finesse Q♣ and take 4 more tricks in that suit (if finesse wins). If, on the other hand, diamonds are divided no worse than 1-4, we can take all 6 diamonds (finessing the jack) and 2 top clubs. However, if diamonds are divided 2-3 or 3-2, we shouldn't finesse the jack, but start with cashing the top diamonds instead. Can we find out what the actual distribution is, before it is too late? Yes. We should play the A♦ first. If diamonds are 0-5 we will know immediately, and still be able to collect 3 more diamonds (finessing J♦). If both opponents follow, we can cash two top clubs first, before handling the diamonds. This play will give us the full information about W's hand: if he follows twice, diamonds are 1-4, if he shows out to the second club, the diamonds were 2-3, and if he shows out to the first club already, then the diamonds are 3-2. This way we can play the minor suits with certainty.

The actual distribution was:

$_{13}$♠ Q J 6 ♥ J 9 3 ♦ A 7 ♣ A J 6 5 3

$_{10}$♠ A T 8 5 2 ♥ A Q 7 5 2 ♦ 6 ♣ 9 4   **W**   **E** $_6$♠ K 9 3 ♥ 8 6 4 ♦ J 9 8 3 ♣ Q T 7

N

S

$_{11}$♠ 7 4 ♥ K T ♦ K Q T 5 4 2 ♣ K 8 2