

## 297. Sweet Consolation

Playing against the club director who is an accomplished player and his unknown partner, I hold:

♠ K Q 9 6   ♥ K Q 7 6 2   ♦ A 2   ♣ 7 2

At favorable vulnerability, partner opens **one diamond**. CD, on my right, preempts **two spades**. I instinctively rue the day that Al Roth invented negative doubles but manage to pass in tempo. UP, on my left, passes, and partner goes into a trance. I mentally urge him to double, and then shrink at the possibility that he may pass. Eventually he emerges with **three clubs**. CD passes and I correct to **three notrump**. Everyone passes. The full auction:

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

West leads the five of diamonds and partner puts down a very presentable dummy:

♠ 10 5  
♥ 10 5  
♦ K Q 9 7 4  
♣ A K Q 4

♦5 led

♠ K Q 9 6  
♥ K Q 7 6 2  
♦ A 2  
♣ 7 2

My first thought is that I'm going to finesse CD for the ♠J and then introduce UP to some form of squeeze play. To facilitate my entries I win the king of diamonds in dummy and instantly regret it when CD drops the ten. I undoubtedly would have had four easy diamond tricks had I let the lead run to my hand. No matter. I call for the ten of spades from dummy. CD grabs his ace as UP discards a club. CD shifts to a heart. My ♥K loses to UP's ace, and a heart is returned to CD's ♥J and my queen.

Time for an inventory. I have three spade tricks with the proven finesse, three diamonds, three clubs, and a heart. I am in the classic one loser position. CD has shown up with seven spades, two

hearts and one diamond, leaving him with three clubs at most. I need only to cash my winners at this point. I take the ace of diamonds, cross to dummy with the ace of clubs, and cash the queen of diamonds. Next comes the spade finesse and another spade. My only duty is to look for the jack of diamonds from UP. This is the position before the last spade:

♠ —		♠ J 8
♥ —		♥ 8
♦ 9	♣ K Q 4	♦ —
		♣ 10
♠ —		
♥ —		
♦ J		
♣ J 9 8		
	♠ Q	
	♥ 7 6	
	♦ —	
	♣ 7	

On the ♠Q, UP cannot afford to make a discard. Plus 460 is a clear top, and the classic rendition of the simple squeeze is a sweet consolation for missing the opportunity to get a big number\* against an old rival.

The full deal:

♠ 10 5		♠ A J 8 7 4 3 2
♥ 10 5		♥ J 8 4
♦ K Q 9 7 4		♦ 10
♣ A K Q 4		♣ 10 5
♠ —		
♥ A 9 3		
♦ J 8 6 5 3		
♣ J 9 8 6 3		
	♠ K Q 9 6	
	♥ K Q 7 6 2	
	♦ A 2	
	♣ 7 2	

\*The "big number" would have only been slightly better than my actual score—plus 500—because CD can escape with two heart tricks to go along with his four spade tricks.