

Teaser No. 3

♠ 8 5

♥ 9 5 4

♦ A Q 8 7 2

♣ J 8 3

LOVE all, Dealer: South

Contract: 3NT by South

Lead: Q ♥

E/W Silent

♠ A K Q 4

♥ A 7 3

♦ K 6

♣ A 10 9 4

All follow to three rounds of Hearts. Plan the play.

Solution Teaser No. 3

The previous two problems have both involved taking advantage of successive chances. On this deal there are successive chances in diamonds and clubs. You could test the diamonds first and, if they fail to break, switch to clubs. As you can then only take one club finesse you would need East to hold both of the missing honours, or one honour either singleton or doubleton (and the long diamonds). Neither of these chances is very good.

It is better to give up on the diamonds and use the two entries to dummy in order to take repeated club finesses. (If you can score three club tricks you only need two from diamonds). So, after winning the third round of hearts, you lead a low diamond to the queen and run the EIGHT of clubs (not the jack!) Assuming this loses, you later lead the king of diamonds and overtake it with dummy's ace. Now you run the jack of clubs, and will only go down if West was dealt both missing honours. It goes against the grain to deliberately blow a diamond trick in such a fashion but on this occasion it is correct to do so: you will succeed three times out of four. That is about 20% better than the odds on the first line winning.

Note that leading the jack of clubs on the first round fails if the missing honours are divided and East holds four or more cards in the suit. On the second round of the suit you will be forced to win the trick in hand and will be unable to take a third finesse.