

Teaser No. 36

♠ 9 8 6 5 4

♥ K 5 4

♦ 10 5 2

♣ A 9

N/S GAME, Dealer: South

Contract: 4♠ by South

Lead: K♣

South opened 1♠, West overcalled 3♣(pre-emptive).

East shows out on first round of trumps.

♠ A K J 10 7

♥ A 3 2

♦ A 4 3

♣ J 3

Plan the play – it's a teams' match.

Solution Teaser No. 36

A top trump reveals that West was dealt three to the queen. The 3C overcall suggested a seven card club suit. There is therefore a good chance that cashing your top cards in hearts and diamonds will strip West of their red suit cards. So, win at trick one, cash AK of trumps, AK of hearts and A of diamonds. Then exit with the jack of clubs (NOT with a trump can you see why a trump is inferior?) Hopefully West will have nothing but clubs in their hand by this stage of the play.

If West ducks the club (unlikely to happen!) you play a trump. With nine tricks in the bag already the forced club return allows a ruff and discard and you have ten tricks.

If West wins the club (far more likely!) they can cash their trump winner but will then have to lead another club.

This is the position as that club is led:

♠ 9 8
♥ 5
♦ 10 5
♣

♠ J 10
♥ 3
♦ 4 3
♣

Now comes the key play: refrain from ruffing, instead discarding a heart from one hand and a diamond from the other. You have West on the ropes, so keep them there! They have to lead yet another club and you score all four remaining trumps separately (on this trick ruffing in the hand that is now void in hearts and discard the remaining diamond loser from the other). Look again at the diagram: if you are on lead you will score just two of the last five tricks, but with West on lead you can score four of the last five!

This remarkable throw-in play has allowed you to score TWO extra trump tricks. You make the contract by way of four top cards in the side suits and six trump tricks.

Taking a ruff and discard at the first opportunity fails as you only score a total of five trump tricks.

The recommended play is aptly called a 'Double discard elimination'.

Did you spot what might happen if you cash your winners and exit with a trump? West can defeat you by playing a low club. You avoid a club loser, but must now lose a heart and two diamonds.