

Teaser No. 65

North

♠ 10 6 5 2

♥ J 9 4

♦ Q J 3

♣ A Q J

East

♠ A Q 9 3

♥ A 5

♦ 8 5 2

♣ 9 8 5 2

Game All, Dealer: South

Contract: 3NT by South

Lead: 3♥

South opened 1♦, North responded 1♠ and South rebid 1NT (15-16). North raised to game.

You are sitting East. Plan the defence – it's a teams match.

Solution Teaser No. 65

Win the first trick and switch to spades. Play the ace of spades first, then the three of spades.

Partner has at most four points so cannot hold both the king and queen of hearts. If they have one top honour in hearts you may establish the suit by returning one, but your partner will have no outside entry and will never get to enjoy their length winners. It is better to hope that partner has led from a weak heart suit and has three spades headed by the king, or three spades without the king but with the king or ace of diamonds on the side. Switching to a low spade is good enough if partner has the jack, but the correct defence is to play the ace of spades first. This caters for ANY doubleton in declarer's hand. Picture KJ doubleton or JX doubleton with South: If a low spade is led at trick two you will be forced to win the second round of the suit, arriving at the position shown below.

106	
8	Q9
Void	

Sadly, you have already blown the defence as you cannot continue the suit without setting up a winner in dummy. It is essential that partner leads to the third round, so you need to have reached this position at the point that partner obtains the lead, be that in spades or diamonds.

By playing the ace first you take four spade tricks straight away if declarer started with JX. If they started with KJ (they did!) you must wait a little longer for the setting trick, but partner will lead their remaining spade as soon as they score a trick in diamonds.

Note that if partner was dealt KJX in spades they must unblock the jack under your ace, and if they were dealt JXX they must unblock on either the first or second round.

Also observe that you must find three spades opposite if the defence is to succeed, there is no doubleton holding that works. If partner was dealt KJ or KX the suit is blocked, and you can only run three spade tricks. Declarer, of course, must then have both top diamonds and will take the remainder.

South held: ♠KJ, ♥KQ6, ♦A10974, ♣K103