

Teaser No. 66

North

♠ 10 8 5 2
♥ K Q 7 4
♦ A J 9 2
♣ 6

East

♠ K Q 9 7 6 4
♥ A 10
♦ 8 6
♣ A J 7

E/W Game, Dealer: South

Contract: 3NT by South

Lead: 3♠

South opened 1♦, North responded 1♥ and you overcalled 1♠. South bid 2♣, North jumped to 3♦ and South signed off in 3NT.

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

Solution Teaser No. 66

Play a LOW spade at trick one.

The opening lead must be a singleton, with South holding AJ doubleton. Declarer can therefore score two spade tricks whatever you do, but if the queen is played at trick one you will be unable to clear the suit without gifting a third. You must hope that declarer cannot score nine tricks without knocking out both of your aces. When you win with your first ace, another low spade is played and the remaining spades in your hand are all winners.

There are two other pitfalls that you may need to negotiate. Firstly, if a low club is led from the table, play the ace straight away and hope that this doesn't establish a ninth trick for declarer. Lead a spade to clear the suit and wait to regain the lead in hearts. Secondly, if declarer rattles off five winners you will have to find three discards. These should be two clubs and a spade, NOT a heart. Declarer will also have worked out that the opening lead was a singleton and that you were dealt six spades. If you bare your ace of hearts, they might well read the position and duck a round, thereby setting up two winners in dummy. Remember that you did make a vulnerable overcall! You can afford to throw a spade as you only need three tricks from the suit.

Have you noticed the similarity to the previous problem? In both examples, if your first spade is the wrong card, you soon find yourself on lead again and unable to continue the suit.

South held: ♠AJ, ♥82, ♦KQ753, ♣K1093