

Teaser No. 73

North
♠ 6 5 3
♥ J 5
♦ Q 5 2
♣ A J 10 6 5

West

♠ 2
♥ Q 9 8 7 2
♦ J 10 8 4 3
♣ K 3

Game All, Dealer: East

Contract: 3NT by South

Lead: 2♠

Partner opened a weak 2♠ (5-10), South overcalled 2NT (strong, balanced) and North raised to game.

East wins the first trick with the ace and returns the queen of spades.

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

Solution Teaser No. 73

Discard the KING of clubs at trick two.

If declarer was dealt the queen of clubs your king is worthless. They will score five club tricks (finessing) to go with the king of spades and will surely be able to score three tricks in the red suits without your partner obtaining the lead. Therefore, assume that partner holds the queen. This would mean they are upper range for a weak two opening but it is the only realistic chance. There is still the danger that South was dealt four small clubs:

AJ1065	
K3	Q2
9874	

Declarer will need to develop the suit. The normal way to play this combination is to take two finesses, scoring four tricks whenever the missing honours are split and when West has both (but annoyingly paying out to KQ doubleton with East!) On this occasion, however, declarer is desperate to keep East off lead. They will start by leading towards dummy and then play the ace if you follow low, hoping you were dealt KX or KQX(X). Note that three club tricks will almost certainly be enough for the contract if declarer is missing the queen. If the king is still in your hand at this point you will be forced to win the next trick with it but will be unable to put partner on lead to cash their spade winners. On the other hand, if you get rid of the king at trick two declarer cannot score more than one club trick without letting your partner in.

If your clubs had been A3 and those in dummy KJ1065, it would have been equally correct to throw away the ace at trick two prepared for everyone to have a good laugh if declarer held the queen!

South held: ♠K97, ♥AK6, ♦AK9, ♣9874