

Dummy

♠J965

♥KJ1096

♦KQ

♣AK

You

♠A843

♥54

♦AJ843

♣75

| <u>You</u> | <u>LHO</u> | <u>Partner</u> | <u>RHO</u> |
|------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| P | P | 1H | P |
| 1S | P | 3S | P |
| 4S | P | P | P |

The opening lead is the J of clubs, Plan the play.

Send your answers to me: billpuzzles@bridgesights.com

The Answer

You have no minor suit losers. It is likely that you have 2 spade losers. Therefore, the whole hand comes down to playing the heart suit correctly. Since there was no bidding and the opponents can discard clubs safely, it is unlikely you will have any clue as to how the hearts are situated. Therefore, it appears to come down to a pure guess.

However, there is a chance that you can force the opponents to help you if RHO started with 3 spades. The play would work as follows. Win the first club, and immediately play a spade, ducking the spade into LHO. If LHO now returns a heart, you must take the heart guess immediately. However, it is more likely that he will make the safe return of a club. You then play KQ of diamonds and lead a spade towards your hand, winning the A. You then continue to run diamonds. The best defense is for RHO to not ruff, to try and avoid the end play. With 5 tricks left, this is your hoped for end position:

Dummy

♠J9
♥KJ10
♦
♣

RHO

♠K
♥??
♦
♣xx

You

♠43
♥54
♦8
♣

You play the last diamond, pitching the 10 of hearts from dummy. If RHO ruffs it, he is stuck. He either has to lead a heart, guaranteeing that you only have one heart loser, or he has to lead a club, allowing you to sluff a heart from your hand and ruff in dummy, again limiting your heart losers to one. If RHO chooses to pitch a club instead of ruffing, you simply play a spade, throwing RHO in, and he has the same problem.

If it turns out LHO has the 3rd spade, then you are reduced to the heart guess, but you are no worse off than you were at the start of the hand.