

Dummy

♠AQ

♥K73

♦AQ87

♣A1063

You

♠632

♥AJ9864

♦652

♣K

The contract is 4 hearts. It should be easy, but this is one of those days where 50% of the finesses are working – 100% for the opponents and 0% for you. You get an opening lead of the 3 of diamonds. Plan the play.

Send your answers to me at billpuzzles@bridgesights.com

The Answer

If everything works (the spade finesse, the diamond finesse, and a 2-2 heart break), you can take 13 tricks – 2 spades, 2 diamonds, 2 clubs, 6 hearts, and a ruff in dummy.

However, you can still plan for it even if nothing works. You can hold your losses to 1 spade, 1 diamond, and 1 trump unless you get a horrendous heart break.

Take the diamond finesse (hey, maybe your luck has changed!). It loses and back comes a diamond. You need to get rid of your losing diamond right away, so you don't have a second diamond loser. Win the diamond, and play a club to the K. You are planning to pitch your diamond loser on dummy's A of clubs.

You also need to do something with your 3rd spade, ruffing it in dummy. So, in case trumps are not 2-2, you cannot completely draw trumps before ruffing a spade.

Therefore, play a spade to the Ace (the spade finesse was probably losing anyway!). Play the A of clubs, pitching your last diamond. Now play the Q of spades.

Now you are pretty much all set, You can win whatever is returned, and play a heart to the K. If both opponents follow you are all set. You play a heart to the A. Ruff a spade in dummy. If hearts are 2-2, you have all the rest of the tricks; if not, you lose a heart and still make your contract.

Even if LHO does not follow, you are still fine, because you can take the marked finesse against the Q before ruffing a spade. You still only lose 1 heart.

If LHO has all 4 hearts, I suggest you quit playing bridge for the day!