

Dummy

♠KQJ2

♥KJ9

♦62

♣K1084

You

♠1053

♥A104

♦AKQ9

♣AQ5

You find yourself in 6N. The opening lead is a spade, RHO winning the A and returning a diamond. You can count 11 top tricks – 3 spades, 2 hearts, 3 diamonds, and 3 clubs. There are good chances for a twelfth trick in either hearts or clubs. However, after thinking about it, you come up with an even more likely way to take 12 tricks, no matter how the minor suits break and who has the Q of hearts. What is this line of play?

Send your answers to me: [billpuzzles@bridgesights.com](mailto:billpuzzles@bridgesights.com)

## The Answer

The defense has to guard three suits in order for you not to make your contract. They have to keep 4 clubs to the J, 4 diamonds to the J or 10, and 3 hearts to the Q. Since each defender can only guard one suit, one of the three suits will remain unguarded, so you will be able to pick up your extra trick, as long as you play the hand carefully. Whichever defender has to guard two suits will be unable to do so. So, you are squeezing one of the defenders, even though you are not sure which one until the hand is over.

Win the diamond. If clubs break 3-3 or the J drops, you have your twelfth trick, so play 3 rounds of clubs.

If LHO started with 4 clubs, play the K of spades, pitching a heart. Now play 2 rounds of diamonds. If LHO does not pitch a club, pitch the club from dummy.

For illustration purposes, assume LHO started with the Q of hearts and long clubs. Here is the situation prior to cashing your last diamond.

Dummy

♠  
♥AJ  
♦  
♣10

LHO

♠  
♥Qx  
♦  
♣J

You

♠  
♥10  
♦Q9  
♣

LHO has a problem on the last diamond. If he pitches a club, dummy's club is good, and if he pitches a heart, dummy's hearts are good.

The only time this play does not work is if LHO started with 4 or more diamonds and RHO has the protected Q of hearts. In that case LHO can guard diamonds and clubs, and RHO can guard hearts.

Alternatively, if RHO started with 4 clubs, play a heart to the Ace, and a heart back to the K. Now play the K of spades, pitching a heart. If neither the Q of hearts nor J of clubs appears on this trick, then run your diamonds.

For illustration purposes, assume LHO has the Q of hearts and the long diamonds. Here is the situation prior to your cashing the last spade:

Dummy

♠K  
♥J  
♦6  
♣10

LHO

♠  
♥Q  
♦10xx  
♣

You

♠  
♥10  
♦KQ9  
♣

On the last spade, you pitch the 10 of hearts. LHO is stuck. If he pitches a diamond, your diamonds will run, and if he pitches a heart, the J of hearts will be good.

The only time this line of play does not work is if RHO started with Jxx of clubs, Qxx of hearts, and 3 or fewer diamonds. In that case, LHO can guard diamonds, and RHO can guard clubs and hearts.

If you do not make the hand, and the defenders discard correctly (which is difficult), consider yourself very unlucky, but console yourself with your brilliant line of play!