

Dummy
♠ KQ86
♥ K7
♦ KJ
♣ KQ962

You
♠ 102
♥ AQ864
♦ 9764
♣ 74

| <u>Dummy</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>Declarer</u> | <u>Pard</u> |
|--------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1C | P | 1S | P |
| 3S | P | 4S | P |
| P | P | | |

Opening Lead: J of Hearts

After hearing the auction, you have a slight regret that you didn't stretch and overcall 1H after the 1C opener. But your brilliant partner finds the heart lead anyway. You cash two heart tricks, declarer following with the 5 and the 2. Plan the defense.

Send your answers to me: billpuzzles@bridgesights.com

The Answer

Pard

♠74
♥J3
♦A853
♣A10853

Declarer

♠AJ953
♥10952
♦Q102
♣J

Dummy

♠KQ86
♥K7
♦KJ
♣KQ962

You

♠102
♥AQ864
♦9764
♣74

You are not certain of the heart situation. It is very possible that partner started with J1093. However, it is also possible that partner started with J3, and declarer with 10952. Since you are not sure which it is, your first thought might be to passively lead back a spade, as that is not likely to give away anything.

Your best hope is that partner has two aces. However, if declarer started with 4 hearts, then you need to worry about declarer pitching dummy's 2 diamonds on the two good remaining hearts. Therefore, you should lead a diamond back at trick 3, to ensure that your side gets the ace of diamonds. If declarer started with the ace of diamonds, and is missing the two black aces, your lead will not hurt, as partner will be able to cash them later.

The main point of this hand is that you must carefully plan the defense early in the hand. Many less experienced players are afraid of giving away tricks and tend to play passively. However, sometimes, as on this hand, if declarer is able to set up a long suit to pitch his losers, it is imperative that the defense play aggressively to ensure they take their tricks before that happens.