

DON'S CORNER

by Don Gardner

You are playing in your weekly club duplicate game when you run into this hand. You and your partner's hands are:

(Partner)

♠ A Q 7 4
♥ K J 8
♦ K Q 10
♣ A 7 3

(You)

♠ 10 3 2
♥ A Q 10 9 4 2
♦ 5 3
♣ 6 2

And the bidding has gone (with opponents silent):

Partner:	1D	You:	1H
	2NT		3H
	4H		All pass

You received the lead of 6♦. You play the K♦ which wins the trick. You draw trump in two rounds, ending in hand and lead a second diamond. LHO plays low and you insert the ten, which loses to the Jack. RHO plays the A♦ and you have to decide what to do. After deciding, what is your plan for the remainder of the hand?

Scroll down for the solution.

SOLUTION

If the spade finesse is off and the J♠ falls, you will be successful. If the spade finesse is not on, is there anything you can do to increase your chances?

Take a few moments to plan ahead before playing to the A♦

Here is the full layout:

		North (Partner)	
		♠ A Q 7 4	
		♥ K J 8	
		♦ K Q 10	
		♣ A 7 3	
West			East
♠ J 9 8 6			♠ K 5
♥ 6 5			♥ 7 3
♦ 7 6 4 2	South (You)		♦ A J 9 8
♣ K 10 8	♠ 10 3 2		♣ Q J 9 5 4
	♥ A Q 10 9 4 2		
	♦ 5 3		
	♣ 6 2		

There is one thing you can do to help yourself in case the spade finesse is off and the King is a singleton or doubleton, and that is:

- Discard a club on the A♦
- Win the club return
- Ruff a club
- Play a spade to the Ace
- Ruff the last club
- Play a spade to the Queen

If the finesse is on, the Queen will win. If the finesse is off, and RHO has only a doubleton spade, RHO will be endplayed. A minor suit return will give you a ruff and discard and the spade loser goes away.