



You are declarer in 4♠ after East opened 3♣. West leads the ♣Q. How do you plan the play?

You will be OK if the ace of hearts is with East but that is quite unlikely after the pre-empt. So even with a 3-2 diamond break it looks as though you are going to lose two hearts, one diamond and a club. But just suppose you let West win the queen of clubs at trick one. You can take a ruffing finesse against the ace later and discard a low heart on the established club winner and now you will be fine as long as diamonds break. Of course, if East overtakes the queen with the ace the defence will be able to take two heart tricks, but now you will have two diamond pitches on the two club winners in dummy.



You are declarer in 4♥ and West leads three top clubs and switches to a low diamond. How do you plan the play?

You need to make four spade tricks to be sure of your contract, so it perhaps looks right to ruff a spade high after taking the ace and the king. However, if hearts are 4-1, you will not be able to draw trumps ending in dummy to cash the spades. So play the ace and the king of hearts first and if you discover the suit has not broken 3-2 then you will simply draw trumps and hope for an even spade break.