

Suggest you apply wet towels to forehead for the first three questions.
Nobody said it was gonna be easy ...

- 1) Quite awkward –we have a diamond loser now and possibly a trump loser too. If we take a trump finesse (leading a spade towards the Ace and running it) and it loses then the diamond will be cashed., on the other hand if we don't take a spade finesse and play the Ace hoping the King will drop we may be in difficulties when the spade finesse was working all the time.

Well some psychology and a combination of odds from the various plays may help.

Lead the Q spades. Not the J. Not the 10 . Not the etc etc etc.

Lead the Q spades. Now –the next player will usually cover if they hold the K. (it would often be in their interests to cover after all).

So we lead the Q. Now if it is covered we are home and dry.We play the Ace , draw trumps and make 13 tricks (I will leave it to you to see how 13 are easy). BUT if when we lead the Q the K is NOT played.... We play our own Ace on the Q. Yes.

Then –we play the A + K + Q Hrts.

Then we play the Q clubs and overtake with the K.

Then we play the J Hrts and throw our diamond.

This approach works when the K is played on the QS , also when the Ks is singleton and finally when the defenders cards are like this.

3
1098
KQJ9
J9876

K2
432
10542
10542

- 2) Well this is tricky too. Who sets these hands ?
Do you play the Ace clubs (which could be just what declarer wants if for sake of argument they held Q 63 or Q6) ? or do you hold off (which risks declarer making their singleton club)? Of course we have been trained to play Aces on Kings ...

So has declarer got : (i) Q6 -----KJ1072

Or

(ii) 6 -----KJ1072

Or

(iii) Q63 ----- KJ1072

Actually you don't know .

The reason I have come up with this hand is to show you the difficulty a good declarer creates for the defenders. Having decided to play on clubs in (i) and (iii) declarer plays the K from dummy giving you the problem. Somehow it seems all the more tempting to play your Ace on the King.

3) Win the Ace hearts .

Now we want to play on diamonds and would like the opponents to release their Ace fairly early. Play a diamond to the K.....

(This play of the K diamonds has fair chances of persuading a defender to play their Ace on your King . Which would help). They can't see your KQJ10 diamonds and may just fall back on the old adage that Aces should be played on Kings.

Anyway if that passes of ok you are nearly there (and this was a real hand which I did make at the table). The K lost to the Ace and another heart came back.

Winning in dummy I managed to scramble another 2 club tricks for the contract.

4) (i) yes play the Ace spades on the Jack sp.

Next cash the Q Hrts . Next get off lead (safely) with a small trump.

If you didn't play the Ace spades (breaking my rule that you never normally leave yourself with a singleton Ace spades) then you are up a gum tree when another spade is led. You win , cash the Q Hrts and ...errr....?

5) Play the Ace hearts. Then lead the 4 clubs.

Sí muy peligroso and not a little dangerous BUT that dummy scares us into action. If you just play pat-a-cake and send a heart back at trick 2 before you know it declarer will have drawn trumps and discarded any losers on the diamond suit.

NB go active(dangerous) when dummy is strong and distributional

Go passive (safe) when dummy is balanced

6) Draw trumps by leading the 2 to the 9. (start with a deep finesse)

Later lead the 4 to the J

Finally lead the Ace.

76% or so chance of losing only 1 trump trick this way.

7) Draw trumps by leading the 2 to the Q (Chinese finesse)

Approx 50% chance of success. Anything else is worse.