

Plan the Defense -- Problem

Board 22
 West Deals
 E-W Vul

♠ Q J 7 3
 ♥ K J 6 3
 ♦ 7 3
 ♣ A 9 6



♠ A 5
 ♥ A 8
 ♦ A 10 8 6 2
 ♣ J 8 5 4


<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Dbl	2♣	2♥
3♦	Pass	Pass	3♥
All pass			
3♥ by South			
Lead: ♦K			

That's a moth-eaten club suit, but in a club matchpoint pairs game, you have to hang in there: 2♣ promises a fifth diamond. This allows partner to push the auction to the 3-level.

Partner leads the king of your suit. Plan the defense.

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Plan the Defense -- Solution

<p>♠ 10 8 6 2 ♥ Q 10 4 ♦ K Q 5 ♣ 10 7 2</p>		<p>♠ Q J 7 3 ♥ K J 6 3 ♦ 7 3 ♣ A 9 6</p>	<p>♠ A 5 ♥ A 8 ♦ A 10 8 6 2 ♣ J 8 5 4</p>
<p>♠ K 9 4 ♥ 9 7 5 2 ♦ J 9 4 ♣ K Q 3</p>			

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	Pass	1 ♦	Pass
1 ♠	Dbl	2 ♣	2 ♥
3 ♦	Pass	Pass	3 ♥

All pass
 3 ♥ by South
 Lead: ♦ K

Count your tricks: two diamonds, and two aces, for sure. How about a fifth trick, to set the contract?

Assuming partner has the ♦ Q, there is a sure-fire defense. Overtake the ♦ K with the Ace, and shift immediately to the ♠ A, followed by the ♠ 5.

Declarer wins the second spade in hand and plays ♥ 2, ♥ 4, ♥ J -- you win your ace. You return the ♦ 6, so that partner wins the ♦ Q; back comes a spade for your planned ruff. It turns out partner still has a trump trick, two down. This defense sets the contract even if declarer has the ♥ Q.

As the cards lie, declarer can save a trick by winning the second spade in hand, and leading the ♥ 9! Also, the opponents could choose to double 3 ♦, which would collect 200 points for one down (the ♥ Q was a wasted value in that contract). Tough game, matchpoints.