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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

16th March 2010 North-South vulnerable. South deals

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|--|---|--|
| | NORTH ♠ A 8 3 ♥ 8 5 ♦ A K Q 10 6 ♣ 9 5 4 | |
| WEST ♠ Q 9 6 5 ♥ A Q 10 7 2 ♦ 7 ♣ K 8 2 | | EAST ♠ J 7 2 ♥ 6 4 ♦ J 9 3 ♣ Q J 10 7 6 |
| | SOUTH ♠ K 10 4 ♥ K J 9 3 ♦ 8 5 4 2 ♣ A 3 | |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| SOUTH Pass 3 NT | WEST 1 Heart All Pass | NORTH 2 Diamond | EAST Pass |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|

Opening lead: Five of ♠

A seemingly innocuous discard can come back to haunt you. West learned that lesson the hard way on this deal from a rubber bridge game.

South, with a near opening bid, wasted no time in getting to game once partner announced enough for a vulnerable two-level overcall. There were eight fast tricks, so a ninth had to be developed.

West did well to steer clear of a heart lead. Declarer played low from dummy on West's spade lead and captured East's jack with the king. Declarer now ran five diamond tricks, discarding a heart from hand. West had to find four discards. Three were easy enough – two hearts and a spade. Unfortunately, West chose the deuce of clubs for the fourth, and declarer needed no more.

A club was led from dummy and ducked in the closed hand. West won with the king and exited with a club, but that simply delayed the inevitable. Declarer won and returned the king of hearts, and West was back on lead. All he could do was cash the queen of hearts, setting up declarer's jack, or lead a spade away from the queen into declarer's combined ace-ten tenace.

To defeat the contract West had to retain three clubs. Now he could always exit with a club, and there was no way declarer could get home. Try it!

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