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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

20th March 2010 Both vulnerable. South deals.

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

SOUTH 1 Diamond 1 Spade 4 Spade	WEST Pass Pass All Pass	NORTH 1 Heart 2 Spade	EAST Pass Pass
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Opening lead: King of ♣

There is a vast difference in technique between duplicate pairs and rubber bridge or, to a slightly lesser extent, team play. At the latter two, making the contract is paramount; at duplicate, overtricks and under tricks are the name of the game. Consider this deal.

A normal auction gets you to a good four-spade contract. How would you play in a duplicate tournament? What about in a team match?

In a pairs competition, your contract is secure if either spades or diamonds divide 3-2. So, after West cashes the king and ace of clubs and shifts to a heart, you win with the ace and draw two rounds of trumps with the ace and ten. When they split 4-1, you try the ace and king of diamonds. West ruffs and reverts to hearts, forcing you to ruff in hand, and the contract is no longer makable.

At rubber bridge or in a team match, you have a safety play available to guarantee the contract. When East shows out on the second trump, you start on diamonds. But cash the ace, taking care to unblock by playing the knave from the table, then continue with the ten of diamonds!

If West does not ruff and East refuses to win, just continue with the nine of diamonds and run it should West still not ruff. East can win and force you with a heart, but you ruff and continue with winning diamonds until West ruffs. You overruff with the queen, draw the outstanding trump and continue running diamonds. Four spades bid and made!

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