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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

30th March 2010 Neither vulnerable. North deals

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

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Pass	Pass	1 Spade	2 Club
2 NT	Pass	X	Pass
		3 NT	All Pass

Opening lead: Six of ♥

This deal is from a major European tournament some years ago. All the pairs reached game contracts on the North-South cards. Most played either four spades or five diamonds, all of which failed in quick time. Three pairs reached three no trump on an auction such as the above. At all three tables West led a low heart, and the fate of the contract hinged on declarer's play from dummy at trick one. Would you play the queen or low, and why?

There is no rule to cover this situation, but is it a pure guess? No, there is a slight inference to be drawn. East did nothing in the auction to suggest any particular desire for a heart lead. Would West lead a low heart from A J x x x rather than lead partner's suit?

One declarer, British internationalist Andrew Robson, decided no and, playing West for a suit headed by the ace-king, shot up with dummy's queen! When that held, he romped home with one spade, one heart and seven diamonds. The others played low and lost five heart tricks right off the bat

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