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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

5th May 2010 Both vulnerable. West deals.

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3 Hearts	3 Spade	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 Diamond	Pass	6 NT
All Pass			

Opening lead: Nine of ♦

While it would be wonderful to have the sort of mind where you remember a host of mathematical details, some distributions are obviously better than others. Go with the odds.

The auction is simple enough. The only question with the South hand after North bids freely at the three-level is whether there is a grand slam in the cards. Simple Blackwood resolved that problem.

Against six no trump West selected the nine of diamonds as the opening lead on which East produced the knave. Obviously, the fate of the hand hung on whether declarer could locate the queen of spades. Declarer set about finding out as much as possible about the hand.

He won the first trick with the ace of diamonds, cashed the ace of spades in case there was good news in that suit and then crossed to dummy with a high club. Since West was most unlikely to have led away from the queen of diamonds against a small slam in no trump, South now led a diamond and finessed the ten. When that held, declarer cashed the ace of diamonds, fetching a heart from West, and the cleared the clubs, West discarding a heart.

Since West had shown up with two cards in each minor, it was simply a question of whether his distribution was 7-2-2-2 or 8-1-2-2. Obviously, a seven-card suit is more likely than an eight-card suit. (Mathematically, it is more than twice as likely, but you don't need to know precisely.) So declarer continued with a spade to the king, for a happy conclusion to a well-played hand

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