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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

11th Nov 2010 East-West vulnerable. South deals.

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

North	East	South	West
--	--	1 Diamond	2 Diamond
4 Diamond	Pass	Pass	X
All Pass			

Opening lead: King of ♥

Students of the game know that, when holding 11 cards in a suit in your side's combined holding, odds on a 1-1 split of the missing cards are 52 percent and 2-0 only 48 percent. But declarer knew he could guarantee the contract by playing for the latter.

West tried hard to get a squeak out of his partner, to no avail. North's jump to four diamonds was pre-emptive. Note that East-West could have been severely punished had East elected to bid over four diamonds doubled.

Declarer elected to let West's king of hearts win the first trick, and West shifted to the king of clubs, pinning dummy's queen. Declarer won in hand, finessed the jack of hearts and cashed the ace for a club discard. A heart was ruffed in the closed hand and a club ruff in dummy eliminated that suit as well from the combined holding. Next came a trump and, when East followed low, declarer took the finesse. When that held, declarer was happy to cash the ace and surrender two spade tricks to West to land the doubled contract.

Why did declarer choose to go against the odds? Because if the diamond finesse lost, West would be endplayed. A spade return would be up to South's king, and a club would permit declarer to ruff in hand while discarding a spade from the table. Either way, the defense would score only one spade trick to go with the heart and the trump already in the bank

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