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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch 11th September 2010

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

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

South	West	North	East
1 Heart	Pass	2 Club	Pass
4 Heart	All Pass		

Opening lead: Ten of ♦

When defending a hand, your partner has ways to tell you where his high cards are located. However, that does not mean that you must shift to that suit. There might be urgent matters requiring your immediate attention.

South's jump to four hearts does not show additional strength. After a forcing two-over-one response, it simply promises a long, good suit with no interest beyond game unless responder is rich in controls.

Your partner West leads the ten of diamonds, declarer plays low from dummy your queen wins. You cash the ace, fetching the jack from declarer and the nine from partner — a suit preference for spades. But see what happens if you shift to a spade.

Declarer wins, leads a club to the ace and ruffs a club with the nine. The ten of trumps is overtaken with the Ace and another club is ruffed high. The seven of trumps to the eight is the entry for another club ruff, setting up a long club on the table. Declarer gets there by overtaking the four of hearts with the six and a losing spade disappears on the long club. Making four-odd.

You should know from the bidding and the high cards you can see that declarer must have the ace of spades for his opening bid, so the spade shift is not vital. More important is to prevent declarer from setting up the clubs, and to do that you must attack dummy's entries, and they can only be in trumps. So shift to a trump at trick three. That forces declarer to spend an entry before it can be put to good use, and the contract must go down. Try it.

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