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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

23rd June 2010 East-West vulnerable. South deals.

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

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
			1 Diamond
1 Heart	1 Spade	4 Heart	All Pass

Opening lead: ?

This deal is from the recent Spring North American Championships in Reno. This was the auction at one of the tables. Looking at all four hands, can four hearts be made with any lead?

With a trump, heart or diamond lead, there's no problem. Declarer starts with nine tricks — five trumps and two ruffs and two aces. He has time to establish a club trick for the fulfilling trick, draws any outstanding trump and starts on clubs. It would seem that would make declarer's task easier. After three rounds of clubs, declarer can claim the balance.

Deep Finesse, the computer program that analyzes hands for many bridge writers, disagrees. Not so, argues the computer. East must win the first club and give West an immediate ruff. Now West shifts to a spade and the defenders get their spade trick before declarer can establish his clubs

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