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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

24th Dec 2010 East-West vulnerable. South deals.

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

North	East	South	West
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3 NT	All Pass		

Opening lead: Seven of ♠

Here is another deal from Eddie Kantar's excellent series "Thinking Bridge," designed for players who would like to improve their game.

"With 5-4 in the minors along with two doubletons and no slam interest, North treats his hand as balanced and bids accordingly.

"Suits headed by Q J 8 x (x) are not considered sequence suits at notrump, so a fourth-best card is led. To lead a queen at notrump you need a suit headed by Q J 10, Q J 9 or A Q J. At a suit contract the queen is led from any Q J combination because, at a suit contract two, not three, adjacent honors are considered a sequence.

"As South, you have seven top tricks and can easily set up three more in clubs. That is, it would be easy if the opponents could not set up their spades first! But they can. Even if the opposing spades are divided 5-4, as evenly as possible, the opponents can set up three spade tricks before you can set up your clubs. You can't win the spade-club race. You must look elsewhere for two extra tricks. 'Elsewhere' is hearts. You need three heart tricks. This means finding East with the king and jack. It's your only chance. Win the spade lead in dummy and led a heart to the ten. Now open your eyes. Guess what? The ten has won the trick. Now all you have to do is repeat the heart finesse for nine tricks.

"When you have a choice between a low-chance play (double heart finesse) and a no-chance play (driving out the ace and king of clubs), take the low percentage play. Live a

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