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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

26th August 2010 Both vulnerable. West deals.

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

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
	1 Spade	2 Diamond	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	X
All Pass			

Opening lead: ?

Look only at the West hand and the bidding. What should you lead against three no trump doubled?

With nothing to guide you, the safest lead is unquestionably the king of hearts rather than the suit you bid. However, partner's double changes that. He is asking you to lead a spade, the suit you bid! Don't insult partner by presuming to know that a heart lead is right anyway.

Suppose you lead a heart. Declarer will capture the king with dummy's ace, force out the ace of diamonds and wrap up nine tricks (the heart, five diamonds, two clubs and a spade) before you can establish a fifth. With a spade lead, however, you are going to take four spade tricks and the ace of diamonds — down one.

The rules for leading against a game contract doubled by partner are:

When you have bid, lead your suit. If both you and partner have bid, it is not always easy to determine whose suit to lead — use your judgment.

When neither you nor partner has bid, partner is suggesting you lead dummy's first-bid suit unless you have a very good suit of your own. This is a case where judgment is key. However, be sure you have an entry back to hand if you opt to lead your own suit.

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