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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

26th Jan 2011 Neither vulnerable. East deals.

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

North	East	South	West
---	Pass	1 Heart	Pass
1 NT	2 Spade	4 Heart	X
All Pass			

Opening lead: King of ♠

This deal is from the Mitchell Open Board-A-Match team event at the recent ACBL Fall North American Championships, held in Orlando. Should North-South make four hearts?

West, looking at a full opening bid, found it hard to believe that his opponents could make 10 tricks at a four-heart contract, and expressed his doubt in no uncertain terms. Looking for some ruffs, he led the king of spades and, on seeing dummy, switched to a trump at trick two. Declarer inserted dummy's nine and, when that held, tried the table's remaining spade. East rose with the ace and shifted to a club, but declarer countered by rising with the ace, trumping his low spade in dummy, returning to hand with a diamond ruff and drew the outstanding trump – making four-odd doubled.

West knew that the strength was more or less evenly divided and, under those circumstances, his opponents had to score some ruffs if they were to make the contract. To prevent that, West should have led a trump, and he can then play another trump when next he gains the lead. Declarer will lose four spades and a club no matter how he wriggles.

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