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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

2<sup>nd</sup> June 2010 North-South vulnerable. South deals

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

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 NT	Pass	2 Heart	Pass
2 Spade	Pass	3 NT	Pass
	All Pass		

Opening lead: Five of

There are several theories as to why the nine of diamonds became known as "The Curse of Scotland." One of the more prominent is that the order for the Massacre of Glencoe in 1692 was signed on the back of that card. At the table, however, every card has its use.

Despite a slightly off-shape hand, South elected to open one no trump because his long suits were minors – a sensible compromise. North transferred to spades and the subsequent bid described a balanced hand with a five-card spade suit and game-going values. West led a diamond and, after a few moments' thought, declarer found the winning line. Can you equal that performance and justify your bidding?

Declarer rose with the ace of diamonds, spurning the finesse in favor of running the queen of clubs. That lost to the king and, while West could revert to diamonds, allowing East to gobble up the queen, West could not regain the lead before declarer had collected nine tricks – four clubs, two in each major and one diamond.

Why did declarer reject the diamond finesse? The opening lead marked East with at least one diamond honor since, with a five-card or longer suit headed by K J 10, West would surely have led the jack. But give West any other five-card holding, winning the ace at trick one blocks the suit since declarer's nine of diamonds would control the suit and prevent West from overtaking should the king and ten be reversed. Try it

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