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Bridge Tips Tanna Hirsch

2nd March 2011 Both vulnerable. South deals.

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

North	East	South	West
--	--	1 NT	Pass
2 Club	Pass	2 Diamond	Pass
3 NT	All Pass		

Opening lead:

One of the first things you are taught when learning how to defend a bridge hand is the maxim "Second hand low." As with most others, it is correct more often than not, but it is not engraved in stone, as Alan Siebert of Little Rock, Ark., demonstrated on this deal from a National Pairs Championship a few years ago.

The auction was a straightforward power sequence. After South's no-trump opener, North checked for a 4-4 major fit and, when none was located, settled in three no trump.

West led the jack of clubs, won in dummy. A spade was led to the ace and a spade was returned to the queen and king. East reverted to a club to dummy's king and, when thrown on lead with another spade, exited with his last club to declarer's ace and a diamond was discarded from the table.

It was time to start on hearts, so South led the deuce, intending to insert dummy's ten when Siebert followed low and then scored three heart tricks later. But Siebert inserted the jack! Suddenly, the contract could no longer be made. If declarer ducked in dummy, Siebert would cash two club tricks to set the hand. If he rose with the ace, he could collect only two heart tricks without letting Siebert on lead for the same result.

As they say in the Old Country: "If you drink the water you die, and if you don't drink the water you die."

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