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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2010 Both vulnerable. South deals

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

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 Spade	Pass	1 NT	Pass
3 Diamond	Pass	4 Spade	Pass
6 Spade	All Pass		

Opening lead: King of Club

Be wary of situations that look familiar. All too often there is a subtle difference, which proves to be the key to making or breaking your contract.

North judged that the king in partner's suit and an outside ace made the hand too good for a simple preference to three spades. Even though North's failure to raise spades immediately suggested only two-card support, South needed no further encouragement to bid the small slam.

West led the king of clubs. At first sight declarer's situation seems routine — take the ace of clubs, discarding the queen of hearts from hand. Cash the ace and king of hearts and ace of spades, then cross to the king of trumps and play off the hearts. This succeeds whenever spades are 3-2 and hearts either 3-3 or 4-2 with the heart length in the same hand as the remaining trump. That is actually the second best line and fails here.

Better technique is to ruff the opening lead in hand and immediately play off the hearts. It makes no difference whether or not West chooses to ruff. Suppose West refuses to trump. Cash the ace of trumps, cross to the king and discard a diamond on the ace of clubs. Now lead the remaining heart and discard your low diamond and the defenders get only a trump trick. This line also works if West ruffs the third heart. This succeeds if hearts are either 3-3 or 4-2 with the heart shortage in the hand with the long trump — a better line since this works if any one hand has three trumps and two or three hearts.

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