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Both vulnerable. North deals.

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

NORTH	EAST	south	west
1 Club	P	2 NT	P
3 NT	All Pass		

Opening lead: Five of ♠

When you hold only one stopper in a suit led by the opponents, it is usually correct to hold up that stopper in an attempt to strip the opening leader's partner of his cards in that suit, thereby breaking communications. But each case must be treated on its own merits.

North-South reached three no trump in quick time. West led a low spade and declarer had only eight fast tricks. A heart trick would have to be developed for the fulfilling trick. To strip East of spades, declarer ducked the first trick and won the spade return. He led a heart to set up his fulfilling trick. Unfortunately, West held the ace. He grabbed it immediately and cashed three more spade tricks for a one-trick set. The operation was successful. Unfortunately, the patient died.

The contract is safe if spades break 4-3, so declarer must presume the suit is breaking 5-2. Since the opening leader would surely have led a high spade if his holding was headed by K Q J, declarer can reason that East has a doubleton spade honor. In that event, declarer's ten and nine of spades become crucial cards.

Declarer must win the first trick with the ace! If East unblocks the queen, South's ten becomes a second stopper. The spades are blocked. Now South can set up his heart trick and take his nine tricks regardless of which defender holds the ace of hearts.

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