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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2010 Both vulnerable. South deals.

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

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 Heart	Pass	2 NT	Pass
4 Diamond	Pass	4spade	Pass
5 Club	Pass	5 Diamond	Pass
6 Heart	All Pass		

Opening lead: King of

Study all four hands in the above diagram and decide: Would you rather play or defend six hearts after the lead of the king of clubs?

North's two no trump was a forcing heart raise and the jump in diamonds showed a singleton. After an exchange of cue-bids revealed that a second-round club control was missing, North-South settled in a small slam in hearts.

You have enough information to elect to play, and West leads the king of clubs. After winning the opening lead with the ace, you cash three rounds of spades, discarding the table's remaining club. However, when you now lead trumps West wins with the ace and leads his remaining spade, and East's nine of hearts becomes the setting trick.

However, that does not mean that you opt to defend – you just need to time the hand better. Before leading a trump, cash the ace and king of diamonds, discarding your winning spade. Now lead a trump and the defense is powerless – you can overruff the fourth spade and claim.

Is six hearts a good slam at rubber bridge? It is unwise to risk hard cash when you can bank a rubber bonus, but here your slam is a better than a 75 percent shot, and the vulnerable slam bonus makes it worth the risk.

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