

Thanks to GorenBridge and STLTODAY.COM

[Read original >](#)

http://www.stltoday.com/entertainment/article_8211b568-ec1d-55e5-b4a9-f891ff8222e6.html

Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

3rd September 2010 North-South vulnerable. South deals.

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

NORTH	EAST	South	West
---	---	1 NT	Pass
3 NT	All Pass		

Opening lead: Queen of ♦

Here is another theme you might recognize. It is fairly common but, occasionally, some extra care is needed.

After South's 15-17 point one no trump opening, it seems that probing for a 4-4 major fit with Stayman is routine. However, North judged his stopper in the short suit might make no trump an easier contract.

West led the queen of diamonds, and declarer could count seven fast tricks — one diamond and two in each of the other suits. Two more tricks can be developed in either of the major suits with the help of a winning finesse, but declarer cannot afford to lose an major-suit finesse early since the defenders can cash at least four diamond tricks for a one-trick set.

A mental coin toss is not the solution to the dilemma of which suit to tackle — you must combine your chances. That can be accomplished without any additional risk. First, cash the ace and king in one of the majors in the hope of dropping the queen. The obvious suit for that is spades, where you have an eight-card combined holding as against only seven hearts. So start by cashing the top spades and then, if her majesty does not appear, fall back on the heart finesse.

What trap must you avoid? To first cash the king of spades. Why? Should West hold a singleton queen, East's ten will be a fourth-round stopper! But should you lead a spade to the ace and fetch a singleton queen with West, your K 9 of spades over East's 10 will permit you to collect four spades via a finesse, and nine tricks regardless of the position of the queen of hearts.

e-mail: gorenbridge@aol.com