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**Bridge Tips**      **Tannah Hirsch**

5<sup>th</sup> October 2010 Both vulnerable. North deals.

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

North	East	South	West
1 Diamond	1 Heart	Pass	Pass
X	Pass	1 NT	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	All Pass

Opening lead: Six of ♥

Powerful hands with a 4-4-4-1 distribution are notoriously difficult to bid. The choice on this deal from an international team match lay between one diamond and two no trump. At one table North elected to open two no trump and ended in three no trump. With the lead coming up to the strong hand, nine tricks proved easy.

This was the bidding at the other table. With the heart lead coming through the strong hand, East won the opening lead with the ace and returned a low heart. This suggested that West might hold one of the minor heart honors and, had declarer risen with the king, the suit would have been blocked and declarer would have had time for the club finesse and conceding a spade. However, declarer tried the nine of hearts, losing to the ten, and a heart was returned, forcing out the king.

A winning club finesse allowed declarer to play three rounds of clubs, ending in hand, and then cash the ace and king of diamonds and the fourth club. On these tricks East discarded the three and seven of spades.

It was crunch time. Did East bare the king of spades to hold on to the queen of diamonds, or was the defender ripe for a throw-in with a heart to lead away from the king of spades? Perhaps because the former case would have meant a newspaper hand, declarer tried the ace of spades! Wrong, but it still made the papers.

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