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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

12th August 2011

Dealer : South Vul : N-S	NORTH ♠ 8 5 2 ♥ 10 9 5 ♦ K Q 6 5 ♣ A K 7	
WEST ♠ J 4 ♥ K J 4 3 2 ♦ A 10 ♣ 10 9 6 5		EAST ♠ A Q 10 7 3 ♥ 8 7 ♦ 8 3 2 ♣ 8 3 2
	SOUTH ♠ K 9 6 ♥ A Q 6 ♦ J 9 7 4 ♣ Q J 4	

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

Opening lead: Jack of ♠

The gap between the sexes among experts continues to narrow. Until relatively recently, the number of women who could compete with the men could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Now there are many who can compete seriously at any level. Watch the ruthless defense by Sabine Auken and Daniela von Arnim in a match from the Women's World Championship some years ago.

In the tournament world, the auctions where only one side is vulnerable tend to be highly competitive. After West's featherweight overcall, North's double denied four spades and the subsequent double showed extra values and was not strictly for penalties. With stoppers in all suits, South elected to try for the no-trump game rather than settle for what might have been an inadequate penalty at this vulnerability.

West, von Arnim, chose to attack by leading the knave of partner's suit, and Auken found the killing defense of overtaking the jack with the queen! Declarer could not afford to win that trick since that would set up East's suit. However, holding up proved to be even worse!

East shifted to a heart, ducked to the jack, and West reverted to spades. East shot up with the ace and persisted with a heart, setting up West's suit. When the smoke cleared, the defenders had collected four hearts, two spades and the ace of diamonds — down three! (08/12/11)

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gorenbridge@aol.com