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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

12th Nov 2011

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

South	West	North	East
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	All Pass

Opening lead: Six of ♥

Don't get carried away by the strength of your combined holding. The shoals of distribution are lying in wait for the careless declarer.

West leads the six of hearts, East rises with the ace and returns the jack, and declarer must duck. Declarer knows that attempting to block the suit is futile, since East cannot hold A J 10. West's fourth-best lead of the six, using the Rule of 11, tells us East cannot have three cards higher than the six. East shifts to the queen of spades, taken in the closed hand.

Time to start the diamonds. Cash the ace and queen. East's spade discard on the second round is a bit of a setback. To complete the count, South cashes his second spade winner, and when West follows suit, he becomes marked with one club at most.

The rest is easy. Instead of cashing the ace and king (the normal way to tackle suit), declarer must lead low to the queen and return the ten. East covers, declarer wins, returns to dummy with a diamond and repeats the finesse to land his contract

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