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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

18th August 2011

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

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

Opening lead: Queen of ♥

South, declarer at three no trump, had a choice of suits to develop. What preliminary steps are necessary, and which minor suit should declarer tackle?

Note North's jump to three no trump without a stopper in the enemy suit. Partner is expected to have that for his opening bid of one no trump, and North has strength in reserve for game after the overcall.

West's lead of the queen of hearts is conventional, asking partner to unblock the jack holding that card. East duly obliged and declarer correctly held up the ace until the third round of the suit, discarding a spade from dummy. With only seven fast tricks available, and unable to surrender the lead to West, it was no choice!

Only an incurable optimist would take the diamond finesse in light of West's overcall. The club suit is certain to produce the necessary tricks as long as West does not hold both missing club honors.

At trick four, declarer should lead the ace and a low club and, when West follows low, insert the eight. East can win this trick with the jack but cannot harm declarer. As long as clubs are 3-2, declarer has nine tricks. If East has four clubs to the queen-jack, declarer will learn of it early enough to play East for the king of diamonds.

What if West produces the queen of clubs when the suit is first tackled? South should win the king and has to guess the position. We would continue with our original plan of playing for split club honors and lead a third round of clubs rather than bank on the diamond finesse.

Read more: http://www.stltoday.com/entertainment/article_24ecae76-ccfa-57eb-a9e6-33143370e435.html#ixzz1VMpMor1F

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