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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

18th June 2011

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

South	West	North	East
--	--	1 Diamond	Pass
1 Spade	Pass	2 Diamond	Pass
4 Spade	All Pass		

Opening lead: Three of ♥

At times, it can be a blessing not to know the percentages. After all, even a 99 percent line will fail once in a 100 times! However, in the long run it pays to follow the odds.

At both tables in a team game, South became declarer at four spades on identical auctions. With the equivalent of an opening bid and a fair seven-card suit, it would have been pusillanimous to rebid anything less than game in the major.

At both tables West led a low heart, and East took the ace and king before exiting with a third heart. Declarer won in hand and here the two sides parted ways.

At one table declarer crossed to the ace of diamonds and continued with the king, discarding a club from hand in an effort to guard against four trumps to his right. Unfortunately, West ruffed and still had to score the king of trumps for a one-trick set.

The declarer at the other table knew that a 5-1 split posed the greater danger, and planned the play accordingly. After winning the third round of hearts, declarer cashed the ace of clubs and ruffed a club in dummy.

To assure a re-entry to hand, declarer made the farsighted play of cashing the ace of diamonds before running the jack of spades. West won with the king (ducking would have made no difference), but then had to return a club, and South claimed the contract.

Note that, had declarer failed to cash one high diamond, West could have exited in that suit after winning the king of spades, and another diamond would have promoted the ten of trumps as the setting trick.

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