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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

20th Jan 2012

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

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

Opening lead: Ten of ♣

North's primary cards and high-card concentrations make his hand worth an invitational sequence, and South's primary cards justify reaching game on the combined holding. After a club lead, should the contract succeed or fail?

We warrant that the contract will succeed more often than not in a notrump game. It takes excellent defense, with a club lead, to stop declarer from taking nine tricks.

East wins the club lead with the ace and returns the seven, ducked by declarer and West. East must shift, and one look at dummy should be enough to convince East that a spade return is the only hope. However, East must return the six, not the knave! The jack must be retained to force a high card from declarer later in the play.

Declarer wins and starts hearts. West wins the first or second heart and can exit with a spade. Declarer can still make the hand by cashing the hearts and guessing the lie of the cards, but the odds are good that he will not do so.

Note that, had East led the jack of spades the first time, West would now not be able to play spades without giving declarer his fulfilling trick.

Read more: http://www.stltoday.com/entertainment/bridge-column-for-jan/article_acf3635c-371a-56d3-887c-752c102faad7.html#ixzz1jzM7WDzt

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