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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

20<sup>th</sup> May 2011

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

South	West	North	East
2 Club	Pass	2 Spade	Pass
3 Heart	Pass	3 Spade	Pass
4 Diamond	Pass	5 Heart	Pass
6 Heart	All Pass		

Opening lead: ?

Most of the time, one of the players at the table is in control of the hand's destiny. On occasion, though, Lady Luck plays a leading role, and you have to bow to her peculiarities.

At both tables in a team game, the final contract was six hearts. Where we watched, South elected to open with a game-forcing two clubs and North responded two spades, showing at least a five-card suit headed by two of the three top honors. The rest of the auction was natural, with North judging that his two heart honors merited a jump raise in the suit.

At one table, West led a club. Declarer won in hand cashed the aces of spades and diamonds and ruffed a diamond in dummy. The king of spades took care of declarer's remaining diamond loser, and South returned to hand with ace of clubs to draw the outstanding trumps and claim 12 tricks.

At the other table the opening lead made all the difference — West chose to lead a trump! East won the ace and returned a trump, and declarer's only entry to dummy had been removed virtually before play started. There was no way for declarer to avoid losing two diamond tricks for a two-trick set.

Our question to you is this: Was the first declarer lucky not to get a trump lead, or was the second West lucky to lead a trump when that was the only defense? (05/20/11)

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