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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

24th August 2011

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

South	West	North	East
--	--	--	1 Club
1 NT	Pass	3 NT	All Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♥

Bridge at all levels continues to improve. This is particularly obvious at the junior level, where the annual World Junior Championship provides some sparkling play. This deal is from a match between Italy and Russia.

We are still not convinced that light opening bids are a profitable pastime. Here, the light opening bid did not hamper North-South in getting to their best game, and did help declarer in the play.

The Italian West's opening lead of the queen of hearts marked almost every card with East for his light opening. Declarer won in hand with the ace, crossed to dummy by taking the marked heart finesse and led the jack of clubs. East covered with the queen and declarer won with the king, noting West's eight of clubs.

The king of hearts provided the entry to the table for declarer to lead the four of clubs. East followed smoothly with the three, but declarer had no problem in playing the deuce! When that held, declarer was still on the board to take yet another club finesse and had nine tricks.

At the other table, the same contract was reached and the opening lead was the same, but East-West were silent. Declarer won in hand and led a spade to the queen, losing to the king. Now declarer needed four club tricks to get home so, on regaining the lead, he cashed the ace and king of clubs, hoping to drop the queen — down two.

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