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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2011

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

South	West	North	East
1 Heart	Pass	1 NT	2 Spade
3 Diamond	Pass	5 Diamond	All Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♠

Listen to the bidding, analyze it, and you can often find the right defense. West was deaf to what was going on, and it proved costly.

With two good suits, South had just enough to rebid competitively at the three-level. North, with a five-card fit for South's second suit and a near-maximum no-trump response elected to jump to the minor-suit game rather than pussyfoot around with a raise to four diamonds.

West led the jack of spades. East covered with the queen and declarer won with the ace — the holdup was pointless and ran the risk of a second-round ruff had East overcalled with a six-card suit. To the second trick declarer led the four of diamonds, and the hand was over when West chose to follow with the ten. Dummy's jack won, two spades were discarded from the closed hand on the ace and king of clubs and, with the ace of hearts marked with East by the overcall and the fact that West held the ace of diamonds, the defenders' tricks were limited to the two red aces.

West maintained that rising with the ace of trumps at trick two ran the risk of dropping a singleton king in partner's hand, but that argument does not stand up to close scrutiny. With a diamond suit headed by no more than the queen, it is most unlikely that South would have introduced it at the three-level. Since the risk of finding East with a singleton king was negligible, it had to be right to rise with the ace to deny declarer an immediate access to the table's club winners, then lead another spade. That would inevitably have led to a two-trick set

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