

North

♠ K 8 7 6

♥ K 5 3

♦ K 4

♣ K 5 3 2

South

♠ A J 10 9 5 4 3

♥ 2

♦ A 2

♣ A 8 4

Lead: ♥Q

South reached six spades after a weak jump 3D overcall by West. North's four diamond bid promised spade support and game going values. It was not a random noise. When an opponent makes a simple overcall, it is useful to play that a cue-bid shows a balanced game forcing raise and a jump cue-bid shows a singleton with a game forcing raise. When an opponent makes a preemptive overcall, there is not as much room available so you must use the cue-bid to show a good hand with support with no hint that you do or do not have a singleton. On this hand, South knew only that North has a good hand with spade support. South bid Blackwood and found that North had a key card. Knowing that an ace or the king of spades was missing, South stopped in six. Perhaps South was being optimistic. In any event, the play is usually the best critique of your auction.

West leads the queen of hearts. Over to you.

If West had not led hearts, you might draw trump and lead hearts yourself. Six spades will make if West has the ace of hearts. Actually, on the bidding, you should suspect that East has the ace of hearts. The opening lead confirms that for you, absolutely. No sane defender in the West seat would lead the queen of hearts from a suit headed by the ace-queen. No. With this opening lead, you know for sure that East has the ace of hearts. Does this mean you are doomed?

In fact, you are not doomed. You actually have a very good chance to make six spades. You have to play carefully at trick one, though. No emotional play allowed.

The correct play is?

Dealer: S Vul: N-S	North ♠ K 8 7 6 ♥ K 5 3 ♦ K 4 ♣ K 5 3 2	
West ♠ Q ♥ Q J 10 ♦ J 9 8 7 6 5 4 ♣ J 7		East ♠ 8 ♥ A 9 8 7 6 4 ♦ Q 10 ♣ Q 10 9 6
	South ♠ A J 10 9 5 4 2 ♥ 2 ♦ A 2 ♣ A 8 4	
Lead: ♥Q		

The correct play is to play low from dummy. Do not make the instinctive play of covering. Here is what you are hoping for.

Let the queen of hearts hold. West will continue with another heart and you will again play low from dummy, ruffing in your hand. Now you play all of your trumps. Here are the final five cards after finishing your spades.

♠ --

♥ K

♦ K 4

♣ K 5

♠ --

♥ --

♦ A 2

♣ A 8 4

You know that East started with the ace of hearts. You hope he started with four or more clubs too. If that is true, you can play the ace and king of diamonds, squeezing East. He will have to hold on to the ace of hearts and he will also need to hang on to three clubs to protect that suit too. He can't do that. He is allowed to keep three cards, not four.

East has four clubs and the ace of hearts so the squeeze works. You are home with your slam.

Now comes the reason for playing correctly at trick one. If you had put up the king of hearts in a pique, East would win and now your squeeze won't work. West can keep his heart stopper and East can keep his club stopper. Six spades will go down