

<b>Dealer:</b> N Vul: E-W	<b>North</b> ♠ Q 7 6 5 3 ♥ 8 6 3 ♦ A Q 10 8 ♣ 2		
<b>West</b> ♠ A K 9 2 ♥ J 10 9 ♦ 7 6 3 ♣ A K 10			
Lead: ♥ J Bidding:			
<b>WEST</b>	<b>NORTH</b>	<b>EAST</b>	<b>SOUTH</b>
	Pass	Pass	1 ♥
Dbl	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

*By Mike Lawrence*

Sitting West, you offer up a takeout double but thereafter, can not contribute further.

With good clubs, it is clear that North might be ruffing them at some time so you start with a trump. Dummy makes your choice look good although the extra values in dummy suggest you are not going to beat two hearts.

South wins with the queen and leads a club, won by your ten. You lead another heart. South takes this with the king and then does a strange thing. He does not ruff a club in dummy. Unexpectedly, he draws another round of hearts, East following for the third time.

So South has opened a four card suit! Well, he WAS in third seat where almost anything can happen. On this vulnerability, he might have been a bit out of line.

South now leads the nine of diamonds, playing low from dummy, losing to East's king.

East switches to the jack of spades, which you win with the king.

Rightly or wrongly, you cash the two high clubs which mean that for four tricks in a row, a different suit was led.

On the king of clubs, East plays low, but on your ace, he plays the queen.

What do you make of that and what to you play now?

You have two choices. You can try to cash the ace of spades or you can lead a diamond.

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<b>West</b> ♠ A K 9 2 ♥ J 10 9 ♦ 7 6 3 ♣ A K 10		<b>East</b> ♠ J 10 4 ♥ 7 5 4 ♦ K 2 ♣ Q J 6 5 3
	<b>South</b> ♠ 8 ♥ A K Q 2 ♦ J 9 5 4 ♣ 9 8 7 4	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
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Dbf	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

If you returned a diamond, you set two hearts one trick. If you tried to cash the ace of spades, minus 110.

The winning play is a diamond but the reasoning is what counts here.

Count declarer's winners. He has four heart tricks. He has three diamond tricks.

Your partner's queen of clubs suggests he has the jack as well. If East started with three clubs to the queen, that would leave South with six of them, a most unlikely holding.

This means that if you return a diamond, South will have only seven tricks. After taking his diamonds and his heart, you will get the last trick with your ace of spades or your partner's jack of clubs.

This is a nasty hand because the illusion is that declarer has lots of winning tricks. Only if you count them will you see he is short one winner.

Just for the record, East was a wimp during the bidding. He had an easy two club bid. Not that this would have affected the bidding greatly, but East's pass is symptomatic of someone who is being too conservative.