

01/11/11 Sectional Tournament at Clubs

**Board 3**  
South Deals  
E-W Vul

♠ 8 4 2 ♥ Q 9 7 5 4 ♦ K J 8 ♣ A 9	♠ 9 7 ♥ A 10 ♦ A 10 9 3 2 ♣ K 5 4 3	♠ A Q J 10 3 ♥ J 3 2 ♦ 4 ♣ J 10 8 2	
<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 50px;"> <tr><td style="width: 50%; height: 50%;"></td></tr> </table>			
♠ K 6 5 ♥ K 8 6 ♦ Q 7 6 5 ♣ Q 7 6			

EW 2♥; NS 3♦; NS 1N; NS 2♣; EW 1♠

West	North	East	South
<i>Tony</i>	<i>Steve</i>	<i>Pete</i>	<i>Brad</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	Pass
All pass			1 NT

1 NT by South

The vulnerability kept East - West out of the auction.

West lead the ♥5 to the 10 and jack, ducked by South. Taking the heart suit in isolation, this makes sense. Looking at that vulnerable ♠K, not so much. I switched to the ♠Q, ducked, and ♠10 - the ♠K held.

South can come to seven tricks, if he can bring in four diamond tricks, with three tricks in the majors. (However, accurate defense will now set the contract, with four spades and a trick in each other suit - that duck at trick one was likely to prove fatal.) There are two basic lines that make sense, in the diamond suit:

1. Take two finesses through dummy, either (a) lead the queen, hoping to pin the jack in East, or (b) lead low, intending to insert the 10 and hoping for the king to pop up in front. These plays appear to have the same chance of success, about 75%. They win any time either honor is onside, including a 4-0 split. They lose when both are off, including ♦KJ doubleton.

2. Lead the A, and then low to the Q. "Suit Combinations" in *The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge, 5th Edition* says this line is best, at 78% - it improves to 83% if the ♦8 is held. This last number is what Brad remembered - he took this line and went down three.

The *Encyclopedia* notes that if East would play the king from ♦Kx, then the percentage play is to run the 10 off dummy - if this loses to the jack, run the queen next: 84% (94% holding the ♦8). I hope I would be up to smoothly ducking the king from ♦Kx, if Brad pulled the 10 off dummy - would you? I suspect that at our club, this line would have been excellent. Paul Wendt notes that once East, who did not overcall, displays a strong spade suit, line 1(a), leading the Q, becomes a strong favorite. It does not take much to change the odds. - Pete Matthews