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TEST YOUR DEFENCE-Jan 2014

By JULIAN POTTAGE - original - <http://www.mrbridge.co.uk/>Here

Dealer : Vul :	NORTH ♠ J52 ♥ AKQ ♦ J10963 ♣ AQ	
WEST ♠ 96 ♥ J974 ♦ Q54 ♣ 10653	Jan 2014 Deal 3	EAST ♠ AK874 ♥ 632 ♦ K7 ♣ J94
	SOUTH ♠ Q103 ♥ 1085 ♦ A82 ♣ K872	

South	West	North	East
--	--	1 Diamond	1 Spade
1 NT	Pass	4 NT	All Pass

Partner leads the ♠9 and dummy plays low. What do you do? Although the usual rule is to play high in third seat, this is not a command. You need to think about the play in the context of the hand as a whole.

South has shown a spade stopper and is going to make a spade trick at some point whatever you do.

Can you see the benefit in ducking the first round of spades?

If you duck the first spade, playing the eight to encourage, you will force out the stopper at once. Then, assuming partner has a second spade and an entry, you will get to run the spade suit later. Taking the first two spades and then giving up the third round will not work so well because partner will be unable to continue spades.

While your ♦K might be an entry if partner happens to hold the ♦A, you do not need to take that chance.

Dealer : Vul :	NORTH ♠ A1052 ♥ KQJ2 ♦ 643 ♣ 107	
WEST ♠ 9 ♥ 974 ♦ J1095 ♣ AJ986	Jan 2014 Deal 4	EAST ♠ J74 ♥ 108653 ♦ AK ♣ 542
	SOUTH ♠ KQ863 ♥ A ♦ Q872 ♣ KQ3	

South	West	North	East
1 Spade	Pass	3 Spade	Pass
4 Spade	All Pass		

Partner leads the ♦J. What is your plan?

There is a time when you should play the higher of touching honours. This is to alert your partner to the fact that you have a doubleton. By playing the ♦A and then cashing the ♦K, you are drawing Attention to your unusual holding

Then, when you play a club, your partner knows to switch back to diamonds to give you a ruff.

If you played the diamonds in the usual fashion, king before ace, your partner will probably play you for a club honour (whichever of the ♣K and ♣Q declarer does not play).

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