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TEST YOUR DEFENCE - JAN 2015 - original - [Here](#)

By JULIAN POTTAGE

Dealer :South Vul :	NORTH ♠ Q74 ♥ 8 ♦ KQ74 ♣AK832		
WEST ♠ 963 ♥ K94 ♦ J10963 ♣106	Deal 3	EAST ♠ 85 ♥ A1075 ♦ A8 ♣QJ754	
	SOUTH ♠ AKJ102 ♥ QJ632 ♦ 52 ♣9		

South	West	North	East
1 Spade	Pass	2 Club	Pass
2 Heart	Pass	3 Diamond	Pass
3 Heart	Pass	3 spade	Pass
4 Spade	All Pass		

Partner leads the ♦J and dummy covers. What is your plan?
The bidding has been revealing. You know that South has 5-5 in the majors. Surely, the opposing plan is to ruff hearts in dummy.

You should begin by capturing the ♦Q with the ♦A. You want the lead and do not want the ♦A to run away. You then switch to a trump; the eight seems best.

Your more important play is still to come. If declarer wins the trump in dummy and leads a heart (or wins in hand, crosses to a club and leads a heart), you may need to be ready. If you fly in with the ace to play a second trump, it is unlikely that your side will make two more heart tricks. Instead, you need to duck the first heart. Partner may have the king or declarer the king-jack and misguess.

Dealer : Vul :	NORTH ♠ QJ1042 ♥ KQJ7 ♦ AQ3 ♣K		
WEST ♠ A983 ♥ 6 ♦ 987 ♣109842	Deal 4	EAST ♠ K75 ♥ 54 ♦ K642 ♣Q653	
	SOUTH ♠ 6 ♥ A109842 ♦ J105 ♣AJ7		

South	West	North	East
--1 Heart	Pass-	2 NT*	Pass
3 Dpade**	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 Heart***	Pass	6 Heart	All Pass
* Strong with heart support ** Shortage *** Two Aces			

Partner leads the ♣10. Dummy wins and leads the ♠Q. What is your plan?

Although the usual rule is to refrain from covering a touching honour, here you should think rather than follow low sheepishly. You know that partner holds one ace. Given the bidding, this is most likely to be in spades. If so, you can protect your king from a ruffing finesse by playing it now. You can exit safely with a trump (or a spade). In due course, you make the setting trick with the ♦K. †