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TEST YOUR DEFENCE - July 2014 - original - [Here](#)

By JULIAN POTTAGE

Dealer :South Vul :	NORTH ♠ KQ102 ♥ KQ98 ♦ Q85 ♣ Q5	
WEST ♠ A754 ♥ 108 ♦ 106 ♣ J9732	Deal 3	EAST ♠ 86 ♥ 732 ♦ KJ743 ♣ A84
	SOUTH ♠ J93 ♥ AJ64 ♦ A92 ♣ K106	

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	2 Club	Pass
2 Heart	Pass	4 Heart	All Pass

Partner leads the ♣3; dummy plays low and you win with the ♣A. What do you return?

Once more, you face a matchpoint decision. This time, you can see a simple way of beating the contract. If partner holds ♦A-x, a switch to the suit will give your side the first four tricks. Do you risk this?

Unless you are desperate for a top, you should not return a diamond. Partner could hold any of the ♠A, ♥A and ♣K rather than the ♦A. Even if partner holds the ♦A, declarer may hold a doubleton. If you return a diamond and declarer has the ♦A, you have said goodbye to your ♦K. Just return the ♣8.

Dealer :North Vul :	NORTH ♠ AK93 ♥ AQJ102 ♦ 105 ♣ 92	
WEST ♠ 7 ♥ K84 ♦ J86 ♣ QJ10743	Deal 4	EAST ♠ 1084 ♥ 873 ♦ A973 ♣ A85
	SOUTH ♠ QJ10743 ♥ 95 ♦ KQ42 ♣ K6	

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

Partner leads the ♠Q. What is your plan?

For a start, you take the ♠A. The big heart suit in dummy means you need to take tricks quickly. On this deal, it is clear which suit to return: diamonds. For beating the contract, leading low is best. Declarer might hold the K-J and misguess, letting partner's queen score. There might also be a trump promotion if partner holds a doubleton diamond honour.

The big risk is that declarer has no guess or guesses correctly, in which case you may well lose your ♦A. At matchpoints, this risk is too great. Start diamonds with the ♦A.