

BRIDGE MAGAZINE

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

By JULIAN POTTAGE

Dealer :West Vul :	NORTH ♠ K976 ♥ 864 ♦ KJ2 ♣ J94	
WEST ♠ Q10832 ♥ J ♦ AQ107 ♣ K102	Deal 1	EAST ♠ AJ54 ♥ 97 ♦ 543 ♣ Q865
	SOUTH ♠ Void ♥ AKQ10532 ♦ 986 ♣ A73	

South	West	North	East
--	1 Spade	Pass	2 Spade
4 Heart	All Pass		

Partner leads the ♠3 and dummy plays low. What do you play?

If declarer has the ♠Q, presumably singleton, you want to put up the ♠A to avoid losing it. If not, you want to finesse the ♠J to avoid setting up the ♠K for a club discard. The rule of 11 and other clues tell you the same thing - West would not lead the three from 10-8-3-2 - a 1♠ opening with that holding would also be rather odd.

So play the ♠J.

Dealer :South Vul :	NORTH ♠ K973 ♥ K932 ♦ K74 ♣ A4	
WEST ♠ 108 ♥ 84 ♦ J10852 ♣ K982	Deal 2	EAST ♠ QJ54 ♥ 765 ♦ A93 ♣ QJ5
	SOUTH ♠ A82 ♥ AQJ10 ♦ Q8 ♣ 10763	

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

Partner leads the ♦J and dummy plays low. What do you do this time?

Partner's lead of the jack tells you that the queen is on your left. If you do not play your ace, you will lose the first trick. This time you know from the 1NT opening that declarer cannot have a singleton queen. Ducking must be better. Moreover, if you get in, say with a club, while dummy has ♦K-x left, you must refrain from cashing the ♦A. You must wait for someone else to lead the suit.

If you grab the ♦A mistakenly, declarer will later be able to discard a spade on the ♦K. By ruffing a couple of clubs in dummy before drawing trumps, it will then be possible to make an overtrick, giving you a poor score.