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TEST YOUR DEFENCE - September 2013 - original - [Here](#)

By JULIAN POTTAGE

Dealer : Vul :	NORTH ♠ AJ105 ♥ J874 ♦ 8753 ♣ 2	
WEST ♠ 83 ♥ AQ62 ♦ K ♣ 987654	Board 3	EAST ♠ 6 ♥ 1093 ♦ AQ10962 ♣ KJ3
	SOUTH ♠ KQ9742 ♥ K5 ♦ 74 ♣ AQ10	

South	West	North	East
--	--	--	1 Diamond
1 Spade	X *	3 Spade **	Pass
4 Spade	All Pass		

* = Take out ** = Pre emptive

Partner leads the ♦K. What is your plan?

Partner may have led top of a doubleton or the king could be singleton. You cannot tell which. While the doubleton is more likely, the chance of beating the contract if South has a singleton diamond seems slim. To cater for the possibility that the king is bare, you should overtake with the ace and return the queen. You do not want to find yourself unable to get in to cash the second diamond.

Which red suit you play after cashing the second round of diamonds does not matter as the cards lie. In practice, if West discards an encouraging ♥6 (you can see all the higher spot cards so you will know that the ♥6 is encouraging), you will switch to hearts rather than play a third round of diamonds. If you did not get a request to switch to hearts, you would continue diamonds in case partner holds the ♠K and only one heart trick.

Dealer : Vul :	NORTH ♠ Q109 ♥ AK74 ♦ KJ ♣ 10752	
WEST ♠ K85 ♥ 53 ♦ 9763 ♣ QJ98	Board 4	EAST ♠ 7643 ♥ QJ6 ♦ Q1082 ♣ K3
	SOUTH ♠ AJ2 ♥ 10982 ♦ A54 ♣ A64	

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

* = 12-14 ** - Stayman

Partner leads the ♣Q. What is your plan?

Once again, partner has led an honour and you must decide whether to try to unblock the suit. On this occasion, there are two reasons (given the presence of the ♠10 in dummy) to accept the blockage and duck.

First, unlike on the second problem, you are not going to play two more rounds of the suit quickly - declarer holds the ace. Secondly, even if you could get to ruff the ♠10, you would be ruffing with a natural trump trick. In time, the contract should go down. |