

Par for the Course

This deal was given to a star-studded field of players in 1957 as part of a par contest, where the deals are pre-constructed to present a problem. It was before transfer bids had become popular, so the auction went as shown.

Board 17
North Deals
None Vul

	♠ J 7 2		
	♥ Q 8 6 5		
	♦ A Q J		
	♣ K 5 2		
♠ 4	♠ N	♠ A 8 6	
♥ J 10 9 7 3 2	W	♥ A	
♦ 7 6	E	♦ 9 8 5 3 2	
♣ J 8 6 3	S	♣ A Q 7 4	
	♠ K Q 10 9 5 3		
	♥ K 4		
	♦ K 10 4		
	♣ 10 9		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	4 ♠
All pass			

The lead of a club would defeat the contract, giving East two club tricks to go with the major-suit aces. However, West made the normal lead of the heart jack at trick one. East won the first trick with the ace and had to decide what to lead at trick two to defeat the contract. The experts could not see all four hands, but even with all hands in view it isn't easy to see how to defeat four spades. Can you figure out what to lead at trick two?

East has three sure tricks but can't count on partner to hold much. The best chance is to hope partner holds the jack of clubs. *East must lead the club queen at trick two!* Declarer has to win this or East will have four tricks. Now when declarer leads a trump, East wins the spade ace and plays a low club to West's queen. West then leads another heart for East to ruff.

Six experts found this defense, including Italy's Massimo d'Alelio and Egypt's Leon Yallouze. Charles Goren and several other experts led back a low club ... which would have worked if West held the nine instead of the eight.