

An Essential Precaution

North-South zip into four hearts, and West sensibly leads the unbid suit. After the defense has cashed three diamonds, East exits a spade and now the contract depends on declarer picking up the trumps for no losers. Any thoughts?

Of course, declarer will finesse against East for the ♥K and the lazy way of doing that is to run the jack around, thereby keeping the lead in dummy for a repeat finesse, if necessary. But, alas for declarer, there is no repeat finesse! East's king covers the ♥J and, when East shows out on the second heart, declarer realizes that he has blundered! Now West's heart nine will eventually score a trick and declarer is down one.

Board 7

South Deals
Both Vul

♠ Q 9 3 2
♥ 9 7 6 3
♦ A 6
♣ 8 7 5

♠ K
♥ J 8 5 4
♦ J 7 5
♣ A K Q J 6



♠ 8 5 4
♥ K
♦ K Q 9 8 2
♣ 10 9 4 2

♠ A J 10 7 6
♥ A Q 10 2
♦ 10 4 3
♣ 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♠
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	All pass	
4 ♥ by South			
Lead: ♦ A			

It was necessary for declarer to lead a *low* heart from the board, an essential precaution against East having a singleton king. This is the kind of problem that nobody gets wrong when they see it in the newspaper. But in the heat of battle it is a different story, as evidenced at a recent club duplicate game where four (embarrassed) declarers managed to lose a trump trick and go down.