

Bridge Today Daily Column
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Preview

South dealer
All vul

North (dummy)
K J 6 4
J 10 8 6
Q J 6
Q 7

South (you)
10 7
A K Q 9 3
A 8 2
A 5 2

South	West	North	East
1H	pass	2H	pass
3H	pass	4H	(all pass)

Opening lead: D5

You play the queen from dummy and East follows with the 3. Plan the play.

Swedish Technique
(from "Tops & Bottoms" by the Granovetters)

During the mid-seventies a new international team emerged with modern systems, practiced partnerships, and a style of training akin to physical sports. The Stockholm team was young and enthusiastic, similar to the group of teenage tennis stars now following in the footsteps of the great Bjorn Borg. The three partnerships not only practiced for hours doing "bid-em-ups," but also did sit-ups and jogged, keeping themselves in strong physical condition (setting themselves apart from the rest of the bridge world's sagging waistlines). The leading partnership of the team was P. O. Sunderlin and Sven-Olov (Tjolpe) Flodqvist who [enjoyed great] success (including a victory in the London Times Pairs). During one of the Swedish trials to select the representatives for the European Championships, a hand came up that presented Tjolpe with a rare technical challenge. Here is the hand:

South dealer
All vul

North (dummy)
K J 6 4
J 10 8 6
Q J 6
Q 7

West	East
8 5 3	A Q 9 2
7 5	4 2
K 10 7 5	9 4 3
J 9 6 4	K 10 8 3

South (Tjolpe)
 10 7
 A K Q 9 3
 A 8 2
 A 5 2

South	West	North	East
1H	pass	2H	pass
3H	pass	4H	(all pass)

Opening lead: D5

The DQ was played from dummy, East following with the 3. Two rounds of trumps were played, each defender holding a doubleton. Tjolpe assumed that West held the DK, because if East held it he could have covered the queen at trick one and started to promote a diamond trick. Keeping this assumption in mind, Tjolpe found a way to guarantee his contract regardless of who held the queen or ace of spades. How?

The answer is he took an upside-down finesse! He won the second trump in dummy and called for a small spade. Then, so long as West held the diamond king, he claimed! There were only two possibilities:

- 1) If West won the spade ten with the queen, he could not lead another diamond. A club would be won by South's ace and a second spade would establish a discard for the losing diamond.
- 2) If East went up with the spade queen, he could lead a diamond; but declarer would go up with his ace and play the ten of spades -- establish TWO discards in dummy for two small clubs.

If Tjolpe had led the ten of spades from his hand it would have lost to East's queen. A diamond return would come through his ace. The best he could do would be to rise with the ace and play another spade, but since East has the ace over the K-J-6, only ONE discard would be established.

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