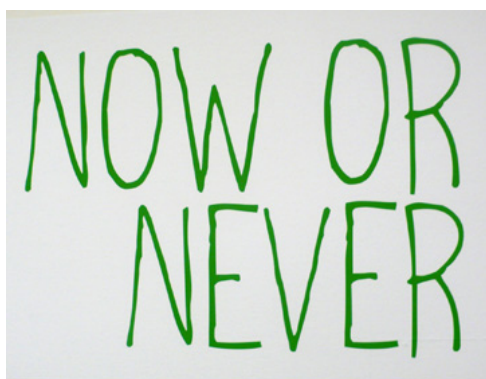


## ONE CHANCE



Leading partner's suit is not always a good idea as North was to find out on the first board of this evening at Akarana. There was to be no recovery when dummy proved to be rather unusual:

### Board 1

North Deals  
None Vul

♠ A 9 6  
♥ A K Q 10 9 2  
♦ 4  
♣ Q 7 4

♠ Q 10 5  
♥ J 8 7 6 3  
♦ K 8 6 3  
♣ 2



♠ K  
♥ 5  
♦ A Q J 10 5  
♣ J 10 9 8 6 3

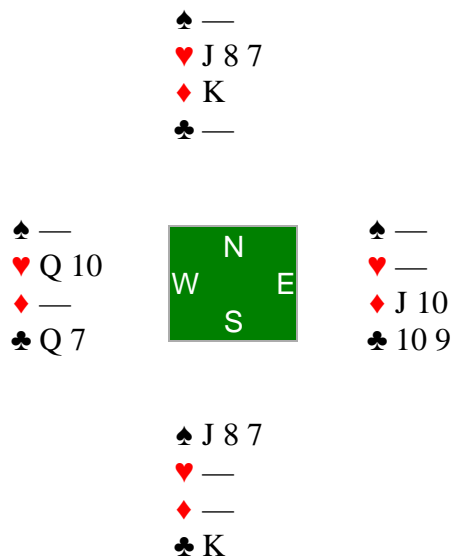
♠ J 8 7 4 3 2  
♥ 4  
♦ 9 7 2  
♣ A K 5

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	1 ♣	2 ♠
3 ♥	3 ♠	Pass	Pass
4 ♥	All pass		

The declarer, Jeff Thompson, received the ♠5 lead. Ten tricks looked likely to come for the loss of just one trump and two club tricks.

Thus, at trick 2, he played ♦A to be followed by ♦Q, ruffed when no king appeared. He ruffed his losing spade and returned to hand with a second diamond ruff.

Two high hearts brought some interesting news in the trump suit. Thus, he cashed his ♠A and exited a club to South. At that point, these cards remained:



It did not matter which black honour card South led as Jeff would not ruff even if he could.

North discarded the ♦K but was unable to avoid winning the lead on the next trick, being forced to lead into ♥QT to give Jeff 10 tricks the hard and beautiful way.

It would not have helped for North to have ruffed the first black honour as on the subsequent lead of the ♦K, Jeff would have thrown his other club, again leaving North on lead when he did not want to be. Nicely played by Jeff.

In theory, an initial club lead might work out better than leading partner's suit, saving the spade switch for later after North wins the lead with say ♥J in order to get a subsequent ruff. Here, though, the ruff would have come quicker than North would have expected.

There was no escape for the defence after trick one. Had North lead his singleton, the defence would have taken the first three tricks and would later have made a trump trick.

Only three pairs played in 4♥ (Only Jeff was successful) and only four played in one of the two making game contracts, 3NT which looks somewhat perilous on a spade lead (five hearts, two spades and a nervy diamond finesse) and 5♣ which requires the same diamond finesse should the defence start with three rounds of trumps. The rest overstretched themselves either in 5♥ or even higher.

*Richard Solomon*