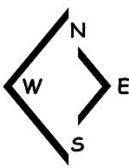


336. A Small Defensive Footprint

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♠ 5432		
♥ J542		
♦ 7		
♣ 10764		
♠ QJ1098		♠ 76
♥ K8		♥ 96
♦ AQ6		♦ J109843
♣ Q52		♣ AJ3
	♠ AK	
	♥ AQ1073	
	♦ K52	
	♣ K98	

E	S	W	N
P	1 ♥	1 ♠	P
P	1NT	P	3 ♥
P	4 ♥	All Pass	

--Both Vulnerable--

The bidding:

South, with 19 HCP's, opens One Heart, and West overcalls One Spade. North has nothing to say with his four points (including distribution). West, without three-card Spade support, cannot do anything either.

South rebids 1NT showing 18 to 19 HCP's. North can now come alive and invite partner to game. A bid of Two Hearts would just be a preference, but a bid of Three Hearts is highly invitational which South accepts. Three Hearts is often called the blame transfer with tongue in cheek. If partner accepts and the contract goes down, it is partner's fault. If partner passes and it makes game, it is also partner's fault.

Opening Lead: The Spade Queen is a natural lead from a touching honour sequence.

The Play:

Declarer wins the Spade Ace and exits a small Diamond. East wins and exits a Spade which declarer wins. He then ruffs a Diamond and takes the Heart finesse which loses. South has an easy exit of a Spade. Declarer draws trump with the Heart Jack and plays the Club Ten. East rises with the Ace and exits a Diamond.

So why does the defense exit Spades when the lead is won even though a Spade cannot lead to a defensive trick? The dummy has four small Spades so declarer has to ruff in the long-trump hand. This is not a problem for the declarer, but it is important that the defense does not open new suits for declarer or to save him transportation of which he may not always have plenty. This is called keeping a small defensive footprint.

The Result:

Declarer loses one Heart, one Diamond and two Clubs for -100. North's shortness was not of value because of South's wasted Diamond King.