

First Lead from Mansfield

Board 20
East Deals
Both Vul

♠ 10 8
♥ A Q 10 7
♦ 8 3 2
♣ J 7 6 4



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	Pass
Pass	1 ♦	Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 NT
All pass			

Matchpoint pairs.

Questions:

1. Who has the ♥J?
2. Who has the ♥K?
3. How many clubs and hearts does declarer have?
4. What is your opening lead?

Second Lead from Mansfield

Board 1
South Deals
None Vul

♠ J 7
♥ Q 5 2
♦ K Q 10 9 5
♣ A K 10



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 NT
All pass			

Matchpoint pairs.

What is your opening lead?

Board 20
East Deals
Both Vul

First Lead from Mansfield

	♠ A K J 7		
	♥ K 9 4		
	♦ A J 9 4		
	♣ Q 2		
♠ 10 8		♠ 9 5 3 2	
♥ A Q 10 7		♥ 8 5 2	
♦ 8 3 2		♦ K 5	
♣ J 7 6 4		♣ A 10 8 5	
	♠ Q 6 4		
	♥ J 6 3		
	♦ Q 10 7 6		
	♣ K 9 3		

Some cards in N/E/S have been moved to improve the example.

Answers:

1. Who has the ♥J?
Don't know.

2. Who has the ♥K?
Probably North. It's the only sure stopper out there.

3. How many clubs and hearts does declarer have?
Declarer should have no more than three hearts, but often will have four to six clubs.

4. What is your opening lead?
This deal calls for a heart lead. With the ♥K likely on dummy, the card to be worried about is the ♥J. The correct lead of the ♥Q is a *surrounding play*. In the layout above, when dummy wins the ♥K, you will have the ♥J surrounded. If you make the "normal" lead of a low heart, declarer will get two heart tricks. If it turns out that the ♥J is in dummy or partner's hand, it won't give declarer anything.

(When I actually led the ♥Q, dummy had only two hearts, and partner had ♥Jxxx. Since he had all the entries, it did not matter, *this time*, whether he played the ♥J or not. See the next deal.)

Board 1
South Deals
None Vul

Second Lead from Mansfield

	♠ 9 6 5		
	♥ A J 7 3		
	♦ 7 3		
	♣ J 5 3 2		
♠ J 7		♠ Q 10 4 2	
♥ Q 5 2		♥ 10 8 4	
♦ K Q 10 9 5		♦ J 8 6 4	
♣ A K 10		♣ 9 8	
	♠ A K 8 3		
	♥ K 9 6		
	♦ A 2		
	♣ Q 7 6 4		
West	North	East	South
			1 NT
All pass			

Answer:

Time for a special lead: the ♦Q. This lead demands that partner deposit the ♦J on this trick, if he has it. When partner obliges, the defense is straightforward.

In at trick two with the ♦A, declarer counts five top tricks. Declarer is reduced to two mediocre options:

1. Play for ♥Qxx onside.
2. Play for ♣AK in the same hand. Due to the dearth of entries to dummy, that would have to be West.

Rats! They both work. But holding declarer to exactly 1NT should be above average. Some Easts won't play the ♦J, giving West quite a problem. Assuming South has the ♦AJx, West may decide to shift. Declarer may eventually run both clubs and hearts, to make nine tricks.

Note: Declarer's duck of a king or queen lead when holding AJx is called a *Bath Coup*. It will cost a trick for leader to continue the suit.