

Risk Leader

♠	KT
♥	T9762
♦	832
♣	985

Sitting South and second to speak you pick up this old load of cobbles and the bidding proceeds:

East	South	West	North
1H	Pass	1S	Pass
2D	Pass	Pass	Pass

What do you lead?

Thoughts:

There is something odd going on here. You have only 3 points, your partner has passed twice and yet the bidding has been dropped on 2D.

Conclusions that might be drawn are that West has a minimum hand for her response and holds 3 to 4 diamonds and most likely only 1 x heart because of her pass. (the latter is somewhat borne out by your 5 x hearts). Furthermore, your partner has good values since you have very little but she didn't bid. Maybe she has good spades?

Sometimes, you will consider leading the A from A doubleton in the hope of getting a ruff. This is especially the case when partner has likely quick entries. Seldom, as a defender on lead, does one lead the K from K doubleton even less recommended when that suit has been bid by the opponents. It is definitely a risk but, with a 3 point only holding and declarer holding at least 9 cards in the red suits, a doubleton spade lead (even Kx) through the dummy followed by a ruff might be in the offing.

The full hand is shown below played on Tuesday June 7.

BOARD 22					
BD: 22	♠ A8754			Dir: E	
	♥ A5			Vul: EW	
	♦ J6				
	♣ AQT7				
♠ Q963				♠ J2	
♥ 3				♥ KQJ84	
♦ KT7				♦ AQ954	
♣ J6432				♣ K	
	♠ KT				
	♥ T9762				
	♦ 832				
	♣ 985				
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	2			2	1
S	2			2	1
E		3	1		
W		3	1		
					15
				6	16
					3

Even with best defence following the lead of KS, which is 10S to North's AS, AC and another spade, declarer can spoil the party by ruffing with the 9D and make 8 tricks. (losing 2 x hearts unlike the omniscient computer) but the lead does actually give the best chance of a good result on this Board despite its risk. It also gives the chance of a poor result so reason very carefully before undertaking this type of gambit.