

Dealer: W  
Vul: EW

♠ A987  
♥ QJ94  
♦ Q973  
♣ 6

W	N	E	S
1C	P	1H	P
1S	P	2D (1)	P
2NT	P	3H (2)	P
4H	P	P	P

(1) Fourth suit forcing to game.

(2) Now shows 6+ hearts as West would show 3 hearts after the fourth suit forcing bid.

What should South lead?

## DEFENCE 9 – Leading a singleton

Dealer: W

Vul: EW

<p>♠ Q654 ♥ 85 ♦ AK ♣ A10842</p>	<p>♠ KJ103 ♥ 2 ♦ J10865 ♣ Q75</p>	<p>♠ 2 ♥ AK10763 ♦ 42 ♣ KJ93</p>
	<p>♠ A987 ♥ QJ94 ♦ Q973 ♣ 6</p>	

W	N	E	S
1C	P	1H	P
1S	P	2D (1)	P
2NT	P	3H (2)	P
4H	P	P	P

(3) Fourth suit forcing to game.

(4) Now shows 6+ hearts as West would show 3 hearts after the fourth suit forcing bid.

What should South lead?

In general terms, the lead of a singleton is often a good idea in suit contracts. However, sometimes it can be counterproductive. It can give declarer a helpful tempo to set up the suit you've led, or it might finesse out a holding partner has in the suit. You should also be aware of situations where you don't really want a ruff because your trump holding is getting the same number of tricks whether you get a ruff or not.

This hand was the latter situation. If the HAK are banged down, you get 2 trump tricks in the HQJ. If you had somehow got a ruff, then you get the ruff plus one trump trick for the same number of tricks.

On this hand, the club lead was disastrous. It finessed out partner's CQ and declarer only lost HQJ and SA and made 4H. If the lead hadn't occurred, the percentage play for declarer with 9 cards in a suit missing the Q is to play AK and hope it drops. This play is slightly more likely than finessing for the Q. It would fail on this hand and declarer would go one down.

Another consideration when you have trump length against an opponent is whether you can force them to ruff and reduce their trumps such that they lose control of the hand. Leading your long suit can often work.

On this hand, given the trump stack and that I don't really want a ruff, I would lead a 4<sup>th</sup> highest diamond, hoping to cause declarer some control problems if they have to ruff.