

## BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

### FISHING FOR CLUES

By: Brian Gunnell

As the play-of-the-hand develops Declarer is constantly on the look-out for the clues which will point to the right line of play. But these clues don't always come gift-wrapped, sometimes Declarer must go fishing.

	♠ 5 ♥ QJ63 ♦ AJ7432 ♣ A8	
♠ A98432 ♥ 84 ♦ ♣ T9754	North West      East Declarer	♠ 76 ♥ 92 ♦ Q85 ♣ KQJ632
	♠ KQJT ♥ AKT75 ♦ KT96 ♣	

### E-W Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
6♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Against 6♥, West tries a Heart lead and Declarer draws trumps in two rounds. It's a fine slam but not quite iron-clad. There's a Spade to be lost, and the key to success is not to lose a Diamond. How would *you* play the hand, looking only at the N-S cards?

If Diamonds are 2-1 then Declarer is home free, but suppose that the suit is 3-0. Now, Declarer has a guess. If he thinks that *West* is more likely to hold three Diamonds then he'll play his ♦K on the first round, later finessing against West's Queen if East does indeed show out. Conversely, he'll play Dummy's ♦A first if he suspects that *East* might have the three Diamonds. Which do you choose?

At this point it's a complete guess, so, before playing on Diamonds, Declarer goes fishing. He concedes a trick to the Spade Ace, and let's say that West returns a Club. Declarer ruffs that, then cashes Spades, and reels in a whopper of a clue when East shows out on the third round! Ha! Now Declarer knows that East started with four cards in the majors, and West with eight. The odds have changed dramatically! If one of the defenders has three Diamonds it's surely East. So Declarer plays Dummy's ♦A on the first round, and says a silent "Yippee!" when West shows out. 12 tricks if Declarer delays the Diamond play and first looks for clues in the other suits.

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