

BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

A SITTING DUCK

By: Brian Gunnell

N-S Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
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1♠	Pass	2♦	2♥
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2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass
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	♠ K3 ♥ 6 ♦ AQ853 ♣ QJT98	
♠ QJ9852 ♥ 82 ♦ 972 ♣ 76	North West East Declarer	♠ ♥ KQJ754 ♦ KJ4 ♣ A542
	♠ AT764 ♥ AT93 ♦ T6 ♣ K3	

N-S are a little shy of the 25 or so HCP generally required to make 3NT. On the other hand, they do have a source of tricks in Clubs which gets Declarer up to eight winners. And where there are eight there's often a 9th, as East is about to find out to his detriment.

West dutifully leads his partner's Heart suit and the Jack is taken by Declarer's Ace (holding up won't achieve anything). The ♣K comes next and East wins his Ace. At this point East can count (at least) eight tricks for Declarer, namely two Spades (because surely Declarer has the Ace), one Heart, one Diamond and four Clubs. East can also deduce that Declarer started with ♥AT9x, because West's opening lead from ♥Tx would be the Ten and from ♥Txx would be a low one. That being the case, it's clear that persisting with Hearts will merely serve to set up Declarer's game-going trick. A Diamond is no better, of course, so East does the best he can by exiting safely with a Club. A nice try, but it just delays the inevitable.

On the run of the Clubs Declarer pitches two Spades and a Diamond, and then cashes the ♠K followed by the ♠A. With East known to have the missing Heart honors and nothing left but red cards, he is a sitting duck for an end-play. Declarer simply exits with the ♥T and sits back smugly while East chooses whether to surrender the 9th trick in Hearts or in Diamonds.

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