

BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

DON'T BE FOOLED!

By: Brian Gunnell

	♠ Q973 ♥ QJ98 ♦ J943 ♣ A	
♠ JT86 ♥ K4 ♦ AQ5 ♣ QT32	North West East Declarer	♠ K542 ♥ 32 ♦ T82 ♣ 9864
	♠ A ♥ AT765 ♦ K76 ♣ KJ75	

E-W Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

In a problem-solving mood? Then cover up S-E and look only at the N-W hands. As West, you lead the ♠J and the defense must somehow conjure up four tricks. But be warned! Declarer is a tricky fellow, and some flim-flam is not entirely out of the question.

The ♠J opening lead is covered by the Queen, King, Ace. Declarer leads a Club to Dummy's ♣A, and then takes the losing Heart finesse. After winning the ♥K it is time for West to ponder a while. Where will the defense find three more tricks?

Can the defense cash three Diamonds? Probably not, Declarer is favorite to hold the ♦K and, anyway, there's no rush, those Diamonds aren't going anywhere. It looks like there is a Spade to cash (based on the play of the ♠Q at Trick 1), but that also can wait. So you exit safely with a Heart and await developments. Declarer wins that in Dummy and leads a Diamond to his King and your Ace. Now what?

At this point it might seem obvious for West to cash the ♠T and the ♦Q for down one. But by now you should be getting suspicious. Why hasn't Declarer led a Spade to the board, setting up Dummy's Nine for a Diamond pitch? The reason is that Declarer doesn't have a second Spade! That squandering of the Queen at Trick 1 was a clever ruse, designed to fool you. The only way to beat the contract now is to lead a casual *low* Diamond, hoping that Declarer will misguess and finesse the Diamond Nine. He probably will, and that will be down one! A fiendishly deceptive play is foiled by sound logic.

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