

BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

SENDING A MESSAGE

By: Brian Gunnell

	♠ A ♥ T94 ♦ QJT63 ♣ KJT4	
♠ 9872 ♥ J62 ♦ A ♣ Q9865	North West East Declarer	♠ 53 ♥ KQ875 ♦ 754 ♣ A32
	♠ KQJT64 ♥ A3 ♦ K982 ♣ 7	

Both Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
		1♦	1♥
1♠	2♥	Pass	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Sometimes the winning defense is obvious to one defender but not to the other, and in such cases it behooves the defender who is in the know to help out Partner as much as possible. Today's West missed such an opportunity.

Against 4♠, West led the ♦A. He shifted to the Heart Two and East's Queen was taken by Declarer's Ace. At this point Declarer was home free if only she could draw trumps, but there were transportation problems. After playing a Spade to Dummy's Ace, she had no fast way back to hand to draw the remaining trumps, so she exited with a Heart, won by East's King.

To West it was obvious that East should give him a Diamond ruff. But it wasn't obvious to East. No doubt he should have figured it out, but he had this fixed idea in his head that West had led a Diamond from AKx or AKxx. So, seeing no rush for the defense to cash its winners, East exited with a Heart. Declarer gratefully ruffed that, drew trumps, pitched the Club loser on the Diamonds, and claimed 11 tricks.

That was not an impressive performance by East but West could have made things crystal clear. That's right, when the second round of Hearts was played, West should have dumped his Heart Jack under East's King! This clever play means that Dummy's Heart Ten is now good, and therefore a Heart return is most definitely not required. The fog lifts, East now knows what to do and the defense continues: Diamond ruff, Club to the Ace, Diamond ruff. Down two!

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