

BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

VARIATION ON A THEME

By: Brian Gunnell

	♠ 54 ♥ 5 ♦ 763 ♣ AJT8765	
♠ JT9 ♥ T876432 ♦ Q4 ♣ 4	<i>North</i> <i>West</i> <i>East</i> <i>Declarer</i>	♠ Q87632 ♥ 9 ♦ K52 ♣ Q32
	♠ AK ♥ AKQJ ♦ AJT98 ♣ K9	

North opened 3♣, after which every South player in the room charged into slam. Some got to 6♣ or 7♣, but could manage only 11 tricks after East's opening Diamond lead.

Other South players tried 6NT on the grounds that, if both slams made, 6NT was the better-scoring contract. If you read last week's Bite, "East to the Rescue", then the Club suit may look eerily familiar, and our question to you is "How do you play 6NT?"

An opening Diamond lead holds no terrors for 6NT, that merely hands Declarer 12 tricks without needing the long Clubs. Instead, West led the less helpful ♠J, won by Declarer. At this point most Declarers took the simple approach, laying down the ♣K, then leading another Club. When West showed out, and when there was no good fortune in the Diamonds (such as doubleton or singleton honor with East), Declarer was down.

Declarer has a better line of play. At Trick 2, he leads the Club Nine and overtakes with Dummy's Jack. East, perhaps a regular reader of Bridge Bites, knows that it would be fatal to take her ♣Q, that would give Declarer access to all those Club winners in Dummy. So she cleverly plays low on this trick. The good news for East is that she has deprived Declarer of a bunch of Club winners, the bad news is that now Declarer has *two* entries to Dummy. Those entries will be used to finesse twice in Diamonds, allowing Declarer to bring home 12 tricks in a different way (two Spades, four Hearts, four Diamonds and just two Clubs).

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