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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2010 Both vulnerable. North deals.

	<b>NORTH</b> ♠K 9 ♥A 9 7 2 ♦Q J 10 9 4 ♣K 8	
<b>WEST</b> ♠4 3 ♥10 8 5 ♦K 6 3 2 ♣Q 10 6 5		<b>EAST</b> ♠10 7 6 2 ♥K Q 6 4 ♦8 7 5 ♣9 2
	<b>SOUTH</b> ♠A Q J 8 5 ♥J 3 ♦A ♣A J 7 4 3	

North	East	South	West
1 Diamond	Pass	1 Spade	Pass
1 NT	Pass	3 Club	Pass
3 Spade	Pass	6 Club	Pass
4 Heart	X	4 NT	Pass
5 Heart	Pass	6 Spade	All Pass

Opening lead: Five of ♥

We cannot state too often that defense is by far the most difficult facet of bridge to master. On this deal from a national championship event, Peter Weichsel, West, found a defense that would elude many even with all four hands exposed.

Note North's preference to three spades with a doubleton king rather than the stultifying three no trump. North's cue-bid of four hearts allowed East to make a lead-directing double. Four no trump was Roman Key-Card Blackwood, where the king of trumps counts as a fifth ace, and North-South ended in six spades.

Weichsel, West, dutifully led a heart. "Declarer rose with dummy's ace, led a diamond to the ace, then crossed to dummy with the king of spades to lead the queen of diamonds, discarding a heart from hand when East did not cover." Weichsel ducked smoothly! When declarer repeated the ruffing finesse, pitching a club from hand, Weichsel won with the king and returned a diamond, ruffed by East and overruffed by declarer. but now one of declarer's winners had disappeared.

Declarer tried to recover by drawing trumps, discarding another club on the long diamond and then finessing the jack of clubs, but West's queen was the setting trick. Beautiful!

Note that if West wins the king of diamond at the first opportunity, declarer gets home. Suppose West reverts to hearts. Declarer ruffs, draws all the trumps and crosses to dummy with the king of clubs to discard three club losers on the good diamonds.

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