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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

9th November 2010 North-South vulnerable. North deals.

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

North	East	South	West
Pass	2 Heart	3 Diamond	All Pass

Opening lead: Two of ♥

We are accustomed to spectacular plays on big hands. One of the best coups seen recently occurred on this deal from the quarterfinals of the Spingold Team Championship at the recent Summer North American Championships held in New Orleans. Sitting South for the eventual winners of the event was Fred Gitelman of Las Vegas, developer of the Bridge Base program for displaying bridge tournaments on TV.

At the other table, the contract was two diamonds, down one. Against three diamonds West led the two of hearts, which declarer could read for a singleton. He played low from dummy, East inserted the eight, and Gitelman won with ace!

He crossed to dummy with the queen of trumps and led a club, won by East's king. Convinced by the play to the first trick that his partner held the queen, East exited with low heart, expecting his partner to win. That happened, but with a trump!

A spade shift would have allowed East to take his ace and give partner another heart ruff, but that was rather risky, so West made the safe play of the ace of clubs. East tried to promote a trump trick for his partner by ruffing with the ten, but declarer overruffed, drew the outstanding trumps. He lost two spade tricks and a heart with the help of an endplay — down one. That tied the board and saved a loss of 3 IMPs had he gone down two.

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