

ACBL – BRIDGE HAND OF THE WEEK

Recovery - May 30 2011

George Mittelman, recently elected to the Canadian Bridge Federation Hall of Fame, showed on this deal from a Toronto tournament why the CBF created a spot for him. See if you could do as well as Mittelman did.

Dealer North Vul :Both	NORTH ♠— ♥K J 10 9 8 6 2 ♦Q 2 ♣A Q J 5	
WEST		EAST
	SOUTH ♠K Q J 10 9 5 2 ♥— ♦A 8 7 3 ♣ K 3	

West	North	East	South
--	1 Heart	Pass	2 Spade
Pass	3 Heart	Pass	3 Spade
Pass	3 NT	Pass	4 Spade
All Pass			

West led the ♣10, and Mittelman won the king to start trumps. When West won the first trump and continued clubs, the dummy was on life support. Without much hope, Mittelman tried a third round of clubs, discarding a diamond, but West ruffed and tried the ♥A. If you were in Mittelman's shoes, what would you do next?

Solution

Had Mittelman followed to the heart lead, West planned to exit with his last trump, stranding declarer in his hand to play diamonds without help from the defense.

When Mittelman ruffed the ♥A and cashed the ♠J, both opponents following, he had to decide who had the ♦K. If it was West, Mittelman could draw the last trump and lead a diamond toward the queen. If it was East, there was an alternative plan.

As East had to hold at least four diamonds to West's maximum of three, the odds favored East's holding that card. Mittelman found an elegant solution to that possibility: he exited with the ♠2 to East's 8!

Had West held a fourth trump, declarer would have been forced to play him for the ♦K when he led the suit.

With only diamonds and clubs left, East was forced to resurrect the dummy. The full deal:

	♠—	
	♥K J 10 9 8 6 2	
	♦Q 2	
	♣A Q J 5	
♠ A 4 3		♠ 8 7 6
♥ A 7 5 4 3		♥ Q
♦ J 6 4		♦ K 10 9 5
♣ 10 9		♣ 8 7 6 4 2
	♠ K Q J 10 9 5 2	
	♥—	
	♦ A 8 7 3	
	♣ K 3	