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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

26th August 2011

Dealer : South Vul : None	NORTH ♠ K 6 4 ♥ 8 5 ♦ A 6 3 2 ♣ A K 8 5	
WEST ♠ J 8 3 ♥ J 10 7 ♦ K J 10 ♣ J 7 6 3		EAST ♠ A 7 2 ♥ A 9 6 3 2 ♦ 8 4 ♣ 10 4 2
	SOUTH ♠ Q 10 9 5 ♥ K Q 4 ♦ Q 9 7 5 ♣ Q 9	

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	1 Diamond	Pass
1 Spade	Pass	2 Spade	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	All Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♥

They say the cards never forgive. That is because we tend to remember those occasions where a mistake proved costly, rather than when it eventually made no difference. Here is an example from a European pair championship where a defender found a way to atone for his misplay.

Note North's raise to two spades with only three-card support –with a weak doubleton in hearts any other rebid would distort the holding. That did not prevent North-South from reaching their best game.

West led the jack of hearts. Since that could have been from a holding headed by K J 10 East, Steve Weinstein of Upper Montclair, N.J., rose with the ace and returned a low heart, declarer winning. Now declarer went after spades by leading low to the king.

East realized that, if he won with the ace, the rest of the hearts were doomed to wither on the vine. To keep alive an entry to his hand, he ducked smoothly.

Not surprisingly, declarer continued with a spade from dummy and finessed the nine, and the defenders were back in charge. West won with the jack and reverted to hearts, forcing out declarer's remaining stopper in the suit.

There was no way for declarer to come to nine tricks before East regained the lead with the ace of spades to cash his long hearts and ensure the contract's defeat

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