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Bridge column by Frank Stewart

12th April 2011

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

North	East	South	West
1 Spade	Pass	2 Diamond	Pass
2 Spade	Pass	3 Club	Pass
4 Club	Pass	4 Heart	Pass
4 Spade	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 Spade	Pass	6 Club	All Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♥

There is often more than one way for a defender to conceal his distribution from declarer. This deal from a team match is a case in point.

Both teams reached the club slam on similar auctions. Four no trump was key-card Blackwood, in which the king of trumps counts as a fifth ace. North's response showed two key cards and the queen of trumps.

Both Wests led the jack of hearts, taken with the king. Obviously, the trump suit presented the only problem. Before tackling clubs, however, both declarers cashed the ace of hearts and ruffed a heart with the nine of clubs.

At one table East discarded a diamond instead of overruffing! Convinced that West held the K J of clubs, declarer cashed the ace of clubs and East had to come to two trump tricks to defeat the slam. Note that, had East overruffed with the jack, declarer would eventually have taken a finesse for the king of clubs to land the slam.

At the other table East overruffed, but did so with the king of trumps! Sure that West held the jack, declarer won the diamond return in dummy, came to hand with the ace of clubs and took the 'marked' finesse of the ten of clubs. No swing.

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