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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

18th May 2011

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

East	South	West	North
3 Spade	Pass	Pass	X
Pass	4 Heart	All Pass	

Opening lead: Ace of ♠

Double dummy problems have a large and devoted following. Here is a classic, the solution of which might even be found at the table.

North-South arrived at four hearts despite East's three spade pre-empt. West leads the ace of spades and then shifts to a diamond. Can you make ten tricks with hearts as trumps?

The winning line is based on two logical assumptions. West's ace of spades is singleton, otherwise there is no reason to shift at trick two, and West must have the ace of clubs, for East would not pre-empt with eight good spades and an outside ace.

Win the diamond in dummy and cash the ace of hearts, following with a middling heart from hand (or lead a middling heart to the king). Now play off the remaining diamond honor and exit with the three of hearts, following with the deuce from hand!

West wins with the five, but is endplayed. If West returns a diamond (best), ruff in dummy and discard a club from hand. Now lead a club to the queen and ace, win the club return with the king and ruff a club to set up a long club on the table. A trump provides the dummy entry to take the long club and discard your losing spade from hand.

If, instead, West returns a club, run it to the queen. Return a club up to the king and West can only win one club trick, and dummy's long club takes care of your remaining spade.

If there is another way to come to 10 tricks, we have yet to find it. But don't try too hard – we think this line is most elegant!

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