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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

23rd September 2011

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

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

Opening lead: Queen of ♣

South made a brilliant decision in the auction. However, it required skilled play to reap the reward.

With a known nine-card fit, it might seem that spades was the logical strain in which to play the slam.

However, South reasoned that the only losers in the hand were likely to be in spades. If that were the trump suit, those tricks would have to be lost. If the hand was played in diamonds, however, any spade losers might be discarded on dummy's secondary heart suit — an entirely accurate assessment as a glance at the diagram shows.

West led the queen of clubs, won in the closed hand performe.

Declarer immediately centered his attention in trying to set up the hearts before playing on spades, but three entries would be needed for that. The aces provided two entries. Where was the third?

The ace of hearts was cleared and dummy was entered with ace of trumps, Declarer ruffed a heart in hand, then ruffed the ace of clubs with dummy's remaining trump as the entry for another heart ruff and, when both defenders followed, the fifth heart was set up for the fulfilling trick.

Declarer drew trumps, crossed to the ace of spades and discarded two spades from hand on the king and the long heart.

One spade was the only loser. At six spades, however, there were two inevitable losers as the cards lie

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