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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

25<sup>th</sup> June 2011

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

South	West	North	East
--	--	--	1 Club
2 Diamond	3 Club	5 NT	Pass
7 Diamond	Pass	Pass	X
All Pass			

Opening lead: King of ♣

The textbooks will tell you that a combined count of 37 points in your hand and dummy is needed to make a grand slam. That is true when the hands are more or less balanced. Freak distributions, however, make a mockery of the point count, as this deal illustrates.

By agreement, South's jump overcall was weak. North's five no trump was the Grand Slam Force, asking partner to bid seven diamonds if the hand contained two of the three top honors. South was somewhat taken aback, but duly obliged. East's double was more from a feeling of firm disbelief that the grand slam was makeable. Declarer quickly demonstrated that all it accomplished was to add insult to injury.

The opening lead of a club was trumped in dummy and a spade was ruffed high in the closed hand. A low diamond to the nine provided the entry for a second spade ruff and a trump to the ten allowed declarer to ruff a third spade with the king. It was then a simple matter to draw the last trump, cash the ace of spades and dummy was high.

So a combined 22 high-card points proved to be enough, while the opponents 18 could not collect more than seven at a heart contract. The shoals of distribution are a hazard that even the Titanic could not overcome!

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