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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

26th Jan 2012

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

South	West	North	East
--	--	1 Diamond	2 Club
2 Heart	Pass	3 Heart	Pass
4 Heart	All Pass		

Opening lead: Five of ♣

Getting an exact count of the distribution can be as elusive as finding Waldo. It is easy to get careless on this deal.

Three no trump is obviously a better contract than four hearts as the cards lie. However, it is not easy to reach that spot with only a positional stopper in the enemy suit and no guarantee of running nine tricks.

West led the five of clubs. East won with the king, cashed the ace and gave partner a club ruff. West switched to a spade, won in the closed hand and declarer's problem was obvious — which defender held the queen of diamonds?

Declarer drew trumps in four rounds, discarding a spade from dummy and then cashed the king of spades. At this point declarer knew that East had started with five clubs, four hearts and at least two spades. It was impossible to tell whether spades and diamonds were split 2-2 or 3-1 in the East hand.

After much thought declarer elected to place East with the queen of diamonds for his two-level overcall, so the ace and king of the suit were cashed. Down one. Could you have done better?

Much better! Instead of discarding a spade from dummy on the fourth heart, declarer should have parted with a diamond! Then, after cashing the king of spades, declarer can ruff a spade, discovering that East had at least three spades and, hence, no more than one diamond. Cashing the king of diamonds and then taking the finesse is a proven line!

Read more: http://www.stltoday.com/entertainment/bridge-column-for-jan/article_0fa2747b-7dde-5fa2-a24a-21d3c4ecff8b.html#ixzz1kXndpqde

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