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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

27<sup>th</sup> August 2011

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

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	3 Diamond	Pass
3 NT	All Pass		

Opening lead: Six of ♣

In a pairs contest, superb defense by East-West defeated three no trump. Was declarer at fault? Should the result be the same at rubber bridge?

By agreement, North's jump to three diamonds was natural and game forcing, and hinted at slam. For obvious reasons, South was not interested and signed off in the most likely makeable game contract.

West's natural lead of a club hit his partner's singleton. Declarer won with the ten, cashed the ace of diamonds and continued with the eight. When West discarded a middling club on this, declarer immediately conceded a trick that had to be lost by playing low from the table.

In with the jack of diamonds, East had to shift to a major suit and concluded that partner would have to hold more in hearts than could reasonably be expected for a switch in that suit to be profitable. The spade suit was more promising, so East went for all the marbles by shifting to the jack of spades! Declarer covered with the queen, West won with the king and returned the six to partner's ace. The deuce of spades through declarer's nine enabled the defenders to score four tricks in the suit for a one-trick set.

At matchpoints, declarer did nothing wrong. There were 11 tricks if diamonds were 3-2 and giving up such good odds for overtricks is a losing formula at duplicate.

Rubber bridge is a game of another color. Correct is to win the first trick in dummy and lead a low diamond to the eight if East follows low. West can win with the ten, but there is no way for the defenders to collect four spade tricks with West on lead.

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