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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

27th October 2011

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

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	4 Diamond	Pass
4 Heart	All Pass		

Opening lead: King of ♣

This deal is from the semifinal of the Grand National Teams event at the recent Summer National Team Championships, held in Toronto. Sitting South for the two teams were U.S. Internationalist Dave Berkowitz and Gary Cohler.

The play at the two tables was identical. The king of clubs held the first trick, and was followed by a switch to a low spade, won by East's king when declarer ducked in dummy. Back came a diamond, won by the ace. Suspecting from the play that the queen of diamonds was with West, both declarers found the winning line. They continued with a trump to the king, followed by two rounds of spades, ending in dummy.

When both defenders followed, the declarers completed the defenders' misery by running the jack of trumps! If it lost, West would be endplayed. A spade return would present declarer with a ruff-sluff for a diamond pitch and a diamond return would be into declarer's major tenace. A club back would set up declarer's queen for a diamond discard from the table.

What if a defender were to ruff the third spade? If West ruffs, he is endplayed. If East ruffs, declarer will have to fall back on the diamond finesse.

Winning a board in a major event is a tough proposition these days!

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