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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

28th Jan 2012

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

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	6 NT	All Pass

Opening lead: Nine of ♥

We would wager that most players would not be sure how to play the last few tricks on this deal.

North was rather surprised to hear partner open the bidding with one no trump. The point count suggested that a small slam was the maximum that could be bid with confidence, and North got there in one fell swoop.

Since the king of clubs lead was more likely to cost than gain, West selected the safe heart lead. Declarer could count eight fast winners outside spades, so that suit had to produce four tricks for the slam to come home.

Declarer started by cashing seven tricks in the red suits. East followed to six of these and discarded a diamond on the last heart. West discarded a club on the third diamond. At this point declarer had no clue as to how the spades were divided. Both defenders followed to the ace of clubs and ace-queen of spades, and declarer learned nothing new. South played dummy's remaining spade and, after some thought, elected to rise with the king. Down one.

There was no need to guess the situation. With a little foresight, South could have obtained a complete count of the hand. All that was needed was to lead a club from dummy at trick two and insert the jack! Now when declarer cashes his winners outside spades, East will become marked with three hearts, five diamonds and just one club, so therefore the defender must have four spades. So, after cashing the ace and queen of spades and the jack does not appear, declarer has a marked finesse for the jack at trick 12. Easy, if you think of it!

Read more: http://www.stltoday.com/entertainment/bridge-column-for-jan/article_929e9cd1-b76a-5e8e-ace9-326986158f1a.html#ixzz1kjm9x8oB

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