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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

28th September 2011

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

| South | West | North | East |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 NT | Pass | 4 Club | Pass |
| 4 Heart | Pass | 5 Club | Pass |
| 5 NT | Pass | 7NT | All Pass |

Opening lead: Jack of ♠

The number 13 is anathema in our society. However at bridge that is the number that is critical on many bridge hands.

Both of North's club bids were Gerber, asking for aces and kings. When all were located, North decided that his 19 points and good five-card suit merited venturing a grand slam.

West led the jack of spades and declarer could count 12 fast tricks – 14 if clubs were no worse than 3-2. Even if clubs did not break 3-2, the jack could be finessed in either direction! In addition a 3-3 heart break or a doubleton or singleton jack with either defender would deliver the 13th trick.

Declarer won the opening lead in dummy and then started on learning about the distribution by cashing the king and queen of spades, discarding a heart from the table as East parted with a diamond. Next came three rounds of hearts, declarer parting with a club from the table as East let go of another diamond. It was time to test the diamonds and, when West followed to both the ace and king, the count of the hand was complete – West had started with six spades, four hearts and at least two diamonds, hence no more than one club.

Declarer led a club to the ace and, when West followed but the knave did not appear, took the marked finesse by running the ten of clubs. A club to the king followed by a diamond to the queen allowed declarer to cash the queen of clubs for the 13th trick

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