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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Dealer : West<br>Vul : None                        | NORTH<br>♠ A Q 6 4<br>♥ A 3<br>♦ A Q J 7<br>♣ J 9 7   |  |
| WEST<br>♠ 8 7 5 3 2<br>♥ 8 7 5<br>♦ 5 2<br>♣ Q 8 6 |   | EAST<br>♠ K J 10<br>♥ Q 2<br>♦ K 10 6 4<br>♣ A K 4 2 |
|  | SOUTH<br>♠ 9<br>♥ K J 10 9 6 4<br>♦ 9 8 3<br>♣ 10 5 3 |  |

| South   | West     | North     | East |
|---------|----------|-----------|------|
| --      | Pass     | 1 Diamond | 1 NT |
| 2 Heart | All Pass |           |      |
|         |          |           |      |

Opening lead: Five of ♦

This deal is from the von Zedtwitz Life Masters Pairs at the recent Summer North American Championships held in Toronto. Sitting East-West was North American internationalist Fred Hamilton, playing with Mark Itabashi.

Declarer won the opening lead in dummy with the ace, cashed the ace of hearts and continued with a trump, winning with the king and cashing three more hearts. Hamilton could not afford to discard a diamond since that would allow declarer to set up a third trick in the suit. A spade would permit declarer to win two spades by ducking one round, so Hamilton had to let go of three clubs.

Declarer let go of a club from dummy on the third round of hearts and Hamilton parted with the four of clubs. On the next heart declarer parted with another club from dummy and Hamilton sluffed the ace of clubs! On the fifth heart declarer got rid of dummy's remaining club and so Hamilton sluffed the king of clubs.

Declarer now played a diamond to dummy's queen. Hamilton won with the king and returned a low club to his partner's eight for a spade switch. Holding declarer to nine tricks was a near top for East-West.

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