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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

30<sup>th</sup> December 2011

Dealer : South Vul : None	<b>NORTH</b> ♠ Q ♥ A Q J 10 8 ♦ 9 7 6 2 ♣ K 8 5	
<b>WEST</b> ♠ 8 6 5 3 2 ♥ K 4 ♦ A 5 ♣ 9 7 4 2		<b>EAST</b> ♠ 10 9 7 4 ♥ 6 5 3 ♦ J 8 4 ♣ J 10 6
	<b>SOUTH</b> ♠ A K J ♥ 9 7 2 ♦ K Q 10 3 ♣ A Q 3	

South	West	North	East
Diamond	Pass	1 Heart	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 Diamond	Pass
3 Spade	Pass	6 Diamond	All Pass

Opening lead: Three of ♠

Deceptive plays do not necessarily have to be profound to succeed. Simply creating a viable alternative for declarer can work wonders. Consider this deal.

North-South reached a poor diamond slam in short order. Once South cue-bid spades instead of signing off, North got the bit between his teeth and barged into the diamond slam in quick time.

To succeed, the heart king had to be on-side and declarer would have to hold his trump losers to one. West led a spade, won by dummy's queen. A diamond to the king lost to the ace, and West shifted to a club. That was taken by dummy's king and declarer proceeded with the percentage play of finessing the ten of diamonds when East followed low. When that held, the slam rolled home as the cards lay.

There are always 12 tricks if declarer guesses to finesse the diamond ten. However, West could have sown a seed of doubt in declarer's mind by the simple expedient of holding up the ace when South first broaches trumps. Suddenly declarer has an option — to play East for the ace of trumps and West for a doubleton knave. To cater to that lie of the cards, declarer will cross back to dummy and lead another trump, going up with the queen when East follows low. That loses to the ace and East's knave of trumps becomes the setting trick.

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