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Bridge column by Tanna Hirsch

31st May 2011

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

South	West	North	East
--	Pass	Pass	Pass
2 Spade	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 Diamond	Pass	4 Spade	All Pass

Opening lead: Three of ♣

Among the visitors to the ACBL Spring Nationals held in Louisville, Ky., was New Zealand internationalist John Wignall, First VP of the World Bridge Federation. He sat South on this deal from a major tournament in Australia.

The two-spade opening bid was conventional, showing a two-suiter with 8-9 playing tricks. Two no trump asked for the second suit and, on discovering the misfit, North lost all interest in anything beyond game.

The opening lead was taken in dummy with the ace and declarer tried to cash a second club, ruffed by East and overruffed in the closed hand. Declarer cashed his two high spades and discovered the bad break. It looked as if declarer would have to lose two trump tricks and one in each red suit, but appearances can be deceptive.

Declarer cashed his two top diamonds, then led a heart up to the king. West rose with the ace but had no good continuation. A heart would permit dummy to win with the king and declarer could start running the clubs, leaving East with a Hobson's choice. If he ruffed, reducing his trump length the defense would be held to only one trump trick, if he discarded, declarer would get rid of losing diamonds.

If, instead of a heart, West exits with a club, East is in the same situation. If he ruffs low, declarer overruffs and holds his trump losers to one. If East ruffed high, he could cash a diamond but that would be the last trick for the defense. (05/31/11)

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