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Bridge column by Frank Stewart

8th April 2011

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

South	West	North	East
--	--	1 Spade	2 Diamond
2 Heart	4 Diamond	4 Heart	Pass
6 Heart	All Pass		

Opening lead: Ten of ♦

Whenever possible, try to disguise your line of play. Revealing too much to your opponents can make life easy for them. Consider this deal from a team match.

The bidding was similar at the two tables. Both North's opened the bidding and under pressure supported hearts at the four-level, and both Souths ended in six hearts.

At both tables West led the ten of diamonds. Declarer's technique at one table was exemplary. After ruffing the opening lead in hand, declarer drew both outstanding trumps by crossing to the king in dummy and ruffed the remaining diamond. Next came the king of clubs, a club to the ace and a club ruff.

The groundwork for an endplay had been laid. Declarer led a spade to the ace and was ready to throw East on lead. The defender realized the king was an embarrassment and jettisoned his majesty under the ace. West was able to win the next spade with the ten and cash the queen for down one.

At the other table South also saw the necessity for an endplay, but he timed the play differently. After ruffing a diamond at trick one, declarer crossed to dummy with the ace of spades preparatory to ruffing another diamond. Perhaps East should have foreseen what was happening, but it was by no means clear. At the table East contributed the nine, and declarer was on the way home.

The remaining diamond was ruffed, trumps were drawn and the clubs were eliminated, East having to follow to all these tricks. Declarer exited with a spade and East had to win with the king. Left with only minor-suit cards, East was forced to yield a ruff-sluff.

gorenbridge@aol.com