

BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

A GOOD ATTITUDE

By: Brian Gunnell

	♠ K ♥ J743 ♦ J8765 ♣ KJ7	
♠ T96 ♥ T982 ♦ AQ ♣ T985	North West East Declarer	♠ J532 ♥ 5 ♦ KT92 ♣ A632
	♠ AQ874 ♥ AKQ6 ♦ 43 ♣ Q4	

Both Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Against 4♥ West leads the Club Ten, won by East's Ace. A Diamond shift is clearly called for, and the standard play from that holding is the Ten, the so-called "top of an interior sequence". Is that your choice or are there other considerations?

If West has Ace doubleton in Diamonds then East can envisage a trump promotion if West also has the right trump holding. But, as it happens, West has ♦AQ and the danger is that West will win the ♦Q on the first round of the suit. That would be the right play if East held a trump honor but not the ♦K, but it would be disastrous on the actual layout, killing the chance of a trump promotion.

In the middle of the hand (starting at Trick 2), many partnerships play "attitude leads", whereby shifting to a low card usually shows a high card in the suit, and shifting to a high card is either from a weak holding or from the top of a sequence. So, reasoning that it is more important to advertise his ♦K than it is to make an ambiguous interior sequence lead, East shifts to the Diamond Two. Of course, West must be alert and majestically squander his Ace on that trick. Then, back comes the ♦Q overtaken by East's King, and the third round of Diamonds promotes the setting trump trick. Nice defense!

A Spectacular Deception! Next, imagine that West holds ♦AQ9 and East ♦KT2. Again the opening lead is a Club to East's Ace and again a low Diamond comes back. West, who is a shockingly devious fellow, wins with his Ace and returns the ♦Q. East overtakes that and sends back a third Diamond. Naturally, Declarer ruffs high, and later finds out to his chagrin that trumps are 4-1 and that he has just gone down in a cold contract!

Visit www.acbl.org for more about the fascinating game of bridge or email marketing@acbl.org