

BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

HELPING PARTNER

By: Brian Gunnell

	♠ KT6 ♥ 4 ♦ 75 ♣ T876542	
♠ 853 ♥ 983 ♦ JT943 ♣ J3	North West East Declarer	♠ AQJ42 ♥ 762 ♦ Q86 ♣ K9
	♠ 97 ♥ AKQJT5 ♦ AK2 ♣ AQ	

Both Vulnerable

South West North East

1♠

Dbl Pass 2♣ Pass
 4♥ Pass Pass Pass

3NT is cold, but our South was in 4♥. That would have succeeded against some E-W pairs, but not against this E-W. Watch how West wakes up her partner and persuades him to make the right play in Diamonds.

West leads a Spade, low from Dummy, won by East's Jack. East looks at Dummy and realizes that it's useless for Declarer's purposes. Well, almost! There is that doubleton Diamond, a potential ruffing value if Declarer happens to have ♦AKx. So, East promptly shifts to a trump, snuffing out that threat.

Declarer still has four potential losers, with no way of reaching Dummy for the Club finesse. He may decide that the best chance now is to play for East to have Qxx in Diamonds. So he draws trumps, and plays ♦AK and a low Diamond, hoping to throw in East. If the plan works then East will be forced to give Declarer his 10th trick in one of the black suits. But our E-W are made of sterner stuff and you can be sure that East will jettison his ♦Q under the Ace or the King, allowing West to win the third Diamond trick. You can also be sure that West will play the ♦J on the first round of Diamonds. That says (a) I can afford to play the Jack, (b) I don't have the Queen, if I did I could have afforded to play it, (c) I have the Ten, otherwise I could not afford the Jack. That considerate play by West should persuade even the sleepest East to dump the Queen.

Here's a little twist. If those defenders are so confoundedly smart, then most of the time they will be able to arrange for West to win the third Diamond. That being so, Declarer might try a swindle. Look at what happens if, instead of playing Diamonds, Declarer cashes the ♣A. Now, a clued-in East will be seriously tempted to dump the ♣K, playing Declarer to hold ♦AKJ and ♣AJ!

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