

BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

NICE TRY!

By: Brian Gunnell

	♠ A9752 ♥ 985 ♦ A97 ♣ 64	
♠ KJ ♥ AKT7 ♦ K84 ♣ T753	North West East Declarer	♠ QT86 ♥ J64 ♦ JT653 ♣ 8
	♠ 43 ♥ Q32 ♦ Q2 ♣ AKQJ93	

None Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♣	1♥	1♠	2♥
3♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

West cashes the ♥A and gets the discouraging Four from East. West shifts to a trump, after which things look bleak! From the bidding and the play to the first trick it appears that West has overcalled with ♥AKxx. How do you avoid losing five tricks?

The only chance is an end-play against West. If you can force him to play a second round of Hearts or to lead the first round of Diamonds, then one of your losers will disappear. The best hope is that West has the doubleton Spade King, in which case you can draw trumps, play a Spade to the Ace, and exit a Spade. West is forced to win the trick with his ♠K, and must now play one of the red suits. Bingo, that's 9 tricks!

That was well done, but if Zia had been sitting West he would have dumped the ♠K on the first round of Spades! No problem! Your clever counter would be to duck that trick (remember, the idea is to keep East off lead) and to win the Spade return with Dummy's Ace. Now you ruff a Spade and, when Zia shows out, you can count his original distribution as 2=4=3=4. So you cash your last trump and Zia is squeezed! He has these unpleasant choices:

- If he comes down to ♥Kx ♦Kx, you play ♦A and out a Diamond, end-playing him in Hearts.
- If he comes down to ♥K ♦Kxx, you throw him in with a Heart and make a surprising overtrick!
- If he comes down to ♥Kxx ♦K, you can cash two Diamonds.

Good defense, Zia, but not quite good enough!

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