

BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

YOU MIGHT BE AN EXPERT IF ...

By: Brian Gunnell

	♠ KJ ♥ AQ9 ♦ KJ65 ♣ KT75	
♠ 9743 ♥ 652 ♦ QT94 ♣ Q9	North West East Declarer	♠ A852 ♥ 43 ♦ 732 ♣ 8632
	♠ QT6 ♥ KJT87 ♦ A8 ♣ AJ4	

E-W Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
3NT	Pass	6♥	All Pass

Playing in 6♥ there are 11 easy tricks. The 12th might come from a Diamond finesse (it works!), a Club finesse against West (that works too!), or a Club finesse against East (that fails). You might be an expert if you managed to go down in this contract.

Against 6♥ West led the Spade Three to East's Ace. Back came the Spade Two won in Dummy, after which our expert Declarer cashed two trumps only, then ♦A, ♦K, followed by a Diamond ruff. Now back to Dummy with a trump and the last Diamond was ruffed.

Let us pause to admire Declarer's technique so far. The purpose of ruffing a Diamond was to build a 12th trick if the Queen were to come down in three rounds. And, by ruffing that Diamond before drawing the last trump, Declarer had the timing to ruff the last Diamond also. Thus he was able to discover that West had started with four Diamonds. West had also started with three Hearts. How about the Spades? That suit looked to be 4-4 based on the opening lead and the play to the second trick, in which case West's original distribution was 4=3=4=2.

Decision time had arrived and, with West known to have two Clubs and East four, the odds were two to one in favor of East holding the Queen. So our unfortunate Declarer finessed against East and went down *two* when West produced the ♣Q and a Spade winner.

When this deal was played in a local club duplicate game, most Declarers made 12 tricks ... a few went down one when they misguessed Clubs ... but only one Declarer was expert enough to ruff two Diamonds, get a perfect count on the distribution, and then go down two. How expert were *you* on this deal?

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