

# BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

## CREATING AN ILLUSION

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### *E-W Vulnerable*

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

	♠ QJ2 ♥ KJT2 ♦ Q43 ♣ J63	
♠ 963 ♥ 74 ♦ KJ865 ♣ 984	<i>North</i>  <i>West</i> <i>East</i>  <i>Declarer</i>	♠ T85 ♥ A8653 ♦ A7 ♣ T72
	♠ AK74 ♥ Q9 ♦ T92 ♣ AKQ5	

In a rubber bridge or team game, this would be a pretty dull deal, with N-S making 10 or 11 tricks in about 30 seconds flat. But in a duplicate bridge game, where overtricks are well rewarded, this dull deal suddenly becomes most interesting!

When this deal was played, all the West players led a Diamond to East's Ace, and a Diamond was returned, South playing the Two on the first trick, followed by the Nine. The West players knew that, if East had two remaining Diamonds, he would have returned the higher one at Trick 2. Therefore, Declarer had the missing Ten, and there was no point in ducking the second Diamond, he had to take his King while he still could. The defense won the ♥A later and it was just 10 tricks for Declarer.

But at one table Declarer created an illusion by playing the Diamond Nine and Ten on the first two tricks. Now West had a chance to go wrong as, in this case, the missing Diamond was the Two. In West's mind, unless Declarer was being diabolically devious (which we know to be the case!), the missing Two was surely with East. So West ducked the second Diamond and sat back, patiently waiting for East to get in and fire back a Diamond. He's still waiting, and it was 11 tricks (and a top board) for Declarer.

In the post mortem West apologized for not grabbing the ♦K while he could, but East could have saved the day. He could count Declarer for 18-19 HCP, leaving only 3-4 for West. That being so, West presumably had the ♦K and no entries, and the defense could never score the long Diamonds. So East must cash the ♥A at Trick 2, making it clear to one and all that the defense must take its three tricks and give up.

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