

BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

A CLUB FINESSE

By: Brian Gunnell

Both Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
			2♦
2♠	5♦	5♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

	♠ KQ952 ♥ 965 ♦ 42 ♣ AQ9	
♠ -- ♥ KT832 ♦ KJ5 ♣ JT873	North West East Declarer	♠ 4 ♥ QJ4 ♦ QT9863 ♣ K54
	♠ AJT8763 ♥ A7 ♦ A7 ♣ 62	

The inventor of the Weak Two had in mind a better suit than East's puny specimen. As for West, he anticipated a 4♠ bid from North so he pre-sacrificed in 5♦. Undeterred, North bid 5♠ which is where South played it.

Against 5♠, West decided to lead a Diamond. The standard lead from that holding is a low Diamond, but West chose the King, expecting it to hold the trick. By retaining the lead and getting a look at Dummy, West hoped to find the best continuation. That was good thinking by West, but it came to naught when Declarer won the ♦A.

The missing trump was drawn, the finesse of the ♣Q lost to East's King, and now Declarer was saddled with an inescapable Heart loser. That was down one and N-S were left to rue that they had not "taken the money" by doubling 5♦.

Declarer was right to finesse in Clubs, but he took the wrong finesse. He has an extra chance if he finesses the Nine instead. If this loses to the Jack or the Ten, Declarer will later finesse the Queen, making 11 tricks if this works. And if the finesse of the Nine holds, or if it draws the King, then Declarer again has 11 tricks. A first-round finesse of the ♣Q works only when West has the King ... but the deep finesse works when West has the King or when West has both the ♣J and the ♣T. Two chances are better than one.

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