

BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

NO SAFE EXIT

By: Brian Gunnell

This month's deals have been about finessing. In earlier weeks we were trying to avoid them in favor of better alternatives. But this week, we are actually going to take a finesse. Eventually.

None Vulnerable

South West North East
 1♥ Pass 4♥ Pass
 6♥ All Pass

	♠ AQ654 ♥ K843 ♦ K7 ♣ 76	
♠ JT9 ♥ 65 ♦ J965 ♣ QJT9	North West East South	♠ K8 ♥ T ♦ T8432 ♣ 85432
	♠ 732 ♥ AQJ972 ♦ AQ ♣ AK	

N-S take the express lane to 6♥ and West leads the ♣Q. You will win that and draw trumps in two rounds, but then what? You have 11 tricks, can you find the 12th?

This hand appears to depend on a successful Spade finesse and, if the ♠K is with West, then 6♥ makes. But that King is with East on the actual lie

of the cards. Does that mean it's down one? Not at all! Having drawn trumps, Declarer cashes those minor suit winners, and leads a Spade to the Ace. Then he crosses back to hand with a trump and leads a Spade towards the Queen. East wins the King but has no safe exit. With nothing left but minor suit cards, whatever he plays will give Declarer a ruff and sluff. Declarer will pitch the Spade loser from his hand and ruff on the board. Making 12 tricks.

Taking the delayed finesse gave Declarer a second way to win. He would still make his slam whenever West had the ♠K, and he would also succeed when the King was doubleton with East. But only if Declarer cashes his minor suit winners first, forcing East to concede that ruff and sluff after winning the doubleton King.

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