

BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

A SECOND CHANCE

By: Brian Gunnell

	♠ 76 ♥ J743 ♦ T65 ♣ J643	
♠ QJT42 ♥ 986 ♦ Q98 ♣ KT	North West East Declarer	♠ AK53 ♥ ♦ 7432 ♣ Q9872
	♠ 98 ♥ AKQT52 ♦ AKJ ♣ A5	

Both Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

2♣ and 2♦ were artificial (strong and weak respectively), and West led the ♠Q against 4♥. Can you spot the winning defense? And, when East fails to find it, can you see how Declarer takes advantage of her second chance?

The winning defense is for East to overtake the Spade and shift to a Diamond at Trick 2. Sooner or later, Declarer will be forced to take the losing Diamond finesse and that will be down one.

What actually happened was that East did overtake the ♠Q at Trick 1 but cashed a second Spade before shifting to Diamonds. Declarer's Ace won that, then trumps were drawn, at which point it might appear that Declarer must put her money on the Diamond finesse. Down one, as before? Not at all! Before putting all her eggs in the Diamond basket, Declarer loses nothing by cashing the ♣A and exiting a Club. This end-plays West if he happens to hold both the ♣K and ♣Q, or if he holds ♣KT or ♣QT doubleton. It was somewhat unlikely that the Club position would allow the end-play to work, but it was an extra chance that cost nothing, and Declarer always had the Diamond finesse to fall back on, if necessary. *Question: Wouldn't West also be end-played if he held, say, ♣K2?* No, because he would dump that ♣K under Declarer's Ace like a hot potato, cleverly allowing East to win the second Club trick, thereby avoiding the end-play!

Did East misdefend when he failed to shift to a Diamond at Trick 2? Well, there were hands when his defense would have been necessary (picture Declarer with ♠98, ♥AKQT2, ♦AKQ8, ♣K5, for example) so let's just count East as somewhat unlucky.

Visit www.acbl.org for more about the fascinating game of bridge or email marketing@acbl.org