

Managing the Entries

By Brian Gunnell

Board 3
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

♠ Q 8 3 2	♠ A K 10 9		♠ J 7 6 5 4
♥ A 10 7 5	♥ Q	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: green; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♥ 8 3 2
♦ 10 4 3	♦ 9 8 7		♦ K J 5 2
♣ K Q	♣ 10 9 7 6 4		♣ J
	♠ —		
	♥ K J 9 6 4		
	♦ A Q 6		
	♣ A 8 5 3 2		

NS 4N; NS 5♣; NS 3♥; NS 2♦; NS 1♠

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

3 NT by South
 Lead: ♦ 3

Can you make ten tricks after a low diamond lead? Our title is one clue, and we'll also say that West is a slippery cove, and that the play in clubs is crucial. Alright, that's enough clues, now please make ten tricks.

Our declarer managed only nine tricks. He won the diamond lead, cashed the ♣A and conceded a club, playing low from the board both times. West won the second club and persevered with diamonds. Declarer correctly ducked and took the next diamond, hoping that the defender with the ♥A was not the one with the thirteenth diamond. Then declarer led to the ♥Q but that rascally West ducked the trick! This fine play meant that declarer could not score a second heart trick ... with ♣T97 on the board and ♣853 in hand there was only one entry back to hand when two were needed (one to knock out the ♥A, the other to get back to the heart winner). Making only nine tricks.

West made a good play by ducking the heart but declarer did not have to give him a chance to shine. On the first two rounds of clubs, declarer should play dummy's ♣9 and ♣10. Now, with ♣764 on the board and ♣853 in hand, there are two entries to hand, and also one back to the board later, with which to reach the ♠AK. Careful management of the entries nullifies West's clever duck and brings in that valuable overtrick.