

# Clever to a Fault

“You, for example, clever to a fault.”  
– Robert Browning

We all have the chance to be brilliant when we have plenty of time at our disposal. However, the problem in real life is not only to find the deception, but also to produce the play in perfect tempo. If we find the right false-card, but break tempo to produce it, declarer can normally see through our little game. With that advance warning, can you see how it might have been possible to deflect declarer from the winning path in today’s deal?

**Board 19**

South Deals  
E-W Vul

♠	A K J 3	♠	Q 10 7 6
♥	K Q	♥	8 7 5 4 2
♦	5 3	♦	A 8
♣	9 7 5 3 2	♣	K 4
♠	9 8 5 4 2	♠	—
♥	3	♥	A J 10 9 6
♦	Q J 10 4 2	♦	K 9 7 6
♣	J 6	♣	A Q 10 8

N
W
S
E

North’s decision to cue-bid facing short spades might have been ill-advised and encouraged his partner to look for the club slam. As it was, when West led the predictable diamond queen, declarer found himself in a horrid spot. He won the diamond king at trick two, crossed to the heart king, played a club to the queen, then crossed his fingers and laid down the club ace. When the king and jack appeared, he had his slam in the bag.

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	4 ♣	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	6 ♣
All pass			

Lead: ♦ Q

So who could have done better? West had a shot to deflect declarer from the winning line, if he had dropped the club jack under the queen. Declarer would surely have played West for a singleton club now. He would try to cross to dummy in hearts to repeat the trump finesse — disaster! West would ruff in and lead a third diamond, promoting the club king in East’s hand for down two. So much for a friendly trump break!