



finesse and cashed the  $\diamond A$ , planning to pitch her losing club and claim +990. North ruffed, cashed the marooned  $\clubsuit K$  and led another club to promote partner's  $\spadesuit 10$ . -200! Unlucky. It would be mean to point out that drawing a third round of trumps couldn't cost.

### Dropping a stiff king offside

Teams Match 5, Bd 2

E/NS	$\spadesuit$ K Q 8 2	
	$\heartsuit$ 10 7 2	
	$\diamond$ A J 8 7	
	$\clubsuit$ J 7	
$\spadesuit$ 10 4		$\spadesuit$ J 9 6
$\heartsuit$ A 8 3		$\heartsuit$ 9 6 5 4
$\diamond$ 6 5 4 3 2		$\diamond$ K
$\clubsuit$ Q 5 4		$\clubsuit$ A K 8 6 3
	$\spadesuit$ A 7 5 3	
	$\heartsuit$ K Q J	
	$\diamond$ Q 10 9	
	$\clubsuit$ 10 9 2	

After  $1\clubsuit - 1\spadesuit - 2\spadesuit$ , North shrugged and bid  $4\clubsuit$ . Vul at teams, etc. East started with  $\clubsuit A-K$ -another. Our declarer ruffed, drew trumps, then led the  $\heartsuit K$ . I won the ace and led a diamond (wrong!) which declarer ducked (wrong!) for -100.

When I led a diamond, declarer should work out that I would never lead away from the  $\diamond K$ , looking at  $\diamond Q-T-9$  in dummy. Of course I should simply have exited with a heart to save partner's possible stiff  $\diamond K$ .

### Teams Match 6, Bd 15

N/Nil	$\spadesuit$ A 6	
	$\heartsuit$ J 7 3	
	$\diamond$ A 9 8 5	
	$\clubsuit$ 10 9 5 4	
$\spadesuit$ Q J 9 4 2		$\spadesuit$ K 8 7
$\heartsuit$ 10 6 2		$\heartsuit$ K 8
$\diamond$ K 10 7 4 2		$\diamond$ J 6 3
$\clubsuit$ —		$\clubsuit$ Q J 8 6 2
	$\spadesuit$ 10 5 3	
	$\heartsuit$ A Q 9 5 4	
	$\diamond$ Q	
	$\clubsuit$ A K 7 3	

Another endplay, this one by Adam Sarten. He played  $4\heartsuit/S$  on the  $\spadesuit Q$  lead, ducked. East overtook to return a low club. Adam looked at this but played the ace and saw it ruffed. After a spade to dummy's ace, it went – heart finesse,  $\diamond A$ , ruff, spade ruff, diamond ruff,  $\heartsuit A$ .

Declarer was down to a trump and  $\clubsuit K73$ , while East had  $\clubsuit QJ86$ . On a

low club to the  $10-J$ , East had to give a trick to dummy's  $\clubsuit 9$ .

### Third player high

Here's a left over hand from the Pairs Final, featuring Mike Robson at his trickiest:

Pairs Final 3, Bd 5

N/NS	$\spadesuit$ 9 8 7 5 2	
	$\heartsuit$ A J 10 2	
	$\diamond$ 10 5	
	$\clubsuit$ A K	
$\spadesuit$ A Q J		$\spadesuit$ 6 4 3
$\heartsuit$ K 4		$\heartsuit$ 9 6 3
$\diamond$ Q 7 6 3 2		$\diamond$ A 4
$\clubsuit$ J 10 3		$\clubsuit$ 9 8 7 6 4
	$\spadesuit$ K 10	
	$\heartsuit$ Q 8 7 5	
	$\diamond$ K J 9 8	
	$\clubsuit$ Q 5 2	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Lee	Moore	Robson	Crittelle
	$1\spadesuit$	No	$2\diamond$
No	$2\heartsuit$	No	$4\heartsuit$

Mike led the  $\diamond 4!$ , which was ducked round to the 10. There's a good case for rising king, can't blame Betty for withholding her queen. +620? Not at all. After a spade to the king and ace, diamond to the ace, spade to the jack, Mike saw his  $\heartsuit 9$  promoted.



The aftermath of a post mortem with Gallus.  
Photo from Keith Huggan

### Exception To The Rule

by Ron Klinger

Teams, Match 1, Board 11 (Rotated)

$\spadesuit$ A 8 7 5	$\spadesuit$ K J 10 3
$\heartsuit$ A 8 6	$\heartsuit$ K J 9
$\diamond$ A J 7	$\diamond$ K 10 2
$\clubsuit$ A 6 5	$\clubsuit$ K Q 8

David Stern	Michael Cornell
$1\clubsuit$	$1\spadesuit$
$1NT$ <sup>15-17</sup>	$4NT$ invitational
$6\spadesuit$	No

Lead:  $\clubsuit 7$ . Plan the play

With a 4-3-3-3 opposite a 4-3-3-3 and game values, you want to play

$3NT$  rather than a 4-4 major fit since you usually make the same number of tricks in each contract. When that number is nine,  $3NT$  is the place to be.

When the decision is at slam level, there is no difference in the number of tricks for success and so the 4-4 fit can be superior, as demonstrated by the complete deal:

	$\spadesuit$ Q 6 4	
	$\heartsuit$ 10 4 3	
	$\diamond$ Q 3	
	$\clubsuit$ J 10 9 4 3	
$\spadesuit$ A 8 7 5		$\spadesuit$ K J 10 3
$\heartsuit$ A 8 6		$\heartsuit$ K J 9
$\diamond$ A J 7		$\diamond$ K 10 2
$\clubsuit$ A 6 5		$\clubsuit$ K Q 8
	$\spadesuit$ 9 2	
	$\heartsuit$ Q 7 5 2	
	$\diamond$ 9 8 6 5 4	
	$\clubsuit$ 7 2	

Playing in  $6NT$  you need to score two out of three finesses in spades, hearts, diamonds. Chance of success for two of three finesses is 50%. There is the extra problem of the two-way finesses in spades and diamonds.

Murphy's Law: Whenever there is a two-way finesse you will get it wrong and your opponents will get it right.

Technique for the spade layout is the  $\spadesuit A$  first, then finesse the  $\spadesuit J$ . This caters for North holding  $\spadesuit Q-x-x-x$ . In diamonds, you have a genuine two way finesse while in hearts the straight finesse of the  $\heartsuit A$  and then low to the  $\heartsuit J$  is 50-50, while the backward finesse (lead the  $\heartsuit J$  from dummy and let it run if not covered or capture the  $\heartsuit Q$  if East covers and then finesse the  $\heartsuit 9$ ) is a 25% chance.

By contrast you need only the trump finesse in  $6\spadesuit$  if spades are 3-2. (If spades are 4-1, you are in the same position as in  $6NT$ .) Michael Cornell in  $6\spadesuit$  showed that he needed neither red suit finesse. He won the club lead, played  $\spadesuit A$ , finessed the  $\spadesuit J$  and drew the last trump. He then eliminated the clubs and cashed the  $\heartsuit A-K$ . When he exited with the third heart, it did not matter who won this. The defender had to broach diamonds or concede a ruff-and-discard.

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