

# Hand-of-the-Month

February 2005

	North	
	♠ 96	
	♥ AQ5	
	♦ AJT74	
	♣ 876	
West		East
♠ J8542	N	♠ AQ7
♥ T642	W	♥ J87
♦ 65		♦ K83
♣ Q2	S	♣ T953
	South	
	♠ KT3	
	♥ K93	
	♦ Q92	
	♣ AKJ4	

North-South Vulnerable			
<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>
P	3N	All Pass	1N
Opening lead: 4♠			

At first glance this hand from a regional pair game from a few years ago seems to be as mundane as they come. The final contract of 3N was reached in the most common manner via a 1N - 3N auction. Also, if you simply make a cursory inspection of the play of the hand, you would likely find that the declarer makes 3N even after West's lead of a low spade.

Normally, East would win West's spade lead with the ♠A and return the ♠Q. South has a relatively standard duck of the ♠Q when East returns it. South hopes that by winning the third round of spades (instead of the second) East has been exhausted of his spade length. If that is the case, if South's diamond finesse loses East won't have any more spades to play since he only started with three. If South wins the second round of spades, East will have a spade to return to West (assuming East gains the lead with the ♦K.) The truth is that this hand has a lot more to it. See this month's Tip-of-the-Month for an interesting morsel.