

Bridge

Both vulnerable, North deals

	North	
	♠ 5 4 3	
	♥ 10 5 2	
	♦ A K 10 6 4 2	
	♣ J	
West		East
♠ J 6		♠ 10 7 2
♥ A J 9 7 4		♥ K 8 3
♦ Q 9 8		♦ Void
♣ Q 5 3		♣ A K 10 8 7 4 2
	South	
	♠ A K Q 9 8	
	♥ Q 6	
	♦ J 7 5 3	
	♣ 9 6	

As we write this, the whole world and its bridge players are hunkered down trying to mitigate the horrible damage being done by the Covid-19 pandemic. Most of the bridge being played at this time is online. We witnessed today's deal while watching an online practice match between two expert teams.

East-West were experts from two opposite sides of the planet. East was Ishmael DelMonte, originally from New Zealand, and West was Eldad Ginossur, originally from Israel. Both live in the USA today. Five clubs was a good contract and would surely have

The bidding:

North	East	South	West
2♦	3♣	3♠	Dbl
4♠	5♣	Pass	Pass
5♠	Dbl	All pass	

Opening lead: Three of ♣

made with the help of the heart finesse. North did well to bid on, but he should have bid five diamonds – a contract that might have made unless East-West cashed out the first three tricks. North's choice of five spades, instead, gave East-West a chance to shine.

DelMonte, East, won the opening club lead with his ace rather than the normal play of the king. He shifted to the eight of hearts, ostensibly denying an honor in that suit. South muddied the waters by rising with the queen of hearts. West, Ginossur, won with his ace and stopped to think. None of his partner's plays made any sense. East could not possibly have bid the way he did without the king of clubs and the king of hearts. What was going on here?

Ginossur worked it out! He shifted to a low diamond, ruffed by East. DelMonte now rubbed salt into the wound by underleading the king of hearts to West's jack for another diamond ruff. Down three, doubled and vulnerable, after a lovely defense!

— Bob Jones
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