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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH BOB JONES

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INTERESTING DEAL

East-West vulnerable, East deals

NORTH
♠ A 9 8
♡ J 8 5 4
♢ A 8 5 4
♣ K 2

WEST
♠ Q 5 3
♡ 9 2
♢ K 10 9 2
♣ Q 8 7 4

EAST
♠ 10 6
♡ A 10 7
♢ 7 6 3
♣ A J 9 6 5

SOUTH
♠ K J 7 4 2
♡ K Q 6 3
♢ Q J
♣ 10 3

The bidding:

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♢
Pass	2♡	Pass	4♡
All pass			

Opening lead: Four of ♣

Today's deal is from the Yeh Brother's Cup last summer. This annual event draws a star-studded field, in part due to first-place prize money of $175,000.

Many declarers on this deal faced a diamond opening lead, rather than a club. They took the winning diamond finesse, drew trumps after knocking out the ace, and ended in their hand. A low spade to dummy's nine then established the spades while keeping West off lead and saw them safely home with 10 tricks.

When Norwegian star Geir Helgemo played the hand, the defense got off to the superior club lead. East captured dummy's king with the ace, cashed the jack of clubs, and then shifted to a diamond. Helgemo's queen of diamonds was covered by the king and won with dummy's ace. A low trump to the king held the trick, and a trump back to the jack lost to East's ace. South won the diamond continuation with the jack and drew the last outstanding trump with the queen.

East-West were a top pair from Sweden. They use an opening one no trump range of 11-14, as many do in Europe. East had already shown up with the ace-jack of clubs and the ace of hearts. Helgemo thought it very unlikely that East would also hold the queen of spades, as he had passed as dealer. Backing his judgment with his play, Helgemo led the jack of spades and ran it when West played low! This play, known as a backward finesse, is seldom used, but it was the big winner on this deal for Helgemo.

(Bob Jones welcomes readers' e-mails at tcaeditors@tribpub.com)