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From the Venice Cup Trials, Subterfuge and a Big Swing

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The 96-board match that chose the U.S.A.-1 Venice Cup world championship team last week in Detroit was won by Sylvia Moss, Judi Radin and Migry Zur Campanile of New York and JoAnna Stansby of Dublin, Calif. They combined well for a game swing on the diagramed deal, Board 74.

NORTH			
♠ A Q 10 2			
♥ 5 4			
♦ A K 9			
♣ K Q 9 8			
WEST(D)		EAST	
♠ J 9 5		♠ K 7	
♥ A 7 3 2		♥ J 10 9	
♦ J 7 5		♦ Q 10 8 6	
♣ 7 6 2		4 3 2	
SOUTH			
♠ 8 6 4 3			
♥ K Q 8 6			
♦ —			
♣ J 10 5 4 3			
Both sides were vulnerable.			
The bidding:			
West	North	East	South
Pass	1 ♣	2 ♦	Dbl.
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	3 N.T.	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	
West led the diamond five.			

In the given auction East made a tactical two-diamond overcall because her partner was a passed hand. Stansby (North) cue-bid three diamonds to show game-forcing values. Campanile (South) could not cue-bid four diamonds to ask her partner to choose the trump suit, because that would have promised extra values. Then, when North bid three no-trump, that was ambiguous. She was expressing uncertainty about no-trump, but that might have been because she had a four-card major (now spades, since she had not raised hearts) or a long club suit and an iffy diamond stopper. South, expecting her partner to have a major,

ran to four spades. But if North had long clubs, the South hand was very suitable for that strain. South could have her gâteau and eat it too.

Against four spades West led the diamond five. Campanile won with dummy's ace and discarded a heart from her hand. Then she played a heart, to cut the communications between the defenders and to gain an extra hand entry for trump leads.

West took South's king with her ace and shifted to the club seven, East winning with her bare ace and returning a diamond. Declarer ruffed and played a spade to dummy's ten. East took her king and led a heart, but South won with her queen, played a spade to dummy's ace and claimed when everyone followed. Campanile lost one spade, one heart and one club.

At the other table North opened one club; Moss (East) overcalled one diamond; South doubled to show 4-4 in the majors; Radin (West) raised to two diamonds; and North jumped to four spades.

East led her club ace, which was clearly a singleton given North's opening bid. Then West would normally be expected to give a suit-preference signal to show where her entry lay. But Radin made a very farsighted play. She realized that if she dropped the club seven, East immediately shifted to a heart, and West delivered the club ruff, declarer, given the auction, would surely place East with the spade king, which West knew would then be a singleton.

So West played her club deuce at Trick 1, trying to make it look as if she had the spade king, not the heart ace.

And it worked. East shifted to a diamond, ruffed in the dummy (South). North, who needed to play a spade to her ace, understandably took a spade finesse. Now East won with her king and switched to the heart jack, West taking dummy's king with her ace and giving her partner a club ruff for down one. Terrific!

Plus 620 and plus 100 gave the Moss team 12 international match points on the board.