

Not Double-Dummy

TO THE EDITOR:

On this deal from the Bermuda Bowl (August 2017 issue, page 5), one South reached three spades after a Stayman sequence:

NORTH
 ♠ A Q 7 2
 ♥ Q 8
 ♦ 10 8 2
 ♣ 8 6 3 2

WEST
 ♠ K J 9
 ♥ J 9 7 3
 ♦ J 9 7 4
 ♣ A 5

EAST
 ♠ 10 5
 ♥ K 6 5 2
 ♦ K 6 5
 ♣ J 10 7 4

SOUTH
 ♠ 8 6 4 3
 ♥ A 10 4
 ♦ A Q 3
 ♣ K Q 9

After the diamond seven to the eight, king and ace, declarer attacked hearts and failed. The analysis mentioned that South could have succeeded if he had peeked a little (for example, by finessing the club nine). As the cards lay, one reasonable approach could have landed the contract without any double-dummy play.

Making nine tricks will often require finding the king of spades onside. If declarer had immediately finessed in trumps and played three rounds of spades, West would have been endplayed into providing some assistance. From South's perspective, if West held king-third of spades the contract might succeed regardless of the locations of the missing heart honors.

DAVID J. WEISS
 Fullerton, CA

* * *