

# A Game Swing From Orlando

By Robert Thorstad

This hand, played by my partner, Benjamin Kompa, in the Keohane Open Swiss in Orlando, is a fine example of excellent card reading, combined with solid declarer play technique.

The ♠8 lead was won in hand, followed by a low diamond. When the defense returned a diamond, Ben won the ♦A and ruffed a diamond high in dummy, East discarding a discouraging club. West's overcall, ♠8 lead, and East's failure to overruff suggested that East held the ♠9 with length.

Ben backed his analysis by finessing the ♠7. When this held, he led another trump to East's ace. East played a club to partner's J, and West returned a diamond, which Ben ruffed.

To make the hand, Ben needed three tricks in hearts. All would be well if West could be trusted to cover the ♥J. But this West was more than capable of ducking, preventing a third heart trick in the dummy.

To counter this possibility, Ben cashed the ♣A and ran all the trumps to reach the following four-card ending with south leading the last spade:

♥KT5 ♣T  
♥Q98 ♣K      ♥764 ♣8  
♠K ♥AJ ♣Q

East's hand is irrelevant at this point. What could West discard? The ♣K would establish Ben's ♣Q, so he pitched a ♥. Now the ♥AK dropped West's remaining ♥Q9, establishing dummy's ♥T. Ben took 10 tricks for a well-deserved game swing.

To beat the contract legitimately after a spade lead requires double dummy defense. After winning the first ♦, West has to find a ♥ switch, beginning an attack on declarer's communication with dummy. If declarer wins the ♥AJ and then ruffs a diamond, East overruffs and plays a high trump. This prevents declarer from reaching dummy.

Declarer could instead win just the ♥A, but the defense has a simple counter. Upon winning the ♠A, East plays a second heart to remove dummy's entry to the long ♥. The defense finishes with two ♣ tricks, the ♠A, and a ♦ for -1.

*Author of this article, Robert Thorstad, is an avid up-and-coming player from Atlanta. He can be reached at [thorstads@gmail.com](mailto:thorstads@gmail.com).*

		♠ Q 6 2	
		♥ K 10 5 3 2	
		♦ 3 2	
		♣ 10 5 2	
♠ 8			♠ A 9 5 4
♥ Q 9 8			♥ 7 6 4
♦ K Q J 10 9 8			♦ 7 6
♣ K J 4			♣ 9 8 7 6
		♠ K J 10 7 3	
		♥ A J	
		♦ A 5 4	
		♣ A Q 3	
West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1 ♣ <sup>1</sup>
1 ♦	Dbl <sup>2</sup>	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
All pass			
	1. 16+ HCP		
	2. 5-7 HCP		
	4 ♠ by South		
	Lead: ♠ 8		