

MOUNTNESSING BRIDGE CLUB

Meets every Thursday at 7.25 for 7.30
at Mountnessing Village Hall, Roman Road, Mountnessing, Essex, England, CM15 0UG

“2020” Comments on “Freezing weather – time for a “frozen suit” ...”

Submission by Alaric Cundy: [Click here](#)

Commentary by Alaric Cundy

Firstly, it is worth reminding readers that anybody can download the *Bridge Solver* analytical tool for free, and use it to analyse different Declarer plays and / or defences, on any hand of their choosing – such as this one! To access ‘Bridge Solver Online’ go to this link:
<https://mirgo2.co.uk/bridgesolver/upload.htm>.

So what does *Bridge Solver* say about this hand? It confirms that, despite the combined 25 HCP holding, the limit of this hand is 3S, or 2NT. Indeed, 140 by NS from a spade contract is the optimum score.

At many tables, East would have opened 1NT (12-14), which would likely as not have been passed out. There is a school of thought that says that in Duplicate Bridge in the pass-out seat the normal values required for a penalty double – at least one HCP more than the upper range of the 1NT – can be shaded a bit, and I suspect that had the NS hands been interchanged then 1NTx-2 would have occurred more than just the once. But as the cards lie, a pass-out is more likely. Looking at the traveller, it is not surprising that 1NT-2 by West was a common outcome.

The different system played by EW at this particular table was always going to lead to a different end-point – but to whose advantage? North and South both need to show good judgement if South makes the more normal first bid of 2S rather than 1S to keep out of an impossible game contract.

Bridge Solver says that on this hand the choice of opening lead against South’s spade contract is immaterial – with care, precisely 9 tricks can be made after any lead, in essence: lead trumps twice towards Dummy, draw all the trumps, losing to the Ace along the way, eliminate hearts, and play the two top diamonds and exit with the third diamond always works. Only one out of the 3 Declarers actually playing in spades made 9 tricks – but sadly they had pushed on to 4S so they too got a poor match-pointed score.

There is not even any defence that could conceivably give away an overtrick, other than a revoke, so this hand really is all about not over-bidding the hand - and recognising and negotiating the Frozen suit.