

MOUNTNESSING BRIDGE CLUB

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

In a 'doomed' contract, try to confuse your opponents...

Hand played on 05/04/2012
Board number 13 (Computer Dealt)
Dealer North
Vulnerability Both
Submitted by John Sutcliffe

	North ♠ 8 6 2 ♥ A 10 8 7 ♦ A 5 4 2 ♣ J 6					
West ♠ J 10 7 ♥ K 9 4 3 ♦ 3 ♣ K Q 10 8 7		East ♠ A Q 4 3 ♥ Q 2 ♦ K 9 7 ♣ A 9 5 4				
			The Bidding			
	South ♠ K 9 5 ♥ J 6 5 ♦ Q J 10 8 6 ♣ 3 2		North No No	East 1S 2NT	South No No	West 2C 3NT

East / West were playing a traditional ACOL style, whereby East's 2NT rebid showed a balanced 15-17 HCP hand, and technically was non-forcing. South might have added interest to the auction by chipping in with a 2D overcall – but that could have been an unwise move at this vulnerability.

South made the obvious lead of the Queen of Diamonds, and playing the popular inverse attitude system of signals on partner's lead, North duly encouraged by playing the 2. East had no option other than to win the trick with the King. Prospects did not look good from Declarer's perspective! Undeterred, five club tricks were cashed, with Declarer throwing a diamond on the fifth round. However, both North and South had to find three discards. Wanting to keep all of his diamonds, South threw one spade and 2 hearts, and North threw one diamond and two spades, leaving this 7-card ending, with the lead in Dummy (West), and six tricks already in Declarer's bag:

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	North ♠ 8 ♥ A 10 8 7 ♦ A 4 ♣ -	
West ♠ J 10 7 ♥ K 9 4 3 ♦ - ♣ -		East ♠ A Q 4 3 ♥ Q 2 ♦ 9 ♣ -
	South ♠ K 9 ♥ J ♦ Q J 10 8 6 ♣ -	

The “obvious” play at this stage would be for Declarer to run the Jack of Spades. Had the King been on-side, and given that three spades had been thrown, then Declarer would have picked up four spade tricks to score an overtrick, and still with the King and Queen of Hearts intact.

Declarer's first good move was to read the spade position accurately – watching opponent's discards like a hawk can reveal a lot about the hand, and Declarer was able to place the King with South. It was clear that the lead of a spade at trick seven was going to lead to instant doom for Declarer, so he called for a small heart from table. Had North been fully alert, he would have played the Ace, followed by the Ace and another diamond, and the defence would have taken 5 tricks in total. However, natural instinct suggested that he should play low, so Declarer won his seventh trick with the Queen. The fall of South's Jack suggested there was no more hope with the heart suit, so he exited with the nine of diamonds! The position was then:

	North ♠ 8 ♥ A 10 8 ♦ A 4 ♣ -	
West ♠ J 10 7 ♥ K 9 4 ♦ - ♣ -		East ♠ A Q 4 3 ♥ 2 ♦ 9 ♣ -
	South ♠ K 9 ♥ ♦ Q J T 8 ♣ -	

North took that trick - as he should, to unblock the suit – but then made another slip-up by returning his last diamond to partner... North was now cut off from his ace of Hearts, and South was end-played – forced to lead away from his King of Spades into Declarer's Ace, Queen at trick 12, to give Declarer nine tricks in total, and an outright 'top' on the board.