

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

Submission by John Sutcliffe: [Click here](#)

Commentary by Alaric Cundy

Firstly, it is worth reminding readers that anybody can download, or use on line, 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>.

The modern style is to play that East’s 2NT rebid after the 1S - 2C start is *game forcing* (rather than *invitational* as was the traditional interpretation), showing either 15 – 19 HCPs with a 5-card spade suit OR a balanced 17-19 if the spade suit is 4 cards. That assumes that the 2-over-1 change of suit shows 10+ HCPs. West has only 9 HCPs, but the nice quality 5-card club suit warrants the 2C response. Opposite partner’s 2NT rebid, West ought to grab the opportunity to explore a possible 5-3 spade fit, especially given the singleton diamond. In fact, because we are in a game forcing situation, West has the luxury of trying 3H en route, in case East started with 5 spades and 4 hearts. In practice, in all likelihood, at match-pointed pairs East’s subsequent 3NT would end the auction. However, any West, perhaps nervous at the sight of the singleton diamond, who opted to remove to the known 4-3 fit in spades would score a real triumph, as 4S by EW is makable, as can be confirmed by the *Bridge Solver* facility!

Suggested modern auction:

North	East	South	West
No	1S	No (???)	2C
No	2NT	No	3H
No	3NT	No	4S (???)
(end)			

Back to the play in 3NT: John’s thinking and play cannot be challenged. It is usually bad play to encourage a slip by the defence to secure an extra trick, but when the situation is otherwise hopeless, as here, then needs must.

It is worth noting that the contract can always be made on any non-diamond initial lead from either North or South; had EW somehow contrived things such that West became Declarer, then North may have led a heart if South had not over-called in diamonds, and now 3NT can be made without resorting to deception. After the Queen of diamonds lead by South, the contract cannot be made without adopting the tricks that John spotted.

Lessons to draw:

- Watch the opponent's discards very carefully – and try to draw such inferences as you can; the converse is that Defenders should aim whenever possible to sow seeds of confusion for Declarer.
- If one line of play is obviously going to fail, try something different – perhaps something totally out of the ordinary! Whenever possible, give the defenders a chance to go wrong.
- It is often said that Defence is the hardest part of the game – the Defenders have to maintain top concentration throughout the play of the hand.