

On a rainy one-day game of cricket, there are no two more significant characters than Frank Duckworth and Tony Lewis. It was these two mathematicians and statisticians who developed a formula, first used in 1997, for calculating targets in weather-affected games, based on the batting team's remaining resources — wickets and overs in hand. They were appointed MBEs in 2010.

Lewis, who died in March, also enjoyed bridge — as do many mathematicians and statisticians. His light take-out double helped to earn a top on the following deal from his last ever duplicate at Summertown Bridge Club, kindly given to me by James Bentley.

Dealer West Neither Vul

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|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---|---|---|-------|--|
| ♠ J 9 8 2 | | | | | | | |
| ♥ - | | | | | | | |
| ♦ A 9 3 | | | | | | | |
| ♣ K 8 7 6 4 2 | | | | | | | |
| ♠ - | <table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100px; height: 40px;"> <tr> <td style="border: none; padding: 2px;">N</td> <td style="border: none; padding: 2px;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none; padding: 2px;">W</td> <td style="border: none; padding: 2px;">S</td> </tr> </table> | N | E | W | S | ♠ 6 3 | |
| N | E | | | | | | |
| W | S | | | | | | |
| ♥ A 10 9 8 6 3 2 | | ♥ Q 7 5 4 | | | | | |
| ♦ K Q J 5 | | ♦ 10 8 7 6 2 | | | | | |
| ♣ J 9 | | ♣ 5 3 | | | | | |
| ♠ A K Q 10 7 5 4 | | | | | | | |
| ♥ K J | | | | | | | |
| ♦ 4 | | | | | | | |
| ♣ A Q 10 | | | | | | | |

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|----------|-----|---------|-------|
| S(Loris) | W | N(Tony) | E |
| | 1♥ | Dbl(1) | 3♥(2) |
| 6♠(3) | end | | |

(1) Featherlight on high cards but an ideal shape for the take-out double. Not textbook but I like it.

(2) A fine decision by Lewis's bridge partner and wife Loris, taking the slight chance her partner has neither first-round red suit control.

Declarer won West's king of diamonds lead with the ace, and could lay down her cards, "drawing trumps and running clubs". That was all 13 tricks and N-S +1010.

No other N-S pair reached 6♠. Indeed, every other N-S pair bar one earned 510 from making 5♠ plus two (or 4♠ plus three).

That other N-S pair defended 6♥, which they had naturally doubled, bid over their 5♠. There is a defence to win the first five tricks, earning an 800 penalty, so beating the row of 510s.

North leads the ace of diamonds and a second diamond, South ruffing. South switches to the ace of clubs and a second club, North winning the king and leading a third diamond, South ruffing again.

Alternatively, North leads a club, South winning the ace and switching to his singleton diamond. North wins the ace, returns a diamond (low as a suit preference signal for the lower-ranking clubs over spades), South ruffing and duly returning a club. North wins the king and gives his partner a second diamond ruff.

In practice, North led a spade (v 6♥ doubled). Declarer ruffed, cashed the ace of hearts and led the king of diamonds. South won the ace, cashed the king of hearts, and the defence took their two top clubs. Declarer claimed the remainder and was only three down. Losing 500 was the E-W top, compared with the row of 510s.