

Teaser No. 34

♠ J 7 6 2

♥ K 8 6

♦ Q J 10 7

♣ K 8

E/W GAME, Dealer: South

Contract: 1NT by South

Lead: 2♥

E/W Silent.

♠ Q 9 5

♥ A 4 3

♦ A K 9 2

♣ J 6 3

Plan the play – it's a teams' match.

Solution Teaser No. 34

Frozen suits are characterised by there being a picture card in each of the four hands. On this deal, both the clubs and spades are both potentially frozen. The club holding is similar to the heart holding in Teaser 33. If the ace is sitting over the king and the queen over the jack, neither side can open it up with impunity. In spades, if the missing picture cards are divided and the ten is with West, the suit is also frozen. Moving the ten of spades to East creates a winning finesse position, so the suit melts!

The mechanics of the game do not favour playing on these suits. You start with a low card and second hand also plays low. You now have to 'waste' an honour card from the third hand and fourth hand gratefully kills it with a higher honour. If the third hand to play were to become the fourth hand, it would be an opponent that was forced to waste an honour on one of your low cards. In other words, it is better to let the other side open up these suits. If you do play clubs or spades yourself you may not make a single trick from either suit.

The solution to the play of this 1NT contract is refreshingly simple. You should cash your six red suit winners and exit with a heart. E/W can cash their heart

winners but will then have to lead a black suit and set up your seventh trick. The opening lead suggests that the hearts are breaking 4-3, so the maximum they can possibly score in the meantime is six tricks: two in hearts, plus two in clubs and two in spades.