

# The Cheapest Trick

## by Brian Senior

The Seniors Pairs began with the qualifying round on Monday evening. We met a lady who said that playing in this congress was ticking off an item on her bucket list – she had never played in Brighton but was now playing in Eastbourne as a one-off. Having ticked the appropriate box, maybe it would be New York next year. Fair enough, I think New York trumps Eastbourne, don't you?

I think she may also have ticked a second box, though it would have been better had she been on the receiving end of what happened on this deal.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠	5	♠	J 7 6 2
♥	Q 10 9 5 4 3	♥	A K 6 2
♦	Q 2	♦	10
♣	Q J 4 2	♣	9 8 5 3
♠	A 9 4	♠	K Q 10 8 3
♥	8 7	♥	J
♦	A 8 7 5	♦	K J 9 6 4 3
♣	A K 10 6	♣	7

West	North	East	South
	Senior		Wolfarth
-	-	-	2♠
2NT	Pass	3♣	3♦
Dble	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Geoffrey opened 2♠, weak with five spades and a four-card or longer minor, West overcalled 2NT, 16-18, and East used Stayman. With the vulnerability in his favour and holding much more extreme distribution than normal for the 2♠ opening, Geoffrey showed his second suit and West doubled for penalties. East didn't fancy that and converted to 3NT.

I duly led the queen of diamonds, which held the trick, and continued with my remaining diamond. Geoffrey played the king, suit preference, and that too held the trick, as did his next play of the jack of diamonds. Declarer did, however, win the fourth diamond, of course. Meanwhile I had pitched two hearts and dummy two hearts and a club.

Declarer now cashed the ace of clubs then played a heart to dummy's ace. Geoffrey, off with the fairies once again, discarded the three of spades. The usual question elicited the response 'Oh, yes', and he corrected his play with the jack of hearts. But, of course, the three of spades was now a penalty card.

Declarer saw an opportunity to sneak an extra spade trick so led dummy's two. Geoffrey had to play his penalty card, the three, and now declarer could, and should, have put in the nine and won the trick. However, she actually played the four and my singleton five won

the trick. Not only had the five won the first round of a suit with everyone following, but this was a perfect example of the phenomenon, with the cards played in order – two, three, four, five – a rare beast indeed.

From here declarer could only make her top tricks so was down three for –300.