

Frozen

by Brian Senior

No, not the title of a children's film, but a frozen suit – one which neither side can afford to lead because doing so would cost a trick. This deal came from Wednesday evening's Mixed Pivot Teams.

Board 26. Dealer East. All Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
–	–	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass
Dble	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

West could not bear to pass throughout when holding a good six-card suit and 16 HCP including three aces, even though the long suit had been bid on his right. He passed over 1♠ then doubled 1NT to suggest a decent hand including some spade length. When East took out into 2♣ he didn't have to hold such a good club suit so West completed the picture of his hand with a 2♠ bid, ending the auction.

Three Clubs would have been a better spot but East was not to know that – West's spades could have been better. Had North found a heart lead, 2♠ would have been defeated, but the actual lead was a low diamond. West called for dummy's eight and South did the best he could by playing low. The eight therefore held the trick but now the diamond suit was frozen and declarer took full advantage.

In dummy for the one and only time, declarer took the club finesse, losing to North's king. Back came a heart to the ten and ace. Declarer cashed the ace of clubs then exited with a heart. He ruffed the heart return and played the king of spades to South's ace. Back came a low spade. Declarer put in the five, winning the trick – the defence made it almost certain that spades were five-one as South would likely have returned a club or a heart had he held one. The jack of spades won the next trick and declarer, down to two diamonds and ten-seven of spades, had a choice of endplays. If he played ace and another diamond, he would make the ten of spades at trick 13, while if he exited with a spade he would lose two spades but South would then have to lead away from the king of diamonds at trick 12. Either way, that was eight tricks and +110, all thanks to a frozen suit.