

# Bridge

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Last weekend saw the start of the Premier League in Solihull and, as I greeted my team, all smiles and bonhomie, I reiterated, for the umpteenth time, with a mildly apologetic nod to my tedious and unnecessary nagging, my only team rule: ‘Remember, boys, NO DOUBLED PART SCORES.’

Off I toddled with my partner Artur for a coffee, confident that the professionals would bring home the bacon. We went back for scoring up. Jason and Justin were enormous (I’m not talking girth, you naughty people) when suddenly I heard from Nick, ‘Minus 470’ and from Justin ‘11 out’. ‘Whaaaaaaat!’ I screamed before fainting, and came round to the words that made me wish I had a carving knife in my system file: ‘Sorry, I could have beaten it!’

Here is the hand which features, so Nick assures me, a neat declarer play from Peter Crouch:

**Dealer East**

**E/W vulnerable**

♠ A 4 2  
♥ Q 4  
♦ A J 10 4  
♣ A Q 8 2

♠ K Q J 6 5  
♥ 10 7 3 2  
♦ Void  
♣ J 10 6 3



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

♠ 8 3  
♥ A 9 6 5  
♦ 8 7 5 3  
♣ K 9 7

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1♠	1NT	2♠	X
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	Pass	X	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West’s ♠K held the first trick. The next spade was won in dummy and a spade ruffed in hand. Wisely leaving trumps alone for the moment, Peter instead took the club ‘finesse’ with the queen, and followed with ♣A and another. East (Nick) saw no reason to ruff what he assumed was partner’s trick, and Peter duly scored his ♣K!

Now, Ace of hearts and another heart left East on lead and, struggle as he may, his powerful trump holding could not produce more than two tricks. Contract made.

Nick was the first to admit he’d been an idiot – South’s actions in the bidding clearly marked him with two high cards, which had to be the ♥A and the ♣K. They say writing it all down is cathartic. . . .