

MALENY CONTRACT BRIDGE CLUB

This is the Number 14 bridge article for members of our club.

Last Week's Problem

You are South.

South Deals
None Vul

♠ A Q J
♥ 9 7 4
♦ 8 6 5 4
♣ Q J 8



♠ K 10 9 5 3
♥ Q 8 6 3
♦ —
♣ A K 9 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♠
Dbl	Rdbl ¹	2 ♦	Pass
Pass	2 ♠	3 ♦	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	

1. 10+ HCP, any distribution

Lead: ♦ A

You stumble into 4 ♠. What is your best chance to make the contract?

You trump the diamond lead in South's hand. You can count 9 top tricks (5 spades and 4 clubs). Where is the tenth trick coming from?

One possibility is hearts. If hearts split 3-3, you may be able to set up your fourth heart as the tenth trick. Alternatively, if they don't break 3-3, you might be able to trump your fourth heart in North's hand. If you lead hearts and they are not 3-3, the opponents can simply lead trumps each time they are in. Then you won't have a trump left in North's hand to trump the fourth hand. Alternatively, they might lead clubs and eventually be able to trump a club if clubs don't break 3-3. If you draw trumps first, they will be able to lead diamonds when they get in with the heart suit. You will run out of trumps in the South hand and go down even if hearts are 3-3.

Normally trumping losers in the long trump hand doesn't gain anything, because the long trumps are winners anyway. However, on this hand, if you can trump three diamonds in the South hand, North will have more trumps than South's 2 remaining trumps. You will have gained an extra trick.

At trick 2, lead a small spade to North's top spades and return a diamond, trumping it in South's hand. Repeat this at trick 4. South will have no trumps left. South should lead a small club and win with North's Q♣ and play North's third high trump. If trumps are 3-2, trumps are drawn, and you can take the remaining 3 club tricks. This makes a total of 10

tricks. Since trumps breaking 3-2 is much more likely than hearts breaking 3-3, this latter line of play is better.

This play, where you draw trumps with the short trump hand (and first use the trumps in the long trumps hand to trump losers) is called a dummy reversal. The role of the long trump hand (usually declarer) to draw trumps is reversed and it is the short trump hand (usually dummy) that draws trumps. For the play to work, the short trump hand must have sufficient entries to be able to lead enough losing cards for the long trump hand to trump, plus one more entry to get back in to draw the last trump.

The theme of the hands this week is finding the right play to manage the trump suit. As usual, you are South, and your aim is to make the contract. Overtricks and extra undertricks are irrelevant. Consider this hand.

North Deals ♠ K 2
 None Vul ♥ 9 8 4 3
 ♦ A K 9 4
 ♣ A 7 2



♠ A 9 8 6
 ♥ A 7 6 5
 ♦ 5 2
 ♣ K 9 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	All pass	

Lead: ♠ Q

West leads the Q♠ and North plays the K♠. How do you continue to give yourself the best chance assuming trumps break 3-2?

You have 6 tricks in the side suits (2 spades, 2 diamonds and 2 clubs) and need 4 tricks from hearts.

One option to consider is to draw trumps by playing the A♥ and another heart. The opponents will play a third round of hearts and you will be a trick short, taking only 3 heart tricks with your 6 tricks in the side suits. This play can't work. You need to cross-trump somehow to generate an extra trump trick.

Another option is to draw one round of trumps with the A♥, leaving 3 high trumps outstanding. You would then take the side suit aces and kings and start cross-trumping. This can't work either. The opponents will take their 3 high trumps separately by trumping your top or overtrumping and you would still have to lose a club.

You need to draw exactly two rounds of trumps without the opponents drawing a third round. The way to do this is to duck a round of trumps after winning the opening spade lead, retaining the ace to ensure only two rounds of trumps are played.

Win the first trick with the K♠ in North's hand.

Lead the 3♥ from North and play the 5♥ from South.

Win whatever suit they return and play A♥.

Then you can play on your side suits, cashing your aces and kings and cross-trumping your losing diamonds and spades. The opponent with the third trump can win a trick with it at any time, but you will make your contract (6 tricks with the side suit aces and kings, the A♥ and 3 heart tricks by trumping; the fourth heart being overtrumped at some stage). You lose only 2 trump tricks and 1 club.

Here is another hand.

South Deals ♠ K 10 4
 None Vul ♥ 9 7 3
 ♦ A K 6 3
 ♣ Q J 8

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A Q J 9 3
 ♥ K
 ♦ J 10 9 5
 ♣ K 10 5

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♠
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	

Lead: ♥ Q

West leads the Q♥ and East plays A♥. East now leads another heart. Trumps turn out to be split 3-2. Take it from here.

You trump East's heart lead. You have 7 top tricks (5 spades and 2 diamonds) and can establish a two club tricks by knocking out the ace. If the diamond finesse works, you have 2 more diamond tricks and if it fails, you can establish 1 extra diamond trick. So you can establish 3 or 4 extra tricks which should be enough for your contract.

Suppose you draw trumps in 3 rounds and lead the J♦ for a finesse, which loses to East's Q♦. East leads another heart and you have to trump with your last trump.

You take your diamond tricks, but when you lead clubs, the opponents take their A♣ and can win more heart tricks to defeat the contract (unless you are very lucky and the opponent with the A♣ has no more hearts to play).

You need to stop being forced to trump hearts so often. The way to do this is to draw only two rounds of trumps, leaving a trump in an opponent's hand, but more importantly, a high trump in dummy. Now if the diamond finesse loses, you can trump the heart return and have a high trump in both North and South. If the opponents lead another heart, you can trump in either hand, cross to the other hand in clubs, draw their last trump and cash your winners.

Here is another hand.

South Deals
None Vul

♠ 5 2
♥ 7
♦ A K Q J 9 2
♣ A 7 4 2



♠ A K Q 10 8 3
♥ A 9 8 6
♦ 7 3
♣ 5

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♠
Pass	3 ♦ ¹	Pass	4 NT ²
Pass	5 ♥ ³	Pass	6 ♠

All pass

- Shows a solid 6+ card diamond suit and opening points
- Blackwood, asking for number of aces
- 2 aces

Lead: ♥ Q

West leads the Q♥. It looks like you underbid this one. You count 14 tricks with 6 spades, 1 heart, 6 diamonds and 1 club. Even if East has all 5 diamonds, you can trump a small diamond in South after drawing trumps and taking the A♦ and K♦. You still have 5 diamond tricks which is enough for all 13 tricks.

You win the heart lead in South with the A♥ and play A♠, then K♠, preparing to claim, when East discards the 4♦ on the K♠. What now?

Now you are going down. Quite a few. West must get in with his spade trick and the opponents can then take three heart tricks. What bad luck that trumps were 4-1. Could you have done anything to make your contract?

Your problem arose because the opponents were able to take heart tricks when they got in with their natural trump winner. How can you stop that? Lose the spade trick on the first round of spades i.e duck a spade at trick 2. This loses a trick that you would not need to lose most of the time (trumps will be 3-2 about 68% of the time) but guarantees your contract if trumps are 4-1 (28% of the time).

After you win the first trick with the A♥, you could just lead the 3♠, but it is fairly safe to cross to North's hand with the A♣ and lead the 2♠ from North, inserting the 10♠ from South if East plays low. At least this means you only lose a spade trick if West has the J♠ (which was the case as the cards lay).

If you were playing pairs, where overtricks matter, should you just draw trumps, hoping they are 3-2 (68% of the times) and make 13 tricks or should you make the safety play of ducking a trump at trick 2 to ensure 12 tricks if trumps are 4-1 (28% of the time)? It depends on how many other pairs you think are in 6♠. If you think all pairs will be in 6♠, you should draw trumps as this will give you the best score more often. However, if you think a number of

pairs (say half) will be in 6♦ or not in a slam at all, you should make the safety play .
 You will have beaten those pairs regardless provided you make your contract.

Next week the topic will still be play by declarer, but the theme will be different. Look at this hand.

South Deals	♠ K Q 5											
None Vul	♥ Q 9 5											
	♦ 6 2											
	♣ A 8 7 6 2											
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	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ A 9 8 6 4 3 2											
	♥ 7											
	♦ K 4											
	♣ K 5 4											
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>									
			1 ♠									
2 ♥	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠									
All pass												
Lead: ♥ A												

After West's A♥ wins the first trick, West leads the 7♠ and East follows with the 10♠. How do you play to give yourself the best chance to make your contract?