

Board 1

South Deals

None Vul

♠ A 2
♥ Q 9 8 3
♦ 7 6 5 3
♣ T 9 7

♠ K Q 9 8 6 4

♥ A J 2

♦ 8

♣ 6 5 4

	N	7
W		♥ T 7 5 4
	E	♦ A 9 4 2
	S	♣ K Q J 3

♠ J T 5 3
♥ K 6
♦ K Q J T
♣ A 8 2

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

4 ♠ by North

If you try to establish a ♦ they will do the same thing, just in a different order. What does that leave you?

It leaves you trying the only possible way you can make this contract, finessing West for the ♥Q to get a ♣ discard from dummy.

You win the ♣A in dummy, play the ♥K, then return a ♥ to your ♥J. You then discard a ♣ from dummy on the ♥A.

This time it worked, another time it might not.

Baker Trumpmgmt 16
North is to play 4♠. East leads the ♣K.

Losers: ♠=1 ♥=0 ♦=1 ♣=2 Total = 4

The ♣ lead was terrible for you as it exposes your 2 ♣ losers before you can establish a ♦ for a discard. If you start to pull trumps now the defense will grab their ♠A, their 2 ♣s and their ♦A.

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If you try to establish a ♦ they will do the same

Board 2

East Deals

None Vul

♠ A 7 5 3
♥ T 7 3
♦ K 9 8
♣ A 9 6

♠ Q J T 9

♥ Q J 8

♦ 6 5 2

♣ 8 4 3

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K 8 6 4 2
♥ -
♦ J T 7 3
♣ Q J T 2

♠ -
♥ A K 9 6 5 4 2
♦ A Q 4
♣ K 7 5

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

4♥ by South

West now leads the ♥7. You cover with dummy's ♥8 knowing the finesse will win. Next you play dummy's ♠J, covered by East and ruffed by you (if East didn't cover you would throw another ♣ loser). Now enter dummy with the ♥Q, pulling West's last trump at the same time. Discard your 2 ♣s on the ♠T 9 and try the ♦ finesse for an overtrick.

Just the fact that you had to use the trump suit for entries to dummy, and therefore couldn't immediately pull trumps.

Baker Trumpmgmt 17
South is to play 4♥. West leads the ♥3.

Losers: ♠=0 ♥=0 ♦=2 ♣=3 Total = 5

If East has the ♦K, one ♦ loser can be eliminated by a finesse. And, if East also has the ♣A one more loser can be eliminated by leading toward your ♣K. The chance of both cards being held by East isn't very good, only about 25%. But dummy has some nice ♠s. Can you use them?

Yes, you can establish 2 ♠ winners for discards, and most importantly, you can do it without letting East into the lead. This is important because if East gets in and plays a ♣ through your ♣K 7 5 it might be a disaster.

So win the ♥J in dummy. Uh-Oh, East discards a ♠. Now play the ♠Q and when East plays low, discard a ♣. This is a loser on loser play and West takes the trick with the ♠A.

Board 3

West Deals

E-W Vul

♠ T 5 2

♥ T 9 3

♦ J 9 5 3

♣ K Q 8

♠ A Q J 9 7 4

♥ A 6

♦ A Q

♣ 6 3 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 8 3

♥ K Q J 7

♦ T 6 4

♣ A J T 7

♠ K 6

♥ 8 5 4 2

♦ K 8 7 2

♣ 9 5 4

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

4 ♠ by North

Baker Trumpmgmt 18
Losers: ♠=0 ♥=1 ♦=0 ♣=3 Total = 4

This is a very easy problem to be up here at number 18! Clearly you have to discard one of those 4 losers on the only card dummy has, the ♦K.

Just as clearly you have to be able to enter dummy after you unblock the ♦A Q so you can't pull trumps immediately.

So here's the Plan. Win the ♥A. Pull one round of trumps with the ♠A. Play the ♦A Q to get them out of the way. Enter dummy with the ♠K. Play the ♦K, discard a loser, and hope nobody ruffs.

. . . except when you have a good reason not to, like here.

Board 4

South Deals

None Vul

♠ Q J T 7 3

♥ J 3

♦ 8 6 2

♣ J 9 5

♠ -

♥ T 9 6

♦ K Q J T 3

♣ A 8 7 4 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A 9 8

♥ Q 5 2

♦ 9 7 5 4

♣ Q T 6

♠ K 6 5 4 2

♥ A K 8 7 4

♦ A

♣ K 3

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	4♥	Pass	3♥
Pass	6♥	All Pass	4NT

6♥ by North

At trick two you duck a trump. That's right, you lose a trump trick early. Since you have to lose a trump sometime, you do it at a time when the defenders can't hurt you. So a defender wins the trump trick, but now a ♠ play won't hurt because dummy still has a trump to ruff with! In fact, whatever they play next you will win, pull the outstanding trumps, then run dummy's ♦ suit.

for the full deal.

When you have a trump loser but still need to pull their trumps, it may be better for you to lose an early trump trick rather than a later one.

Baker Trumpmgmt 19

North's 6♥ response to Blackwood showed one Ace and a ♠ void. South is to play 6♥. West leads the ♠Q.

Losers: ♠ = ?? ♥ = 1 ♦ = 0 ♣ = 0 Total = 1 ??

Of course you ruff the ♠ in dummy. West wouldn't underlead an Ace at a slam contract, and since you have a certain trump loser you cannot afford to lose a trick to East's ♠A.

Dummy has some great ♦s, but you can't expect to run them unless you have pulled all the trumps. But if you play ♥ A K 4 the defenders will take their trump trick and immediately set the contract with the ♠A. There IS a way around the problem.

First off, you must get a 3-2 split in trumps because if they don't split 3-2 you will have two trump losers. So you assume that they are split just like you need them to be.

Board 5

South Deals

N-S Vul

♠ 6 5
♥ 5 4 3 2
♦ Q 2
♣ K Q 9 7 3

♠ 7 4 2
♥ Q J T 7
♦ 5
♣ A 8 6 4 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A K Q
♥ A K 9 8
♦ A T 8 6 3
♣ 5

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

6♥ by South

cross-ruff hand, ruffing ♣s in dummy and ♦s in your hand. Since neither hand can be over-ruffed you expect to make all 8 trumps.

Remember, when playing a cross ruff, you need to take any side suit winners first, otherwise a defender may be able to discard that suit while you are ruffing. So you win the ♠A, then take the ♠K, then . . . what?

Well, if you win the ♠Q, then the two Minor suit Aces, you'd be set up to cross-ruff the hand out for all 13 tricks. But here's what might happen if you try.

West might ruff the ♠Q. OK, no disaster yet. But he might then play a trump. Your slam is now kaput. You can no longer make 8 trump tricks and will end up down 1.

The answer is to not be greedy for that overtrick. With East's opening ♠ lead there is an indication of possible length there. So, realizing that West could be short in the suit, take just the 2 ♠ tricks that you need for the slam, then play your Minor Aces and start the cross-ruff.

Don't jeopardize your contract trying to take too many.

Baker Trumpmgmt 20

Agreed that the bidding wasn't much. The final contract is still a good one. North is to play 6♥. East leads the ♠J.

Losers: ♠=0 ♥=0 ♦=0 ♣=4 Total = 4

There really aren't 4 ♣ losers since they can be ruffed in dummy. In fact you should see that this is an ideal cross-ruff hand, ruffing ♣s in dummy and ♦s in your hand. Since neither hand can be over-ruffed you expect to make all 8 trumps.

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