### CLYDE E. LOVE

## BRIDGE SQUEEZES

Winning Endgame Strategy



A timeless classic, updated for the first time in more than 50 years.

SECOND EDITION

# CLYDE E. LOVE BRIDGE SQUEEZES C O M P L E T E

Winning Endgame Strategy
SECOND EDITION



Updated and revised by Linda Lee with Julian Pottage Text © 1959, 2010 The Estate of Clyde E Love Cover © Yuji Sakai/Digital Vision/Getty Images

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FOREWORD TO THE SECOND EDITION

My three sisters and I are thrilled to see our grandfather's classic book, Bridge Squeezes Complete, revised and in print again. Clyde Love was a well-known bridge authority in his day, and when first published, the original edition was on the New York Times Bestseller list. His keen strategic and analytical sense and passion for the game resulted in this comprehensive, often entertaining, book.

Born in 1882 in the southeast Michigan town of West Branch, Clyde E. Love was the only child of medical doctor Frank Love and his wife, Marian. His brilliant mind for numbers manifested itself early on. Before the age of five, he had shown a genius-level grasp of mathematics. In fact, his natural aptitude for learning was so sharp, he only attended school three months of the year rather than eight and learned all he needed in that space of time.

As an eighteen year old student at The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, he began teaching mathematics as a university Teaching Assistant. In that same year he married Georgena Emerick, and in 1904 they had their first child, Frank. My mother, Marian, was born in 1910. After earning his PhD, he was hired as a Professor in the University of Michigan Mathematics Department. During his academic career, he wrote math textbooks that were used by many universities. These included Analytic Geometry, Elements of Analytic Geometry and Differential and Integral Calculus. The textbooks were translated and were eventually in use at universities and colleges throughout the world. His bridge books were not completed and published until later in his career.

In the Love household, bridge was a family affair. All members were avid players. Mother often teamed up with her father for local matches and master tournaments as far away as Chicago. In fact, during one such tournament in Detroit, Michigan they played against Oswald Jacoby, and won. Later in life, my mother played with my father, Archie MacAlpin. They continued to play and host bridge parties until they passed away in the 1990s.

Besides bridge and mathematics, our grandfather loved nature and the wilds of northern Michigan. As a youth, he enjoyed family camping trips at the many lakes in Michigan's Lower Peninsula. These trips inspired him to build a rustic, seasonal cottage on the shores of Burt Lake, a beautiful lake in the northern Lower Peninsula. The cottage was completed in 1922 and is still used and enjoyed each year by the Love/MacAlpin family.

My grandfather loved this modest, woodland cottage. He enjoyed working in the forest, bringing in wood for the large fieldstone fireplace and woodstove. On evenings he and my parents would play card games, sing to piano tunes and enjoy grand sunsets from the screened porch that faces the lake. Clyde loved the beauty of the water but in all his years enjoying the lakeside he never learned to swim.

He had a deep love of the West, and took a number of trips to the West with my grandmother. He embraced a number of conservation causes before it was popular to do so. He was especially concerned with saving the California redwoods.

Clyde had us call him 'Gramps', and some of my fondest personal memories of him were at his Ann Arbor home. We especially enjoyed playing dominos together, and the old pump organ upstairs was a particular attraction too. Every year without fail, he gave me twenty-five silver dollars on my birthday and a box of stuffed dates at Christmas. He loved cigars and always had one in hand, a habit that eventually weakened his health. It was 1959 when he died at the age of seventy-seven.

If my grandfather were alive today he would be pleased to know Bridge Squeezes Complete has stood the test of time. Through this revised edition, a new generation of bridge enthusiasts will be given the opportunity to sharpen their game with the help of his astute instruction.

> Mary Therese Keith November 2009

#### FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION

Clyde Love has perhaps produced the finest book on bridge. His first book, Squeeze Play in Bridge (1951), was a more complete exposition of the subject than anything previously written, and now he has gone far beyond his own monumental work.

This book is not to be perused lightly. Instead of racing through, each reader should pace himself to his own capabilities in order to digest thoroughly as he goes. This book is intriguing, fascinating, instructive, comprehensive, and, above all, thoroughly entertaining. Do not put it aside with the thought that it is not for you. It is for every bridge player of every gradation of skill. All that is required is interest and a desire to learn.

Bridge Squeezes Complete will polish the expert's technique and will reveal to him hitherto unknown potentialities in other aspects. Bridge Squeezes Complete will make fine players out of good players by providing them with the means for perfecting and crystallizing their often erratic play of squeeze-type hands. Bridge Squeezes Complete will intrigue the student beyond description, furnishing him with hundreds of hours of fascinating analyses and squeeze possibilities.

If you are an egotistical bridge player (as most of us are); if, in your opinion, your game is already perfected, leaving little more to learn about the game of bridge — this book is for you, as well as for the average player. We humbly suggest that your eyes will be opened by Bridge Squeezes Complete.

This book is great. It transcends adequate praise from mere bridge players such as we. Full appreciation and ultimate recognition will be forthcoming from you — the bridge players of the world — for whom this masterpiece was written. We confidently predict this work will become an all-time classic. It is a rare privilege indeed to review this book and to recommend it wholeheartedly and without reservation.

> William B. Woodson John W. Norwood, Jr.

#### PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Ray and I were very pleased when we were offered the opportunity to republish Clyde E. Love's Bridge Squeezes Complete. After all, it is still on many people's lists as one of the best and most important bridge books ever written. We both recalled the book fondly from early in our bridge careers. I read and reread it; I remember getting out a deck of cards, laying out deals for the Exercises and Problems on my bed and carefully working through them. Professor Love was absolutely correct: reading this book will make you a better bridge player. You cannot possibly work out at the bridge table everything you need to know about how squeezes operate, no matter how often you play. That is something you need to learn.

However, at the same time we both remembered that we never actually finished reading the whole book and that we didn't always fully understand what Love was trying to tell us. In a way he reminded me of my university mathematics professors who would either leave things as exercises for the student or give very terse mathematical explanations. That was something we could address in a new edition. In addition, bridge vernacular and even the English language have changed enough that some of the expressions used in the original text have become dated. The game itself has changed dramatically, too, since 1959. In fact, I was astounded by how silly the auctions in the first edition look to us today. Defensive carding has improved, and has become a much more important part of the game. Today, most expert players have clear agreements on what they lead, what they signal in various situations, and what discards mean. Clearly, bridge technique has advanced a lot in the last fifty or so years, and our new edition had to take that into account.

Love's book still forms the basis for all discussions of squeezes, and the squeeze vocabulary he invented has become part of the language. Only a few days ago, I saw several online bridge commentators joking about BLUE — and every one of them knew exactly what it meant. Squeeze theory has also advanced, however — subsequent writers have built on the foundation that Love's work provided.

All of these developments in the game and its language, as well as advances in theory, represented challenges for us. They meant that we would have to make substantial changes to the book while still attempting to retain the wit, insights and approach to squeeze theory of the original. And even though we recognized that the word 'complete' in the title would never really be true, we needed to include at least some of the important new ideas in squeeze theory of the last half-century.

I began by deciding to remove auctions from the Exercises unless they impacted decisions made during the play (and even then, if we could get away with just mentioning that someone had opened or overcalled, on occasion we did so). In the Review Problems I did provide modern auctions with standard conventions like RKCB, so readers could approach the problem having all the information and make a decision on what was relevant. In some cases the bidding may seem a bit contrived, but not every auction at the table follows the textbook and it is, after all, in the nature of squeezes that you may need them more on deals where you have not bid perfectly.

The next decision was how much new material to include, and what it should be. I would have liked to go even further in introducing new squeeze theory but we were limited by what could realistically go into a single book. In some cases, new material could be included in the appropriate chapter, but in others it just didn't fit. Finally I decided to add a new chapter, which would provide a brief survey of some fascinating (if generally fairly rare) squeezes that are too far beyond the scope of the original book.

One of the big decisions was whether or not to change any of the nomenclature. I 'loved' BLUE, but there were other acronyms and terms that didn't seem to work as well. More than one generation of bridge players has learned to use these names, though, and many of them are pervasive in squeeze literature. So I knew we had to tread lightly. Every idea for a change was carefully weighed. For example, I couldn't understand why Love had used 'A' for 'access' instead of 'E' for 'entry' when talking about a type of strip-squeeze, leading to the awkward acronym CLA. However, in one place in the book he did refer to it as CLE; that, I felt, justified making a change and using the more felicitous mnemonic CLuE. The most significant other issue was in the realm of the double squeeze. In this edition we refer to the threat jointly guarded by both opponents as 'C' for 'Common' and not 'B' for 'Both', since references to 'Common suit' and 'Common threat' flow much more smoothly. (Other writers have also been uncomfortable with the term 'Both' — David Bird uses the 'pivot suit', for example.) However, this does result in the double squeeze types changing from the original B1 and B2 to C1 and C2. It was a much easier decision to add some new names or to change some of the more minor terms in the cause of clarity.

Space has also affected the number of Review Problems we could provide for each chapter. In some cases this meant adding problems and in some cases removing them. I also liked the idea of having a general set of problems at the end of the book as Love had done. However, most of the original end-ofbook problems were not squeezes at all but simple endplays, and by then the team felt that the book was getting too long. So we came up with another solution. We will put together many of the problems from the original book that for one reason or another didn't make the cut, as well as some new problems to cover a wider range of topics, and make them available for free download. To access these problems, just go to www.ebooksbridge.com and follow the link for the free squeeze problems.

Two other new features in this edition are the chapter summaries and the glossary. When I was working on the book, I was constantly looking up the various rules and definitions. I noticed that people have collected many of Love's rules and summarized them in articles on websites. Clearly, everyone needs to consult these as reminders from time to time. We wanted to make them easy to find, without having to search through the entire book. Terms in bold type have been included in the glossary. If you come across these terms later in the ebook and need a reminder, just click on the appropriate bookmark link to the glossary, using your browser's back button to return. Likewise, you can reference the chapter summaries using the bookmarks provided.

Once we were up and running, Julian Pottage provided an enormous amount of assistance to this project. He was the source for many of the new examples and problems used in this edition. He read every page and worked through every deal, and provided me with a multitude of corrections, analytical improvements and ideas on squeeze technique. He also helped us make decisions on just about everything from which new squeezes we would add to which nomenclature to use. In other words, I could count on Julian to find most of my errors and omissions, and to provide enough guidance with everything else that I didn't go too far astray.

Besides Iulian, I would like to offer my thanks and appreciation to my editor (and husband) Ray Lee and to Roy Hughes, Colin Lee and Ron Bishop, who all offered insights and assistance at various stages. Finally I want to thank the family of the late Clyde E. Love for giving me and Master Point Press this opportunity. It is amazing how excited everyone was to have a chance to work on 'Love'.

> Linda Lee Toronto, November 2009

The question is often asked: 'Is it possible to win without knowing anything about squeezes?' The answer is: 'Yes, certainly.' However, you won't win as often; more important, you will never experience what is unquestionably the greatest thrill in bridge — the consummation of a squeeze. If you become known as a competent squeezer, a better grade of players will want you as a partner. Second, a squeeze deal requires shaping up according to principles which are in large part unknown to many, and many non-squeeze deals require shaping up according to those same principles. This means that this knowledge will make the difference in many deals where no squeeze is present.

This book ultimately gets into the realm of expert play; but it begins at the very beginning, on the assumption that you never saw a squeeze, and the progress is by very easy stages. It follows that anyone who can make a respectable showing in home-town duplicate can read this entire book. However, if you are a squeeze novice, a study of just the first chapter will be of great benefit to your game. (This is merely bait: once you have fully assimilated Chapter 1, you will never stop there, because squeeze play is habit-forming.)

A word of warning: do not think that you can read this book the way you would read a newspaper — or better, a whodunit. Instead, lay out each deal as given, and knuckle down to a bit of serious study.

To acquire a knowledge of squeeze play, the student first encounters two typical forms: the simple squeeze and the double squeeze (each of the 'notrump' variety), in which declarer can win all but one of the remaining tricks without surrendering the lead. Since these are usually the easiest of all squeezes to recognize and execute, it seems proper to call them elementary squeezes. Beyond these two types there is a great body of advanced positions. An earlier work, Squeeze Play in Bridge, covered to the best of our ability the elementary field. Readers of this book who are already acquainted with its older brother may want to omit Chapters 1 and 2 following, because those chapters treat the same topics.

Several deals, of types rarely if ever occurring in play, are introduced merely to show the possibility of exceptions to our general statements, or because of their intrinsic interest as curiosities. Those types that are of practical importance in play are discussed to classify the various forms according to their characteristic features, and to reduce the play of each species, so far as possible, to a definite line of procedure. In short, this is a textbook, not an encyclopedia. A few nonsqueeze problems have been included for two reasons: the reader cannot assume that every contract must be played with a squeeze; secondly, because the problem is interesting in its own right.

A word about the bidding. Except in the end-of-chapter problems, full auctions have been included only when declarer's plan of play may be influenced by the defenders' bidding. This book is primarily concerned with the play of the cards, and it is suggested that the reader concentrate on the play. There are no artificial bids except those that are familiar to everyone, and these are marked, as usual, with an asterisk. Vulnerability is not given: where you think that this would affect the bidding, you may assume the proper conditions to exist. Limitations of space made it impossible to take up a systematic discussion of squeeze defense.

Throughout the writing we have leaned heavily upon that loval supporter, Dr. Ben Dushnik, of Ann Arbor, MI. This faithful adherent has gone over the entire manuscript with a microscope, and his help has been invaluable. Messrs. John W. Norwood, Jr., of Greenville, SC, and William B. Woodson, of Greensboro, NC, have kept in close touch with the work from the beginning, and have made any number of useful contributions. Our obligation to these three good friends can hardly be overstated, because without their constant encouragement it is doubtful that the book would ever have been completed.

> Clyde E. Love Ann Arbor, MI

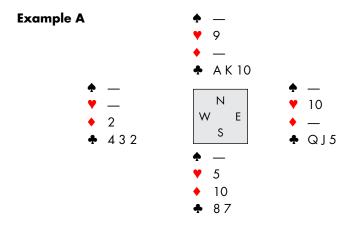
#### THE SIMPLE SQUEEZE

Let's get started with the basics. This will involve introducing some terminology that we are going to use throughout our study of squeezes.

As a rule, a bridge hand contains some worthless cards as well as some that play a useful role, as a prospective winner or a guard, etc. These are called **idle** and busy cards respectively. A guard is a card which prevents declarer from obtaining extra winners in a suit.

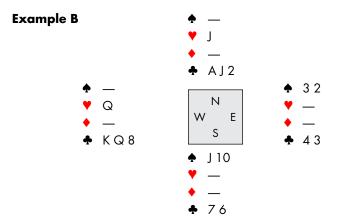
A player may be forced to discard a busy card, for the simple reason that his hand no longer contains any idle cards. When this happens, the player is said to be **squeezed**. A squeeze occurs when a player plays out cards which remove all the idle cards from an opponent's hand and forces the opponent to discard a winner or give up a guard position. This results in the gain of one or more tricks sooner or later.

In the following end positions the contract is notrump. South has the lead and needs to make the rest of the tricks. One of the defender's hands is worthless.



In Example A, the West hand is worthless as East has the entire job of keeping the heart and club cards that will prevent declarer from making all four tricks. East has no idle cards. The ♥10 guards the heart suit and the three clubs guard the club suit. All his cards are 'busy'.

On the lead of the ◆10 the idle heart can be discarded from the North hand, but East is squeezed. If he throws the ♥10, South's ♥5 is good; if he yields a club, North's ♣10 scores. So, although declarer has only three top tricks, he takes all four tricks.



In Example B, both West and North throw an idle club on the first spade. Now all of West's cards are busy. On the second spade West is squeezed. No matter what he does, the North hand takes the rest.

#### Squeeze Vocabulary

Squeeze play has a vocabulary all its own, and our first step is to learn that vocabulary. For simplicity, we shall begin by considering only pure squeezes (i.e. we shall for the time being ignore endings that combine a squeeze with some other type of play such as a throw-in). In every squeeze one adversary must hold busy cards in at least two suits. In the typical case, declarer holds potential winners in these suits, one of which will become established by the squeeze. Declarer's potential winners are called **threats** (sometimes referred to as **menaces**). In Example A above, the threats are the ♥5 and the ♣10; in Example B, the threats are the  $\P$  and the  $\P$ . The suits in which the defender or defenders are busy are the **threat suits**; the other suits are called **Free suits**.

In the simplest case, when a certain stage of play is reached, declarer begins leading his Free winners and continues until all are played. The winner that forces the fatal discard is the squeeze card, and the trick on which it is played is the **squeeze trick**. (As we shall see, in some of the more complicated squeezes there is more than one squeeze card, and therefore more than one squeeze trick.)

When declarer is ready to begin playing his string of winners (the 'string' might consist of only one card), the squeeze is established; when the squeeze card is about to be played, the squeeze is **reached**. In Example A, the squeeze is already reached; in Example B it is established, and is reached after one more trick.

Of declarer's two hands, the one that lies to the left of the intended victim is called the **upper hand**; the one to the right, the **lower hand**. In Example A, South is the upper hand; in B, North. You could also say that the victim lies **under** one of the threat cards. This is similar to a finesse. The victim is forced to commit by playing his card before declarer makes his discard from the upper hand, so at least one threat must be to the left of the victim.

All squeezes fall into one or the other of two general classes. In a **notrump squeeze** (which may in fact occur at a trump contract) the play, after the squeeze is established, is essentially of notrump character: the trumps, if any, are merely run off to force discards. In a **trump squeeze**, by contrast, declarer's ability to ruff is an essential ingredient of the squeeze. Since trump squeezes are comparatively rare, their study will be postponed to our last chapter.

#### **BLUE** and the Simple Squeeze

Of the many varieties of squeeze that may arise, the commonest is the two-suit squeeze on a single defender. This is called a **simple squeeze**. It is also, by good fortune, the simplest squeeze in the usual meaning of the word. In the typical form of this play, declarer holds threats in two suits and the whole burden of defense lies with a single adversary. Further, at the time when the squeeze becomes established declarer has only one loser remaining: that is, he can win all but one trick off the top.

An important property of the simple squeeze is this: at least one of the threat cards lies in the hand opposite the squeeze card. In the examples that follow we shall see that there are three possible arrangements of the threats, or **entry conditions**. In most of the examples to follow, for simplicity, South will hold the squeeze card. Using this approach, when I refer to South I am referring to the hand that holds the squeeze card. Similarly when I refer to North I am talking about the hand opposite the squeeze card, which must always hold at least one of the threats. Of course in real life any of the four hands might hold the threats or the squeeze card.

There are four conditions that must be present for a simple squeeze to work.

#### The Four Conditions (BLUE)

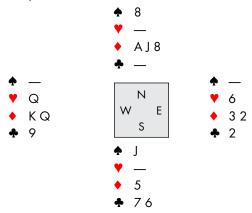
- В One defender is **Busy** in two suits, his partner being helpless.
- Declarer has only one **Loser** remaining.
- There is at least one threat in the hand to the left of the victim (a threat lies in the **Upper** hand).
- Ε There is an **Entry** to the established threat.

You can remember the four conditions by calling to mind the word **BLUE**.

The absolute necessity of **B** (Busy), for all squeezes of whatever type, has already been remarked. The necessity of **E** (Entry) is obvious. What happens when either L (one Loser) or U (one threat in the Upper hand) is lacking can be shown easily:

#### Example C — L is not met

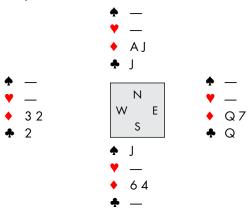
Notrump contract, South to lead



In this example, declarer can win only two of the four remaining tricks; that is, he has two losers. When declarer leads the •], West has an idle card available (the  $\mathbf{VQ}$ ), and the squeeze fails.

#### Example D — U is not met

Notrump contract, South to lead



In this example, East is the squeeze target but both threats are in the North hand (here the lower hand). With no threat over the victim, **U** is lacking. North has to discard before East on the \[ \]! whichever threat is thrown, East can release the guard in that same suit.

The squeeze is a machine, and the only way you can learn to operate a machine is by actually doing so. This means that the Exercises are the lifeblood of this book. However, to get anything like full value from them, you must scrupulously avoid double-dummy play — usually this will involve covering the East-West cards. Start by looking at your own hands and the bidding (if it is given), and form a tentative plan, as you would at the table. Try not to start with the preconceived idea that each hand will produce a squeeze; instead, just play bridge. Next, read the paragraph immediately below the diagram, and bring your plan up to date. Then, and not until then (no peeking!), look at the adverse holdings and read the full analysis. At least at first, you may find it helpful to lay out the full deal with a deck of cards and play it out trick by trick, watching the wheels go round.

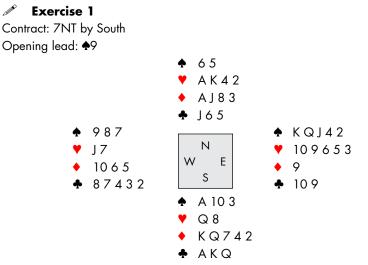
How can you determine whether a squeeze will work on a particular deal? Since L (Losers), U (Upper hand) and E (Entries) depend mostly on your own holdings, you can determine (tentatively at least) whether these are present. As regards **B** (Busy), it is usually necessary to assume that both threats are guarded by a single adversary and therefore that all that player's cards are busy. Finally, when a squeeze offers the best or only chance, always try for it.

There are three types of simple squeeze based on where the threats and entries lie. We will examine each type in detail.

#### Type 1: Long-Threat Entry

The first type of simple squeeze is called a **long-threat entry**: the hand opposite the squeeze card holds a threat with an entry in its own suit. This is the most frequent type of simple squeeze occurring in play. North (the upper hand) holds a threat accompanied by an entry in its own suit. For example, the North hand contains the ace-jack in a suit while South has a small card in the same suit; the jack is a threat while the ace is an entry.

When this entry condition is present, the threats can be divided between declarer's two hands, or the North hand can hold both threats. If the North hand holds both threats then West is the only possible squeeze target, because otherwise **U** would be absent since no threat would lie in the upper hand. If East was the victim he could sit back and wait for the North hand to release a threat card before having to commit to his own discard.



East plays the •J on the first trick. First count your winners. You have one spade, three hearts, five diamonds and three clubs, for a total of twelve. You are a trick short and the only chance is a squeeze.

Let's see whether a squeeze is possible. The opening lead suggests that East has the  $\bigstar$ KQ. If he also has four or more hearts he is guarding both suits, so we'll assume that he does have the hearts. Let's tick off the **BLUE** conditions:

```
We're assuming that East is

B = Busy ✓

There is only one loser.

L = Loser ✓

One threat, the ♠10, is in the upper hand (here, South).

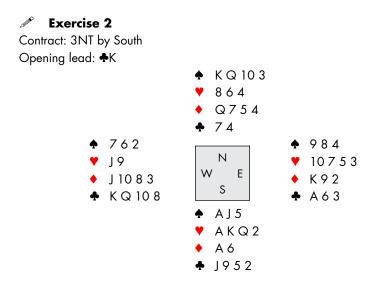
U = Upper ✓
```

In addition, there will be an entry for the heart threat. This deal is an example of a long-threat entry position. The long threat is the heart suit and the heart honors are entries. The heart threat is in the hand opposite the squeeze cards.

Nothing to do but run the Free suits. Before starting to play, should you try to figure out why or how or when the squeeze will operate? No: when you slip a coin in a parking meter and the numbers change, do you care what went on inside? Or should you try to visualize what the four hands will look like after eight or nine or ten tricks? No: sheer waste of time.

So how do you know if the squeeze has worked? What should you watch for? There are two suits that matter, the suits that have the threats. In this deal, the cards that matter in the spade suit are the  $\bigstar K$  and  $\bigstar O$ . When they are gone the \$10 will be high. The other cards that matter are the cards in the heart suit. However, the only cards you really have to watch for are the top spades. If the  $\bigstar$ K and  $\bigstar$ Q are thrown then you cash your  $\bigstar$ 10. You don't need to keep track of the hearts at all. If the  $\bigstar K$  and  $\bigstar Q$  have not both been thrown then you try the heart suit. If the squeeze worked your hearts will be good. They either run or they don't. So your plan is to watch for the cards in one suit (choose the easier one for you, the one where you have less to watch for); if they have not appeared then you assume that the squeeze has worked and the other suit will now run.

One remark, to avoid a possible misconception. In a deal offering a choice of contracts, the denomination might matter. For instance, if you could play in spades or notrump, it may happen that a squeeze is present in one strain but not in the other. However, since a squeeze is determined by the placement of the cards, it is totally independent of the level of the contract.



You quickly arrive in 3NT with no opposition bidding. The defense starts off by taking four club tricks, East throwing the \$\frac{1}{2}\$4 on the fourth club. West switches to the ◆J. Believing that West would not lead away from the ◆K, you play low from dummy and win the trick in hand with the A.

Counting your winners, you discover that you have eight tricks: four spades, three hearts and a diamond. If hearts break 3-3, the long heart will produce a ninth trick. The heart division is a frail reed to lean on, however. Might there be a squeeze?

If either defender (most likely East, but who cares?) has the ◆K and four hearts, **B** is in operation. Let's tick off the **BLUE** conditions:

We assume

B = Busy ✓

After four tricks, there is only one loser.

L = loser \( \sqrt{}

The two threats (the ◆Q and the ♥2) are divided so **U** will work against either adversary.

**U** = Upper ✓

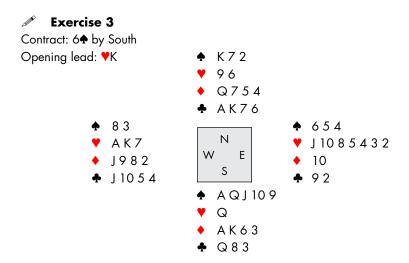
So long as you do not test for a 3-3 heart break prematurely, there will be an entry to the heart threat.

**E** = Entry ✓

Nothing to do but reel off the spades. What should you watch for? Well, you could count hearts but the easiest thing to do is to watch for the ◆K. (Yes, you can ignore discards in the heart suit completely.) By the way, did you notice that this is another example of long-threat entry? Here the squeeze card is the fourth spade. The fourth heart is the long threat and the ♥A is the entry to it.

We shall insert a remark about defense from time to time, and perhaps it is not too early to begin. One of the most potent anti-squeeze weapons is the attack on the Loser condition, L: that is, the defenders try to prevent declarer from giving up enough tricks so that he has only one loser. In Exercise 2, West can see that there is no chance unless East has either an ace or the ◆K and a heart stopper. In the latter event East can be squeezed if the defenders take all their club tricks. What if West wins the third club and then switches to the ◆1, without cashing that fourth club winner? Now just try to make 3NT. Notice that with this defense East follows to all declarer's tricks except the fourth spade and still has an idle card left, a small diamond, which he can throw. With more than one loser the squeeze will not operate.

Thus, to the list of reasons why you should study squeeze play, this deal adds another, and one which is of prime importance. Many times no defense is possible (Exercise 1), but sometimes a killing defense can be found (Exercise 2). If you are a non-squeezer you will not take advantage of chances to defend yourself. As for protecting your partner, you will never see his danger until too late — probably not until the bitter incriminations of the post-mortem; and even then, you will offend in exactly the same way next time.



You arrive in 64 with no opposition bidding. The defense starts off with the top two hearts and you ruff the second round. You play three rounds of trumps and West discards the ♥7 on the third round.

You have five spade tricks and six top tricks in the minors. If either minor breaks kindly you have twelve tricks. However, even if neither minor runs there is still a chance: the length in the two suits might lie in the same hand. Let's check the squeeze chances with **BLUE**:

If either defender has length in both minors then **B** is in force. We might as well assume this since if neither minor breaks and the stoppers are in different hands there is no way to make the slam.

After the **YK** is taken there is only one potential loser.

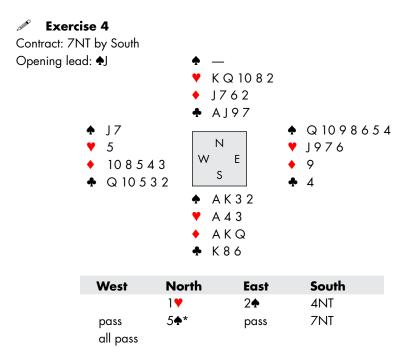
The two threats (the ♦6 and the ♣7) are divided so Upper will work against either adversary. (Check this for yourself.)

Since both threats are within long suits that include top winners, you can make sure that you keep an entry for each threat.

You naturally start by trying the top two diamonds since if that suit breaks there is no problem. (It would be just as good to start with the top clubs first.) When diamonds don't break, you plan to play the A and the Q hoping that suit might break. If clubs don't break either, you will need a squeeze. Which suit should you watch?

In Exercises 1 and 2, declarer, at the point where he gained control, had winners remaining in only one threat suit. However, in Exercise 3 declarer has winners remaining in both threat suits (clubs and diamonds). When you hold winners in both suits, you don't need to watch the discards in both suits. To make life easier, merely decide which suit you will try first, after the squeeze trick; then keep note of the discards in that suit, ignoring the other. Now cash the first suit and you will know whether the threat has become a winner. If it hasn't, then you just assume the threat in the second suit is now good.

In this case there is not much that makes one suit easier to watch than the other, so pick whichever one you want. Let's say you have decided to cash diamonds first since there are fewer of them missing. So you are keeping an eagle eye out for any diamond discards. You start by cashing two top diamonds. When the suit splits badly, you see you might need a squeeze. Make sure to cash the squeeze card, the last spade, throwing the diamond loser from dummy. Countless contracts have failed because declarer has not cashed his long trump, especially when, as here, this might not be necessary. If it was needed, the squeeze is now complete. If a defender throws a diamond then your long diamond is good: take your diamond winners. If not, you have to assume all your clubs are good. Play off the remaining minor-suit winners and hope for the best.



When a spade is led against your grand slam, you have to decide what to throw

from dummy. You have eleven top winners: two spades, three hearts, four diamonds and two clubs. However, you are probably going to be able to take one and most likely two more heart tricks since East has already announced spade length. Accordingly you throw a club from dummy.

You cash the ♥A but when you play a second heart West surprises you by showing out, throwing the \dot 3. What now? After this bad news, the only chance is that East holds more than six spades. If so, **BLUE** is in force as long as the club finesse through West is risked on the first round of the suit, preserving the ♣K as an entry (**E**) to the spade threat.

Let's look at that in more detail with the assumption that the club finesse works.

East has to hold both the long spades and the heart.

B = Busy ✓

Assuming that the club finesse works, there is only one potential loser.

L = Loser ✓

The two threats, the  $\P$ 10 and the  $\P$ 3, are divided so Upper (**U**) is present.

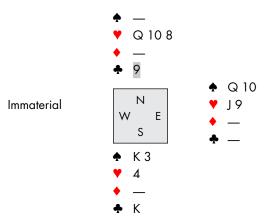
**U** = Upper ✓

The VQ will be an entry to dummy's long heart. This is another example of long-threat entry.

**E** = Entry ✓

Since the diamond suit is blocked, the first step is to clear diamonds; then the second step is the club finesse. You start with the top three diamonds and then play a club to the 4. The finesse wins, as you had hoped. You now cash your remaining winners in the side suits (clubs and diamonds): the ◆I and the ♣A. Finally you lead a club towards your hand.

At this point East will have no idle cards. Let's look at the position from East's point of view. Nine tricks have been played: one spade, two hearts, four diamonds and two clubs. These are the last four cards.



When you now lead a club towards your hand, East is squeezed. If East throws a spade your \$\displays \text{ will be a winner, but if East throws a heart, the hearts in dummy will be high. Which suit should you be counting? Obviously the simpler one is hearts. You know after the first few tricks that East has two hearts left, so if he throws one at any time your hearts are good.

In some squeezes, the North hand holds both threats. As we mentioned earlier, on those deals West must hold both guards, for lack of Upper (U) against East. If East holds both guards, when the squeeze is reached the North hand will have no idle card remaining, and will have to discard one of the threats on the squeeze trick.

This brings up an important point of play. The saddest possible outcome of a squeeze deal is to execute the squeeze and then not cash in on it. With the North hand holding both threats, if you have winners remaining in both suits when the squeeze card is led, you cannot always tell with certainty which suit has been given up by West, and you might discard the wrong threat. To avoid uncertainty as to what has happened, follow this rule:

**Rule:** Cash all the winners in one suit before the squeeze trick

When both threats are in one hand and you have winners in both threat suits, cash all the winners in one suit, if possible, before the squeeze trick. Of course you need to make sure that you do not give up the entry condition, E.

#### Contract: 7NT by South Opening lead: **YQ** ♠ A 6 Κ6 Q10986 A Q 7 3 1082 95 Ν QJ103 98742 K 7 153 S 11086 952

South wins the opening heart lead with the \(\nspace A\) in hand and tests the spades. The spades break, East throwing the \$\forall 4\$ on the third round, and South now has twelve tricks. A club-diamond squeeze may produce the thirteenth trick.

KQJ743

A 5 A 4 2 K 4

Since the North hand contains both threats, the squeeze will only work if West and not East is the victim. This type of squeeze is called a **positional squeeze** because it depends on the victim being in the right position, forced to discard ahead of the upper hand. So a squeeze will develop if West holds the ◆K and four clubs, the threats being the  $\diamondsuit$ Q and the  $\clubsuit$ 7.

West is assumed to hold both the ◆K and the long club.

B = Busy ✓

Exercise 5

There is only one potential loser.

L = loser \( \sqrt{

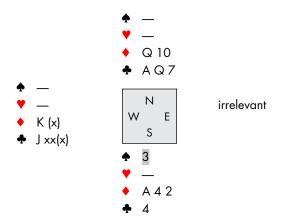
The two threats are in the North hand so the squeeze only operates on West, otherwise **U** is not present. Assuming West has the needed cards:

**U** = Upper ✓

There is an entry to dummy in clubs (this is another example of long-threat entry).

**E** = Entry ✓

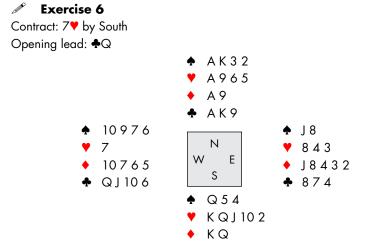
However, if declarer just runs off all the major-suit winners, there's a problem. It is impossible to determine at this point which suit West has unguarded. Here is the position as South leads the last spade.



The problem is that South does not know which card to discard from dummy. However, if South cashes the ◆A before this point is reached, then all uncertainty is removed. Now South merely has to watch for the •K. If West does not throw that on the last spade then South can discard dummy's last diamond and assume that the squeeze has worked and the clubs are good. South obeyed the 'cash winners in one suit first' rule described above. It was safe to cash the ◆A because it was not needed as an entry.

Many deals contain two or even several squeeze possibilities. Here a squeeze will also develop if East has any four diamonds and the club length (to allow for this, you do need to watch all the diamond discards though). Try it by trading East the  $\bigstar K$  and  $\bigstar 10$  for the  $\blacktriangledown 9$  and  $\blacktriangledown 2$ .) This is a less probable layout, however, since suits tend to break evenly most often — diamonds are much more likely to be 3-2 than 4-1.

This deal brings out another reason for studying squeeze play. If the prospective declarer, either yourself or partner, is a skilled squeezer, you can sometimes risk a 'try for a top' that you would not otherwise venture, just on the chance that a squeeze can be found if needed.



South has one loser to dispose of, the third club. If spades are 3-3, the long spade will provide the discard (and the thirteenth trick). If not, South will need a squeeze.

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Let's see whether **BLUE** is in place for a squeeze if the spades are 4-2. The threats are the \$\infty\$9 and the \$\infty\$3. It seems likely from the lead that West has the \$\infty\$QJ10 so if West has four spades then the positional squeeze can work.

If West has the clubs and the long spade then his cards will be busy.

There is only one potential loser.

The two threats, the  $\clubsuit 9$  and the  $\spadesuit 3$ , are both in the North hand so Upper (**U**) is present against West only.

Dummy has entries to the long suits. This is another example of long-threat entry.

An easier squeeze problem could hardly be constructed. Draw trumps and, remembering the rule about cashing winners in the squeeze suits when possible, cash all the top spades. Then play diamonds and all of your remaining hearts. You will just need to watch to see whether West discards the thirteenth spade.

By the way, it would work just as well to cash the top clubs instead of the top spades early in the play. In that case you watch for the \$\ddot J\$ and \$\ddot 10\$ instead

of the thirteenth spade. I prefer cashing the spades since if they break 3-3 you can claim quickly.

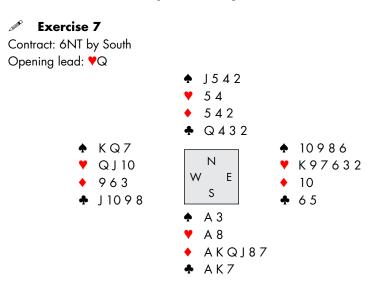
There is still the possibility that West has led from a short suit and that in fact East has five clubs. If that is the case East can be squeezed if he also has four or more spades. Since the \$\displays 5\$ is a threat against East, if West has only two clubs the squeeze still operates in exactly the same way. Try it.

#### Rectifying the Count

In each of our hands so far, the squeeze is already established, all conditions satisfied, at the time when you first get control. Now let's suppose that on checking **BLUE** you find that **L** is wrong: there is more than one loser. Then you must correct, or **rectify**, the loser count by losing as many tricks as may be necessary: with two losers in hand, duck (that is, purposely lose) one trick; with three losers, duck twice; etc. In effecting this maneuver, declarer should follow this rule: lose the required number of tricks at the first opportunity. Of course it is a rule that must be applied with discretion, for it often happens that certain loose ends must be tied up before the lead can be safely surrendered. Just concentrate on getting rid of those surplus losers as soon as possible.

**Rule:** Get rid of surplus losers as soon as you can do so safely.

Once again, we should emphasize that this applies to simple squeezes; later in the book we shall encounter squeezes that operate with more than one loser.



You have eleven top tricks, and the club suit might provide the twelfth trick. If clubs do not divide there is a chance of a positional squeeze in spades and clubs against West. (Make sure you understand why it doesn't work against East.)

If so, **BLUE** is in force except that there are two losers. So, after making sure that no continuation can hurt you, you duck the first trick. West continues with the \(\forall \), which you win. You have now rectified the count. Let's check **BLUE**:

If West has the clubs and the top spades, then his cards will be busy.

B = Busy ✓

There is only one potential loser now.

L = Loser ✓

The two threats, the  $\clubsuit$ J and the  $\clubsuit$ 4, are both in the North hand so U is present against West only.

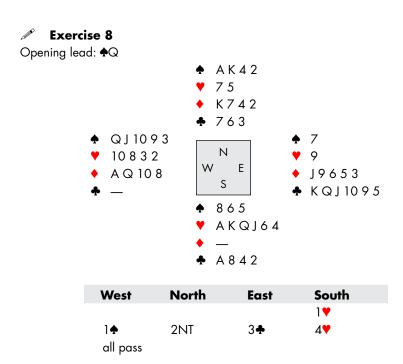
**U** = Upper ✓

Dummy has a club entry, a long-threat entry.

**E** = Entry ✓

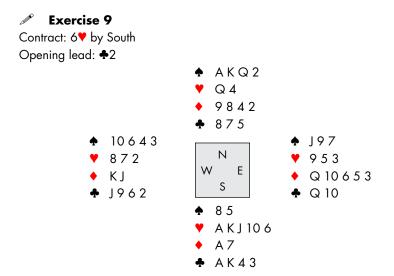
You cash the ♠A to clarify the spade-suit discards. Now you only need watch for the  $\triangle Q$  and  $\triangle K$  as you play off all your diamonds.

This rule (lose your sure losers early) finds very broad application in bridge, quite apart from squeeze play, and there are some millions of players whose game would greatly improve if they would learn to do this one thing. Playing 3NT, the difference between an expert and a novice is roughly this: the expert loses four tricks early, the novice loses five tricks late.



East follows with the  $\clubsuit 7$  as you win with the  $\clubsuit A$ . Let's count the losers. You have a spade loser and three club losers, one too many. West is known to have five spades so East has no more, while East must have at least five clubs for his bid. If we place the ◆A with West for his overcall, a positional squeeze may be possible against West in spades and diamonds.

You start off by drawing trumps in four rounds. On the second round of hearts East throws the \$\,\ \text{Confirming the position in that suit. You now need to lose enough tricks to set up the squeeze, so you start by laying down the A and playing another club. Your plan is to lose three club tricks to East, which will satisfy **L** (one loser remaining) and make all of West's cards busy, setting up **B.** If East takes all three of his club winners, you ruff his next club and play the last trump; West will be squeezed in diamonds and spades. If East tries to escape by leading a diamond instead of taking a club winner, you simply throw a club on the diamond. West will get the ◆A but your ◆K will provide a discard for your last spade loser.



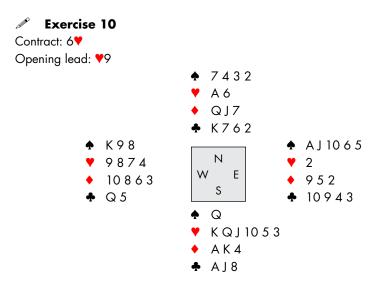
East contributes the  $\bullet Q$  to Trick 1. From the play to this trick, it appears that West has at least three clubs. If clubs are 3-3 then the fourth club will be the twelfth trick, but if clubs are 4-2 then a squeeze will be needed. If West is kind enough to have four spades, **BLUE** is in force except that there are two losers. In either case we need to duck a club. The simplest approach is to win with the A, draw trumps (in case West has led a singleton) and then duck a club. Whatever they return now, you win and try clubs; if clubs are 3-3 all is well. If either hand (presumably West) has four clubs and four spades then the squeeze will work. (Check out **BLUE** yourself.) Run your winners, just keeping an eye out for a discard of the master club. If your last club isn't good then play for the fourth spade to be high.

Wait, though — this may be a book on squeeze play, but here the squeeze is not the best line. As long as clubs are no worse than 4-2, the slam can always be made regardless of who has the spades by winning the first club, cashing a second club and then conceding a club. Your plan is to ruff the fourth club in dummy with a high trump. Barring a bizarre opening lead or falsecard in clubs, the only serious danger you face is a 5-1 trump split, so the better than 85% chance of success for this line of play is much better than for the black-suit squeeze.

This Exercise is designed to illustrate that you should 'just play bridge' and not look for a squeeze in every deal. While the deal does produce a squeeze as the cards lie, the odds favor the club ruff line.

#### Ruffing Out a Stopper to Isolate the Menace

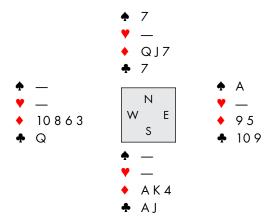
When a notrump-style squeeze is played in the course of a trump contract, the trumps may serve in various ways in helping to get the squeeze set up. The most important of these ways is in ruffing out a stopper held by the victim's partner. Do not confuse this play with a genuine trump squeeze, in which declarer's ability to ruff plays an essential role after the squeeze is established (see Chapter 8).



You have a spade loser so the goal on this slam is to avoid a club loser. Besides the club finesse, there is one other chance: if one opponent holds five or more spades and the club guard, he can be squeezed. However, for that to work only the victim can have a spade guard. That means you have to remove all the spades from his partner's hand. What you are doing is commonly called **isolating the menace** or, if you prefer, isolating the threat, making sure that only one defender can protect against the spade threat. You want to keep all your dummy entries for this task, so you win the first trick in the closed hand and lead the  $\Phi Q$ .

West wins with the  $\bigstar K$ , and East, who knows nothing about squeeze play, drops his 4]. West, who sees what you are up to, leads another heart (as good as anything). You win with the  $\P$ A, ruff a spade in hand and draw the remaining trumps in two rounds, throwing clubs from dummy. East throws a spade, a diamond and a club on the last three trumps.

You then return to dummy with the ♣K to ruff a third spade and arrive at this position with the lead in the South hand:



You cash all three diamonds ending in dummy, the last diamond being the squeeze card. West follows to all the diamonds. On the third diamond East throws a club. When you lead a club from dummy East follows low. Now what? It seems likely from both the play and the opening lead that West did not hold both the  $\triangle A$  and  $\triangle K$ . Assuming East has the  $\triangle A$  as his last card he cannot also hold the  $\clubsuit Q$ , so you play the  $\clubsuit A$ , dropping West's  $\clubsuit Q$ .

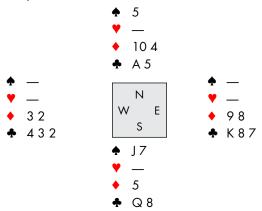
The hand raises an interesting point of logic. Since East holds a stopper in only one suit, is he 'busy in two suits'? In other words, is this a genuine squeeze? The answer is definitely 'yes'. Though worthless in themselves, East's clubs (while they last) are busily engaged in concealing the fact that West's  $\Phi Q$ will drop. This type of squeeze is called a **show-up squeeze**. Since East must come down to only one club when you lead up to the club tenace position (the A]), if he has the Q it will show up. If it doesn't, then you know the finesse will not work and you need to play for the drop.

#### The Vienna Coup

Suppose that East is to be pulverized. The South hand contains the squeeze card, so the threats, of necessity, are divided. When the squeeze is reached, the North hand must have an idle card remaining, for otherwise the squeeze would pinch North rather than East. As a rule, the mere presence of a threat in South's hand makes room for an idle card opposite. However, there is one situation where trouble arises; that is, when the North hand holds a winner in each threat suit and South has no winner in either suit. Then, unless you take precautions, the trouble will be fatal.

#### **Example E**

Notrump contract, South to lead



In Example E, the threats are the  $\diamondsuit 4$  and the  $\clubsuit Q$ . East is guarding both and it appears that **BLUE** is in hand.

East has both diamonds and clubs controlled so his cards will all be busy.

There is only one potential loser now.

The two threats, the extstyle 4 and the extstyle Q, are in different hands so extstyle U is present.

Dummy has a diamond entry, a long-threat entry. Wait, though — if North throws the  $\clubsuit 5$ , his 'idle card', the club suit is blocked. There is no entry to the  $\clubsuit Q$ .

If you run the spades now, on the last one dummy will have to discard either the \$\display\$4, releasing the pressure from East's diamond guard, or the \$\display\$5, which releases East's club guard because the suit is now blocked. The remedy is easily found: cash the \$\display\$A first, then return to the South hand in spades and turn on the heat. Dummy's \$\display\$5 is now idle, and East is helpless.

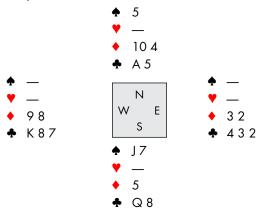
This play is called the **Vienna Coup**. A formal definition:

The Vienna Coup is a play in which declarer cashes all his winners in one threat suit before playing the squeeze card in order to prevent that threat from becoming blocked.

Or in other words, the Coup saves declarer from squeezing himself.

### **Example F**

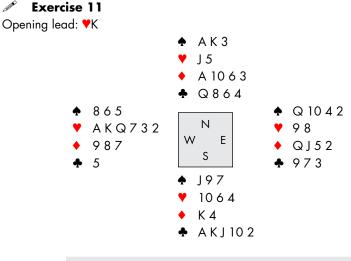
Notrump contract, South to lead



Look now at Example F. This is the same position except that this time West is on the spot. Here, with North discarding after West, the squeeze will surely occur if the spades are run now (check it); but tricky discarding by West might make it impossible to tell which threat has been set up. The difficulty is exactly the same one we discussed previously in Exercise 5, and the remedy is the same. Follow the rule: merely cash dummy's winners in South's threat suit before the squeeze trick.

Let us summarize all this in the form of a rule:

**Rule:** When the threats are split between North and South, and South holds the squeeze card but has no winner in either threat suit, unblock South's threat suit before the squeeze trick (cash North's winners in South's suit). That is, execute a Vienna Coup.

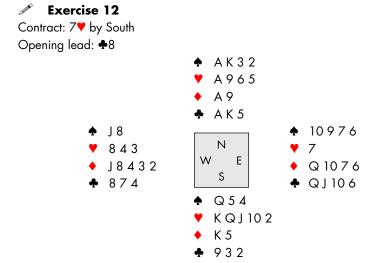


West	North	East	South
			1♣
2♥	3♣	pass	3♥*
pass	3♠	pass	4♣
pass	5♣	all pass	

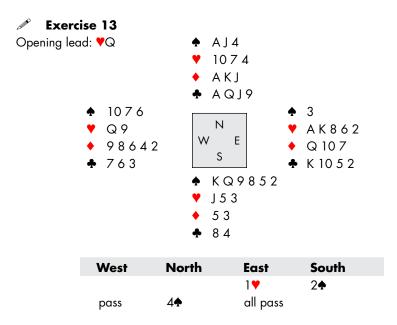
West starts out with the top two hearts as East follows with the  $\checkmark$ 9 and the  $\checkmark$ 8. West then switches to the ♦9; East follows with the ♦5 when you play low from dummy, your K winning in hand. At this point you have one more potential loser, the third spade. If either opponent holds the pointed-suit honors (East, on this bidding), he is squeezable (check it!).

Watch your step! North has winners in both threat suits, South in neither: to set up the simple squeeze you must cash the spades while you still have a means of return. You can afford to draw two rounds of trumps but then you need to ruff your last heart with the  $\mathbf{AQ}$ , play the top two spades (Vienna Coup) and return to hand with a club. You only need to keep an eye out for the  $\Phi Q$ .

Many glowing adjectives — 'spectacular', 'abstruse', 'stupendous' — have been showered on the Vienna Coup, none of which it deserves. It has even been called a 'species of squeeze'! The obvious truth is that as regards difficulty of recognition and execution, this play is on an exact par with that of Exercise 5. Any squeeze novice who memorizes the above rule, the Vienna Coup Rule, and keeps it in mind for use when required, will handle the Coup as adeptly as any expert. In short, the aura of glamor which has always seemed to surround this play is wholly fictitious.



An easier squeeze problem could hardly be constructed. You are starting with twelve top tricks. If spades break, you have thirteen tricks. If spades do not break, the only chance is that East (who clearly has the club guard) has that suit. Your threats are the ♣9 in the South hand and the ♠3 in the North hand. Win the first trick in dummy with the A (East playing the Q), draw trumps and cash the **\( \Pi \)** K (Vienna Coup). Now cash your diamonds and then all your hearts, watching only for the  $\clubsuit$ J and the  $\clubsuit$ 10.



The defense starts off with three rounds of hearts, West discarding the ◆2 on the third round. It is almost certain that the club finesse will fail based on the bidding, and the diamond finesse does not offer a much better prospect. However, besides the diamond finesse, there is one other chance: if East has both the \Q and the  $\bigstar$ K10, he can be squeezed. The threats will be the  $\bigstar$ 8 in the South hand and the •I in the North hand. There has to be at least one threat in the South hand or else upper (**U**) will fail, since North has to discard before East.

However, to execute the squeeze you need to remove the blocking ♣A from dummy. If you do that, then **BLUE** will be satisfied (run through the checklist). So you cash the A (Vienna Coup) and the A and run all the trumps.

However, after eleven and a half tricks when you play a diamond and West follows with a low card, you are in a dilemma, of a sort that fairly often arises: has the squeeze operated, or is a mere finesse required? (Imagine the  $\mathbf{\bullet}Q$  traded for ♦9.) East's ♦10 discard means nothing, because it could just as easily be a falsecard.

If you play for the drop, and fail, it means one down, while a lost finesse will leave you two down. However, the stronger rationale for playing for the squeeze is that without the ◆Q, East's opening bid would be barely a minimum. So you would probably play for the drop — but it could be wrong. (All the experts with whom I am personally acquainted would go up, on the following reasoning. If a finesse works, so what? If a squeeze works, oh boy!)

Note that the Vienna Coup does not transfer a threat from North to South. The North hand, holding the diamond threat, is incapable of holding a second threat against East, and you cannot transfer from North to South something that North never possessed.

Of course East should have played a discouraging heart at Trick 1. Also, West can see that the bidding probably marks his partner with the ♣K: thus West might switch to a club. If East-West do this then the simple squeeze cannot operate because L (losers) cannot be obtained without giving up the lead, at which time East can take his club winner along with his remaining heart tricks.

# Type 2: Opposite-threat Entry

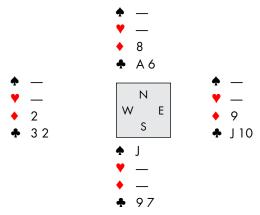
Earlier we discussed the first entry condition for simple squeezes, a long-threat entry. Although not as common as the first, our second entry condition is by no means rare. The **opposite-threat entry** occurs when the North hand's only entry to its threat is in the suit in which South has the threat. In general, the entry card must be accompanied by a small card in the same suit, or else declarer will be unable to get back to the South threat. (An ending that is an exception to this last statement will appear later as Type 3.)

This squeeze will operate in two situations:

- In all cases where West is the victim
- Where East is the victim, as long as South also has an entry back to his own threat (or else **U** will not be present, as in the Vienna Coup).

It is of course understood that North has no entry in his own suit, for in that case a long-threat entry would be present.

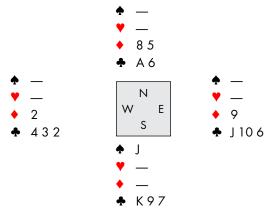
### **Example G**



On the layout in Example G, the North hand, having to discard before East, is squeezed in the minors when the last spade is played. If West holds the stoppers, however, he is helpless (transfer East's cards to West and try it): if West gives up the  $\blacklozenge 9$ , the  $\clubsuit 6$  is discarded from dummy, or if West yields the  $\clubsuit 10$ , the  $\blacklozenge 8$  is thrown from the North hand.

Now watch what happens when we add one more entry to the South hand, still in South's threat suit.

### **Example H**



In Example H, the entry condition 'opposite-threat entry' is satisfied: South's club winner makes room for an idle card in the North hand without relaxing the pressure on East. South can play the ♠J, throwing the ♦5. This is an automatic **squeeze** now: one that will work against either of the opponents. The Aprovides an entry to the ♦8, if that becomes a winner; otherwise, the club winners provide transportation to cash the  $\clubsuit 9$  if that provides the final trick.

#### **Exercise 14** Opening lead: •K 1072 J863 AKQ A 5 3 KQJ84 9653 Ν 9 10 Е 97 J10432 S K I 10 9 2 874 AKQ7542

865 Q 6

West	North	East	South
			1♥
1♠	2♠	pass	4NT
pass	5♥*	pass	5NT
pass all pass	6 <b>♦</b> *	pass	6♥

There is quite a good chance that West holds the \(\Phi\)KQJ and the \(\Phi\)K. If so, we pick up that handsome overtrick, because BLUE is airtight, thanks to an opposite-threat entry in the club suit.

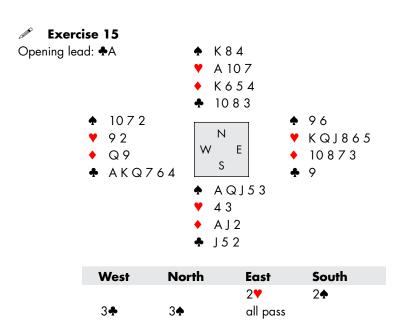
Assume West has both the top spades and the ♣K so his cards will all be busy.

There is only one potential loser.

North holds the threat (the ♠10) behind West; **U** is present.

North has a club entry, an opposite-threat entry.

Draw trumps, clear the diamonds, ruff a spade and finish the trumps. On the last trump, West will have to give up the spade suit or bare his \$K. You need only watch for the  $\mathbf{\Phi}Q$  and  $\mathbf{\Phi}J$ .



The defense starts off with three rounds of clubs, East discarding the ♥8 and the ♥5 on the last two. Now West shifts to the ♥9. At this point you need all the tricks but one and that means you have to dispose of the diamond loser. Finesses are nasty risky things: might there be a squeeze? East certainly holds the ♥KQJ, and if he also has four diamonds, **BLUE** is in force except that there are two losers. Thus ducking the heart at Trick 4 is clearly indicated. The plan is to squeeze East in hearts and diamonds with dummy's ♥10 and South's ♦J as threats. East wins Trick 4 with the ♥J and returns the ♥K to dummy's ♥A.

The two rounds of hearts remove North's long-threat entry but leave **BLUE** still in force. Let's check **BLUE**.

Assume East has four diamonds along with the high heart, then all his cards will be busy.

There is only one potential loser.

The threats are split between the North and South hands. North holds the ♥10 and South holds the ◆J so **U** is present.

North has an entry in South's threat suit, diamonds, so the squeeze operates on both opposition hands, opposite-threat entry

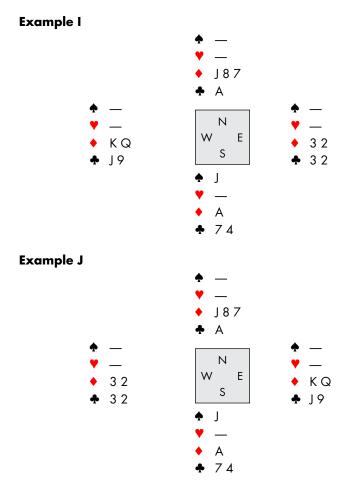
Just run the trumps, watching for the  $\P Q$ . If it does not appear, cross to the  $\P K$ and lead another diamond. When the  $\nabla Q$  is still missing after East plays to the twelfth trick it is certain that he does not have the  $\mathbf{Q}$ , so you rise with the  $\mathbf{A}$ (a show-up squeeze).

Even if you have not thought far enough ahead to have your whole line of play sized up, you should still duck the heart at Trick 4, just on general principles. Any time you get a chance to lose a trick at no cost, do it!

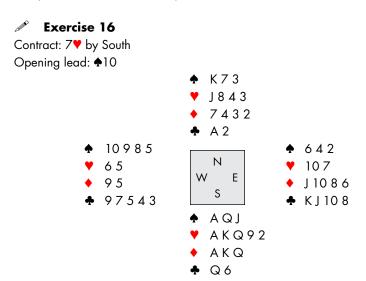
# Type 3: The Criss-Cross Squeeze

The last of our three entry conditions is comparatively rare in play, yet not so very uncommon that you can afford to overlook it. It is the **criss-cross squeeze**: North holds a winner in South's threat suit, and South a winner in North's threat suit. Once you see it in operation, the reason for the name becomes obvious.

These examples show how the squeeze works.

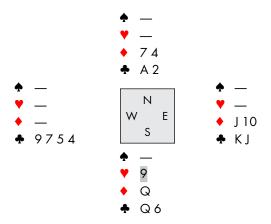


The squeeze works on either defender. In Example I West is squeezed and in Example J East is squeezed. The North hand will always have an idle card available for discard on the squeeze trick. If the defender (in either case) parts with a diamond, declarer cashes the A, then crosses to the A. If he yields a club, declarer cashes the A, then returns via the A.

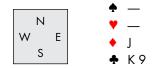


Counting your tricks, you have twelve on top. One chance for a thirteenth trick is a 3-3 division in diamonds. Is a squeeze also possible? If one defender holds the \*K and four diamonds he may be put under pressure. You notice that the North hand has an entry in the club suit, South's threat suit, while South's entry is in the diamond suit, North's threat suit. If there is a squeeze it will be a crisscross. **BLUE** is present if one defender is guarding against both threats (check it yourself).

You cash the top two diamonds and all the majors, then make your choice. This is the position as you lead the last heart, planning to throw a club from dummy.



If East throws a diamond in this ending there will be only one missing, and then you know your diamonds are good. In that situation you cash the ◆Q and cross to dummy on the A to enjoy your long diamond. If East throws the I, however, you are not certain whether the clubs are now high or whether diamonds were 3-3 all along and the clubs are not high. In the deal as shown you need to cash the A first and then use the Q as an entry to the South hand. However, if East has falsecarded in clubs and his remaining cards are:



then you need to play the diamonds first.

The criss-cross squeeze, as you can see, suffers from a built-in defect. By the very nature of its entries, after the squeeze you have one or more winners remaining in each threat suit. This introduces exactly the same kind of difficulty that was first discussed in Exercise 4. There we found a remedy: the rule, cash all your winners in one suit first. Here no remedy is available. Thus in some deals, against a skillful and shifty defender, the decision as to whether to cash South's winner or North's might be little better than a guess.

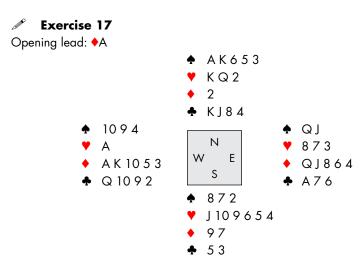
# The 'Failing Entry Case'

Summarizing the entry conditions for a simple squeeze:

- Long-threat entry North has an entry in his threat suit.
- Opposite-suit entry North has an entry in South's threat suit and either
  - a) South has an entry in his threat suit.
  - b) South has no immediate entry in his threat suit, but the North hand has a card in South's threat suit to lead if South's threat becomes a winner.
- Criss-cross North has an entry in South's threat suit and South has an entry in North's threat suit.

In all of these cases the squeeze works on either hand provided **BLUE** is present, with the exception of 2b. As discussed earlier, this case is a positional squeeze and will only work on West, because the North hand will not have room to retain a card in South's suit. If East holds the winners then **BLUE** is not present since the North hand is 'squeezed' ahead of East. The North hand must discard either its threat or its small card in South's threat suit, leaving no access to South's winner.

This is the **failing entry case**. If the North hand had an entry to its threat suit outside South's threat suit then we would cash the winners in South's threat suit first (the Vienna Coup), but if South's threat suit provides North's only entry then this is not possible. Returning to Exercise 16, one's first thought might be to cash all the diamonds before the last major-suit winner, but that puts us in the failing case. (Play it out.)



West	North	East	South	
1♦	dbl	3♦	pass	
pass all pass	3♠	pass	4♥	

The defense starts by taking the A. When West switches to the 2 you put in the ♣] and lose to the ♣A. East returns the ♣7 and you win West's ♣9 with the  $\bigstar$ K. You play the  $\blacktriangledown$ K, West winning with the  $\blacktriangledown$ A. West continues with the  $\bigstar$ Q, East follows with the  $\clubsuit$ 6 and you ruff.

You have now lost three tricks and need the rest. Your only hope of disposing of your spade loser is a squeeze. One possibility is that the hand that holds three spades also holds the last club, the \$10. Let's see whether that might work.

The victim will be busy if he holds the ♣10 and three spades.

B = Busy ✓

There is only one potential loser.

L = Loser ✓

The threats are both in the North hand. **U** will only work against West — you are in the failing case if East is your victim.

**U** = Upper ✓ (against West only)

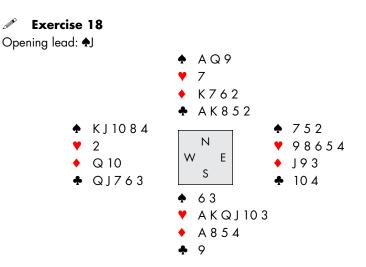
North has a spade, a long-threat entry

**E** = Entry ✓

It does appear from the play to the first five tricks that West has the fourth club. So ruff your diamond with the \(\forall \Q\) (don't block the suit) and run all of the hearts, watching only for the  $\clubsuit 10$ .

### **Choice of Threat Suits**

Suppose you know that only a simple squeeze is present, but you have promising threats in three suits, and cannot determine (at an early stage) just which two are the threat suits. This question may in some cases be very baffling; but usually, by careful analysis, you can find the answer.



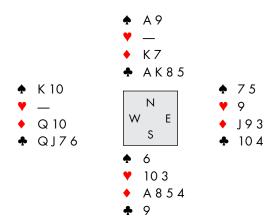
West	North	East	South
			1♥
1♠	2♣	pass	3♥
pass	3♠	pass	4NT
pass	5♥*	pass	5NT
pass	6♣*	pass	6♦
pass	7♥	pass	pass
dbl	all pass		

You win the opening lead with the \(\Phi\)Q, having no choice but to take the oddson finesse in this ambitious grand slam. You have twelve tricks: two spades, six hearts, two diamonds and two clubs.

You start drawing trumps. Both opponents follow to the first round but West shows out on the second. With five trumps in the East hand there is no hope of ruffing out clubs for your thirteenth trick. Your only chance is going to be a squeeze. It probably cannot be a club-diamond squeeze because it is unlikely that East holds exactly four clubs and three diamonds along with six cards in the majors. It will have to be either a spade-diamond or spade-club squeeze — but which?

In this instance, you don't care. If West has diamonds, the clubs must be cashed anyway (Free winners), and the top diamonds can be played without doing any harm. If West has clubs, the diamonds are Free winners and can be cashed; meanwhile, the top clubs should be played and a club ruffed, to remove East's stopper if the suit is 4-3.

Thus the same sequence of plays will inflict either squeeze. Start by drawing trumps, throwing two diamonds and a club from dummy while West throws two spades and a club, to arrive at this position:



On the lead of the ♥10, West throws the ♦10 and you throw the ♦7 from dummy. You want to keep all of the black cards you have in the North hand in case West has clubs with his spades. Now you cross to the A, cash the Kto unblock it, and ruff a club back to hand, making sure only one defender can guard clubs if they are 4-3.

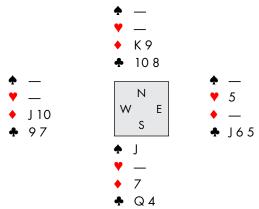
You play the ♦A and West is squeezed in clubs and spades. If you switch the ♣6 and the ♣3 for the ♦9 and the ♦3, West is instead guarding diamonds and spades. In this instance the squeeze will occur on the trick where you ruff the club back to hand. (Try it yourself.)

While the above certainly suffices for the bridge table, there is one other possibility: West might have both minors (as well as spades!). This case will play itself, though, for if West is responsible for three suits, West will be squeezed in three suits and will be ground to mincemeat. (Play it out with the  $\circlearrowleft 3$  and  $\clubsuit 3$ switched.)

# **Transferring a Stopper**

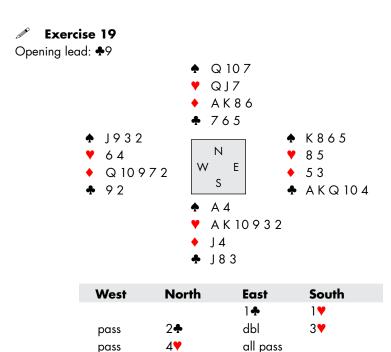
It frequently happens that all the conditions for a squeeze are favorable except that **B** is lacking: one threat is guarded by West, the other by East. In such a spot, it is sometimes possible to transfer a stopper.

#### **Example K**



With North on lead, suppose you know the location of the outstanding honors. A squeeze is in force except that West guards diamonds, East clubs. You lead the ♣10, forcing East to cover with the jack and setting up the squeeze if West happens to hold the \$9. Oswald Jacoby is credited with the discovery of this stratagem.

It seems likely that opportunities to transfer the stopper occur with appreciable (though certainly not great) frequency, but that they are apt to be overlooked.



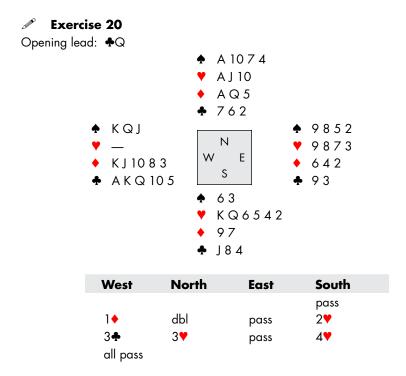
East wins the first three tricks with top clubs as West discards the ◆7 on the third club. At Trick 4 East shifts to the \$\infty\$5, which goes to the jack, queen and ace. At this stage you have lost three tricks and cannot afford to lose a spade trick. Do you have a diamond-spade squeeze? Both threats are in the North hand, so U can only operate against West. East's opening bid surely marks him with the  $\Phi K$ , but if West holds the • I there is still a chance.

Draw trumps, ending in dummy, then lead the  $\Phi Q$ , covered by the  $\Phi K$  and captured by the ♠A. Now **BLUE** may be in force if West has the ♠I and is also guarding diamonds. (Run through the checklist. You can run the trump suit, watching only for the  $\clubsuit$ J.)

# Taking Care of Partner on Defense

Perhaps by this time you will agree that the difficulty of playing squeezes as declarer is greatly overrated. Squeeze defense, on the other hand, is probably the most challenging department of bridge; and within the subject, the toughest assignment is protection of your partner. If you are to succeed in this, you must try to look at the deal from declarer's viewpoint, and figure out what your plans or hopes would be if you were in his place.

Cover the South and West hands on this next deal.



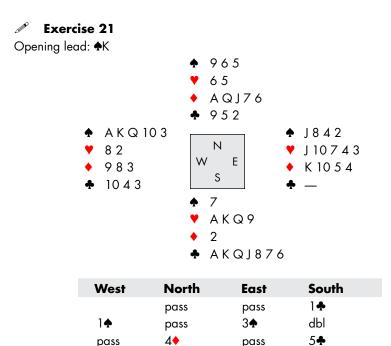
West starts off with three top clubs. South follows to the first two with the ♣4 and the \ 8. Plan the defense as East.

On this auction you would expect partner to be at least 5-5 in the minors with a good hand, of course. If the third club lives, you have taken your three minor-suit tricks. South has only five cards in the minors, so he must have eight cards in the majors and the auction suggests he has at least five hearts. Therefore the defense has no heart winner and the setting trick must come from spades.

If declarer has nine tricks, as seems likely, then it looks as though partner will be squeezed in spades and diamonds. But look! On the bidding South probably has no more than two diamonds; thus the threat will be dummy's ◆5 — which you can guard. You hang on tight to that diamond stopper through thick and thin.

West should switch to the  $\bigstar K$  at Trick 3 as a matter of routine. After that, he knows he must hold spades (seeing the \$10 in dummy) and count on you to guard diamonds. Even if West does continue clubs as described, East can help a little by ruffing the third club and returning a high spade. Perhaps partner will get the message!

Cover the East and South hands on the next deal.



64

pass

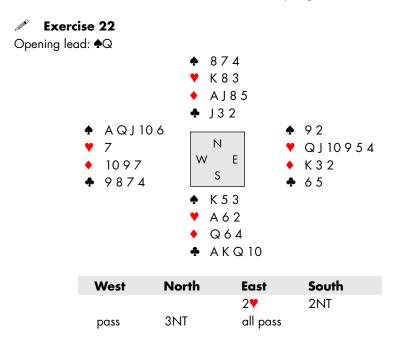
As West you start off with the  $\bigstar K$ , asking for count. Partner plays the  $\bigstar 8$ , showing an even number. Declarer clearly has no more spades — not a surprise. From the auction you presume that South has ten or eleven cards in hearts and clubs along with one or two diamonds. Thus, the best chance for the defense is that East has the •K and a heart stopper — but if that is the case, he is in danger of being squeezed. However, if you switch to a diamond now, the squeeze fails because E will be lacking.

all pass

If declarer goes up with the ◆A and runs the trumps, get all three of your diamonds out of your hand and on to the table as soon as you can so that East can count the suit. Of course, in reality South will try to ruff the third round of hearts in dummy, and your \$10 will put a stop to that endeavor.

## The Suicide Squeeze

We saw earlier that cashing your winners may help declarer establish a squeeze by rectifying the count and that the attack on  ${\bf L}$  is one of the most effective squeeze defenses. In contrast, one of the more distressing situations occurs when a defender himself plays the card that squeezes his partner. Sometimes this can be avoided, but sometimes the defender has very little choice. Let us look at a deal where the defender is on the horns of a truly unpleasant dilemma.



You win the first trick with the  $\bigstar K$  as East plays the  $\bigstar 9$  (count). While it is not a sure thing that East would overtake at Trick 1 if holding the  $\bigstar A$ , you want to cater for the possibility that the lead is from  $\bigstar AQJ10x$ . You have eight top tricks and can easily set up a ninth by playing on diamonds. However, if the diamond finesse loses and the spades are as you fear, East will be able to play a spade to West, who can cash four more spades. Ducking the first trick might smoke out whether East has the  $\bigstar A$  but otherwise doesn't really help. (West will switch at Trick 2 and then if the diamond is offside, you'll simply go down one more unless West started with six spades – and if he does, you might as well win the first trick!) If West does indeed have the  $\bigstar A$ , then East surely must have the  $\bigstar K$ , given the poor quality of his heart suit.

Suppose, though, that you start by cashing your club winners and then exit with a spade. What can West do? If he takes his spade winners, East will be squeezed in hearts and diamonds on the last one — this is called a **suicide squeeze**. If West fails to cash all his spade winners, you can afford to lose a

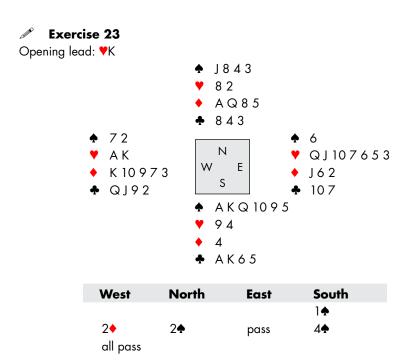
diamond to East, who will have no more spades to return. After the opening spade lead there is no defense. (If you lead a spade back immediately before cashing the clubs, West will in fact have the same problem, but the ending is not technically a suicide squeeze since West will not lead the actual squeeze card. Nevertheless if he cashes all his winners you will have **BLUE** for the redsuit squeeze on East, and if he doesn't, the defense will never get all their spade winners.)

# The Pseudo Squeeze

Even with no hope of a genuine squeeze, do not abandon hope if there is any chance that one defender may think that he is being squeezed, for in a surprising percentage of cases he will make a fatal blunder in discarding. This type of play is called a **pseudo squeeze**.

One point should be emphasized here. A pseudo (of the 'simple' variety, which is all that we are considering at present) will seldom succeed when L is missing. Thus with more than one loser in hand you should prepare for a pseudo squeeze, just as you would for a real squeeze, by ducking the required number of tricks as early as possible.

Of course, that word 'blunder' is hardly fair to the defense. There are pseudo squeezes which are absolutely indefensible: that is, hands where a dunderhead might stumble into the winning defense, but a capable player, never. Another important possibility is that the victim's partner may make a discard that converts the pseudo squeeze into a genuine squeeze. For example, in Exercise 20 many Easts would throw one of those 'worthless' small diamonds. After all, surely West's bid shows that he can guard diamonds!



West starts off with the ♥K and the ♥A (presumably showing that he started with only two hearts), East contributing the \(\nsigma\) at Trick 1. In some forms of scoring, declarer would concede a club and claim the rest, but playing matchpoints a bolder course is advisable. If the diamond finesse is on, as is all but certain, it can cost nothing to run those spades. With nine diamonds and seven clubs in sight, West can see that East is much more likely to hold a club guard than a diamond guard. A thoughtful West would be very apt to abandon clubs therefore.

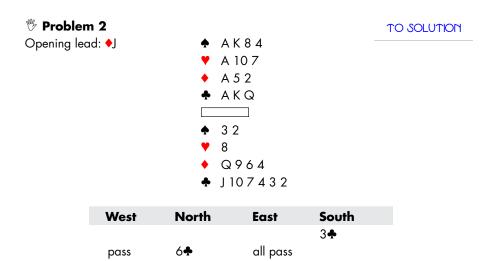
However, East can see that his clubs are probably worthless, while his diamonds might possibly help. He should discard the ♥J at Trick 4, to tell his partner that he (East) has a little something in the higher remaining suit, and follow that by getting rid of both his clubs at the earliest opportunity.

### **REVIEW PROBLEMS**

# **<sup>™</sup> Problem 1** Opening lead: VJ **♦** K4 **9** 8753 AKQ754 ♠ AQ6 AKQ AKQ9632

West	North	East	South
	1♦	pass	4NT
pass all pass	5♠*	pass	7NT

Plan the play.



You duck the opening lead; East wins the ◆K and returns the ◆3. You put in the ♦6 and West's ♦7 forces your ♦A. What is your plan now?

TO SOLUTION

### Problem 3

Opening lead: 45

TO SOLUTION

TO SOLUTION

<b></b>	K Q 6 4
<b>Y</b>	9743
<b>♦</b>	ΑJ
*	A 10 3
<b></b>	9532
•	AKQ

•	Κ	Q	10	8

♣ KQ

West	North	East	South	
			1♦	
pass	1♥	pass	2NT	
pass	6NT	all pass		

You play low on the opening lead and win East's ♣8 with your ♣K. You play a spade to dummy's ♠K; East wins with the ♠A and returns a club. How do you proceed?

### Problem 4

Opening lead: •Q



		_	
West	North	East	South
pass	1♣	1♥	1♠
3♥	pass	pass	4♥
pass	4♠	pass	5♣
pass	5♦	pass	5♥
pass	6♣	pass	7♠
all pass			

You win the diamond in hand as East plays the  $\diamond 7$ . You then play three rounds of spades and West throws diamonds on all of them, the ◆2, the ◆9 and the ◆10. What next?

### Problem 5

Opening lead: ◆5

TO SOLUTION

TO SOLUTION

-	117772
<b>Y</b>	A K J 7 2
<b>♦</b>	4
<b>♣</b>	ΚJ
<b></b>	A 10 5
<b>Y</b>	10 4

K9742

•	AKIU	
•	A () 9 3 3	)

West	North	East	South
	1♠	pass	2♣*
pass	2♥	pass	2♠
pass	3♣	pass	4NT
pass all pass	5♥*	pass	7NT

East plays the  $\mathbf{Q}$  on the opening lead and you win it with the  $\mathbf{A}$ . You play the ♥10, which is covered by the ♥Q, East following with the ♥3 as you win the ♥K in dummy. You unblock the club suit by cashing the two clubs in dummy, as all follow. How do you plan to bring the grand slam home?

### Problem 6

Opening lead: VJ

K 2 K Q 5 A8732 963

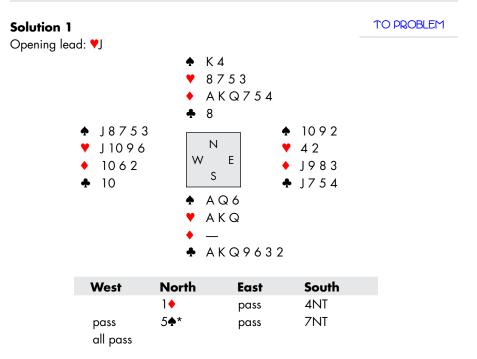
♠ AQJ109 ♥ A 2

J 5 4 ♣ AQ8

West	North	East	South
			1♠
pass	<b>2</b> ♦*	pass	2NT
pass	3♠	pass	4 <b>♣</b>
pass	6♠	all pass	

At the outset this contract looks like a bit of an underdog. It seems that you have ten top tricks and three losers in the minors. There is no possible way to make the slam unless the club finesse works, so let's start with that assumption. What else do you need? How do you maximize your chances?

### **SOLUTIONS**

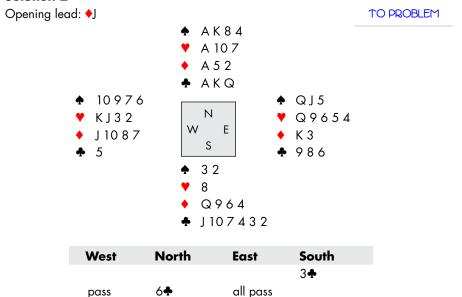


If clubs break 3-2 you have sixteen tricks. If clubs don't break but hearts do, you still have thirteen tricks: four hearts and three in each of the other suits. So it can't hurt to start by cashing your top hearts. If the hearts break you are home, but when the hearts don't break, as on this layout, you still have an arrow in your quiver. It cannot hurt to abandon the diamonds in dummy. The extra three diamond tricks don't really help you (except perhaps in reducing the number you will go down if clubs don't break). This is a perfect hand for a pseudo squeeze. After cashing the hearts, play three rounds of spades.

If clubs don't break, the pseudo squeeze will usually succeed if both minor suits are in one hand. What would you discard from East's hand at Trick 6? Declarer's failure to cash the diamonds when in dummy with the ♠K 'proves' (if proof were needed) that he has at least one diamond; thus a diamond discard is surely wrong. There is not all that much that West can do to help even if he could figure out the situation, since he is following suit on all the major-suit tricks.

A fine player would therefore surely discard a club from the East hand. It would take an imbecile or a genius to discard a diamond!

#### Solution 2



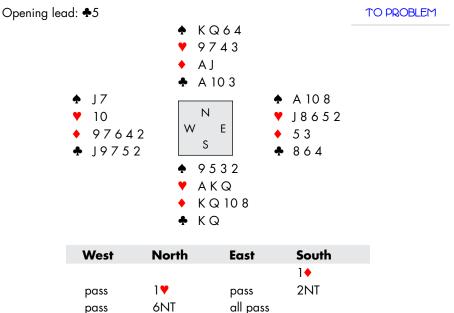
You duck the opening lead; East wins with the ◆K and returns the ◆3. You put in the  $\bullet$ 6 and West's  $\bullet$ 7 forces your  $\bullet$ A.

West probably guards diamonds so he can be squeezed if he has four or more spades. In order to set up the conditions for a simple squeeze, you are going need to ruff a spade to isolate the spade stopper. You draw trumps, cash the top two spades and ruff a spade, then run all your clubs and finish by playing the \(\nspec{\psi}\)A.

However, as you may have spotted, this is not the right way to play the hand. Since dummy's clubs are very likely enough to draw the opponents' trumps and there are plenty of entries on the table, a dummy reversal is a better idea. It is a pretty one because of the exquisite timing required.

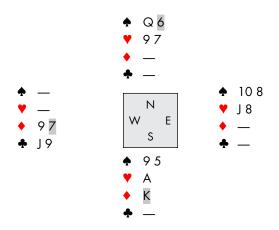
The sequence, beginning with the third trick, should be: ♥A; heart ruff; cross to a spade; heart, ruffed with the \$7; cross to a spade; spade, ruffed with the ♣10; cross to a top club; spade, ruffed with the ♣J; cross to a top club; third top club; diamond. This wins except against a very bad division in spades, hearts or clubs, whereas the squeeze is rather less than an even bet.

#### Solution 3

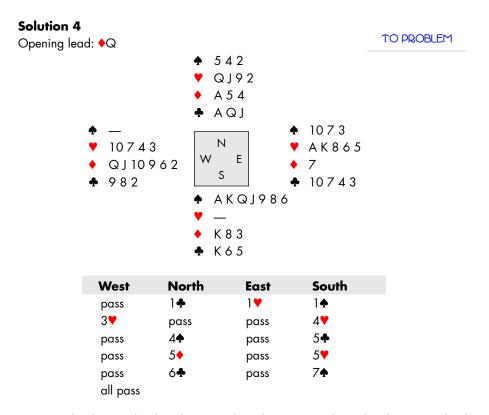


You play low on the opening lead and win East's ♣8 with your ♣K. You play a spade to dummy's  $\bigstar K$ ; East wins with the  $\bigstar A$  and returns a club.

As usual, forget the heart break: it either is or is not there. Thanks to East's help in winning the first spade, the contract is cold on a criss-cross squeeze if either defender is guarding both majors. You win the club in hand, cross to dummy with the  $\diamond A$  and take the  $\diamond A$  and the  $\diamond I$ . You cash the top two hearts, noting that West shows out on the second heart. Now you cash the remaining two diamonds throwing spades from dummy, to arrive at this position with East yet to play to the tenth trick:



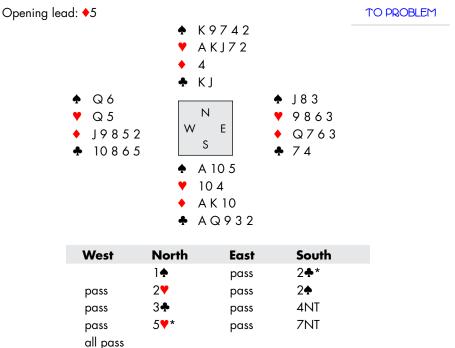
West showed out on the second heart, so you have a count of that suit and therefore there is no ambiguity about what East is keeping. If East discards a heart now, you cash the A and dummy is high. If East discards a spade, you cash the  $\triangle Q$  and your hand is high.



You win the diamond in hand as East plays the ◆7. You then play three rounds of spades and West throws diamonds on all of them, the  $\diamond 2$ , the  $\diamond 9$  and the  $\diamond 10$ .

Maybe you can do something with the hearts. You cross to dummy with a club and lead a low heart. East correctly plays low, and you ruff. You travel back to dummy with another club and lead the \(\forall \Q\). East covers and you ruff to lead another club to dummy and try the ♥J. East covers again but of course the ♥10 doesn't fall. However, there is still a chance. If West holds the ♥10 with his fiveplus diamonds there is a diamond-heart squeeze. West has come down to the ♥10 and two diamonds, and when you lead your last spade he is squeezed.

#### Solution 5

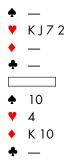


East plays the  $\bullet Q$  on the opening lead and you win it with the  $\bullet A$ . You play the ♥10, which is covered by the ♥Q, East following with the ♥3 as you win the ♥K in dummy. You unblock the club suit by cashing the two clubs in dummy, as all follow.

After the heart finesse and a reasonable club split you have twelve top tricks. The hearts might break or the spades may lie in a way that allows you to make a third trick in spades without a loser. Also, of course, there is the possibility of a squeeze.

This deal, based on one that occurred in a local club game, is a fine example of the concept of choice of threat suits discussed on page 50. The crucial question, the location of the spade stopper, is a fifty-fifty guess. Let's look at the squeeze possibilities. If either defender guards both spades and hearts, he can be squeezed. You can also squeeze a defender who has both the spade guard and the last diamond honor. We must also not overlook the possibility of a heartdiamond squeeze. Let's look at the spade-heart squeezes first.

After you have cashed dummy's clubs you cash the **AK** and then cross to hand on the  $\triangle A$ . You now play off your club winners to arrive at this position.

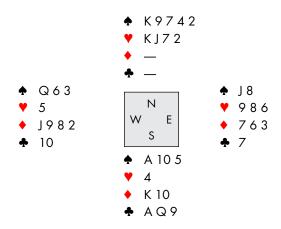


A defender with both spades and hearts protected will be squeezed when you lead the •K. If the last high spade has not appeared, you can play for hearts to be running (or to have split 3-3 in the first place). Notice that cashing the  $\Phi K$ was a Vienna Coup, which comes into play since by the time of the squeeze trick South has no entry to his threat, the  $\clubsuit 10$ .

The same line works for the heart-diamond squeeze. In the position above, anyone who started with four or more hearts and the ◆J will have been squeezed already — either the ♦J will come down under the ♦K or the hearts will run.

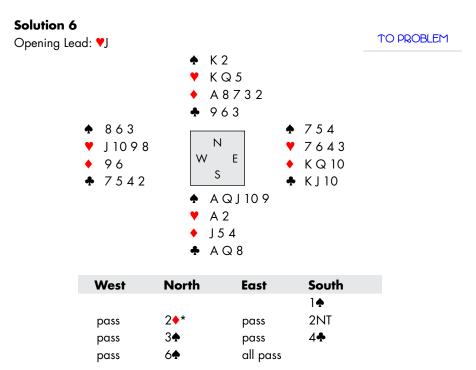
If you assume from the opening lead that West has diamonds guarded, then you might be looking for a spade-diamond squeeze if West has three spades. In fact, this specific squeeze will not work from the same position: you do not have **U** on West since both threats are in the South hand. However, playing for this squeeze you end up with thirteen tricks a lot of the time in any case: obviously when hearts are 3-3, but also when either hand has both majors guarded.

There is a squeeze which will work when West guards spades and diamonds (whether or not he also has hearts). If you swap one of East's spades for a club from West and play the first four tricks identically, you arrive at this position:



At this point you need to play the top hearts from dummy to remove the idle cards from the West hand. If hearts don't split, as in the diagrammed position, you then cross to your hand with the  $\triangle$ A. In this position, the threats are the  $\triangle$ 9 in dummy and the  $\triangle$ 10 in your hand. Now you meet the requirements of **BLUE**. Of course, from this ending a heart-diamond squeeze will not work against either opponent (no **E**) and a spade-heart squeeze will not work against East (no **U**).

As you can see, there are two different lines, each of which works some of the time depending on the exact position. The spade-heart squeeze is better, though, partly because it combines better with the heart-diamond squeeze. (Work through it to check.)



At the outset this contract looks like a bit of an underdog. It seems that you have ten top tricks and three losers in the minors. There is no possible way to make the slam unless the club finesse works so let's start with that assumption. What else do you need? How do you maximize your chances?

The best way to approach this type of deal is to work out what lie of the cards will make it possible to succeed. One possibility is a favorable position in diamonds. If the •KQ are doubleton, you will have only one diamond loser. If West has a singleton king or queen, you can play the •A and then lead a diamond towards your hand. In this case, if East plays low on the second diamond you will have to decide whether West started with the •KQ doubleton or a singleton honor (the higher percentage).

There are a couple more chances. If East has •KQx and a doubleton club, you might be able to arrange a throw-in, reducing to a three-card ending with the

lead in dummy and putting East in with the diamond. This is a bit of a long shot. Can you see any squeeze chances? If either hand is forced to guard both clubs and diamonds then there could be a squeeze. This will happen when West has five or six clubs and the long diamonds. It will also occur when East has the long diamonds along with any five clubs or any club holding which contains the king, jack and ten. In either of these situations one hand is guarding both suits.

You want to combine as many chances as you can. The simplest approach is to draw trumps, which as it turns out you can do in three rounds, and then lead a diamond towards dummy. If West plays the king or queen, you will rise with the A and assume that it is from shortness, leading a low diamond back towards the jack next. If West plays low on the first diamond, you play low from dummy; you want to duck a diamond to rectify the count for the squeeze in any case. On this layout, when you lead a diamond towards dummy, West plays low and so do you. East will (likely) win with the ◆10 and return a heart.

At this point the only chance is the squeeze. You cash the last heart winner in dummy, throwing a diamond from hand, and finesse in clubs. When this works you play off all your spades and the  $\triangle A$ , keeping the  $\triangle A$  and a small diamond in dummy. You need only watch for the  $\bigstar K$ ,  $\bigstar I$  and  $\bigstar I0$ . If either hand is squeezed they will have to throw their clubs or else the diamonds will be good. On this deal, East is squeezed.

You might wonder whether it makes any difference if East returns a diamond instead of a heart when he wins his ◆10. If that happens, you will need to run the spades first and then enter dummy with a heart. The third heart will be your squeeze card. (Try it and see.)

Notice that on this deal you looked for the best line of play overall and used the squeeze, which was a relatively low percentage, only as a last resort. You were able to combine chances. So now you've seen how the 'combining chances' approach works on this deal, let's refine it slightly. It is also possible to play off all five spades at the beginning of the deal, throwing diamonds from dummy, and only then duck a diamond. Again, the third heart will be the squeeze card. While it is normally the rule to lose the tricks needed to arrive at the **L** condition as soon as possible, sometimes this may not be required and may not even be the best approach. On this deal, playing the spades first is indeed better. Let's say you play all your spades first, throwing two diamonds from dummy. Now you lead a diamond from hand, ducking in dummy when West follows low. If East wins with the  $\bigstar K$  or  $\bigstar Q$  and returns a heart, you win in dummy with the  $\bigstar K$  and then play the  $\bullet A$ . Now you find out whether East started with a doubleton  $\bullet KQ$ before you have to make a discard (the ◆I) from the South hand on the last heart. This means that you can play for the squeeze and check to see whether the ◆KQ is doubleton too.

### CHAPTER 1 SUMMARY

- A simple squeeze is a two-suit squeeze against a single defender that will produce an extra trick. It is the most common of all squeezes.
- For the simple squeeze to operate, **BLUE** must be in operation at the time the squeeze is mature:
  - = Busy (the defender being squeezed must have no idle cards)
  - = Loser (there must be only one loser)
  - = at least one threat must be an Upper threat: it must lie to the left of the defender being squeezed
  - = there must be an Entry to the established winner after the squeeze. Е
- There are three types of simple squeeze based on the **entry conditions**:
  - Type 1. **Long-threat entry**: the entry is a winner in that hand's threat suit. If each offensive hand contains a threat, then the squeeze is automatic: that is, whichever opponent holds the guards in both threat suits will be squeezed. If North holds both threats, the squeeze is positional for lack of **U** on East.
  - Type 2. **Opposite-threat entry**: this occurs when the North hand's only entry to its threat is in the suit in which the South hand has the threat. The entry card must be accompanied by a small card in the same suit, or else declarer will be unable to get back to the South threat. This squeeze will operate in two situations: (a) in all cases where West is the victim; (b) where East is the victim, as long as South also has an entry back to his own threat (or else **U** will not be present).
  - Type 3. The criss-cross squeeze: North holds a winner in South's threat suit, and South holds a winner in North's threat suit. This is an automatic squeeze since with the threats split there is always **U** on both opponents.
- A Vienna Coup may be necessary in a simple squeeze with the first entry condition. The threats are split between the two offensive hands. South holds the squeeze card but no entries. In order to avoid blocking South's threat suit, you cash North's winner in that suit before the squeeze trick.

### Basic squeeze concepts

- Before the squeeze matures, you need to arrive at the correct loser count, the L of BLUE. It is a good idea to give up the necessary losers as soon as possible. This process is called **rectifying the count**.
- In some cases, in order to give one opponent responsibility for both suits you may be able to:
  - isolate the menace or threat in one suit by ruffing out the guard held by one opponent, or
  - transfer the stopper from one opponent to another by using a finesse or ruffing finesse.
- The easiest way to determine whether the squeeze has worked is to watch one suit. If you are missing a high honor or two, you only need to watch for those honors. If they do not appear, you assume that the other threat is now good.
- When defending against a potential squeeze, consider attacking the entries (E) or trying to prevent declarer from achieving L (one loser) by not taking a winner.

# THE DOUBLE SQUEEZE

The **double squeeze** is a play in which both opponents are squeezed. The two squeezes result in the gain of one trick. The opponents may be squeezed simultaneously or sequentially — that is, both opponents may be squeezed on the same trick or each may be squeezed on different tricks.

In the typical case, one adversary defends one suit, his partner defends another, while each (before the squeeze culminates) can guard a third suit. Declarer thus holds three threats. As we shall see shortly, it is impossible for all three threats to lie in one hand. This means we always have a single threat in one hand and two threats in the opposite hand. For the sake of discussion, let's suppose that South is the hand containing the single threat. The threat may be one card or several cards in length, but South has a threat in only one suit. The North hand holds threats in two other suits. East guards one suit and jointly guards a suit with West; similarly West guards one suit and jointly guards a suit with East.

Guards a threat (Left) Jointly guards Common



Two threats

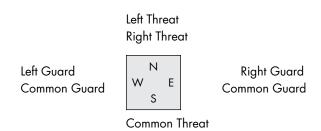
Guards a threat (Right) Jointly guards Common

Single threat

The suit which contains the threat guarded by both opponents is referred to as the **Common suit**<sup>1</sup> and the threat as the **Common threat**. Starting with the hand that holds the single threat (South) we will refer to the threat guarded by the hand to his right as the **Right threat** and the threat guarded by the hand to his left as the **Left threat**.

In the following example, North holds both the Left threat and Right threat and South holds the threat in the Common suit.

<sup>1.</sup> In the first edition, the author used the designation 'Both' for this suit, leading later to the classification of certain double squeezes as 'Type B'. Other writers have called it the central suit or the pivot suit. Your editors feel that Common is a useful improvement, both for ease of reference in the text and because we later encounter a B threat of a different kind in the study of compound squeezes. As a result, this edition refers to Type C double squeezes, and not Type B, a term with which some readers may be familiar.



Finally, the fourth suit, the suit in which there are no threats, is called the **Free** suit.

## The Necessary Conditions

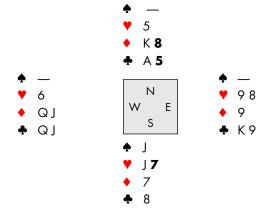
In order for a double squeeze to occur, each defender must be susceptible to a simple squeeze if his partner's support in the Common suit is withdrawn. This is why it is impossible for all three threats to lie in one hand: Upper (U) would fail against the adversary who plays after the hand with the threats.

Therefore, to determine whether a double squeeze is or may be present, declarer's first step (of course after identifying the threats) should be to check **BLUE** against each opponent in turn. Second, he plans the play, making sure that all conditions will remain in effect until each squeeze has matured. Third, he runs the winners: in the typical case, he watches for all cards higher than the two singly-guarded threats, disregarding discards in the Common threat suit.

This may look at first glance like a somewhat formidable task. However, we shall shortly proceed to classify all double squeezes into three easily distinguishable types, and to lay down explicit rules for the execution of each type. Armed with these rules, you will find that in most cases the double squeeze is only slightly more complicated than the simple squeeze.

We shall not actually play any full deals until this classification has been made, but let us start by looking at two end-positions.

#### **Example A**



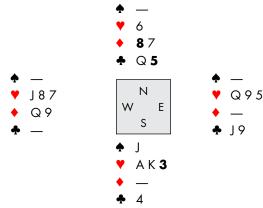
In Example A, South is the one-threat hand, and the threats are:

Right: **Y**7 Left: **8** Common: **4**5

West is going to be squeezed in diamonds and clubs and East in hearts and clubs.

Start by cashing the winner in diamonds and return to the South hand by cashing the heart winner. Now that all the idle cards have been played, the squeeze is established against both adversaries. Cash the 4J. West must give up a club to guard diamonds. You discard the diamond from dummy, since it has already done its work, and East surrenders.

### Example B



Example B is a sequential squeeze, with these threats:

Right: **4**5 Left: **8** Common: **Y**3

West will be squeezed in hearts and diamonds and East in hearts and clubs.

South leads the . On this trick West and North can throw idle diamonds, but East is squeezed out of a heart. Now when South leads a club to dummy, West has two choices: discard a heart, establishing the ♥3 as a winner, or throw the  $\bullet$ O, establishing the  $\bullet$ 8 in the North hand.

Note that in these examples, unless the Free winners and the winners in the Left and Right threat suits are run in the proper order, the squeeze will fail. This is true of double squeezes in general. By the end of this chapter one fact will stand out: in the vast majority of double squeezes, it is usually safe to run the winners in the Left suit at an early stage, and in many cases it is advisable or even necessary to do so.

It is important that you do not adopt this last statement as a universal guiding principle, since it is not universally applicable. However, the remark is inserted for the following reason. Theoretically, with a double squeeze in view you should be able to plan the sequence of plays to the end. Actually, with the whole table waiting impatiently for you to play a card, it is easy to 'get mixed up'. In such a case, cash the Left-suit winners. The chances are that this will do no harm, and it may simplify the problem to the point where you can see your way through to the ending.

#### **Entries**

Since the winners in all suits but the Common suit must be cashed before the squeeze will operate, you must have an entry in the Common suit itself for access after the squeeze has been completed. Think of it this way (for now assume that the Common-suit winners are in the South hand): one of the threats must be in the North hand (since only two threats can be in any one hand), so let's say it's the Left suit. If the winners in all the other suits have been cashed and you have no winner in the Common suit, then if you are in the North hand you cannot access cards in the Common suit and if you are in the South hand you cannot access cards in the Left suit. Thus the squeeze fails. The same concept holds true no matter which hand holds each type of threat.

**RULE:** The Common suit must contain an entry when the squeeze position is reached.

In addition, if the hand opposite the Common threat does not also contain an entry in the Common suit, then the squeeze card must be led from that hand. Otherwise, there would be no access to that hand after the squeeze. Remember that at the time the squeeze matures all winners in all other suits have been cashed. The only winner(s) remaining is in the Common suit.

**RULE:** When the hand opposite the Common threat has no winner in the Common suit to serve as an entry, the squeeze card must be played from that hand.

# Classification of Double Squeezes

Remember that a double squeeze includes two single squeezes, one against each opponent. For each single squeeze to operate, at least one of the threats against an opponent must lie in the hand that plays after that opponent or **BLUE** will not apply: you will not have **U** against that opponent.

With South holding the single threat and the three threats being split between the North and South hands, these are the possible placements of the threats.

#### **Example C**

Threats: Right and Left

Guards Left and Common

Ν

Guards Right and Common

Threat: Common

#### **Example D**

Threats: Left and Common

Guards Left and Common

Ε S

Guards Right and Common

Threat: Right

#### Example E (FAILS)

Guards Left and Common

Threats: Right and Common

Ν

Guards Right and Common

Threat: Left

Just by looking at these diagrams you can see that Example E fails since North plays before East and has both the threats against East. As a result, **U** fails against East.

So double squeezes are of two types only:

- The single threat is the Right threat the **Type R double squeeze**
- The single threat is the Common threat the **Type C double** squeeze

The Type R double squeeze is undoubtedly the commonest in play. Also, situations occasionally arise where, due to a multiplicity of threats, the deal may be viewed and played as either a Type R or a Type C double squeeze, at declarer's choice. (We shall see an example later.)

# The Type R Double Squeeze

When sitting South, if you hold the single threat and that threat is against East, your right-hand opponent, you are performing a Type R (Right) double squeeze.

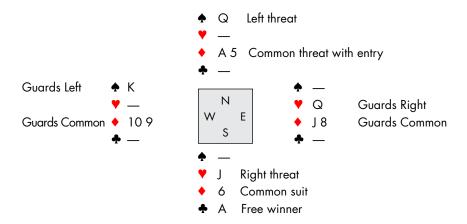
As mentioned above, one of the most important things to think about when executing a double squeeze is the order in which you take your winners. In many cases this is critical to a successful outcome.

For the moment, let us assume that the South hand has no winner in the Common threat suit to serve as an entry. In that case, as the rule states, you must play the final squeeze card from the South hand. You approach the squeeze by cashing all the remaining winners in the North hand other than those in the Common suit. The North hand may have winners in any of the suits, although it will normally have the last Left-suit winner. You then enter the South hand (which must have an entry at this point) to cash all the remaining winners outside the Common suit. The South hand will often have winners in the Right threat suit to go along with the Right threat and it may have Free-suit winners as well. The last winner is the final squeeze card.

## Cashing Left-suit Winners

Rule: In most Type R double squeezes, all of the winners in the Left suit should be cashed early. The last winner of all, which will be from the Free suit or the Right suit, must lie in, and be led from, the one-threat hand.

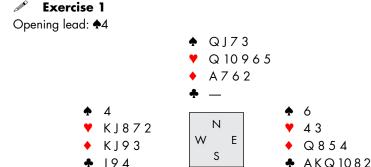
This is a typical position after all the Left suit winners and all but one of the winners in the Right suit and Free suit have been cashed.



The squeeze is mature and the A, a Free-suit winner, is the squeeze card. It is in the one-threat hand. The other cards in the South hand are the Right threat and a card in the Common suit that will be used to enter the North hand. The squeeze will operate simultaneously on West and East, who will have to guard the Left suit and the Right suit respectively and so will not be able to guard the Common suit.

Positions can be constructed where the Left suit must be cashed last, but since you are unlikely ever to encounter one, the wording of the Rule as it stands is satisfactory for practical purposes.

Previously, you were told to cash the winners in the Left suit when in doubt. We have now learned that for Type R double squeezes, the commonest form, this is standard procedure. Thus, when planning the execution of a double squeeze, the first step (after identifying the threats) is to note whether the squeeze is a Type R or Type C double squeeze. If it is a Type R, then get rid of those Left-suit winners! In most cases, the rest of the play will be routine.



◆ AK109852 ◆ A ◆ 10 ◆ 7653

West	North	East	South
		3♣	3♠
4♣	5♣	pass	5♥
pass all pass	6♦	pass	7♠

Had it not been for that naughty trump lead the slam would be a laydown, as you could ruff all of your club losers in dummy. However, there is still an excellent play for it. Start by cashing the ♥A and crossruffing hearts and clubs, hoping to drop the ♥K. After ruffing three clubs and four hearts and drawing trumps you have a Type R double squeeze. Your threats are:

Right: **♣**7
Left: **♥**Q
Common: **♦**7

As an exercise, let's check **BLUE** on each hand. First West:

- B: When you are about to play the last trump with three cards remaining, West's last three cards two diamonds (guarding diamonds) and the 
  ▼K are all busy. ✓
- L: You have only one loser. ✓
- **U:** Both threats are in the North hand (the upper hand), therefore you have  $U.\checkmark$
- E: You have a diamond entry to dummy. ✓

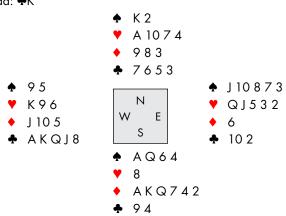
#### Now East:

- **B:** East's last three cards two diamonds (quarding diamonds) and the ♣A — are all busy. ✓
- You have only one loser. ✓
- **U:** The Right threat. The ♣7 is in the South hand (the upper hand), therefore you have **U**. ✓
- You have a diamond entry to dummy. ✓

You have cashed all of the Left and Right winners and all but one of the Freesuit winners. You are about to lead the squeeze card, the final Free winner (the last trump). The squeeze card is in the one-threat hand, i.e. it lies in the South hand. So all conditions are ready for the squeeze. You have to watch for the VK and keep a count of the clubs that have been discarded.

Notice that this squeeze really plays itself. You wish to ruff three hearts; therefore, automatically, the Left-suit winner gets cashed 'early'. When the VK fails to appear, what can you possibly do but finish the trumps?





West	North	East	South
		pass	1♦
2♣	pass	pass	2♠
pass all pass	3♦	pass	5♦

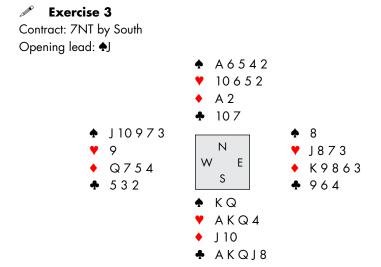
West starts out with three top clubs as East discards the ♥2. You ruff the third club and play two rounds of trumps, East throwing the  $\clubsuit 3$  on the second round. Your first thought might be to try to ruff a spade. West has eight minor-suit cards, though, so giving him three spades would mean that hearts are 2-6, a less probable layout than spades 2-5 and hearts 3-5. However, West is highly unlikely to hold as many as four spades, and if he does not, the Type R double squeeze is on with these threats:

Right: **4**6 Left: **♣**7 Common: **Y**10

Draw West's last trump. Now, since there are no more Left-suit winners to cash, start by taking all of the Right-suit winners, the three top spades, and then play off all of the remaining diamonds. (You can cash these winners in any order as long as you finish in the South hand.) Notice that if you run diamonds first the last diamond will squeeze East, who will have to release his spade guard. When you then play spades the third spade will squeeze West. This is a **non-simultaneous** double squeeze. However, if you play spades first and then diamonds, both players will be squeezed on the final diamond, a **simultaneous double squeeze**. Try it both ways yourself.

## A point about defense

Just as with a simple squeeze, attacking declarer's entries can be an effective defense. For a double squeeze to operate there must be an entry to the Common threat. In this example, a heart switch by West after cashing the top two clubs (or even earlier) will defeat the contract by removing the heart entry.



You have arrived in 7NT in an unopposed auction. When you cash your second high spade, East discards the ◆3. At this point you have twelve top tricks. If hearts behave, you will have a thirteenth trick; if they don't, then you will certainly have a squeeze.

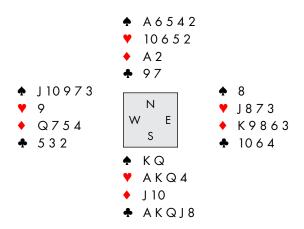
Two rounds of hearts will expose the situation. If East has the stopper, then you have a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

Right: **\**4 Left: **\$**6 Common: **\Q**2

It is a Type R squeeze because South holds the Right threat and North the Left and Common threats. Cross in clubs; cash the A (the last Left winner) and run the clubs.

Alternatively, what if you found that West were guarding hearts? Then you would have a simple heart-spade squeeze on West. That is one you can try for yourself.

Let's change that last deal slightly, though, by giving East the ♣10.



In this altered version of Exercise 3, after a spade lead the only way declarer can cash all three Left winners (the spades) is by using his diamond entry to dummy. However, he now has no way to get back to dummy and any squeeze will fail (the **E** of **BLUE** would be missing). Since declarer cannot cash the  $\triangle A$ , the last of the Left-suit winners, the double squeeze fails because East has an idle card and therefore the **B** from **BLUE** is missing after declarer has finished running clubs. Try it for yourself.

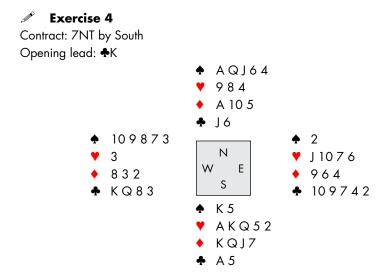
This is an example of a Type R double squeeze that fails because of entry difficulties. Recall the rule:

In most Type R double squeezes, all of the winners in the Left-threat suit should be cashed early. The last winner of all, which will be from the Free suit or the Right suit, must lie in, and be led from, the one-threat hand.

# A Simple Squeeze Played as a Double Squeeze

In a typical double squeeze, we assume that both defenders can guard the Common suit. If it turns out that only one can do so, there is actually a simple squeeze against that opponent, with the other out of the picture. However, this is a mere technicality, in no way affecting the play and certainly doing no harm, since a load that would be too heavy for both defenders cannot possibly be carried by one alone.

Suppose on a particular deal that West is guarding hearts and East diamonds, while declarer's clubs are such that only one opponent can guard that suit (for example, AKQx opposite xx); suppose also there is no way to locate the club stopper. Technically there is no double squeeze — merely a simple squeeze against the hand with the club length. However, if the necessary conditions are present, declarer can obviate the guess by playing the hand as a double squeeze. Again, the fact that only one defender is guarding the Common suit has no weight. This device should always be kept in mind, because it finds frequent application.



The point of this deal would be very easy to miss or, at least, your author cheerfully admits that he himself would be very apt to miss it, simply because it is so easy to take for granted that spades will run. Before starting to run a suit that looks solid but may not be, you should always consider what will happen if that chance fails. Here, of course, you should cash two hearts first. If East shows out, you run diamonds and then spades to execute the heart-club simple squeeze on West. West will be squeezed on the fourth spade. (Notice that, at the table, you have to be quite confident that West does indeed have the \( \blacktle \Q \) because on the fourth diamond you will have to throw the fifth spade from dummy, giving up on the likely spade break.)

If West shows out in hearts (as in the diagram) and spades fail to break, you have either a spade-club simple squeeze against West or a spade-heart simple squeeze against East. Which? You don't care. Merely play the Type R double squeeze with these threats:

Right: **Y**5 Left: **♣**| Common: **\$**6

Just run the reds and one of the defenders will be squeezed.

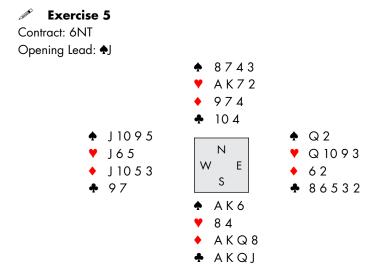
## Simple Squeeze or Double Squeeze?

When faced with a choice between two simple squeezes, do not think that you can always obviate the guess by resorting to double-squeeze technique, because in the last section there was a proviso: 'if the necessary conditions are present'.

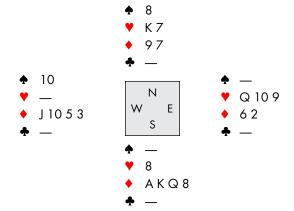
For a prime example, play through the deal in Exercise 4 again with North and South trading the \\$4 and the \\$5. In this case, cashing two top hearts to test the suit would leave you unable to execute a heart-club simple squeeze if West has the heart length (lack of E). Now your best bet is to run the diamonds in hope of acquiring a little information, but all you get is two meaningless clubs. So you cash the \*K and \*A, then flip a coin. Good opponents may falsecard on each of these honors to make the decision more difficult.

Do not confuse the problem above, which is the choice between two simple squeezes, with the totally different problem of the choice between playing a simple or a double squeeze. On a deal that may contain one or the other of these squeezes, quite obviously you should play off as many winners as you can and still leave both roads open. While this is going on, new information may come to light which will infallibly point out the right path. We are concerned here only with those situations in which uncertainty remains. It might be thought that in these cases the double squeeze would also be the right play, but that is not so. We saw previously that if the necessary conditions are present, declarer can obviate the guess between two simple squeezes. However, that is not the case on deals where you must pick between the simple squeeze or the double squeeze because on these the techniques of the two squeezes will inevitably diverge.

Deals can be constructed that leave the choice a mere toss-up, but in most cases one can pick the best route with at least some probability of success. The point to be emphasized is that there is no a priori reason to incline toward the double squeeze, because (other things being equal) the simple squeeze is just as likely to be present. And (with rare exceptions) you can't have it both ways!



After you bid unopposed to 6NT, you receive the lead of the  $\clubsuit$ J. East overtakes with the  $\spadesuit$ Q and you duck this trick. East returns the  $\spadesuit$ 2 to your king as West follows with the  $\spadesuit$ 5. You try the  $\spadesuit$ A and East shows out, throwing the  $\clubsuit$ 2. You play one round of hearts and then cash all your club winners, discarding a heart and a diamond from dummy. East follows but West discards the  $\blacktriangledown$ 6 and then the  $\blacktriangledown$ J.



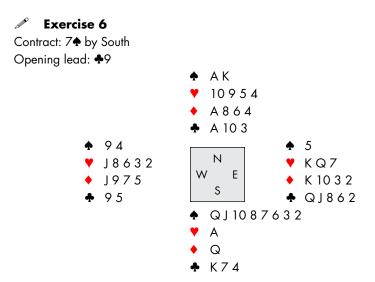
At this point you have taken four club tricks, two spade tricks and a heart, after ducking the opening spade trick. You have won seven tricks and need all of the remaining five. If diamonds break 3-3 then you are home, but otherwise you need to decide who is guarding diamonds.

If West has the diamond guard then the spade-diamond simple squeeze will work. In that case you need to lead a heart to dummy, which will squeeze West.

If East has the diamonds then you might think that a Type R double squeeze will result. However, East then does not have room for more than two hearts, so

the heart guard cannot be shared! In fact, in that case West must be guardiung both majors, and you can squeeze him by cashing your diamonds.

So here there cannot be a double, and you need to make a choice about which simple squeeze you wish to play. After nine tricks the evidence is that West is protecting diamonds, so play for that and lead a heart.

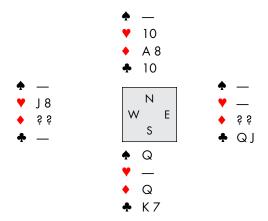


You have arrived in an ambitious 7♠ contract with no opposition bidding and you have twelve top tricks. There is a slim chance of a thirteenth trick if the ♥KQI are alone, and there are some squeeze chances, of course.

In order to set up the ▼10 as a threat for the squeeze, you are almost certainly going to need to ruff some hearts. The plan is to ruff two hearts, aiming to leave only one opponent able to guard hearts: you hope that the hearts do not split 4-4 with the honors divided between the two hands. There are other possibilities, but let's say that you win the club in dummy with the ace to keep the club entry to the South hand. Getting ready for any squeeze, you cash the ♥A, cross on a spade, ruff a heart and repeat this process one more time in an attempt to remove the heart guard from one opponent's hand. On the three hearts, West follows with low cards but East plays the ♥7, the ♥K and the ♥Q. East discards the ♣6 on the second trump. At this point only one opponent (whoever has the ♥J) can control hearts; it seems more likely to be West than East, although that is not certain.

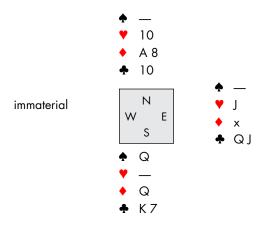
If East has the \(\varphi\)J, you have a club-heart simple squeeze on East. If West has the \(\varphi\)J then there is a double squeeze with diamonds as the Common suit, West guarding hearts and East guarding clubs. In either case you need to run all of the spade winners. You play three top spades, throwing two diamonds and a club from dummy. West will throw two diamonds and a club while East discards a club and a diamond. Now you have come to a decision point.

This is the position as you believe it to be



If West has the heart guard, as appears likely at this point, then you have a Type R double squeeze. The position is as shown in the diagram. You cash the \*K and the  $\Phi Q$ : West can throw a heart on the club but he is squeezed and forced to throw a diamond on the spade. In this classic double squeeze position you throw the \$10 from dummy, and now East, too, has to throw a diamond to keep his club guard. (You will notice that in the squeeze as shown you could equally well have won the ♠K in hand at Trick 1, provided you cashed the ♠A in dummy before the squeeze matured.)

Now suppose you believe that it is in fact East who holds the ♥J. Then you have a simple squeeze on East in hearts and clubs. In this situation you have reached this four-card ending after having followed the same procedure and run all the spades but one:



#### Let's check **BLUE**:

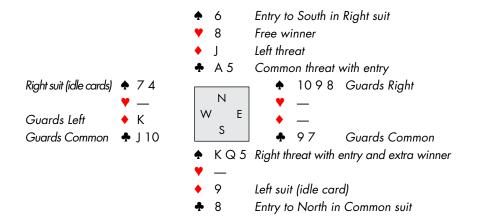
- East still holds an idle card. X
- There is one loser. ✓
- **U:** North holds the heart threat and South holds the diamond threat. ✓
- The ♣K is an entry to the club threat. ✓

You have to cash the spade to achieve **B**, so you do that; East and North can each discard a diamond. Now when you play a diamond to the North hand East is squeezed. In this squeeze it is important that you still have the •K as an entry to the South hand at the critical moment. (Later when we learn about trump squeezes you may wish to come back to this example; it is still possible to make 7♠ on a trump squeeze when East guards both clubs and hearts, even after winning the first club in hand.)

If hearts were 4-4 with the heart honors divided between East and West, there would be no genuine squeeze in the hand. There would, however, be a pseudo compound squeeze which only a very knowledgeable East would be able to defend, as we shall see in Chapter 7.

## The Final Free-Suit Winner is in the Two-Threat Hand

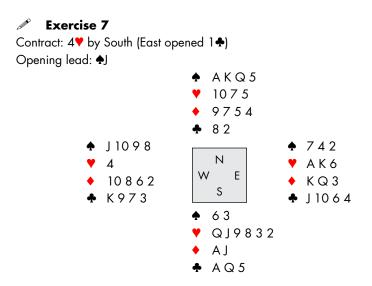
In the examples thus far, the single-threat hand has contained the Free suit. This does not have to be the case; as we mentioned earlier, the final Free suit winner may be in either hand. Here is a typical case:



North leads the ♥8, the last Free-suit winner. Since all of the Left-suit winners and Free-suit winners have been played, East is squeezed. He has to throw a club to keep the spades guarded.

South discards his small spade, which has done its job (a diamond would do as well), and West, who is under no pressure as yet, throws a spade. You then cross to the South hand, with a spade, and cash the last spade winner, the final squeeze card, to squeeze West in the minors.

You notice that in this situation the final squeeze card is a Right-suit winner and therefore West is always the one squeezed on this card; East was squeezed earlier when the last Left- and Free-suit winners were cashed.



You win the spade lead in dummy. With visions of an overtrick, you lead a club and finesse the ♣Q. Alas, West wins and finds the trump switch. East takes two top trumps and plays a third round. You now have only nine tricks: three spades, four hearts and two aces. What are the squeeze possibilities?

Given the lead, it looks as though West is guarding spades. East is likely to have the  $\bigstar$ KQ, or else he does not have much of an opening bid. Both defenders can probably guard the third round of clubs. You envisage a Type R double squeeze, with North as the one-threat hand and the threats as follows:

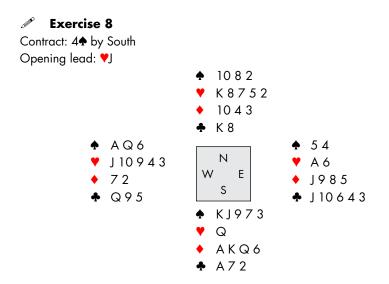
Right: **\$**5 Left: **♦**J Common: **\$**5

You win the third round of hearts in dummy and play a diamond, cashing the Left winner and giving East the chance to err. East is wide awake, however, and puts in the queen. You win with the ace and run the trumps, throwing diamonds from dummy.

On the last trump, West has to abandon clubs. You then cross to dummy with a spade and cash the final spade winner, putting East under pressure. If he throws the  $\bullet K$ , the  $\bullet J$  is high. If not, you throw the  $\bullet J$  and make the last trick with the  $\clubsuit$ 5. The end position, as you lead the last trump, is the one shown in the diagram earlier.

You could, had you wished, have won the third round of trumps in hand and finished the trumps before cashing the  $\bullet$ A. The squeeze works just the same. The important thing is that you take all the Free and Left winners before finally crossing to the one-threat hand.

You may have noticed one nice feature about having the Free suit in the two-threat hand: you do not have to discard a threat on the last Free winner, as you often do in other Type R double squeezes.



You play low from dummy and the  $\forall$ A fells your  $\forall$ Q. East switches to a trump. West wins and plays two more rounds of trumps. As on the previous deal, the opponents have thwarted your ambition of ruffing a club in dummy, but all will be well if the ◆J falls in three rounds. If not, you will have only nine tricks: three spades, a heart, three diamonds and two clubs. Even if hearts break 4-3, you lack the entries to set up and cash a long heart. What are the squeeze possibilities this time?

From the lead, it seems that West is guarding hearts. You cannot be sure at this stage who is guarding diamonds, though as West seems to have rather more cards in the majors then East does, East is the firm favorite. As a matter of general technique you should win the third round of trumps in dummy and ruff a heart. If East started with \(\forall A9x\), this would be a necessary step to isolate the heart guard with West.

Assuming East has the diamonds guarded, you envisage a Type R double squeeze, with North as the one-threat hand and the threats as follows:

Right: **98** Left: **♦**6 Common: **♣**7

To execute the double squeeze you cash the spades and diamonds, then cross to the  $\bigstar K$  and finish with the  $\blacktriangledown K$ .

If you thought West had the diamonds, the timing would be different. Since the heart threat has no entry, the squeeze card would have to be in dummy, meaning you could afford to cash only two diamonds. You would need the third diamond winner as an entry to the diamond threat after you had run the trumps and cashed the AK. Unless East shows out on the second round of diamonds, you are going to have to give up on the heart-diamond simple squeeze because it is so much less likely to work than the Type R double.

## The Type C Double Squeeze

In Type C double squeezes, the single-threat hand contains the threat in the Common suit. With rare exceptions, all Type R squeezes are essentially alike. For Type C squeezes, it is quite otherwise. These squeezes divide into two subgroups, differing widely in their rules of play.

The first subgroup, which we will call **Type C1**, occurs when the Common threat is accompanied by exactly one Common-suit winner. subgroup, **Type C2**, occurs when the Common threat is accompanied by two or more Common-suit winners. We should emphasize that the designations '1' and '2' do not mean 'first' and 'second'; they merely denote the number of winners accompanying the Common threat. Indeed, we shall examine the Type C2 squeeze first.

## The Type C2 Double Squeeze

A Type C2 double squeeze has the following characteristics:

- Single-threat hand: Common threat accompanied by two or more Common winners
- Two-threat hand: Left and Right winners and either
  - (a) one or more Common winners or
  - (b) no Common winner

In Case (a), declarer's minimum holding in the Common suit is AKxx opposite Qx, or the equivalent. Since it is now impossible that both defenders are guarding the suit, it follows that Case (a) can arise only when a simple squeeze is being played as a double.

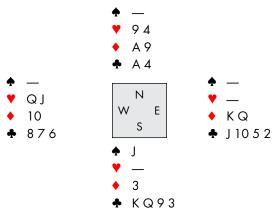
In all Type C2 squeezes the winners in the other suits (the Free suit, Left suit and Right suit) can usually be cashed in any order whatsoever. As a result, declarer does not care about which threat is the Right threat or the Left threat, just that the Right and Left guards are split between the two defenders. There is one important proviso: if the two-threat hand has no Common-suit winner then the final squeeze card must lie opposite the Common threat.

The Common-suit winners must still be unplayed when the squeeze is reached. If it becomes necessary to cash Common-suit winners earlier in the play until only one is left, then the position becomes a Type C1 — for which (as we shall find presently) the rules of play are much more strict.

**Type C2 Rule:** Winners may be cashed in any order provided that (a) entries are maintained and (b) if the two-threat hand has no Common-suit winner then it must also contain the final squeeze card.

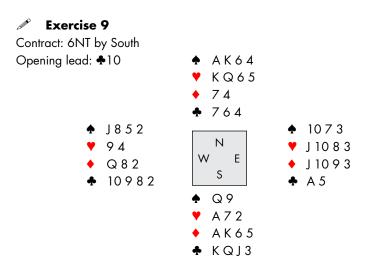
Of course when we say 'winners may be cashed in any order', nothing can supersede the fundamental requirement, dominating every situation whether or not it involves squeeze play, that entries must be conserved.

## **Example F**



In this example, with these threats:

unless the ♠I is led now, South's hand will have to be re-entered in clubs, which ruins everything. However, with North's \(\forall 4\) replaced by a spade, 'any order' is right. Since winners may be cashed in any order, if you are used to cashing Leftsuit winners first, you can still do that provided it does not create entry problems, but you don't need to do so.



East wins the A and returns the 5 to your K, West following with the 2. When you play another club, East discards the ♠3. You have eleven winners. If hearts break 3-3, the long heart will provide your twelfth trick; otherwise you will need a squeeze.

If East has both majors then there is no squeeze: **BLUE** fails since there is no **U** (Upper) threat. If West has both majors then you have a simple squeeze on West (you can check **BLUE** yourself). Your threats are the ♠4 and the ♥5. However, this seems unlikely since that would give East at least six diamonds and he most likely would have discarded one of them on the third club.

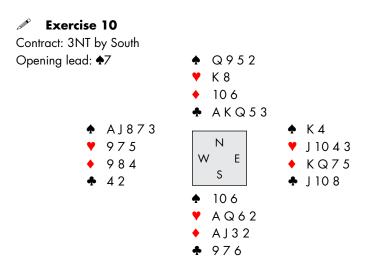
If the major stoppers are divided, either way, there is an easy Type C2 double squeeze with diamonds as the Common suit. The only requirement is that the final squeeze card lie opposite the Common threat.

The threats are:

Left or Right: ♥6 Left or Right ♠6 Common: **♦**6

So you cash the last club followed by the major-suit winners, watching for any heart and spade discards. At the end, if neither the ♥6 nor the ♠6 is high, you will try the diamonds. Notice that you don't really care which defender guards which major suit — a Type C2 is an automatic squeeze, not a positional one.

Also, on this deal you must choose between the simple squeeze on West and the Type C double squeeze. This is because if you were executing the single squeeze you would need to cash the diamonds and clubs while still retaining an entry to the North hand in one of the majors. Try it for yourself by moving two diamonds from West to East, exchanging them for the ♥1 and the ♥10.



Playing pairs, you arrive in 3NT in an auction where North has bid clubs and spades naturally and you have bid hearts and diamonds. Playing fourth-best leads, West starts with the  $\clubsuit$ 7. You play low from dummy and East wins with the  $\clubsuit$ K. East returns the  $\spadesuit$ 4, West winning with the  $\spadesuit$ A. At Trick 3, West switches to the  $\spadesuit$ 9, East plays the  $\spadesuit$ Q and you win with the  $\spadesuit$ A. You cash two top clubs with everyone following. At this point you have ten tricks (one spade, five clubs, one diamond and three hearts) and you are playing for one more overtrick. When you lead the  $\spadesuit$ Q, East discards the  $\spadesuit$ 5 and you the  $\spadesuit$ 2.

With West holding the •K there would be no spade-diamond simple squeeze, for lack of **E**. However, it is unlikely that West would lead away from the •K into your bid suit: East probably has that card. If so, a Type C2 simple-played-as-double squeeze is there. The threats are:

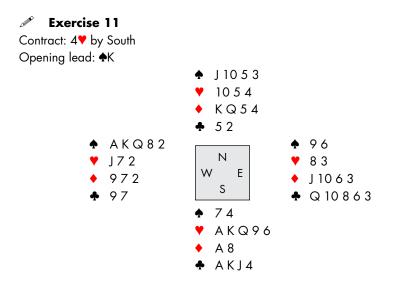
Just finish the clubs and whoever is guarding hearts will be squeezed. On the run of the club winners you throw all the diamonds from the South hand, but the \$10 in the North hand is the threat.

This deal illustrates a possibility mentioned in the earlier discussion of the classification of double squeezes. That is, when there is a multiplicity of threats, a squeeze may sometimes be played as either a Type R squeeze or a Type C squeeze,

as declarer chooses. Due to the presence of a genuine diamond threat in each hand, the squeeze may equally well be considered as a Type R. North is the onethreat hand in this case, the threats being:

Right: **4**9 Left: **♦**J Common: **%**6

The play is exactly the same, as it turns out. You cash the top spade and all the club winners, expecting to throw the ◆I from the South hand, but this time being prepared to change your mind if East parts with the •K. As before, neither East nor West will be able to hold on to the heart guard.



Playing matchpoints you arrive in 4 after West has overcalled in spades. Since at least some of the field will probably be in 3NT, making four, you would like to pick up the overtrick. West starts off with two top spades and continues with the ♠2, East ruffing with the ♥8 and you overruffing with the ♥9. You draw two rounds of trumps, East showing out on the second, throwing the \$3.

After recoiling in terror from the club finesse, your first thought might be to ruff a club in dummy; but with West known to have eight cards in the majors, this involves a serious risk. With the ♥J still out, West is likely to be in a position to ruff high in front of dummy.

What are the squeeze possibilities? If West guards diamonds, then there is a spade-diamond simple squeeze. **BLUE** is in place and all you need to do is run hearts, watching for the discard of the  $\Phi Q$ . However, this would mean playing for clubs to be 1-6. It is very much more likely that East has the diamonds, and if that is the case there is a Type C2 double squeeze with clubs as the Common suit. The threats are:

Right: ◆5
Left: ◆J
Common: ◆J

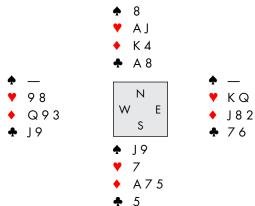
Finish the hearts and the diamonds and neither defender will be able to hold on to three clubs.

## The Type C1 Double Squeeze

Remember that a Type C double squeeze occurs when the Common threat is alone in the single-threat hand opposite the Left and Right threats. If the Common threat is accompanied by exactly one Common-suit winner, then we have a Type C1 double squeeze.

We can further subdivide Type C1 double squeezes into two categories. In the first and most common, both hands have a Common-suit winner.

#### **Example G**



In Example G the threats are:

Right: ♥J

Left:: ♠8

Common: ♦7

The Common threat is alone in the one-threat hand. The two-threat hand has a winner in the Common suit, the ◆K, and the South hand has exactly one winner, the ◆A, in the Common suit. This is therefore a Type C1 double squeeze.

#### In all Type C1 double squeezes:

- the last Right-suit winner must be cashed before the last Free-suit winner
- the last Free-suit winner must be in the hand with the Common threat.

We can see that the deal above meets this second requirement. The Free-suit winners, the spades, are in the hand with the Common threat. What is the reason for this condition? If the one-threat hand has only one winner in the Common suit (as is necessarily the case in C1), there is simply no room for the other hand to hold two threats and the Free suit. Since in every Type C1 double squeeze the last Right-suit winners must be cashed before the last Freesuit winners, it is almost always desirable, and frequently necessary, to cash the Right-suit winners early in this type of squeeze.

The last and rarest of the double squeezes, a type of C1 squeeze, occurs when there is no winner in the Common suit in the two-threat hand. It has very precise requirements and is called an RFL double squeeze. Here are its characteristics.

The two-threat hand contains:

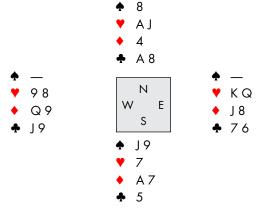
- The Left threat, which includes an entry
- No winner in the Common suit
- The Right threat

The single-threat hand contains:

- Exactly one winner in the Common suit, which is also an entry.
- A Free-suit winner

In these squeezes the last winners must be cashed in a precise order (Right suit, Free suit and Left suit), which is why they are called RFL squeezes. Notice that the starting requirements for both the C1 squeeze and the RFL squeeze are the same, with the main difference being that in the RFL squeeze the two-threat hand does not have a Common-suit winner but instead must contain an entry in the Left suit.

#### **Example H**



The threats are:

Right: ٧J Left: **%**8 Common: **◆**7

This deal is exactly the same as Example G except that North does not have a winner in the Common suit. This makes it an RFL squeeze. (If you would like a clever name to help you remember the RFL squeeze then I suggest REFLEX.)

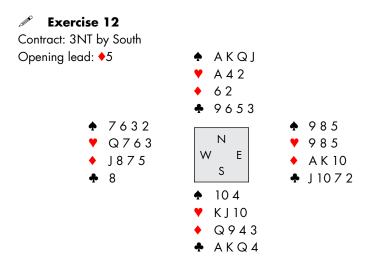
In Example H we must cash the Right-suit winner, the ♥A, before we cash the Free winners, but beyond that constraint we can cash the winners (outside the Common suit) in any order. In Example G we must finish by cashing the last Right-suit winner, then the last Free-suit winner, and finally the Left-suit winner. The formula says hearts-spades-clubs. Be sure to verify for yourself the fact that with any other sequence the squeeze would fail.

The RFL approach will work for both examples. Cash the  $\forall$ A and run the spades, then cross to the A to finish West. However, it is often advisable in the non-RFL C1 double squeezes to cash the Left-suit winners first to remove ambiguity — this is because in the RFL sequence you are typically discarding the Left threat on the last Free winner. This means that for all double squeezes except the RFL type you will normally cash the Left-suit winners first, as we discussed for Type R double squeezes and Type C2 double squeezes.

The two classes of Type C1 squeeze compare in this way. In each, the last Right-suit winner must precede the last Free-suit winner. In the RFL squeeze the last Left-suit winner must be kept for use as final squeeze card. In other Type C1 double squeezes, the last Left-suit winner may turn out to be used as the final squeeze card but that will not often be our approach.

We have now classified all of the Type C squeezes: the C2 squeeze, the C1 squeeze and a special class of the C1 squeeze, the RFL squeeze.

The RFL squeeze, though by no means rare, is undoubtedly the least common of the various forms, for an obvious reason: even when the necessary threats are present and properly placed, very often the squeeze cannot be executed because the winners cannot be cashed in the proper order.



Playing matchpoints, the defense starts off with three rounds of diamonds. You win with the  $\bullet Q$  and discard a club from dummy. East has turned up with the •AK10. You test clubs by playing the top two clubs; West shows out on the second round, discarding the \$2 At this point you have ten tricks: seven blacksuit winners, the top two hearts and the  $\mathbf{Q}$ . You would like to make the rest of the tricks for a top matchpoint score. One possibility is to guess which way to finesse in hearts, but there is a better choice.

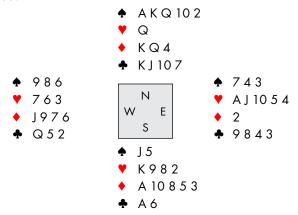
The Type C1 squeeze is almost certain to work, with North as the one-threat hand. These are the threats:

Right: Left: **-**4 Common: **\**4

The rule that the last Right-suit winner, the \Q, must precede the last Free-suit winner has already been attended to. So you cash the last club followed by the spades (or vice versa).

Back at Trick 3, if you throw a heart from dummy on the third diamond the squeeze will fail. The  $\checkmark$ 4 is the threat in the Common suit, not the  $\checkmark$ 1. The  $\checkmark$ 1 cannot be the threat as the squeeze against West fails due to lack of **U**. Try it.

## Exercise 13 Contract 6NT by South Opening lead: 49

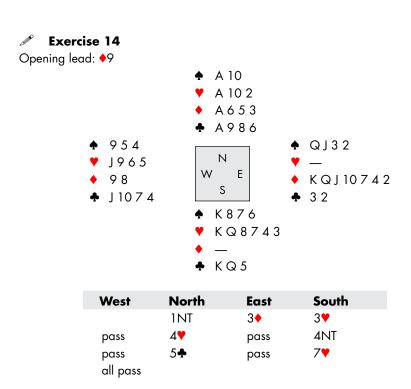


You win the opening spade lead in hand with the  $\spadesuit$ I, as East follows with the  $\spadesuit$ 3. You cash the  $\bigstar K$  and  $\bigstar Q$  and East discards the  $\bigstar 5$  on the second diamond. Now you lead the ♥Q from dummy. East wins with the ♥A and returns the ♥J, West following to both hearts.

At this stage, after the poor diamond break, you have only eleven tricks. You could try a club finesse, but the Type C1 double squeeze is very likely on, as East surely has the ♥10. North is the one-threat hand, and the threats are:

Right: **♦**10 Left: **Y**9 Common: **ب** 

You cash the Right-suit winner, the ◆A and then the Free-suit winners, the spades. You watch for the \$10 and any diamonds. Assuming East retains the ♥10, you discard the Left threat, the ♥9, on the last spade. The double squeeze works and you make the slam without having to guess the  $\clubsuit$ Q.



It is not to everyone's taste to use Blackwood with a void, but anyway here you are in 7♥. You duck the opening diamond lead in dummy, East plays the ◆K and you ruff. When the  $\forall K$  is led, East discards the  $\Diamond Q$ . Unfortunately, with the bad trump break you cannot ruff any spades in dummy. However, you have twelve top tricks and there is a chance that a 3-3 club break will produce a thirteenth. If clubs don't cooperate there is still the chance of a squeeze.

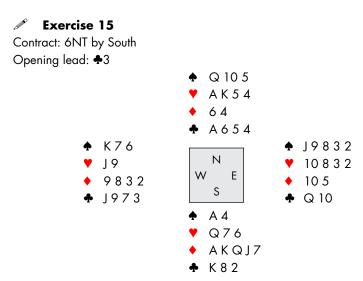
It is likely on the bidding and defense, and must be assumed anyway, that West cannot guard diamonds. If East is guarding clubs, the diamond-club squeeze will fail for lack of **U**, and the contract along with it, so give West the clubs. The threats you have, then, are the ♣9 against West and the ♦6 against East, with spades as the Common suit and the 48 as the threat. South is the single-threat hand and holds the Common threat. Since North also has a winner in spades, this is a type C1 double squeeze, not an RFL.

Threats:

Right: Left: **4**9 Common: **4**8

In this type of squeeze the last Right-suit winner must precede the last Free-suit winner. You must also watch your entries carefully: here the ◆A must be cashed before the last heart. If you were to ruff a second diamond in case West had three diamonds, you would not be able to play the ◆A before playing the last heart (since West would ruff), so you cannot take that line. Equally you cannot afford to cash the A and then ruff a diamond, because West would overruff. Your plan, then, is to draw trumps and after that cash the •A before completing the squeeze. So you finesse the ♥10, cash the ♥A and return to hand with the ♣K. After that you draw the last trump (throwing a diamond from dummy).

At this point you have a choice of how you cross to dummy to cash the A. Suppose you cross to the A, throw a spade on the A, return to the Athe last heart. If West discards a spade, you will not know whether the squeeze is working (in which case you want to throw a club from dummy) or whether clubs were 3-3 all the time (in which case you want to keep dummy's clubs). As noted previously, in a non-RFL C1 double squeeze you should cash the Left winners if you get the chance. Therefore you cross instead via the ♣A, take the ♦A and return via the ♣O. You will now be in hand to play the squeeze card, the ♥8, having discovered the club position and retained the top cards in the Common suit to provide transportation.



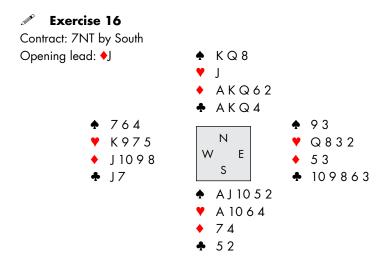
East plays the ♣Q on the first trick and you duck. East continues with the ♣10 and you win the ♣K in hand, West playing the ♣7. Everyone follows to two rounds of diamonds.

At this point you have one spade, three hearts, five diamonds and two clubs for a total of eleven tricks, with the potential for a twelfth trick if hearts break 3-3. You dismiss any thoughts of a 3-3 club split — surely an opening lead from Jxx against a slam is unthinkable. However, the contract is assured in any case. If West has hearts guarded, then the slam will make on a heart-club simple squeeze. If East has hearts guarded, then the RFL double squeeze works with

RFL reads hearts-diamonds-clubs: therefore, to keep both squeezes in force, cash the hearts followed by the diamonds and then the clubs. After you have cashed the three top hearts you will know who has the long hearts (or if in fact they divide) and can decide how to continue.

In the RFL squeeze, with the cards as shown above, West will be squeezed on the last diamond and forced to give up his spade guard. You can throw the �6 from dummy, as it is no longer needed. When you then cash the club winner, East will be squeezed in spades and hearts.

If you trade the  $\diamondsuit 32$  for the  $\heartsuit 32$  in the diagram, you have a simple squeeze on West. (In fact you actually have a three-suit squeeze on West since he also has the  $\spadesuit K$ . You can also try it with the  $\spadesuit K$  switched for another spade.)



East follows to the first trick with the ◆3 as you win with the ◆Q. Yes, 7♠ would be the easier contract since your thirteenth trick would be a heart ruff in the North hand. If you assume from the lead that West holds four (or more) diamonds, your only chance for a thirteenth trick is a squeeze. If West also guards clubs then you can catch him in a diamond-club simple squeeze. If East has the clubs, you expect there to be an RFL squeeze with these threats:

Right: **♣**4

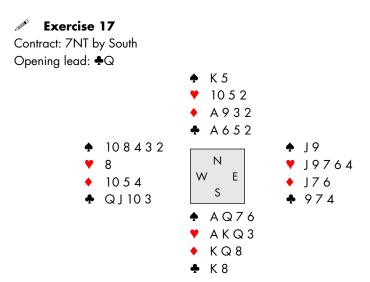
Left: **♦**6

Common: **♥**10

RFL translates into clubs-spades-diamonds, which means that all the black-suit winners can be run, first clubs, then spades, without disturbing either squeeze.

Owing to the 5-2 club division, you can tell which squeeze to play for (granted the diamond assumption) after four tricks. You are still not out of the woods as you will have to decide what to throw from dummy on the last spade. Most defenders in the West seat will keep diamonds guarded if they can, so if West throws a diamond, you will probably play for a 5-1 diamond break and throw a diamond from dummy anyway. If you are up against a top-class defender (fortunately this does not happen very often) it is more of a guess. Normally, though, the average West will bare the ♥K after an agonizing trance and you will know exactly what to do.

If both defenders follow to three rounds of clubs — play through the deal with the ♣3 and the ♥5 traded — you will again have a guess about what to throw from dummy on the last spade. If West is still guarding both minors, he will have had to throw all his hearts away. So, unless West has thrown a heart honor, it is unlikely that he is keeping both minors and you can play for the RFL squeeze. If West has thrown a heart honor, it is probably right to throw dummy's heart and then cash the \(\forall A\) going for the simple squeeze.



After dummy plays low, East plays the ♣4 and you win the ♣K. You have eleven tricks. You will either need four tricks from each red suit (via a 3-3 split or some other friendly lie) or four tricks in one suit and a squeeze. You start by playing the ◆KQ as both opponents follow. Then you play two top hearts, West discarding the  $\clubsuit 3$  on the second. Next you play a spade to the  $\spadesuit K$  and then back to the  $\spadesuit A$ . West follows low but East plays the  $\clubsuit$ 9 and the  $\clubsuit$ J.

At this point you know that East has the heart guard. Assuming diamonds break then East is known to have five hearts, three diamonds, at least two spades and one club. Two of his cards are unknown, and while it is just possible that he holds a spade stopper (having started with \$\int\_11098\), it is much more likely that

West has the spades. In that case you have an RFL squeeze with clubs as the Common suit. North is the single-threat hand, and the threats are:

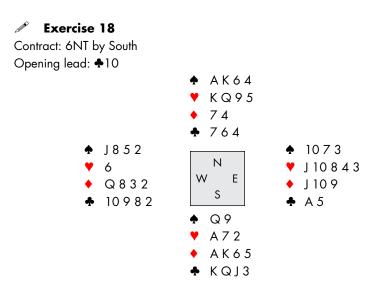
Right: **•**7 Left: **Y**3 Common: **4**6

To execute the squeeze you work through RFL: here the order is spades-diamondshearts. You cash the third spade and East shows out, as you expect. The •A brings the hoped-for 3-3 split, so you play the ◆9 and then the ♥Q to complete the squeeze.

In the unlikely case that East is 4=5=3=1 and has both the major-suit guards, you can actually play your slam in exactly the same way. Try it, trading two of West's spades for clubs.

## A defensive point

Although the subject is large and important, we lack the space for an extensive study of double-squeeze defense. However, let us pause long enough to make just one point which might otherwise escape your notice. When threatened with a Type C2 double squeeze, a defender who is able to change the squeeze to Type C1 stands a good chance of making declarer work for his supper. Sometimes opponents will attack your C2 threat almost unwittingly, simply by following an intuitive play such as leading up to a weakness in dummy. This is what happens on the next deal.



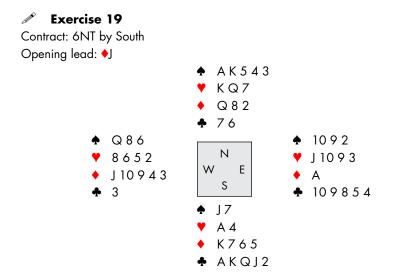
After a short auction in which clubs are the unbid suit, you end up in 6NT and West leads the ♣10, perhaps not surprisingly. East plays the ♣5 and you win with the •K. It would be strange for West to have underled the •A so it seems quite likely East has it and that you can make three club tricks. This means that you have eleven top tricks. The first thing to do is force out that A. You cross to dummy with the  $\forall K$  and play a club. East wins with the  $\triangle A$  and returns the ♦], West following with the ♦8. You play the ♠Q, and everyone follows to both tricks. What now?

Obviously you have the rest if hearts run, so forget that for now. There are many possible squeeze positions. Let us list them:

- West guards both majors simple squeeze. 1.
- 2. East guards both majors — no squeeze.
- 3. Major guards are split:
  - i) East guards diamonds and either major simple squeeze.
  - ii) Both guard diamonds and East guards hearts with West guarding spades — you have an RFL squeeze with sequence hearts-clubsspades.
  - iii) Both guard diamonds and East guards spades with West guarding hearts — you have an RFL squeeze with sequence spades-clubshearts.

It can't hurt to cash the \(\forall A\) first to see whether you can get any more information. When you lead the \(\forall A\) and West shows out, you have eliminated a lot of the choices. West must guard spades or no squeeze will work. If East solely guards diamonds then you have a simple squeeze on East. If they jointly hold diamonds then the RFL squeeze with sequence hearts-clubs-spades works. In fact this RFL sequence will also work for the simple squeeze. When West shows out in hearts it is much more likely that the double squeeze is working, because otherwise West would have started with only one heart and two diamonds.

In the next deal, let's say that East is known to be a master player. (We'll try not to let such a thing happen too often, because it merely makes trouble.)



East's  $\triangle$ A wins the first trick; he switches to the  $\triangle$ 10, covered by the  $\triangle$ 1, the  $\triangle$ 0 and the ♠K. On the ♠Q, East discards the ♥3. At Trick 4 you play a club to the ace and everyone follows. With eleven clear tricks, you pause to think about what will happen if clubs do not run.

If West guards clubs as well as diamonds (and by force East guards spades) there is no squeeze because **U** is missing against West. So if a squeeze is needed we must assume East (as is most likely) is guarding clubs. In that case there is an RFL double squeeze. North is the single-threat hand, and the threats are:

**♦**7 Right: Left: **+**2 Common: **\$**5

By returning a spade East has made the deal as tough as possible for you, changing a C2 squeeze into an RFL squeeze. The correct sequence is diamonds, then hearts and then clubs.

One's first thought might be that East must have taken a peek, but not so. He has merely taken a really careful look before leaping — a thing which most players, certainly including your author, frequently fail to do at the bridge table. (It must be admitted that the study table and the bridge table are two quite different articles of furniture. This book might be viewed as an attempt to bring the two closer together.) East can see that if spades run, the hand is undoubtedly cold, so as the only hope he gives West the  $\Phi Q$ . After that, South surely must hold all the invisible high cards. On these hypotheses, the Type C2 double squeeze is in plain sight. (Play it with a heart or a club switch at Trick 2.)

### **REVIEW PROBLEMS**

# Problem 1 Opening lead: ♣J

TO SOLUTION

<b></b>	A K J 6 3
•	J 9 8 2
•	8 2
*	5 4
<b></b>	Q 2
•	Q 10 4
•	AKQJ6
*	Q 8 2

West	North	East	South
			1NT
pass	2♣	pass	2♦
pass all pass	3♥*	pass	3NT

East wins with the  $\bigstar$ K and returns the  $\bigstar$ 3. West holds the  $\bigstar$ A and the  $\bigstar$ J so it doesn't matter which club you play. West takes the next three club tricks showing up with the  $\bigstar$ AJ109. At Trick 5, West leads the  $\bigstar$ 10, East plays the  $\bigstar$ 4 and you win with the  $\bigstar$ Q. How do you proceed?

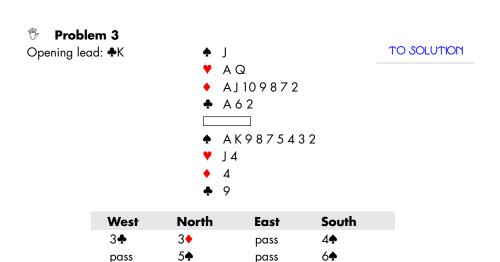
## Problem 2 Opening lead: ◆10



-	_	$\overline{}$		ò	$\overline{}$		, ,	-		$\overline{}$	_	
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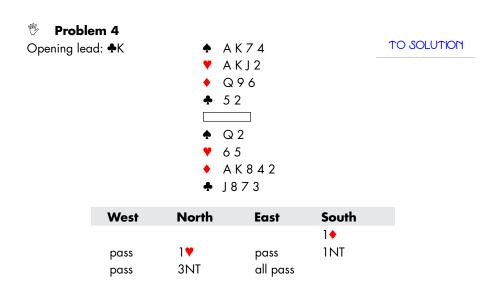
West	North	East	South
			2♣
pass	2 <b>♦</b> *	pass	2NT
pass	3♣*	pass	3♦
pass	4♣*	pass	4NT*
pass	7NT	all pass	

East discards the ♠2 on the opening lead. Show how you can claim the contract.

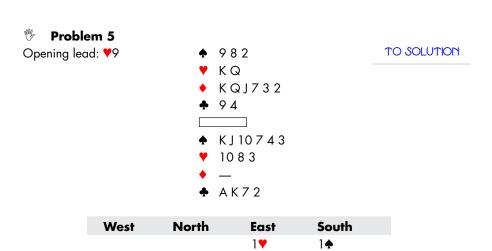


You go up with the A in dummy as East follows with the 7. You cash the top spades and are pleased to see that they split. With the spades working the play is now for the overtrick. Can you get a top board by taking all the tricks?

all pass



East follows to the first club with the \$9 and wins the second trick with the ♣A. He returns the ♣6 to West's ♣10. West cashes his last club winner as East discards the \$\discards. You have discarded a heart and a diamond from dummy on the clubs. At Trick 5 West plays the ♠J, East plays the ♠6 and you win the ♠Q. Plan the play.

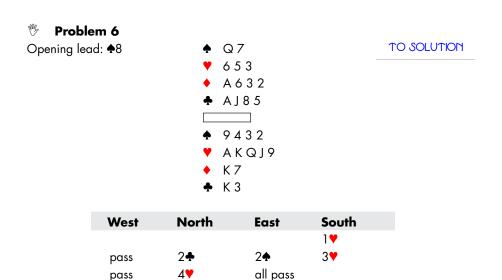


East wins with the ♥A and switches to a trump. Whatever you do, West wins two trumps and plays a third round, East throwing two hearts. Plan the play.

pass

all pass

3♠



East takes the top two spades and continues with the  $\clubsuit$ J. West ruffs the third spade with the  $\blacktriangledown$ 7 ( $\spadesuit$ 2 from dummy) and returns the  $\spadesuit$ 10. East plays the  $\spadesuit$ 8 and you win with the  $\spadesuit$ K. You then cash the  $\blacktriangledown$ A and  $\blacktriangledown$ K, and on the second heart East discards the  $\spadesuit$ 6. What now?

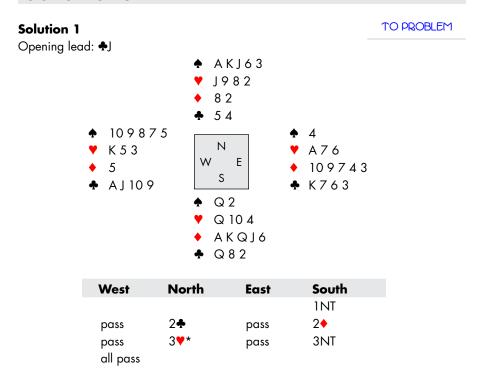
1NT

pass

2\*\*

4

### **SOLUTIONS**

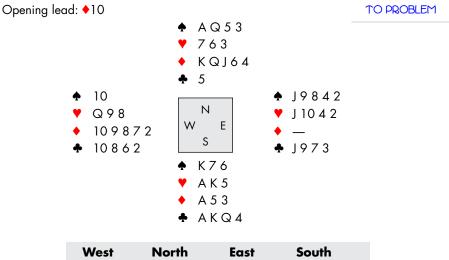


East wins the ♠K and returns the ♠3. West takes the next three club tricks showing up with the AJ109 of clubs. At Trick 5, West leads the ♠10, East plays the  $\clubsuit 4$  and you win with the  $\spadesuit Q$ .

Fortunately the defense has failed to cash out. You have eight top tricks and a ninth can come from either diamonds or spades. If neither suit breaks then it seems likely West has the spades and therefore East has the diamonds. Could there be a squeeze? The only possible simple squeeze would occur if one hand (presumably East) had both the top hearts. This seems quite unlikely. What about a double squeeze? Give West the spades as indicated, and East the diamonds: there is no double squeeze because the Common threat (hearts) is not accompanied by a winner.

So if neither of your long suits will cash, the only hope is a pseudo-squeeze. East almost certainly has the ♥A, for if he held that card West would have surely have cashed it at Trick 5. Similarly, West probably has the ♥K, for with both top hearts East might have laid down the VK at Trick 2. You need to induce one of the defenders to pitch from their long suit. If you run the diamonds West will discard the ♥K, because a spade discard would obviously be sudden death. However, if you cash the spades East will suffer torment, and it is long odds that he will yield a diamond.

#### Solution 2



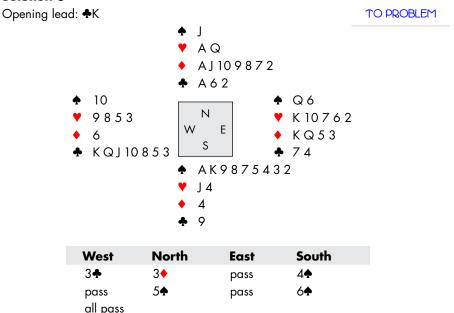
North	East	South	
		2♣	
2◆*	pass	2NT	
3♣*	pass	3♦	
4♣*	pass	4NT*	
7NT	all pass		
	2 <b>♦</b> * 3 <b>♣</b> * 4 <b>♣</b> *	2	2♣ 2♦* pass 2NT 3♣* pass 3♦ 4♣* pass 4NT*

East discards the \$\display2\$ on the opening lead. You should cash the spades. If West has that suit guarded, then you can make the grand slam on a spade-diamond simple squeeze. If East is guarding spades, then you have a Type C2 double squeeze. Notice that either the club suit or the heart suit works equally well as the Common suit.

Right: **\$**5 Left: **♦**6 ♣4 (or ♥5) Common:

If hearts are to be the Common suit, start by cashing your club winners (or vice versa), then cash the winners in spades and diamonds in any order. At the end, both East and West will have to hold on to a winner in their singly-guarded suit and therefore will abandon the Common suit.

#### Solution 3



You go up with the A in dummy as East follows with the 7. You cash the top spades and are pleased to see that they split 2-1. With the spades working the play is now for the overtrick.

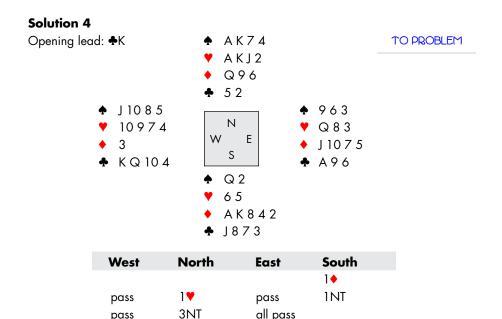
Give East the ♥K on the auction. Then if he also has the ♦KQ, as suggested by the bidding, there is a heart-diamond squeeze. You want to run all the trumps, first taking care to cash the VA (Vienna Coup) and then returning to hand via a club ruff.

However, in the unlikely case that West has the diamonds, and assuming that East has only two clubs, as the bidding suggests, then West will be caught in a diamond-club simple squeeze. (Trade the •KQ for two hearts.)

Finally, it is possible that the diamond honors are divided (trade the  $\mathbf{Q}$  for a heart); then if East has only two clubs there is a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

Right: **۷**J Left: **4**6 Common: **♦**J

The striking feature is that all three squeezes require exactly the same technique. So even if it is hard to place the cards with any certainty, you are still set up for one squeeze or another.



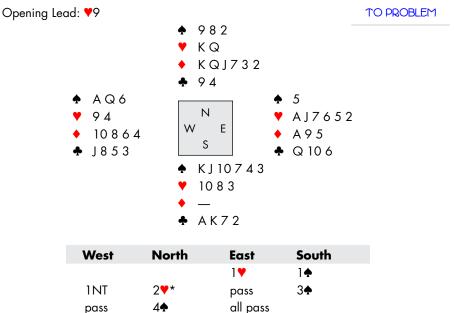
East follows to the first club with the \$\infty\$9 and wins the second trick with the \$\infty\$A. He returns the \$\infty\$6 to West's \$\infty\$10. West cashes his last club winner as East discards the \$\infty\$3. You have discarded a heart and a diamond from dummy on the clubs. At Trick 5 West plays the \$\infty\$J, East plays the \$\infty\$6 and you win the \$\infty\$Q.

If diamonds break 3-2, you have the rest trivially. If not, you would rather play for a squeeze than stake all on the heart finesse. The 3-2 diamond break can wait. What are the squeeze possibilities?

East might have thrown a spade from three cards or five. The spot cards and West's decision to switch to the suit despite East's discouragement make the former more likely. In any case, if East has the long spades, you are unlikely to be playing for a squeeze (no  $\bf U$  if West has the diamonds, for instance). As it cannot hurt any squeeze, and may in fact be necessary, you can start by cashing spades. When East shows out on the third round you know that West started with eight cards in the black suits. If diamonds don't break then it seems most likely East has the stopper. That suggests a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

If West holds the diamond stopper there is a spade-diamond simple squeeze, but this gives East six hearts and East would probably have discarded one. All things considered, this squeeze is much less likely. So cash the top diamonds now and either one defender will give up his spade stopper or the  $\P$ J will be good. Watch diamonds and spades.

#### Solution 5



East wins with the ♥A and switches to a trump. Whatever you do, West wins two trumps and plays a third round, East throwing two hearts.

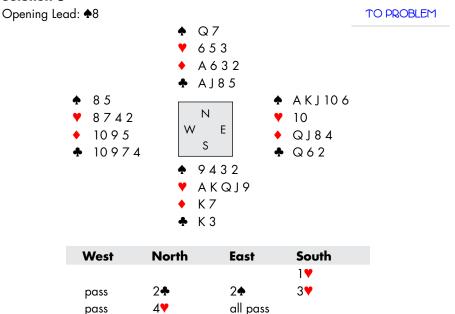
You have lost three tricks already and need to make the rest. Now that West has turned up with the AQ you can be sure the ruffing finesse in diamonds will work, but this still leaves you a trick short. A squeeze will be needed to secure the game-going trick.

Since entries to dummy are scarce, you should win the third round of trumps there and lead the  $\bigstar$ K. If East ducks, you continue with the  $\bigstar$ Q. East is sure to cover the first or second diamond and you ruff. If East has the long diamonds, you are going down — no heart-diamond simple squeeze due to lack of **E**. You therefore place West with the diamond length. With North the one-threat hand, you are now in position for a Type R double squeeze:

Right: **♦**7 Left: **V**10 Common: **♣**7

The fact that dummy's only remaining entry is in hearts dictates your line of play. Having picked up the diamonds, you cash your two remaining trumps. West can spare a heart and a club, East a diamond and a heart. When you then cross to dummy with a heart, you squeeze West. You finish with the top diamond(s) to squeeze East. Watch for diamonds and the V.

#### Solution 6



East takes the top two spades and continues with the 4]. West ruffs the third spade with the  $\checkmark$ 7 (dummy throws the  $\checkmark$ 2) and returns the  $\checkmark$ 10. East plays the  $\checkmark$ 8 and you win with the  $\bigstar$ K. You then cash the  $\maltese$ A and the  $\maltese$ K, and on the second heart East discards the \$6.

Until West shows up with more than three hearts, the play looks trivial: just draw two rounds of trumps, then ruff the last spade. Unfortunately, after six tricks it appears you must go to work. Two lines suggest themselves: (a) If West has the  $\Phi Q$ , a mere finesse will work; (b) If East has the  $\Phi Q$  then there is a spade-club simple squeeze. Since the two look equally probable, each offers a 50% chance, and you will have to choose after cashing the ◆A, the ◆K and the hearts.

However, there is a third method: (c) Assume that West holds the  $\Phi Q$  and play a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

Right: Left: **♣**J Common: **♦**6

If you take this approach, you draw the last trump before cashing the \*K and the A and ruffing a club. If the Q does not come down then you run the remaining hearts. Since you have a chance to drop the \$\Pi Q\$ when East has it doubleton or third, this is a much better than even chance.

### All Double Squeezes

- Unless the Free winners, Left-suit winners and Right-suit winners are run in proper order the squeeze will fail, and this is true of double squeezes in general.
- It is usually safe to run the Left-suit winners at an early stage, and in many cases it is advisable or even necessary to do so. There are specific types of squeeze where another order is required.
- The Common suit must contain an entry when the squeeze position is reached.

### Type R Double Squeeze

- The single-threat hand contains the Right threat.
- The single-threat hand contains a winner in the Free suit or in the Right suit.
- There must be an entry to the double-threat hand in the Common suit.
- In most Type R double squeezes, all of the winners in the Left suit should be cashed early
- Once all of these winners have been cashed, the final squeeze card is cashed.
- When the hand opposite the Common threat has no winner in the Common suit to serve as an entry, the squeeze card must be played from that hand.
- *Failing case:* If the one-threat hand has neither a Common-suit winner nor the last Left winner, then the winners in the two-threat hand (North) must all be cashed while South still has a Free or Right entry in addition to the last Free/Right winner (the squeeze card).

### Type C Double Squeeze

- The single-threat hand contains the Common threat.
- There are three types of Common-suit squeezes: C1, C2, and RFL (Reflex).
- C2: There are two or more winners in the Common suit in the one-threat hand
- C1: There is one winner in the Common suit in the one-threat hand and at least one winner in this suit in the two-threat hand
- RFL: A subclass of the C1 squeeze: there is one winner in the Common suit in the one-threat hand and no Common-suit winner in the opposite hand.

### Type C2 Double Squeeze

- The winners in the other suits (the Free suit, Left suit and Right suit) may usually be cashed in any order.
- Declarer does not care about which defender guards the Right threat or the Left threat, just that the guards are split
- The two-threat hand must contain the final squeeze card if it has no Common-suit winner.

### Type C1 Double Squeeze

- The last Right-suit winner must precede the last Free-suit winner.
- The last Free-suit winner must be in the hand with the Common threat.
- Since in every Type C1 double squeeze the last Right-suit winner must precede the last Free-suit winner, it is almost always desirable, and frequently necessary, to cash the Right-suit winners early.
- If this is not an RFL double squeeze, it is usually permissible to cash the Leftsuit winners first.

### **RFL Double Squeeze**

- The two-threat hand contains:
  - the Left threat which includes an entry
  - no winner in the Common suit
  - the Right threat
- The single-threat hand contains
  - exactly one winner in the Common suit which is also an entry.
  - a Free-suit winner.
- Winners must be cashed in the specific order Right/Free/Left.

### THE ELIMINATION PLAY

Most readers of this book will be familiar with the elimination play, or strip, in each of its forms: the trump strip and the notrump strip. However, many deals embody the salient features of both squeeze and strip to such an extent, and so closely interwoven, that it would be impossible to separate them. Thus it seems worthwhile, if only for purposes of review, to preface our study of advanced squeezes with a brief discussion of the **elimination play**.

### The Trump Strip and Endplay

In the typical case, in order to achieve a **trump strip** and endplay declarer must have at least one trump remaining in each hand after the throw-in has occurred. Then it may happen that any return the opponent can make will allow declarer to make his trumps separately via a ruff and discard: that is, he ruffs in one hand while throwing a loser from the other. More often, the defender has a choice of this or some other equally ruinous lead, usually a lead into a tenace.

In playing a trump contract, one should always keep in mind the following:

**RULE:** When you have or will have trumps in both hands with no obvious way of making tricks with them separately, always look for a strip and endplay.

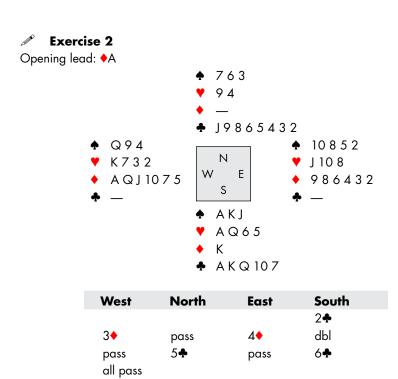
Of course this rule is inoperative when you have only one loser remaining, because no throw-in can gain; but that is precisely the case in which a squeeze is most likely to be present.

#### Exercise 1 Contract: 4♥ Opening lead: \*K 952 Q 10 7 3 2 764 108 104 J763 Ν 954 8 Ε 1052 K I 8 3 S 97652 AK43 AKQ8 AKI6 A Q 9 QJ

West starts off with the top two clubs and then switches to a trump, East following. After three tricks the contract is in your pocket. This first deal has a familiar theme and is the simplest of endplays.

You draw trumps, then cash the three top spades. If the suit fails to break, you ruff the fourth spade and lead a diamond from dummy. If East plays the ◆10 or the  $\blacklozenge$ J, you put up the  $\blacklozenge$ Q: if West wins, he will have to return a diamond into the A9 tenace or permit a ruff and discard. However, if East plays low, don't touch that  $\mathbf{Q}$ . You play the  $\mathbf{Q}$  instead, and again, West is caught.

You should make a mental note of this particular combination (AQ9), since the fact that this holding is just as good as AQ10, for throw-in purposes, is not instantly apparent.



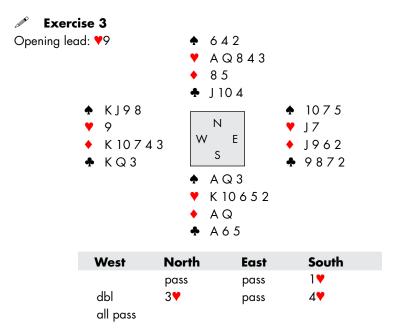
There is a rather straightforward play here to make the contract 100% at Trick 1. Our Rule says 'always look for a strip and endplay'. Doing so, you quickly find that the best line is to discard a spade or a heart from dummy on the  $\diamond A$ , then claim the rest. When you go looking for an endplay, better get an early start!

Notice that a sharp distinction should be drawn between the terms **end play** and **endplay**. The end play of a deal, every deal, is a vague term meaning the play of the last few tricks. In modern usage, the word 'endplay' is used to mean a play that forces an opponent to lead and results in that opponent losing one or more tricks that they might otherwise have won. A **strip** precedes the endplay. The plan is to strip the enemy of all his easy **exit cards** before giving him the lead.

A **throw-in** is the play which actually gives the opponent the lead. I shall sometimes use the word 'strip' to mean both the strip and the throw-in, which together have led to an endplay on an opponent.

### A Repeating Throw-in

Under exceptionally favorable circumstances it may be possible to throw a defender in for the gain of one trick, and then to repeat the maneuver for the gain of another trick.

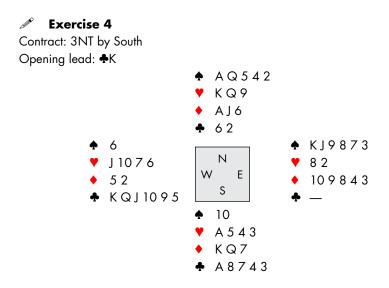


You win the opening lead in hand and cross to the  $\mathbf{VQ}$ . West discards the  $\mathbf{\Phi}9$ . West's takeout double seems to call for him to have most of the missing high cards. If he has the  $\bigstar K$ ,  $\bigstar K$  and  $\bigstar KQ$ , the contract, looking so hopeless at first sight, is surely cold. You run the • I to West. If he returns a spade, you cash the other spade winner and exit with the \$\displays 3. If West wins this trick, you are home. If East wins the spade and returns a minor, you go up with the ace in that minor and exit in the same suit. If West returns a minor at Trick 4, the procedure is equally obvious.

### The Notrump Strip and Endplay

We know that, in a typical trump strip, the victim must give declarer a plain-suit trick or else concede a ruff and discard. In order to set this up, declarer must strip his own hands of two plain suits or, as in the previous example, possibly only one. It may happen that nothing more than this is needed. At worst, it is merely necessary to direct the throw-in, which involves the adverse holdings in only one suit; and as a rule, those holdings must be favorable to begin with or nothing can be done. That is, declarer must get his own two hands into proper shape.

A **notrump strip** (which, like the notrump squeeze, may occur in the course of a trump contract) is one in which the ruff and discard possibility is not present: the victim's return must usually be such as to give declarer a trick in the suit played. Now declarer's problem is not readying his own hands, but removing all safe exit cards from the defender's hand, leaving him ripe for the throw-in. (Technically, all exit cards are removed in the trump strip also, but this is done indirectly, by stripping certain suits from declarer's hands, rather than that of the opponent.) It follows that here — just as in squeeze play, to a much greater extent than in trump-strip play — declarer is interested in all features of the adverse distribution.



You arrive in 3NT with no opposition bidding. You win the opening lead with the A as East discards the A9, and continue with three rounds of hearts and two rounds of diamonds (the ♦A and the ♦K). Everyone follows to the diamonds, but East shows out on the third heart, throwing the  $\clubsuit$ 3.

You have only eight top tricks, but after the play to the first six tricks you can claim the contract! This is because West, who has shown up with four hearts, six clubs and two diamonds, can have no more than one spade.

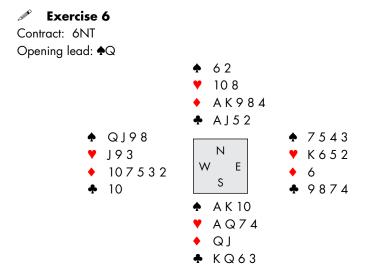
The plan now is to endplay East, who will have to give you a spade trick eventually. The first step is to complete the strip by cashing the  $\mathbf{Q}$ ; this removes East's last exit card. You now lead a spade. There is just one pitfall to avoid. If you let the ♠10 run, East may work out his fate if he wins and allow the ♠10 to hold then you have to concede four clubs and a heart to West. So, regardless of what West plays, you go up with the ♠A and duck a spade to East. This completes the throw-in stage. East has a couple of diamonds to cash but eventually will have to lead a spade, which will allow dummy's  $\Phi O$  to take the ninth trick.

#### Exercise 5 Contract: 3NT by South Opening lead: **YQ** AQ54 963 K 7 AKJ7 K 6 3 J92 Ν QJ1082 75 Ε 1932 106 S 932 Q 10 8 5 1087 A K 4 AQ854

You duck the opening heart lead and win the second round as East follows both times. In a spot like this — all other suits well protected — the first thought of any experienced player would be to hold off the opening heart lead: if not for a clear-cut reason, then just on general principles. Here a reason for ducking is not far to seek. Granted a normal diamond division, the contract is easy. So assume that suit to be 5-1. No matter where the diamonds may lie, you plan to throw East in, but first his hearts must be eliminated. Since he may have three hearts, the smooth and sure road to that elimination is by ducking the first trick.

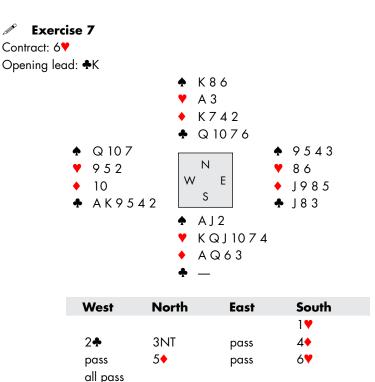
You play off three top diamonds, and West discards a club on the third round. When the 4-2 diamond break becomes apparent, you put East in at once, since cashing the third heart would leave you with no entry to enjoy the thirteenth diamond. Maybe East had only two hearts, in which case you pick up an overtrick. As the cards lie, East would probably return the  $\Delta$ 2. Any spade you play from your hand, as it turns out, will force West to play the ♠K. You now have ten tricks and might as well try for eleven.

For a variety of reason you do not intend to take the club finesse. For one thing, with nothing in either black suit East might have switched to a club rather than a spade. For another, there is a squeeze if either defender holds both the  $\P$  and the  $\P$ Q. You cash the  $\P$ Q (Vienna Coup) on the chance of a spadeclub squeeze, cross back to your hand with a heart, and run diamonds. You throw spades from dummy and East is eventually squeezed, so you end up with that second overtrick.



After North opens 1, North-South arrive in 6NT very quickly. West leads the  $\Phi Q$ . You win this and play off two diamonds, East discarding a club on the second one. At this stage you have eleven top tricks. The plan is to endplay West by removing any exit cards in clubs and throwing him in. There are two possible ways to throw him in, with either a diamond or a heart. You start by playing the K and then the Q. On the second club West shows out. Now you cross on a club to dummy. It seems as if you could endplay West by playing off all the diamonds and then throwing him in with the last one. The problem with this plan is that you cannot find three discards from the South hand. However, your heart spots are good enough to exit in hearts. Simply lead a heart from dummy, planning to let it run — or, if East covers, to play the queen. No matter how the hearts are placed, West's return will give you a trick.

This approach will guarantee your contract; however, you have a safe play for an overtrick. Start by finessing the \(\nsigma\)Q. If it wins, as here, you have a diamond-spade simple squeeze on West with the ♠10 and ♦9 as threats. **BLUE** is in place. If the finesse loses, West's heart return will drive out the \(\forall A\), but you still have the diamond-spade squeeze for your twelfth trick.



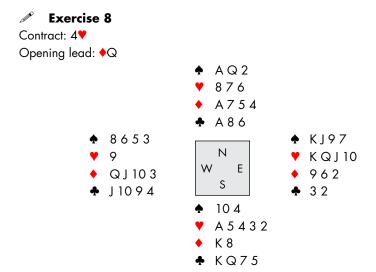
The opening lead of the  $\bigstar K$  asks for count; East follows with the  $\bigstar 3$ , playing standard carding. You ruff and play the ♥A and ♥K as both defenders follow. On the  $\mathbf{\nabla} \mathbf{Q}$ , you throw the  $\mathbf{\Phi} \mathbf{6}$  from dummy and East discards the  $\mathbf{\Phi} \mathbf{3}$ . You play the  $\bullet$ A and the  $\bullet$ Q, and West discards a club on the second diamond.

At this point you have two potential losers, a spade and a diamond. You would prefer not to have to take the spade finesse, which seems almost certain to lose. Outside of his clubs, West can hold only a few rags. Thus he must have started with at least six clubs — that would also be suggested by the low club played by East at Trick 1. If so, West is sure to get caught in a throw-in or squeeze.

Lead a third diamond to dummy's  $\bigstar K$  and exit with the  $\bigstar Q$ , discarding the •6 from hand. West wins and must return a club, since a spade would yield a free finesse.

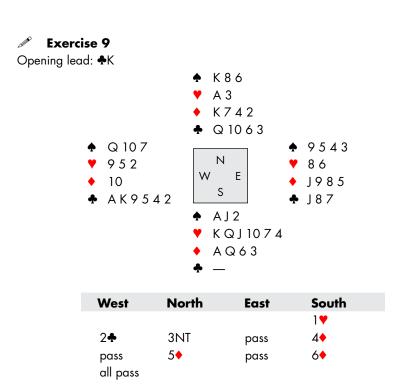
You play the ♣10 from dummy, hoping that West has had to lead from the ♣J. East covers, and you ruff — but you are still home. You have a Type C1 double squeeze with spades as the Common suit. West is squeezed in spades and clubs and East is squeezed in diamonds and spades. Just lead out the last trump, watching for clubs from West and for East's last diamond.

On the lie of the cards, there are several other lines of play that will succeed. You might find it interesting to work them out.



West leads the ◆O and you win the ◆K in hand. You duck a heart, West playing the  $\checkmark$ 9 and East the  $\checkmark$ 10. East returns the  $\checkmark$ K and, when you win with the  $\checkmark$ A, West shows out, discarding the  $\clubsuit 3$ .

The only chance of avoiding the spade finesse is to strip East's minors. You also want to ruff your last club in dummy and protect the top clubs from being ruffed. You cross to the ♦A and ruff a diamond, then cash the ♣K and ♣A and lead a club towards your hand. If East ruffs, he is ruffing your club loser and will find himself endplayed, so he discards a spade. You play the  $\mathbf{\Phi}Q$  and lead another club, ruffing in dummy. If East discards another spade you don't need the throwin, you have ten tricks via the A and a diamond ruff.

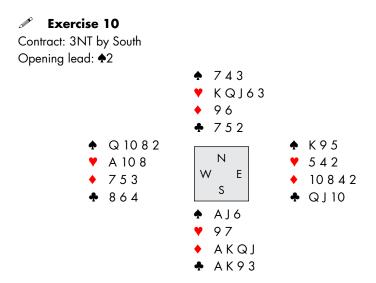


If this layout seems similar to the Exercise 7 that is because it is the same deal played in a diamond slam this time. You ruff the opening lead and try trumps. On the second diamond West discards a spade.

This deal is about as exciting as a saunter in the park. Of course, you merely bombard East with hearts until he decides to ruff. One point though: take care that the two top diamonds you played were the A and the Q from your hand, preserving the  $\diamond 6$  to ruff East's club return. You can then cross to the  $\diamond K$ , draw East's last trump, and return to the  $\triangle$ A to enjoy the rest of the hearts.

From time to time there will be a deal in this book that may seem to be out of place. For instance, Exercise 7 leads to a squeeze instead of the expected strip, Exercise 8 can end with an elopement, while Exercise 9 involves no endplay of any kind. The reason, of course, is to ensure that the reader will keep ready at hand all the weapons in his arsenal, not merely the one whose use is being exemplified at the moment.

It is a truism that beginners tend, in a general way, to cash their quick, sure winners early and then look around for something else to do, while good players reverse the process. It may be worthwhile to point out that occasionally there occurs a deal that must be played à la novice. When no harm can possibly be done thereby, it is a good idea to run your solid suit at the earliest opportunity. On many deals a solid suit cannot be run at once, for one or more of a dozen reasons — no need to elaborate; but keep on the watch for those deals where 'no harm can possibly be done thereby'. Then make those defenders grab for discards at the earliest possible moment: very often they will hand you a bouquet of roses.



After an uncontested auction, South ends in 3NT and receives the lead of the  $\clubsuit$ 2. East plays the  $\spadesuit$ K and South wins with the  $\spadesuit$ A.

Declarer has to assume that West holds the \(\nstar{A}\), for if not, there is hardly a chance. Declarer needs two heart tricks to make nine tricks. An average player might lead up to hearts twice hoping that West ducks both times. However, East should signal count on the first round so West will know that he has to hop up and win the second heart. Thus, against competent defense, any thought of two heart tricks is a pipe-dream.

A better player would lead a club from dummy at Trick 3, hoping for some sort of lucky break in that suit. This plan has a good prospect of success, but it fails as the cards lie. East will get in on the club and, after he plays a spade through, the defense will be able to take five tricks.

The point of interest is this: if either opponent can be induced to discard a club, the contract is assured (given that West has the  $\forall A$ ). Thus the best line, after winning the opening lead, is to run the diamonds. Now suppose that a club is discarded: any club, by either adversary. Declarer scores the ♥K in dummy as West ducks, then cashes the top two clubs and puts West in with the ♥A. West's only chance of exiting safely is that he has a club and East a higher club, which is not possible after a club discard. Even if no club has been discarded, every chance that was available to begin with is still intact.

### **REVIEW PROBLEMS**

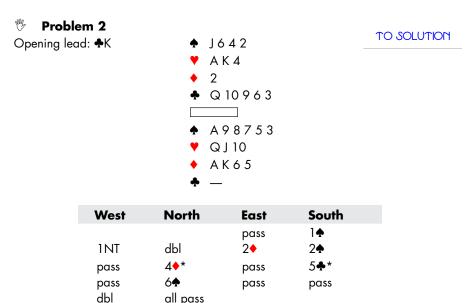
### **Problem 1** Opening lead: \*K ♠ Q 10 6 10643 A 107 ♣ J92 ♠ AKJ9874 ΑQ KJ2

West	North	East	South
			2♣
3♣	dbl*	pass	3♠
pass	4♣*	pass	4NT
pass	5♣*	pass	6♠
all pass			

Α

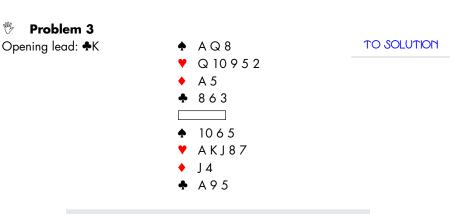
TO SOLUTION

East plays the  $\clubsuit$ 6; declarer wins with the  $\clubsuit$ A and plays a middle spade to the  $\spadesuit$ Q, West discarding the  $\clubsuit 3$ . Plan the play from here.



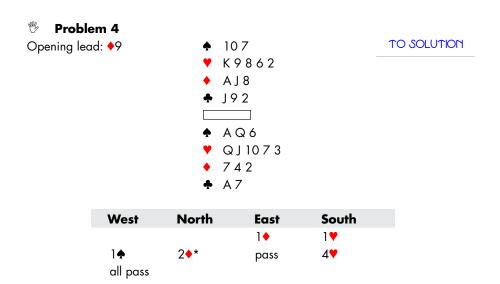
The  $\bigstar K$  asks for count and East plays the  $\bigstar 8$  (standard carding). How do you continue?

all pass



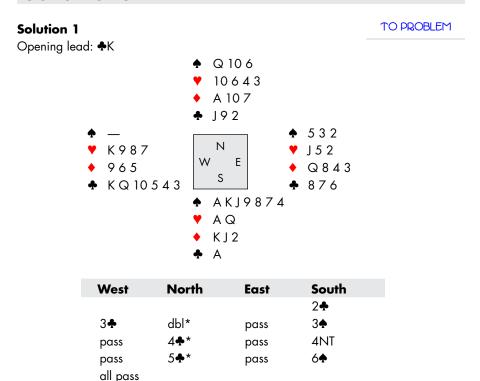
West	North	East	South	
			1♥	
2♣	3♣*	3♦	4♥	
all pass				

You duck the opening lead and win the ♣Q continuation with the ♣A (East follows). When you play two rounds of hearts, East discards the \$\infty\$9 on the second round. What now?



You duck the lead in dummy; East overtakes with the ◆10 and continues with the  $\bullet$ K. West plays the  $\bullet$ 3 and the  $\bullet$ A wins. Now what?

### **SOLUTIONS**

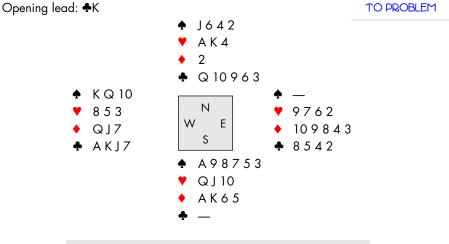


East plays the  $\clubsuit$ 6; declarer wins with the  $\clubsuit$ A and plays a middle spade to the  $\spadesuit$ Q, West discarding the  $\clubsuit 3$ .

The goal on this hand is to avoid finesses. The plan is to throw West in with a club and force him to lead a red suit. Ruff a club high, cross to dummy with a middle spade to the \$10 and lead the \$J, discarding a diamond from hand. West is endplayed. If West returns a club, ruff in dummy and discard a heart from hand. A heart return or a diamond return is equally fatal.

This stratagem, where one defender is thrown in at a time when his partner still holds one or more trumps, might be called a **semi-strip**. Many times the risk of an untimely ruff by the partner would be slight; in other cases, it is so great as to preclude the method. Here, this danger is negligible compared to the risk of depending on the finesses. The only thing East might ruff is the third round of clubs. If that happens, you overruff high and still have various chances in the red suits. You would probably cross to the  $\diamond A$  and finesse the  $\diamond I$ , succeeding at once if East has the  $\mathbf{Q}$  or West has a doubleton  $\mathbf{Q}$ . If West can get off play with a third diamond, you still have the  $\clubsuit 6$  as an entry to take the heart finesse.

#### Solution 2



West	North	East	South	
		pass	1♠	
1NT	dbl	2♦	2♠	
pass	<b>4</b> ♦*	pass	5♣*	
pass	6♠	pass	pass	
dbl	all pass			

The  $\bigstar K$  asks for count and East plays the  $\bigstar 8$  (standard carding).

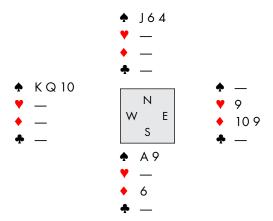
If you ignore the 1NT overcall and the final double, 6♠ looks like a pretty good contract. The only problem is to avoid two trump losers. West no doubt holds the  $\bigstar KQ$ , and he probably has the  $\bigstar 10$  as well, but you cannot be absolutely certain of that.

If spades are 3-0 then you are going to have to strip the hand completely and put West in only when he is down to three cards, the ♠KQ10. There is some danger in never drawing trumps but there is little risk in delaying a trump play for a little while and seeing what you can deduce from the hand.

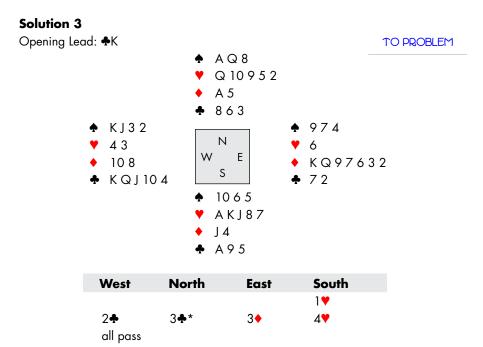
You start by playing off the top two diamonds and ruffing a diamond. West follows to all three rounds, playing the  $\mathbf{Q}$  on the third. You now ruff a club, play a heart to the king, and ruff another club. So far there is little danger in your play since if West overruffs at any time you can still play for a 2-1 trump break.

Based on the bidding and play so far, you are fairly certain that East is 5-4 in the minors with at least three hearts (since he can have at most one spade). His shape is either 1=3=5=4 or 0=4=5=4.

You can therefore afford to cash the remaining top hearts and ruff the fourth club to arrive at this position:



At this point you cannot be certain who has the last heart. West might have the ♠KQ and the ♥9 left or, as in the diagram, the ♠KQ10. However, if you lead the ♦6 now it doesn't really matter. West must ruff in with a spade honor and he is then helpless. If he leads the \$10 or (not that he can as the cards lie) the missing heart, you will play the • I from dummy. You make your slam whatever he does.

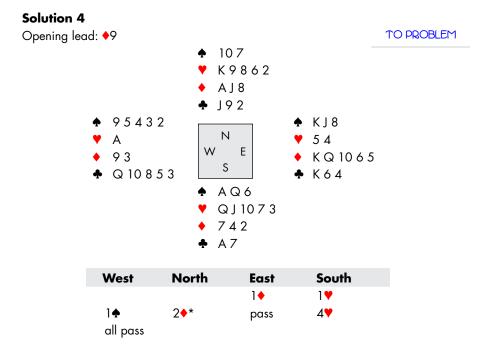


You duck the opening lead and win the ♣Q continuation with the ♣A (East follows). When you play two rounds of hearts, East discards the ◆9 on the second round. What now?

You have two potential club losers, a diamond loser and possibly two spade losers. You hope that you can get rid of some losers with an endplay or two. The 3♦ bid and the ♦9 discard strongly suggest that East has the top diamonds; this combined with the 2♣ overcall marks West with the ♠K and East with no more clubs.

With these clues, there is an endplay on East. There are several ways to proceed. You are going to need to strip East of spades, and one simple way to do that is to duck a spade to East (i.e. finesse the  $\clubsuit$ 8). East will probably get out with a top diamond, so you win that. Cross to hand with a trump, finesse the  $\Phi Q$ , cash the A completing the strip, and throw East in with a diamond. East has to give you a ruff-sluff, allowing you to discard the club loser.

There are other endplays that will also work on this layout. However, perhaps West would have been better advised to follow his partner's suggested defense and have led a diamond. Try making 4 then!



You duck the lead in dummy; East overtakes with the ◆10 and continues with the  $\bullet$ K. West plays the  $\bullet$ 3 and the  $\bullet$ A wins.

The main point of this deal appears on the first trick. At first glance there is no reason for ducking; however, there is also no argument against it, because even if the lead was a singleton, no harm will have been done by the duck. So hold off the first trick as a matter of sound procedure: lose your sure losers early. The goal is to sever communications between the defenders and, as we shall see, to set up an endplay.

On further study one faint ray of hope appears. It seems West started with a doubleton diamond. You will need the \*K onside, but then if West holds either  $\bigstar$ K10 or  $\bigstar$ Q10, and also a blank  $\forall$ A, this leaky ship may make it to port.

You start with the spade finesse, then cash the A and ruff a spade, eliminating spades. Now you play a heart. West wins with the ♥A and must return a club. If West returns a low club, you put in the ♣9 forcing the ♣K, which you win with the A. Now you lead a club up to the J. West wins but your last diamond loser goes on the club winner.

However, if West finds the return of the ♣Q when he is in on the ♥A, he has a chance to defeat the contract. If you win the A you cannot set up a club winner without letting East in to cash the setting trick in diamonds. Ducking the \$\int Q\$ would be the best chance: now when West continues clubs you put in the \$\int 9\$ and hope that East covers, but if he does not do so, you are doomed. However, if East and West find this defense they have earned their good result.

This is a deal where there is but faint hope, and declarer looks for any remote chance. Likewise, a defender, when it appears that he is endplayed, must think about his best chance to defeat the contract and pull his own rabbit out of the hat. As it turns out, the play of the  $\mathbf{AQ}$  can hardly cost.

#### CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY

**Strip and Endplay**: You strip the defender of all his easy exit cards and then throw in the defender in an ending where any return gives you one or more tricks.

#### Trump Strip and Endplay

- Typically declarer holds at least one trump in each hand after the throw-in.
- Any return will either give up a ruff and discard or directly give up a trick in the suit played (a lead into a tenace, for example).
- It is worthwhile to look for this kind of play on a deal where there is no other obvious way of making trumps separately.
- Declarer normally prepares his hand and dummy for the throw-in by stripping himself and dummy of one or more plain suits. Returns in these suits will provide a ruff and discard, while a return in other suits gives up a trick directly.

### Notrump Strip and Endplay

- Declarer prepares by removing all safe exit cards from the defender's hand; as a result declarer needs to focus on the adverse distribution.
- Declarer throws in the defender; any return by the defender gives declarer one or more tricks in the suit played.

Occasionally you can throw a defender in more than once to gain extra tricks: a repeating throw-in.

On deals where it can do no harm, leading a solid suit may produce a good result — either by force or as a result of a misdefense.

## THE TWO-SUIT STRIP-SQUEEZE

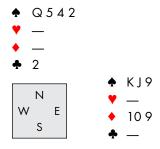
In Chapters 1 and 2 we have considered the standard and best-known forms of one-loser squeezes, but such a study leaves much of the country of squeeze play unexplored. It is time to begin a foray into the hinterland.

### The Two-Suit Strip-Squeeze

A **strip-squeeze**, as the name implies, embodies the features of both squeeze and strip. You start with a squeeze, which sets up the strip, and then throw in the defender. The squeeze operates only on one defender. (Although we will see in the more complicated squeezes in Chapter 9 that under special circumstances the partner of the victim may also have a role to play.) Since at the end of the squeeze you plan to exit to a defender, this type of squeeze always has at least two losers. Indeed, in some of these squeezes it is possible for declarer to have more than two losers.

In this chapter we are concerned with one grouping of these squeezes, the two-suit strip-squeeze. However, despite the name, this type of squeeze quite often involves a third suit (usually a suit that provides the defender with an entry to his partner's hand or a safe exit).

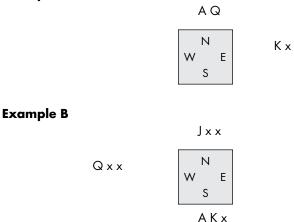
As a preliminary, some definitions are needed. Suppose that you plan a notrump strip. At the moment when you get control, the victim has potential exit cards in one or more suits. You must hold enough winners in the exit suits to remove all possible exit cards; when this has been done, you put the enemy on lead in circumstances where sooner or later he must give you a trick. Very often, when the throw-in is reached the defender will still have one or more **surplus** winners: that is, winners over and above the one on which the throw-in is to occur. He may also have idle cards remaining. For example, in Exercise 4, Chapter 3 (p. 125), at the time of the throw-in declarer needs one more trick:



West and South are irrelevant since neither holds any spades or diamonds. The lead is in the North hand and the +2 is not high. Declarer plays a spade: East wins the  $\clubsuit 9$  and eventually has to cede the game-going trick to North's  $\spadesuit Q$ . The ♠9 is the **throw-in winner**, the ♠K and the ♠109 are surplus winners and the ♠1 is an idle card.

When a player guards a suit, but the position is such that if he leads away from the stopper he will lose it, we shall define the stopper in question as a fragile **stopper**. Examples A and B both show defenders holding fragile stoppers.

### Example A

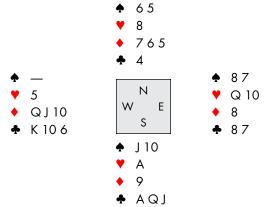


In the majority of cases, the success of a notrump strip is due to the fact that the defender holds, and is ultimately compelled to lead from, a fragile stopper.

We will first look at the three most common forms of strip-squeezes and then at some rarer types. The three that are most likely to appear and be recognizable in play are the surplus winner strip-squeeze, the two-loser fragile-stopper **squeeze** and the **two-loser delayed duck**.

### The Surplus Winner Strip-Squeeze

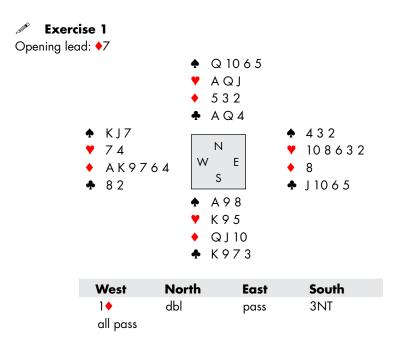
### **Example C**



In this notrump ending, declarer cashes the **Y**A to complete the strip, and the first spade forces out West's last idle card, the 46. Now the second spade squeezes West: he must choose between abandoning the vital guard in clubs and throwing one of his surplus winners. Of course he parts with a diamond; now when he is thrown in with a diamond, he can take only one more trick before leading away from the \*K. Notice that the defender still has what we have termed 'surplus winners' after the squeeze trick — just not enough of them to beat the contract any more.

This layout illustrates an important possibility. The defender holds a fragile stopper. Declarer is able (as in Chapter 3) to play winners in the defender's potential exit suit or suits (in the above example, hearts) until all exits are sealed off. He has enough Free winners remaining (above, the \$\int\$I) to force out all idle cards. If he has only just enough winners for this purpose, then the hand belongs in Chapter 3, the pure strip. However, if he still has one Free winner (or more) — here, the \$10 — then leading this squeezes the opponent: he must discard from his surplus winners, thereby reducing the number of tricks he can take after the throw-in.

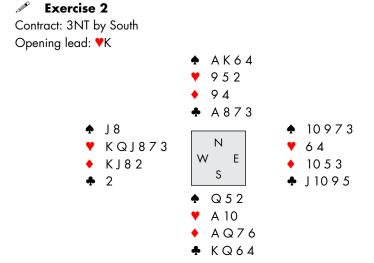
The question might be asked, what happens if the defender has no surplus winners? This question is easily answered. If, after removal of all the idle cards and exit cards, declarer has so much as one cashable Free winner remaining and the defender has no surplus winner, the hand is a pure squeeze — not a strip at all.



On the opening lead East plays the  $\diamond 8$ . As these opponents play fourth highest it seems quite possible that West has a six-card diamond suit. You have eight tricks and it seems that unless clubs come in for four tricks there could be a problem: even though the  $\bigstar K$  is certainly in front of the  $\bigstar Q$ , West may have too many winners to cash if you give up the lead.

However, the concentration of winners in West's hand is also the saving feature. After you play off three hearts and three clubs, West will have come down to six cards: four diamond winners plus the  $\bigstar Kx$ . Then you can throw him in with a diamond and compel him to lead away from his ♠K at Trick 12. Of course the hearts should be cashed before the clubs, on the chance of getting a club discard from someone. The third club exacts a diamond (surplus winner) from West, whereupon the throw-in functions according to plan.

With one of West's diamonds traded for a card of any other suit, the hand would have been a pure strip, yet your plan and play would have been the same. That is: so far as the original plan is concerned, it often makes little or no difference whether a pure strip or the combined form is to develop. In making his blueprint, declarer neither knows nor cares about such matters, though in the execution the difference may be material, as we shall see later.



The defense starts off with two hearts: you duck the first and win the second perforce as East follows with the \*4 and then the \*6. You have nine tricks if clubs break 3-2 so you start with the \$KQ; however, West shows out on the second round, playing the •8. You next try to find your ninth trick in spades but West shows out on the third round, throwing the  $\diamond 2$ .

After seven tricks there can be no question about the next play: lead the A to extract more testimony from West. As soon as that party discards a heart, he is a cherry ripe for the picking. Endplays are tough, aren't they? Notice that the card squeezed out is not a guard of any description (but the victim will testify that it feels like a squeeze, anyway – he is, after all, parting with what he hoped would be the setting trick).

In Exercises 1 and 2 declarer was able to extract all of the exit cards from the victim by cashing winners in that suit. The goal of the squeeze was to extract surplus winners from West.

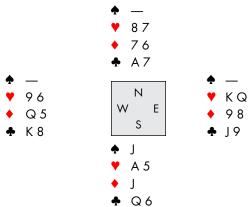
In summary, the surplus winner strip-squeeze has the following characteristics:

- there is a fragile stopper.
- prior to the squeeze, declarer has two or more losers.
- declarer can extract all useful exit cards from the defender's hand by power.
- declarer runs winners, and the defender is forced to discard surplus
- the defender is thrown in and ultimately has to lead away from his fragile stopper.

# The Two-Loser Fragile-Stopper Squeeze

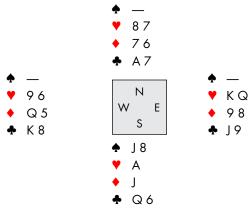
The nature of squeeze play is such that we are trying to remove something from a defender's hand by forcing discards. The discard we are aiming for can be something substantial, like a guard or even a winner in another suit, or something that seems insubstantial, like a safe exit or an entry to partner's winners. In the surplus winner strip-squeeze, the loser count can be higher than two. However, when a squeeze must be used to remove the defender's useful exits the situation is entirely different — declarer must have exactly two losers for the squeeze to operate. Look at Example D.

### **Example D**



On the lead of a spade, West discards an idle card — a heart or the ◆5. Whether you throw him in now or after cashing the heart, he will be able to avoid leading a club.

### **Example E**

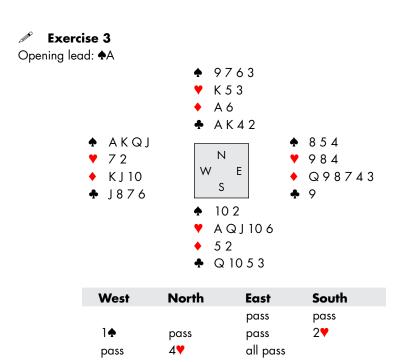


In Example E, West discards the ◆5 on the first spade, but on the second his goose is cooked. If he discards a diamond or a club, disaster is instant (provided declarer reads the situation correctly); instead, he will yield a heart. Whereupon you lay down the ♥A, closing off the exit, then lead a diamond. And what is the difference between these two layouts? Just this: in D you have three losers, in E only two.

The general problem is easily formulated. Throughout Chapter 3, you had enough winners in the exit suits to exhaust the victim in those suits. Suppose now that one adversary defends two suits and holds a potential exit card in a third suit. Suppose also that you are not able to remove that card simply by playing the suit because the defender holds more small cards in the exit suit than you have winners in that suit. Don't give up! If one stopper is fragile and if you have only two losers, you can squeeze out the exit card every time.

The reason why this squeeze functions with two losers instead of one, as in a simple squeeze, is easily found: the necessity of keeping an exit card puts an extra busy card in the opponent's hand.

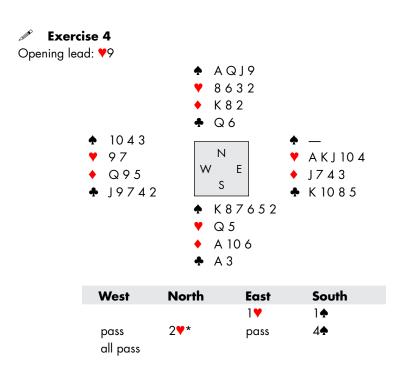
This squeeze fails with three losers for exactly the same reason that a simple squeeze fails with two losers. Strictly speaking, the play we are now examining is a three-suit squeeze: the defender holds stoppers in two suits with an equally vital exit card in a third suit. Thus it might seem that this material properly belongs in a later chapter. However, this play is much more closely related to the notrump strip than to the triple squeeze, so this is certainly the logical place to study it. We call it a two-suit squeeze in order to distinguish it from the case where the victim holds stoppers in all three suits.



West starts with three top spades as East follows, and you trump the third round. At Trick 4 you play the ♥Q and all follow.

You are assured of the contract after four tricks either if clubs split or if East has four and you can take the proven finesse. If West has four clubs, then there is an elementary spade-club squeeze except that there are two losers. You cannot give up a trick since the only possible duck is in diamonds, whereupon West will erase the spade threat. Nevertheless the two-loser strip-squeeze is bound to pay dividends, because the club stopper is fragile; there is no possible ambiguity, because you know where all the cards are placed.

However, there is a concealed trap. You need to make sure that you handle your entries carefully so that you keep the club tenace intact and are in hand to lead the squeeze card, the last heart. The sequence that won't work is to draw trumps and then play off the top two clubs from dummy (play it through for yourself). A thoughtful player might play off the last trump before playing clubs. It can't cost anything and it does work on this deal. As it turns out, the last trump squeezes West into discarding down to a singleton diamond. Now when clubs don't break declarer can cash the A and throw West in with a spade.



The defense starts off with three rounds of hearts. You trump the third round with the  $\bigstar K$  and West discards the  $\bigstar 2$ .

You start off by drawing three rounds of trumps. Based on the bidding (and the club discard) you are pretty certain that East has the \*K; your plan is eventually to throw him in with a heart to lead away from it. In order to do that you have to squeeze him out of all his possible exit cards (here, diamonds) and his long heart. You cash dummy's last trump, cross back to hand with the A and play the last trump, throwing a diamond from dummy.

When you play the last trump East must throw his penultimate diamond to keep ♣Kx and his heart winner. Having removed his last possible exit card, you now play a diamond to dummy's king, completing the strip, and throw him in with a heart.

Can East defeat you by throwing diamonds earlier to keep a long heart? You should know the answer is no because you have only two losers. Your line is just the same. When you cross to the K at Trick 10, East will have to part with his surplus heart winner in order to keep the \*K guarded.

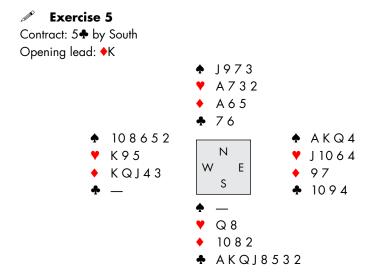
Sometimes, in executing a 'fragile-stopper squeeze', you will bring down a number, possibly a bagful, of surplus winners. This is a mere side issue, of no interest or importance. The big game, the only game you are hunting, is that elusive exit card.

It is worth reviewing the differences between the positions we have studied so far:

- In the pure strip (Chapter 3), no element of squeeze is involved. You are able to remove all possible exit cards as the defender is required to follow suit; having done this, you put your adversary on lead at once. He may or may not have a fragile stopper. He may still have surplus winners, or idle cards, or both. Within the limitations of a deck of cards, you may have any number of losers.
- In the surplus winner strip-squeeze (Exercises 1 and 2), again you are able to remove all possible exit cards as the defender follows suit. The defender holds a fragile stopper. After closing the exits, you have enough Free winners to force the discard of all idle cards, and still hold one or more Free winners. The play of this last group squeezes out surplus winners. Again, you may have any number of losers.
- In the fragile-stopper squeeze (Exercises 3 and 4), you are not able to remove all possible exit cards by making the defender follow suit. The defender holds a fragile stopper. If you have only two losers, you can squeeze out the last exit card.

# **Rectifying the Count Again**

We know that to establish a simple squeeze, if you have two or more losers in hand, you must rectify the count by ducking down to one loser. Precisely the same problem may arise in strip-squeeze play. If you can extract the exit card by making the defender follow suit, no need to worry about the number of losers; but if that card will have to be squeezed out, you must duck down to two losers.



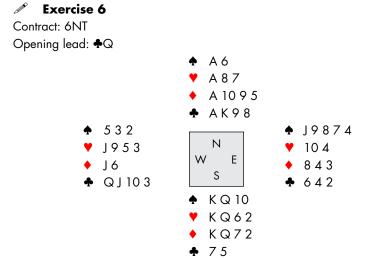
You decide to open 5♣ and end up playing there. After the diamond lead it looks like you have three losers: two diamonds and a heart. The only chance is that West has the diamond honors plus the **V**K. Hold off the first diamond, win the second one, and run all the trumps. The risk of a 6-1 diamond division is serious on a distributional deal like this, but that risk must be run. You will come down to three cards: two hearts and a diamond. West must hold on to a diamond winner and two hearts. You can then throw him in with a diamond to lead away from the ♥K.

You can see why it would not work to win the first trick: after running the trumps, everyone would have four cards instead of three. West would not obligingly keep two hearts and two diamonds. Instead he would let one of his diamond winners go on the last trump to keep an exit card in spades.

## Simple Squeeze or Strip-Squeeze?

Suppose that a simple squeeze is established, except that there are two losers. In that situation, one usually tries to rectify the count as soon as possible. However, perhaps there is the danger that a defender, if left on lead, will be able to kill the squeeze, or do damage in some other way. In such a spot, always look to see whether one stopper is fragile; if so, the strip-squeeze will serve equally well, thus obviating the need for a duck.

Another point, important at matchpoints: suppose that a single duck will establish a simple squeeze, for the contract; or, if a certain as yet untested suit is on its good behavior, this also will produce the needed trick. If the strip-squeeze will serve as well as the one-loser squeeze, postpone the duck; for if said suit runs, the new winner thus created will set up the elementary squeeze for an overtrick.

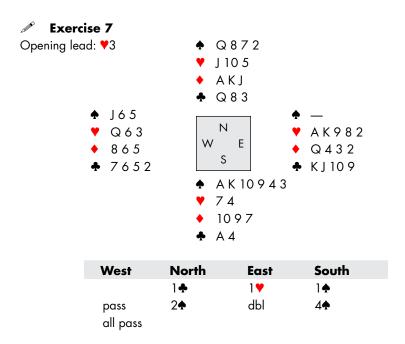


The contract is trivial if diamonds are 3-2. If West has four diamonds, laying down the ◆KQ will develop a proved finesse; if East has four, playing the ◆AK will produce the same result. Which to play for?

Actually, it doesn't matter how diamonds are divided. Merely duck the first trick; then on getting in, cash the •K and •A. East's putative diamond guard can be finessed; meanwhile, if West has a diamond stopper he is measured for a squeeze, already established, with the  $\blacklozenge$ 7 and the  $\clubsuit$ 9 as threats.

The above might suffice at IMPs or rubber bridge, but at matchpoints a closer look is advisable. Following the play of the ◆K and the ◆A, the contract is straightforward unless West has shown up with ◆Jxxx. However, in that case he is subject to a fragile-stopper diamond-club strip-squeeze. It follows that the duck at Trick 1 is not required. (Play it through with two of East's diamonds replaced by two of West's major-suit cards.)

When the diamonds behave, you will even make an overtrick if hearts are 3-3. In fact the situation is even better than that: if West guards hearts he is in the grip of a typical simple squeeze with the  $\checkmark$ 6 and the  $\clubsuit$ 9 as threats. Thus, as the cards lie, you do indeed make seven.

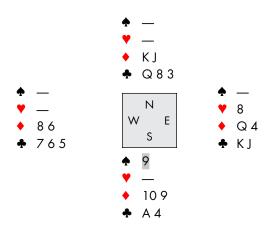


The defense starts off with three rounds of hearts: East wins Trick 1 with the ♥K, cashes the ♥A and leads a low heart. Presumably West started with ♥Qxx. You must begin by considering whether or not to ruff this trick.

On the auction East is marked with almost all the outstanding high cards. He must surely hold the  $\bigstar K$  and quite likely the  $\bigstar Q$  as well.

If you throw a diamond, any diamond-club squeeze on East will fail because of the lack of **U**. You could discard a club on the third heart, trying for a crisscross squeeze with the ◆10 and the ♣Q as threats, but this will fail too if West returns a club, destroying your communications. (Test this yourself.)

Instead, go for the two-loser strip-squeeze. Ruff the third trick, draw trumps, cash the ♦A and finish the trumps. You arrive at this position:



When you lead the last spade, West and North throw clubs and East has to throw a heart. Now, while it is no certainty, the throw-in looks like a better bet than the finesse. Other things being equal, you will exit with ace and another club rather than king and another diamond because you are more confident that East has the  $\bigstar K$  than the  $\bigstar Q$ . However, if East has thrown a lot of diamonds, you might do it the other way round or change your mind and take the diamond finesse. Evidently, the deal has defensive possibilities. If East keeps the  $\mathbf{Q}$  and the  $\bigstar$ K109 and drops his  $\bigstar$ 10 under the  $\bigstar$ A, you will have to be a good guesser.

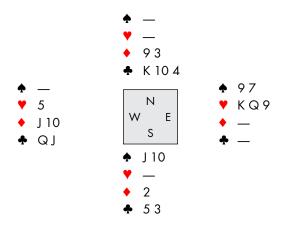
This deal illustrates the rather surprising fact that sometimes, when you have two losers, you cannot afford to part with either of them; or to put it more succinctly, in some cases two losers are better than one.

# The Two-Loser Delayed Duck

In the **delayed duck squeeze**, declarer would like to set up a winner in a suit we shall call the **target suit**. One defender is guarding this suit and holds one or more winners in it. Declarer cannot simply set up the target suit by ducking, usually because the defenders will be able to cash too many winners in total if this is done immediately.

Instead, declarer makes use of a squeeze, which serves one or more purposes. First, as in all these strip-squeezes, declarer must remove one defender's access to winners in the other defender's hand either via the squeeze or by cashing winners. Second, declarer may need to force the defender to discard one or more cards from the target suit.

Besides the target suit, then, the defender will be guarding another suit. The delayed duck is therefore intimately related to the elementary simple squeeze, and all conditions for that squeeze must be present, except that there are two losers with no way to drop just one trick. Then it fairly often happens that the defender can be trimmed down to size using a strip-squeeze, after which the onetrick duck can be used effectively.

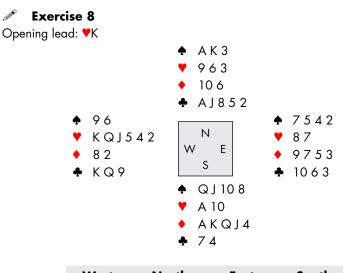


The first spade forces West to part with a diamond, the second squeezes out the exit card (the heart); dummy discards clubs. Now the lead of the •2 establishes the •9. The reason why the play succeeds, with two losers still in hand, is the same as in the fragile-stopper case: the victim needs to retain an exit card, which puts an extra busy card in his hand. With rare exceptions, the delayed duck squeeze fails with three losers.

The requirements for this play are now clearly visible. The threat in the target suit must have a Companion, a small card of the same suit (above, the  $\bullet$ 3 accompanying the  $\bullet$ 9). After the squeeze has occurred, it must be possible to **Lead** either the companion or a small card of the same suit from across the table (above, the ◆2). Also, there must still be an **Entry** to the established threat (above, the •K). In order to assist the reader in remembering these three essentials, let us coin the acronym **CLE** — **C**ompanion, **L**ead, **E**ntry. I like to use the word **CLuE** (rhymes with **BLUE**!) to help to remember the acronym.

One further requirement is almost too obvious to need pointing out, vet sometimes the obvious is overlooked! You may or may not hold the top card of the target suit (in the example above, you do not) but you must hold the master card in the other threat suit, for if the defender holds that card, he will be able to take his second trick at once when he gains the lead. In the example, declarer might try discarding dummy's diamonds on the spades, then ducking a club to establish the club threat; but West would simply lay down his diamond winner. There is one other important point. If the two threats are in opposite hands, as will always be the case if the squeeze is against the defender to the right of the squeeze card, you will also need an entry to the hand with the squeeze card. This entry can be in either suit.

At first reading this may look like a formidable amount of machinery, but it is actually not so. With a little practice you can learn to recognize the presence of this squeeze, and to execute it, as easily as a mere simple squeeze.



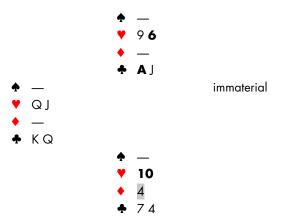
West	North	East	South
	1♣	pass	1♦
1♥	pass	pass	2♠
pass	3♣	pass	3♥
pass	3♠	pass	6NT
dbl	all pass		

You have had a rather aggressive auction to get to 6NT, and for his brash double of this brash bid, West should have the heart-club honors. Granted this, the contract is in the bank.

One's first impulse would be to lose the first trick, to rectify the count. However, if West is a good player he will switch to the ♣K, destroying E for the simple squeeze in hearts and clubs. Fortunately the duck is not necessary, because **CLuE** is already established:

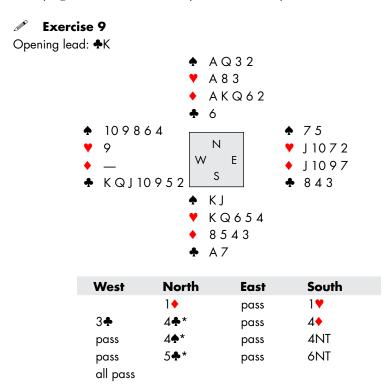
Companion: ♥6 Lead: **7**10 **♣**A Entry:

Merely run off all the spade-diamond winners. This is the position at Trick 9 as you lead the last diamond with the **CLuE** cards in bold.



Here West must throw a heart else the clubs are immediately high, so you discard a club from dummy. At Trick 11 you lead a heart, setting up dummy's \(\nspecifs\).

Do not proceed until you see clearly that this is nothing but a simple squeeze, except for a slight change in the order of ceremonies: and on this deal, instead of rectifying the count at Trick 1, you do so when you lead to Trick 11.



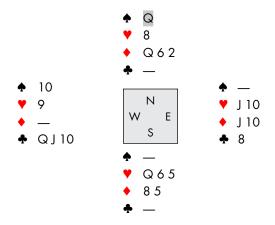
If one of the red suits splits you have plenty of tricks so you win the with A and play a diamond, West showing out and throwing a club. You now try the VA and the **VK** but West discards a club on the second heart. If you had ducked the club initially, you would now have a simple diamond-heart squeeze on East, but perhaps you are playing matchpoints. Obviously it is too late for that now!

However, since East guards both hearts and diamonds, after four tricks you know you can establish the delayed duck squeeze. Careful planning is still required.

The elements of **CLuE** are:

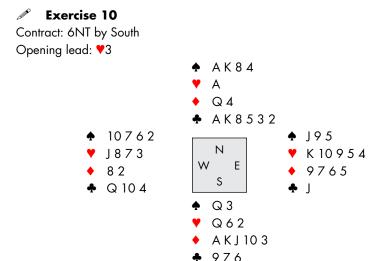
Companion: ♦6 Lead: **\**2 Entry: **♥**Q

The sequence must be  $\bigstar KJ$ , the  $\bigstar K$ , and then the  $\bigstar AQ$ . The closed hand will have the ♣7 and the ♥5 available for discard on the spades (don't touch those diamonds — they're busy). This is the position as you lead the last spade:



The last spade squeezes out East's exit card in clubs, whereupon the general rule comes into play: at the first opportunity, which is now, declarer ducks a diamond. Be sure you understand that declarer will fail if a heart is led at Trick 10; similarly, if one of South's diamonds has been discarded the contract fails. Also note that if North-South could have seen each other's hands they would have bid seven. Ouch!

In Exercise 8 the squeeze pinches out a winner in the target suit (a heart); here, it is an exit card (the club). No matter, all is grist that comes to this mill.



You win with the  $\checkmark$ A in dummy perforce as East follows with the  $\checkmark$ 9. You try clubs and East shows out on the second round, discarding a heart. When you cash three rounds of diamonds, West discards the ♥7 on the third round.

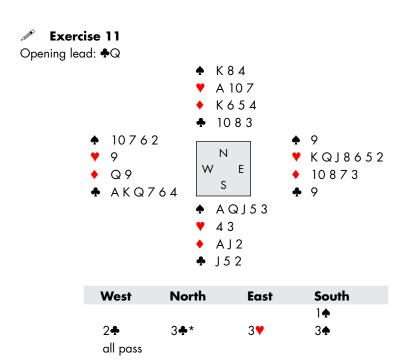
If you assume that the lead was an honest fourth-best, West's hand can be counted after six tricks as 4=4=2=3. He is under the thumb of a delayed duck spade-club squeeze with **CLuE** as follows:

Companion: ♣5 **♣**7 Lead: ♠K Entry:

Play the penultimate diamond, keeping four spades and the two clubs in dummy. West will have kept four spades and a club and a heart. The last diamond forces West to discard his exit card, the heart. You can now throw the fourth spade from dummy and lead the \$7 to establish dummy's last club as your twelfth trick.

You must be sure to see clearly the difference between the fragile-stopper squeeze and the delayed duck. In each, there are two losers. In each, the last free winner reduces the enemy to a holding where one trick may be safely ducked. In the former, the duck in one suit compels him to lead away from his fragile stopper, usually in the other suit. In the latter, the duck establishes a new winner in the suit in which you lose the lead (the target suit).

When you have a simple squeeze position, except that there are two losers with no way to rectify the count, look to see if one stopper is fragile, in which case you can play for a two-loser fragile stopper squeeze. Lacking that, look to see if one threat suit is of extra length: if so, there is a good chance that the other conditions for a two-loser delayed duck will be satisfied.

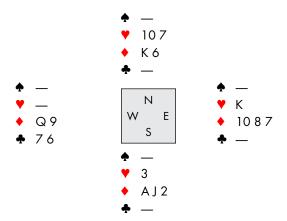


West starts with the three top clubs, East discarding the ♥8 and ♥2. Now West switches to the \(\forall 9\). You win the \(\forall A\) and play two rounds of trumps, East showing out on the second.

At this point you know that West started with six clubs, four spades and at least one heart. West's diamonds and hearts are likely to be divided 1-2 or 2-1. You could try to guess diamonds but there is a better way. Run the spades, throwing two diamonds from dummy. East will be squeezed in diamonds and hearts. CLuE is:

Companion: **Y**7 **\**3 Lead: Entry: **♦**Κ

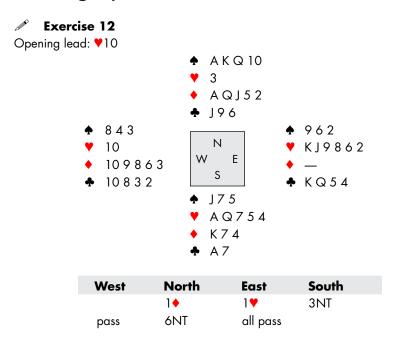
You arrive at this ending:



You now play a heart to set up dummy's heart winner. Here, East is keeping three diamonds to keep the maximum ambiguity in the diamond suit. If East keeps two hearts and two diamonds then you play for diamonds to be 2-2, assuming that East has the remaining hearts. Notice that there is some card reading required on this deal because you cannot be sure whether East started with six hearts or seven.

In Chapter 1, Exercise 15 you had the exact same North-South hands and in that case the duck of a heart, which could be assumed to be safe on the auction, was 'clearly indicated'. Here, if you hold off the first round of hearts, East will return a heart, for instant disaster if the \(\forall 9\) was a singleton. So win the trick and run the spades, for the same result as in Chapter 1, Exercise 15 (of course, you could just as well have played that exercise this way).

# A Losing Squeeze Card

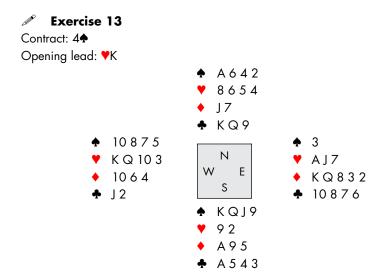


Given your weak heart spots, you decide to bid your own game rather than try for a penalty, and end up in slam. East follows to Trick 1 with the ♥2 and you win with the ♥Q. You lay down the ♦K but East throws the ♥6. You then play the top two spades as both defenders follow.

It seems likely on the bidding, and from his discouraging card in hearts, that East has the \*K and the \*O. So finish the spade and diamond winners, then throw West in with the last diamond, squeezing East at the same time. East will have to abandon hearts or clubs and you simply discard from the suit East abandons.

The strategy employed in this example works like this. A simple squeeze in hearts and clubs is available except that there are two losers. Then your thoughts turn to delayed duck, but you find that the threats are in opposite hands and there is no entry to dummy's Companion club threat. (With the \*4 traded for the ♣4, the hand would be a standard delayed duck as then you would effectively have both threats in the South hand.) In such a spot, it may be possible to lose a trick to the victim's partner, executing the squeeze at the same time. Be sure you understand that in its timing, and in every other respect, this play is identical to a simple squeeze, except that the squeeze card is a loser.

Of course you must make sure that the thrown-in defender cannot make a damaging return. If spades were 5-1, you would fail because West could cash a spade winner when in with the diamond.



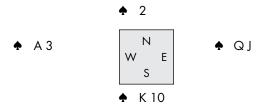
East overtakes the  $\forall K$  with the  $\forall A$ , continuing with the  $\forall I$  and then the  $\forall 7$ , which you ruff as West plays the ♥10. You play the ♠K and the ♠Q, East discarding the \$\infty\$8 on the second spade.

At first sight, the contract looked to be laydown on a dummy reversal, simply ruffing two hearts in hand, but with spades 4-1 this plan is out. In case the clubs do not come in, your thoughts turn to a squeeze. Giving West the clubs would mean that diamonds are 1-7, so let's place the clubs with East. If he also has the •KQ (his silly signal says that he does, and unless clubs run it is the only chance anyway), you can nail him with a **losing squeeze card**.

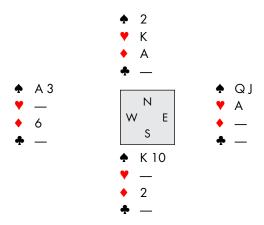
You should start by drawing trumps, playing the ♠J and crossing to dummy on a club to play the A. By this point, in order to keep four clubs East will have to bare down to the doubleton •KQ. You can test clubs ending in the North hand and then lead the losing heart, the squeeze card, or you can just play the squeeze card right away. Either way East is squeezed in diamonds and clubs on his partner's heart trick.

# A Two-Defender Strip-Squeeze — The Vise

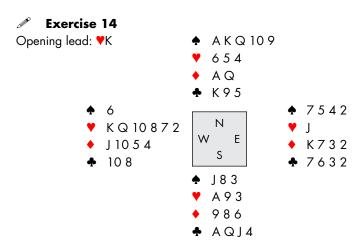
In the endings we have seen so far, only one defender has been squeezed, stripped and thrown in, but in the vise squeeze, both defenders have a role to play. In the vise, the defenders own a finessing position in a suit. One defender holds high intermediates and the other defender a winner in the suit. A typical position would be:



In this position, it seems that declarer cannot set up a spade winner without a squeeze or an endplay against West. Suppose, however, that a squeeze will work on East but not on West, so that East can be forced to discard in spades. (In Chapter 5 we will see that this squeeze has much in common with a guard squeeze.) For example, this is the position late in a deal:



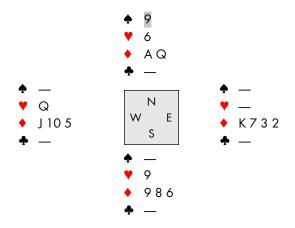
Declarer cashes the ◆A and East must discard a spade. Now declarer plays a spade and West will have to concede a spade winner to declarer. In this squeeze East is actually squeezed but it is West who is thrown in.



West	North	East	South
2♥	dbl	pass	3NT
pass	6NT	all pass	

You win with the ♥A as East follows with the ♥J. While nothing is certain, the auction has made the diamond finesse a favorite to be a loser, but if West has the ◆110 you can still make your slam. You play off four rounds of clubs. West discards the ♥2 and the ♥7, while you discard a heart from dummy. Next you play four rounds of spades, discarding a heart on the fourth round. East follows and West throws the ◆4, the ♥8 and the ♥10.

This is the position as you play the fifth spade:



On this trick, West is in trouble. You have a vise position in diamonds, yet West must throw a diamond. You then lead the ◆A and continue with the ◆Q; West's ♦ J10 fall on these tricks. East wins but must return a diamond to your ♦ 9, which is now high.

Vise positions can occur in more complex squeezes, including a strip-squeeze on both defenders. This will be discussed in Chapter 9.

# A Basic Principle of Squeeze Defense

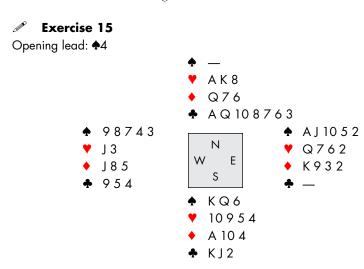
Turning for a moment to the other side of the picture, let us state a general principle of squeeze defense which is invaluable, yet is not often followed, even in high-level play. With a squeeze threatening but not yet fully established, every competent player is on the alert for a way to kill the squeeze by upsetting one of the necessary conditions. For instance, in Exercise 13, East could and probably should have switched to a diamond after making two heart tricks. He was so busy trying to set up a trump winner for his partner that he neglected to protect his own holding.

Suppose, though, that the squeeze is established and therefore certain to occur. Usually even in top-flight competition, and invariably at a lower level, the victim tags docilely along like Mary's little lamb, meekly dropping his idle cards one by one and disgorging the critical card (often after a huddle) on the squeeze trick. When this line is followed declarer knows exactly what to do, and his success is assured. Instead, the defender should keep in mind this rule:

**RULE:** When you are surely in the grip of a fully-established squeeze, make the key discard early.

Of course the rule is not always applicable. When declarer has an accurate count on your hand, nothing can be done. Indeed, many times you cannot be sure that a squeeze is impending until it is too late to take effective action. However, there is still an important percentage of cases where, by following this rule, you will be able to create an ambiguous position: declarer cannot tell with certainty what has happened, and will have to choose between two courses, with a chance, sometimes an odds-on chance, that he will go wrong. Obviously, against a declarer who knows your style you must mix 'em up — sometimes play lamb, sometimes Artful Dodger. The point is, don't telegraph your play.

For a first example, go back and have a look at the defensive ploy we pointed out on Exercise 7, baring an honor, in relation to Exercise 1. If you recall, West had ◆AKxxxx, ◆KJx and two small in the other two suits. Declarer in 3NT won the diamond lead and cashed three winners apiece in the rounded suits. West meekly threw a spade and a diamond, giving declarer no possibility of going wrong. If West instead had calmly thrown two spades, declarer might well have played him for a 4=2=5=2 shape and gone down by trying for the endplay – West would then have had enough diamond winners to defeat the contract.



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	3NT
pass	6NT	all pass	

East plays the  $\clubsuit$ 10 and you win with the  $\spadesuit$ K, throwing a diamond from dummy. You have eleven tricks and, assuming that East has the ◆K to go along with his A, he will come under pressure when you run the clubs, especially if he has a heart guard as well. West, if he has the ◆J, will come under some pressure too because he will need to keep the ◆J guarded to stop you from leading the ◆Q and picking up the diamonds on a finesse. You plan to reach a four-card ending playing your last winner. In dummy you will have a club winner, a heart and the  $\bullet$ Qx, in hand the  $\bullet$ A10 and the  $\bullet$ Kx. When you play the last winner East has to hold on to the  $\triangle A$  and presumably also two diamonds, else you can cash the  $\triangle A$ , bringing down the ◆K. However, you are going to have to guess the ending and on some layouts there will be no way to succeed against best defense.

You play off the clubs. East first discards three diamonds, then a heart and finally three spades, ending with the \$\int J\$. West pitches four spades. You play off the top two hearts and both defenders follow. Now what?

When this deal occurred, declarer was fully aware that East might be trying to take him for a ride. After long cogitation he decided that holding a 5=4=4=0 with some strength in each suit, East might have chosen to double rather than overcall on the first round. There was no reason, however, for East not to have a 5=3=5=0 shape. So, playing for East's last three cards to be the ◆Kx and ◆A, and West's to be the  $\bigvee$ Q and  $\bigvee$ Jx, declarer led the heart as a losing squeeze card.

Whether or not you agree with this decision is immaterial: the point is that East gave declarer a guess, and he defeated the contract. If he had followed the customary 'yessir' line — throwing two diamonds and three spades and a heart before going into a long trance on the last club — he would have been a soft touch. West played his part too, keeping all his diamonds when East started throwing them. The average West would have held on to a spade, in which case declarer would have had no reason to try the losing squeeze card option.

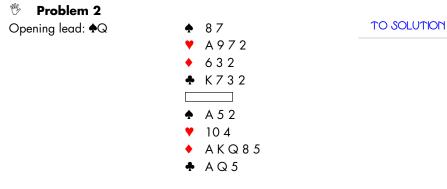
## **REVIEW PROBLEMS**

## Problem 1 Opening lead: •K J 5 8 4 943 A76432 ♠ A93 AQ6 AKQ ♣ KJ85

West	North	East	South
	3♣	pass	4NT
pass	5♦	pass	6NT
all pass			

TO SOLUTION

Plan the play.



West	North	East	South	
			1♦	
pass	1♥	1 🏚	2NT	
pass dbl	3NT all pass	pass	pass	

East overtakes with the  $\bigstar$ K and returns the  $\bigstar$ J. You duck (West plays the  $\bigstar$ 3) and win the third spade as West contributes the ♣4 and dummy the ♥2. East discards a spade on the A. What now?



♠ 653 **♥** Q6 A 8 4 2 ♣ KQ96 A 9 8 A 8 KQ65 A 7 5 4

T	SOL	111		
10	JUL	UΙ	$\sim$	

West	North	East	South	
		pass	1NT	
pass	3NT	all pass		

East overtakes with the ♠K and you duck. East returns the ♠2 and you win with the  $\triangle A$ . You play the  $\triangle K$  and the  $\triangle Q$ , West discarding the 2 on the second diamond. You play up to the ♣Q, West following with the ♣J. On the ♣K West discards the ♥4. How do you continue?

# **Problem 4** Opening lead: \$5

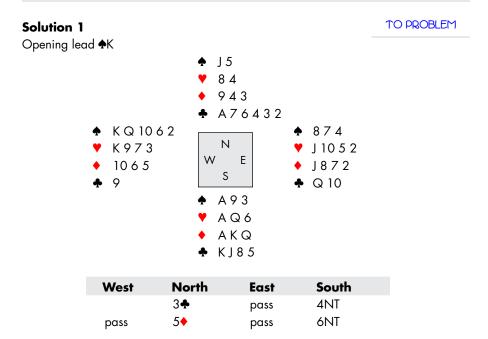
Q9863 K Q 5 3 A 7 **♣** J6 ♠ K72 A 6 KQJ932 ♣ AQ

TO	SOL	UT.	1001	

West	North	East	South
			2NT
pass	3♣	pass	3♦
pass all pass	4NT	pass	6♦

East plays the ♠10 and the ♠K wins. You cash the top three diamonds, West discarding the \$\infty\$8 (encouraging) on the third round and dummy a spade. You play three more diamonds, both defenders discarding clubs as you discard spades from dummy. How do you continue?

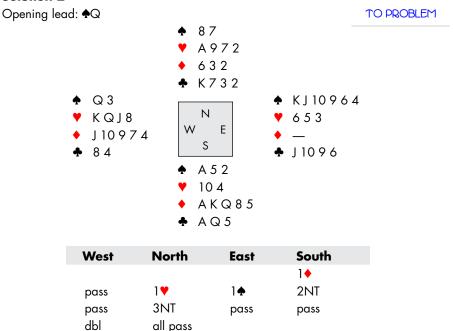
### **SOLUTIONS**



You win the first spade because your aim is to avoid the heart finesse by putting West on play with a spade in the endgame. Unless West has all three clubs, that suit will run. You carefully play the ♣8 to the ♣A, but the clubs are 1-2, so you cash the minors ending up in dummy. Your final three cards are the 4 and two small hearts in dummy, with the \(\nspace AQ\) and another major-suit card in the South hand. At this point you have to decide whether the simple finesse will work or whether you have executed a strip-squeeze with West holding the VK.

When this deal occurred, the opponents followed (literally) the line of least resistance: East kept three hearts, West two hearts and the  $\Phi$ O. With all the spades bar one having gone, declarer had no problem: he could exit with a spade and claim. The deal is a fine example of the need to make deceptive discards when being squeezed. West can see that he must find five discards. If he nonchalantly tosses three hearts and two spades, there is at least a reasonable chance that declarer will go wrong.

#### Solution 2



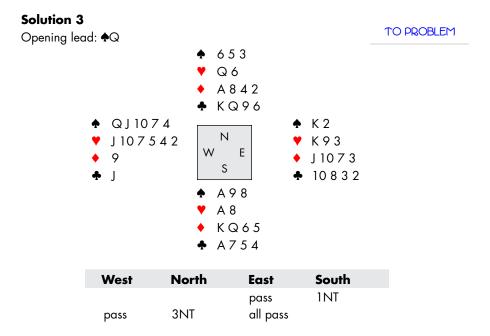
East overtakes with the  $\bigstar K$  and returns the  $\bigstar I$ . You duck (West plays the  $\bigstar 3$ ) and win the third spade as West contributes the ♣4 and dummy the ♥2. East discards a spade on the A.

Forget the club break: it is either there or it is not. So the only chance to be considered is that West has the **Y**KQI. However, this is not a forlorn hope but rather a fairly good prospect, because West's double is certainly based on something pretty stout in hearts. Cash the AKQ; then, assuming the last club is not a master, duck a heart or a diamond, according to West's discard. Of course he will toss a heart, because this saves the day if East has ♥10xx.

This is the exceptional case, where the delayed duck succeeds with three losers in hand. The reason is this. In the usual (two-loser) case the defender must retain an extra card in one target suit: this additional busy card causes the squeeze to ripen with two losers. Here declarer has **CLuE** in two target suits. Two hearts and three diamonds are enough to guard the suits, but three and four respectively are required to stave off the duck: these two extra busy cards move the loser count up to three.

Of course, East should realize that his partner must be crying for a heart lead or switch. However, while it is true that a heart shift at Trick 3 (if not Trick 2) is called for, it does not in fact defeat the contract. After you duck the first trick there will be no future entry to the East hand. Depending upon the exact defense, there may be more than one way to make the contract but certainly it is best to duck the first heart. If West continues to play red suits you can duck three

times, rectifying the count for a simple squeeze on West in hearts and diamonds. If West switches to a black card, you can achieve a similar result by ducking red cards yourself.

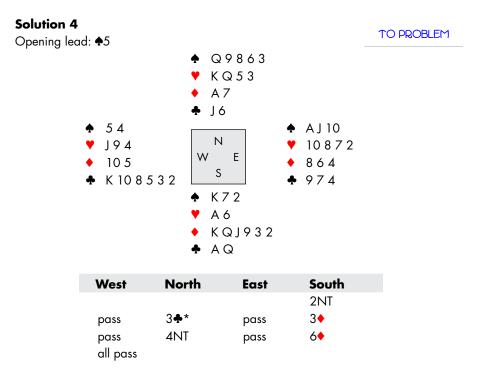


East overtakes with the  $\bigstar K$  and you duck. East returns the  $\bigstar 2$  and you win the  $\bigstar A$ . You play the  $\bigstar K$  and  $\bigstar Q$ , West discarding the  $\bigstar 2$  on the second diamond. You play the  $\bigstar Q$ , West following with the  $\bigstar J$ . On the  $\bigstar K$ , West discards the  $\bigstar 4$ .

As the cards lie, with East holding the  $\P K$ , you can simply cash the remaining minor-suit winners and throw East in with a minor-suit card. Eventually he will have to concede an extra heart trick. What if West has the  $\P K$ ? You can follow the same strip, cashing the minor-suit winners. West will have to keep the  $\P K$ x and you can throw him in with a spade to lead a heart for your ninth trick. However, this does mean that you have to decide which hand has the  $\P K$ . Is there an easier way?

There is a better approach if you have been careful about how you cashed your minor-suit winners. The simplest way is to make sure that when you cash the four minor-suit winners, one of them is the •A. Then at Trick 7 you start the process of rectifying the count by leading a spade. If West cashes all the spades, you throw two small minor-suit cards from dummy. East will be hopelessly squeezed if he holds the •K and West will be endplayed if he has it. Even if West cashes only one more spade, East will be in big trouble. West does better to switch to a heart straight away. Let us suppose you misguess and put up dummy's •Q. You allow East's •K to win and take the next heart. You then have a

simple throw-in with ace and another diamond. No matter who has the VK, the defenders are helpless. However, if dummy still has the A and either or both of the club honors when you throw West in on a spade, dummy will be squeezed by West's spade winners and you will go down. (Try it.)



East plays the ♠10 and the ♠K wins. You cash the top three diamonds, West discarding the \$\infty\$8 on the third round and dummy a spade. You play three more diamonds, both defenders discarding clubs as you discard spades from dummy.

It appears from the discards and play to Trick 1 that West has the \*K and that East has kept the AJ and four hearts. Of course, other distributions are possible.

One critical card is the \$\dag{4}\$. If East's last six cards are the \$\dag{A}\$I and four hearts (as is the case with the layout shown), you want to lay down the A to squeeze out the 4. You can then concede a spade for your twelfth trick. If instead East has the AJ4 and only three hearts, then West is down to four hearts and Kx in clubs. Then you want to cash three hearts and throw West in on the fourth heart for a club return. Of course, if this is the position, East could have defeated you by going up with the ♠A at Trick 1 and returning a spade at Trick 2, giving West a ruff.

The odds favor cashing the A, playing East for the A and four hearts.

#### CHAPTER 4 SUMMARY

A strip-squeeze embodies the elements of a squeeze and a strip, the squeeze removing safe exit cards and/or surplus winners from the victim's hand.

All strip-squeezes start with at least two losers The goal of the squeeze is to do one or both of the following:

- Remove a safe exit card from a defender's hand.
- Remove surplus winners either in a side suit or in a suit in which declarer wishes to set up tricks for himself.

There are three main types of strip-squeeze:

#### • The surplus winner strip-squeeze

The defender has a fragile stopper. Declarer can remove all exits by cashing high cards. The squeeze forces the defender to give up one or more winners, after which he can be safely thrown in. This squeeze can have more than two losers.

#### Requirements:

- the defender has a fragile stopper
- declarer can extract all useful exit cards from the defender's hand by cashing his own winners in those suits
- declarer runs winners while the defender is forced to discard his own. surplus winners
- the defender is thrown in and ultimately will have to lead away from his fragile stopper

## • The two-loser fragile-stopper squeeze

Declarer must squeeze safe exits from the victim's hand before the throwin. The defender then has to lead away from a fragile stopper, giving away a trick in that suit. There can be only two losers.

### The delayed duck

Declarer needs tricks in the target suit. During the squeeze, the defender is forced to discard either a safe exit card or one or more winners in the target suit. After this, declarer can duck a trick in the target suit to set up the winner(s) he needs. There can usually only be two losers.

#### Requirements:

- CLuE
- Companion: The target suit must contain a threat and a small card in the same suit
- Lead: After the squeeze, it must be possible to lead either the companion or a small card of the same suit from across the table
- Entry: There must still be an entry to the established winner in the target suit after the duck.
- You *must* hold the master card in the other threat suit.

Squeeze defense tip: When you are surely in the grip of a fully-established squeeze, make the key discard early.

# THE TRIPLE SQUEEZE AND REPEATING SQUEEZE

In the standard form of the two-suit squeeze, or simple squeeze, one opponent carries the whole burden in two suits, and declarer has only one loser. In the corresponding standard form of the three-suit squeeze, or **triple squeeze**, one defender is solely responsible for three suits, and the squeeze matures with two losers remaining in declarer's hands. The reason for this is not hard to find. The presence of two losers gives the victim an advantage of one trick, but the necessity of retaining a third stopper cancels that advantage, so that the pinch occurs, just as in a simple squeeze, on the last Free winner. It follows from these remarks that **BLUE** serves for the triple squeeze with only two changes: **B** means Busy in three suits, **L** means only two Losers.

We have seen that there are other forms of the two-suit squeeze, beyond the standard form. The same is true of the three-suit squeeze. These more advanced situations, or some of them, will be studied in due course; but in this chapter we are speaking only of the primary form described above.

The double squeeze, as the name implies, consists of two simple squeezes — one on each defender. The triple squeeze is so called because it may be viewed as equivalent to three simple squeezes. If the Free suit is spades, then the sufferer is simple-squeezed in hearts-diamonds, hearts-clubs and diamonds-clubs simultaneously.

## Classification of Triple Squeezes

In the following text, though not always in the Exercises, South will denote the hand containing the squeeze card (the last free winner). We know that in a simple squeeze the South hand cannot hold both threats as well as the squeeze card, because there simply isn't room. For the same reason, in a triple squeeze the South hand cannot hold all three threats. South may, however, hold two threats, because one space is opened up by the presence of one threat opposite. Thus all (standard) triple squeezes fall under one or another of three headings, as follows.

The squeeze card is held by South and:

Case 1: North holds one threat.

- Case 2: North holds two threats.
- Case 3: North holds three threats.

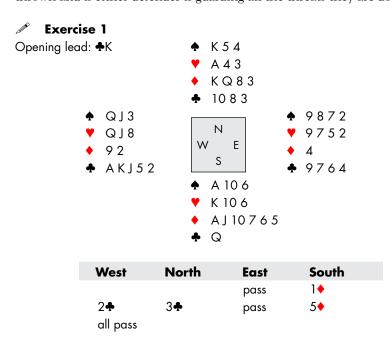
Since each of these cases has certain features peculiar to itself, we shall consider them separately.

Another point that should be made: some players believe that a three-suit squeeze nearly always, if not always, produces two tricks. As we proceed, it will become clear that this is very far from true. In studying each of the three forms, beginning with Case 1 in Exercise 1, we shall first develop the conditions under which the squeeze will gain one trick. Immediately following, in Exercise 2 for Case 1, we shall note the additional conditions that are necessary if the squeeze is to 'repeat', for the gain of a second trick.

# Case 1: One Threat Opposite the Squeeze Card

In this case, when the squeeze is reached, North in general has two idle cards, due to the presence of two threats in South's hand. When North's only entry is in one of South's suits there may be only one idle card, but since one is plenty, no trouble arises.

Because the one-threat hand always has an idle card when the squeeze card is in the opposite hand, there is no positional aspect — the triple squeeze always succeeds against either defender. As the squeeze card is played, the idle card is thrown and if either defender is guarding all the threats they are done.



Everyone follows to the ♠K and West continues at Trick 2 with the ♣J. Basically a squeeze is the only hope of making the contract, so a momentary thought might be to duck the second trick, in the hope of setting up a simple squeeze on West. However, if you do that and West continues with a third club, he will destroy your club threat. If you have only heart and spade threats you will not have  ${\bf U}$  on West. Also what do you pitch from the South hand on the second club? If you discard from either major then you eliminate the threat (the ten) in that suit. So there is no simple squeeze.

The best chance is that West holds all the invisible high cards. If so, the triple squeeze is established right now, and an easier one could hardly be conceived. Just ruff in and run all the trumps, and West will buckle.

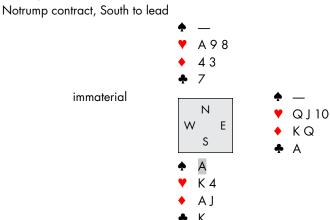
# The Repeating Squeeze: One Threat Opposite the Squeeze Card

As our next step, another highly important possibility must be developed. As soon as one threat is unguarded, that threat becomes a new winner, and since the victim is still busy in two suits, it is obvious that under proper conditions this new winner will inflict a simple squeeze, and gain another trick. When this happens, the sequence is called a **repeating squeeze**.

When will a Case 1 triple squeeze repeat? If West is the target he can escape the second squeeze by giving up his guard in North's threat suit, because that squeeze will fail for lack of **U** when both threats are held by South and stopped by West.

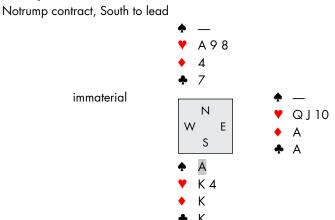
When East is the target, **U** will be present no matter what he does, and his only chance of beating the second squeeze is by upsetting **E**.

## **Example A**



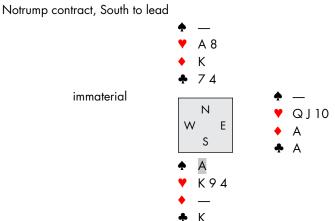
In Example A, North has an entry in his own suit and South an entry in one of his. In this situation there is no opportunity for East to upset **E**.

#### **Example B**



However, the situation is different in Example B; if South's only entry is in North's suit, or if he has none in any suit, East gives up the guard against North's threat (here, hearts), leaving South high and dry.

#### **Example C**

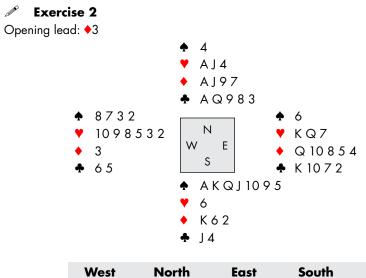


And when North's only entry is in one of South's suits, East gives up the guard in that suit. So in Example C, East discards a heart and the diamond threat can no longer be reached.

**Rule:** When North (the hand opposite the squeeze card) holds one threat, a triple squeeze will never repeat against West. Against East it will always

repeat if the North hand has an entry in its own threat suit and South an entry in one of his; in all other cases, with rare exceptions, the second squeeze will fail.

Strictly speaking, the term 'repeating squeeze' is a misnomer. The triple squeeze does not 'repeat', because it is all over as soon as the last Free winner has been played; instead, it leads to an elementary (one-loser) simple squeeze. The logically correct name for this phenomenon is 'quadruple squeeze', for it consists of a triple (equivalent to three simples) followed by a simple. Some authors prefer the term **progressive squeeze**, but that too is open to criticism. Since 'repeating squeeze' is firmly embedded in the literature, let us continue to use it.

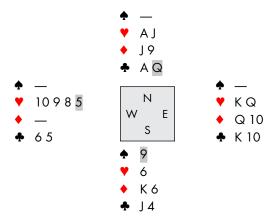


1 • **5**♠\* 4NT pass pass 5NT 6♣\* pass pass **7** dbl all pass pass

South mistakenly shows the **\***K in the RKCB sequence and, after this slip of the tongue, finds himself dangling at the end of a very long limb, with his only hope a repeating squeeze. On the auction, East must have all the outstanding high cards and the rest of the diamond suit. If so, a repeating squeeze is available.

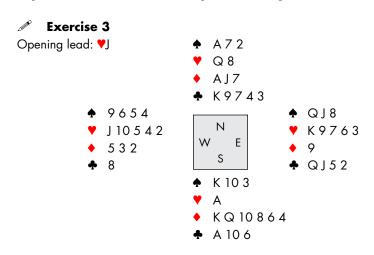
Watch your step, though. One threat is the ♥J. If North holds either of the other two threats, East will give up guarding South's threat, and with both threats in the North hand, the second squeeze will fail on **U**. This says that the minor-suit threats must be the  $\bullet$ 6 and the  $\bullet$ 1.

How about that first trick? As soon as the ◆K is gone, there is no entry to the South hand, and the quarry escapes the second squeeze by surrendering the heart guard. Thus the first trick must be won with the ◆A. Now you run all the trumps, arriving at this ending as you lead the last trump:



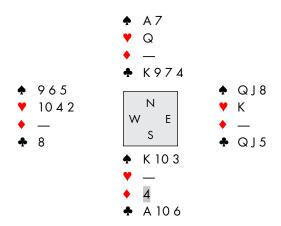
There is one more pitfall. On the last trump, dummy discards the \$Q (or a diamond). Now if East parts with a heart or a club, the result is straightforward. If he discards a diamond, however, a Vienna Coup will be essential for the heartclub squeeze: that is, declarer must cash the ♣A at Trick 9. Try it all three ways yourself.

In general, the second squeeze will fail unless the North hand holds an entry in its own threat suit and one of South's threat suits also contains an entry. The only time this is not true is when the North hand, though holding no entry in its own suit, has entries in both of South's suits and the South hand has entries in two (any two) of the three threat suits. Then, no matter what East does, the requisite entries for the second squeeze will be present.



West	North	East	South
pass	1♣	1♥	2♦
4♥	pass	pass	4NT
pass	5♥*	pass	5NT
pass all pass	6♣*	pass	7NT

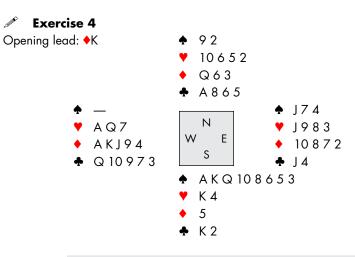
You only have eleven tricks but if East has the ♠QI, the ♥K and at least three clubs, this crazy contract can be made. The North and South hands each have entries in both of South's threat suits, so that no matter which of these is surrendered by East, **E** (with opposite-threat entry) will be in effect for the second squeeze. The threats are the  $\clubsuit10$ ,  $\clubsuit10$  and  $\blacktriangledownQ$ .



In this ending, you lead the last diamond, throwing a club from the North hand. If East throws a heart, you cross to dummy in one of the black suits and cash the  $\mathbf{VQ}$ , squeezing East in spades and clubs. If East throws a spade, you cash the spades and the simple squeeze in hearts and clubs works. A club discard will fare no better.

We need to point out one final important constituent of the present problem. Fairly often, as regards the second squeeze, the defender is confronted with the bitterest kind of pseudo, sometimes under circumstances that make correct play all but impossible. Thus in some cases the squeeze actually will repeat when, according to our theory above, it does not rate to do so.

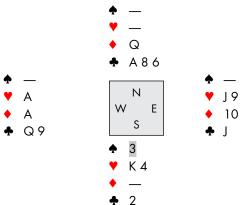
A striking example is furnished by Exercise 1. West can see that he is squeezed in three suits if declarer's major-suit cards are exactly ♠A10x ♥K10x. West would never discard the A playing IMPs, and seldom, if ever, at matchpoints, because this discard concedes the contract, while a spade or a heart keeps bright hope alive at the risk of a contemptible 20 points. And if anything but the A is thrown, the squeeze repeats.



West	North	East	South	
		pass	4♠	
4NT	pass	5♦	5♠	
dbl	all pass			

East follows to Trick 1 with the  $\bullet$ 8, playing standard carding. West switches to the  $\bullet$ 10, East plays the  $\bullet$ 4 and you win with the  $\bullet$ K. You play three rounds of trumps, discarding a heart from dummy as East follows suit and West throws the  $\bullet$ 3,  $\bullet$ 4 and  $\bullet$ 9.

You have ten tricks: eight spades and two clubs. West almost certainly has the  $\P$ A and the  $\P$ A. If he is also guarding clubs, as appears quite likely, he will be subject to a triple squeeze. You run the trumps. After seven trumps you arrive at this position:

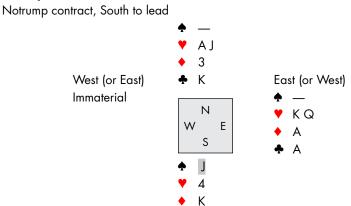


When you lead the last trump, West can hold you to the contract by discarding the  $\bullet$ A. However, if he elects to throw the heart on the chance that East might have the  $\forall$ K, your  $\forall$ K inflicts the second squeeze.

# Case 2: Two Threats Opposite the Squeeze Card

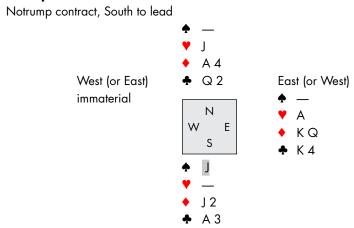
Again, we begin by examining only the triple squeeze — nothing to do with the question of repetition.

#### **Example D**



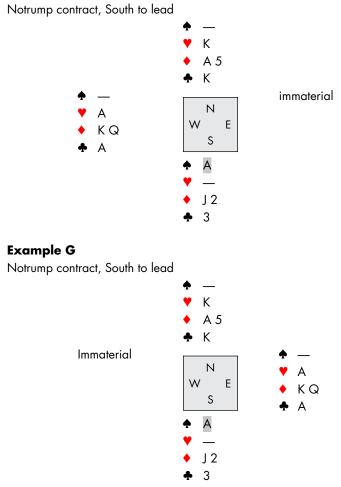
When the North hand has an entry in either (or of course each) of its own suits, the presence of one threat in the South hand results in North having one idle card (here the ◆3) available for discard on the squeeze trick. The result is that the triple squeeze, as shown in Example D, is valid against either adversary clearly, if the squeeze works against East, who has to discard after the two-threat hand, it works against West.

#### **Example E**



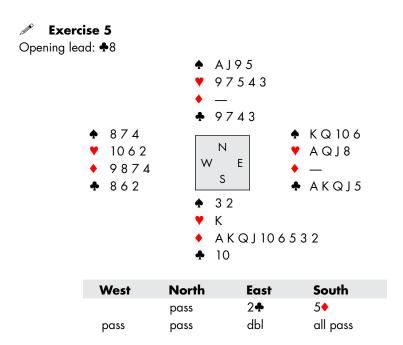
Suppose, however, that North's only entry is in South's threat suit. If South has a winner in one, any one, of the three threat suits, that winner makes room for an idle card in the North hand. This is shown in Example E, where South has the ♣A, and North's ♦4 is an idle card. When South leads the ♠I, the ♦4 can be thrown from the North hand and the defender has no answer. Again, the defender can be either in the East or West seat, it makes no difference.

#### **Example F**



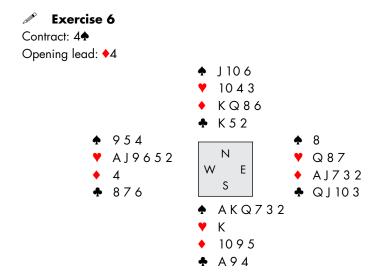
Finally, if the North hand's only entry is in South's suit and South has no winner in any threat suit, North has no idle card: the squeeze succeeds against West (Example F) but fails against East (Example G). The failing case would seldom occur in actual play.

**Rule:** When the North hand (opposite the squeeze card) holds two threats, the triple squeeze always succeeds against West, and (with one rare exception) always against East too.



East wins with the \$\int\$I and continues with the \$\int\$A, which you ruff. Clearly East could have beaten you if he had cashed the \(\nstacklore{A}\) or switched to a spade; presumably the position was difficult for him to read. Now, however, the contract is a laydown if he holds the ♥A and the ♠KQ, quite probable after his powerful opening bid. You just run diamonds, keeping the  $\triangle A$  and the  $\triangle 9$  in dummy in the three-card ending. East has to discard from the  $\bigstar KO$ ,  $\blacktriangledown A$  and  $\bigstar K$  and any suit he gives up allows you your eleventh trick.

You will surely agree that this triple squeeze is as easy, in plan and play, as any simple squeeze that could be constructed. Moral: When you hold a gigantic powerhouse opposite a bust, begin to think about squeeze defense very early!



You play the ◆K from dummy. East wins with the ◆A and returns the ◆2, which West ruffs with the ♣5. West continues with the ♣8, dummy playing the ♣2 and East the  $\clubsuit 10$  as you win with the  $\clubsuit A$ .

Since East's ◆2 was a strong signal for clubs and West's ♣8 is doubtless top of nothing, East has the minors. If he also holds the  $\forall A$ , he is subject to a triple squeeze with the  $\forall K$ ,  $\bullet 8$  and  $\bullet 9$  as your threats. If he did hold the  $\forall A$ , though, surely he would have produced a higher diamond at Trick 2, calling for a heart return: therefore, West probably has the \(\forall A\). However, you don't care where the ♥A is. Your plan is to give up a trick to the ♥A after drawing trumps and then squeeze East in clubs and diamonds, with the  $\clubsuit 9$  and  $\spadesuit 8$  as your threats. The  $\spadesuit Q$ will remain as an entry to dummy.

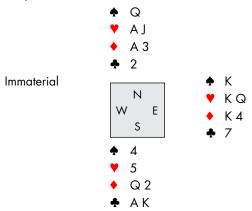
This deal is designed to remind you that the standard three-suit squeeze is a tool you can add to the list of two-loser squeezes but it is not the only approach to a play problem. In other words, where you have two losers and no triple squeeze is present, there are other lines of play to investigate.

# The Three-Suit Vienna Coup

The two-suit Vienna Coup described in Chapter 1 (p. 35) has its three-suit counterpart. For Case 2, North holding two threats, the set-up is exactly the same as in a simple squeeze: East is the quarry, South has or will have no entry in any of the three suits, and North has one or more winners in South's threat suit. Those North winners must be cashed before the squeeze is reached: a **three-suit Vienna Coup.** Of course the Coup is necessary for precisely the same reason as in two-suit play — to avoid blocking South's threat.

#### Example H

Notrump contract, South to lead



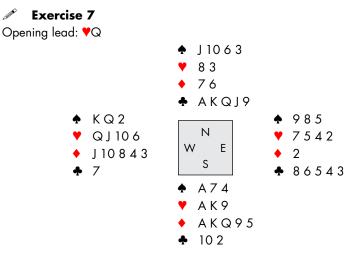
In this example the A must be cashed before crossing back to the South hand with the A and leading the K, the squeeze card.

**RULE:** In a triple squeeze, when the North hand (opposite the squeeze card) holds two threats, East is the defender being squeezed, South has no entry in any threat suit, and North has one or more winners in South's threat suit, cash those winners before the squeeze card is played.

This coup is comparatively rare, even in Case 2. While it may conceivably arise in Case 1, the contingency is too remote to be worth considering. Note that the Vienna Coup in Exercise 2 had nothing to do with the three-suit squeeze, which was already set up; instead, it was nothing more than our old friend from simplesqueeze days, necessary in order to execute the second, or simple, squeeze.

Returning to our rule: with one threat opposite the squeeze card, the triple squeeze always succeeds against either defender. However, if we are to be hairsplittingly accurate, that word 'always' must be trimmed by half the thickness of a hair. It is easy to lay out a hand where the three-suit Vienna Coup is required but cannot be executed because South has no re-entry: of course in that event the squeeze fails. However, since the odds against your ever holding such a hand are prohibitive, suppose we let 'always' stand. The same comment applies to the statements around the success of Case 2, two threats opposite the squeeze card.

It would be an over-statement to say that the word 'always' must always be avoided, and that 'never' must never be used; yet both words are dangerous, and should not be employed unless the writer is very sure of his ground.

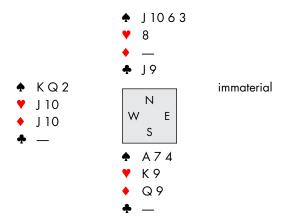


West	North	East	South
		pass	2♣
pass	2◆*	pass	2NT
pass	3♣	pass	3♦
pass	4♣*	pass	4NT*
pass	6NT	pass	pass
dbl	pass		

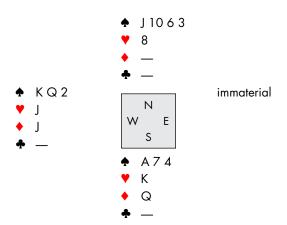
You win West's  $\mathbf{\nabla}Q$  with the  $\mathbf{\nabla}A$  ( $\mathbf{\nabla}2$  from East) and play two rounds of diamonds; East shows out on the second round, discarding the \(\forall 4\). Of course a first-trick duck of the \(\forall\) was out of the question, for if diamonds are 4-2, one trick will have to be lost in that suit. When diamonds fail, it is time to look for a squeeze.

After the strange matchpoint double it seems reasonable to play West for all of the remaining high-card points. It also seems reasonable to place West with the ♠KQx since the ♠KQ alone would make the double less attractive. A simple squeeze is no longer possible. If you attempt to duck a trick the defense can return a heart which will remove the entry from the South hand needed for a squeeze. (Try it.)

However, you can make the slam on a choice of two different two-loser squeezes. First, you can succeed on a strip-squeeze and endplay since the KQx is a fragile stopper. Run all the clubs and you will arrive at this position:

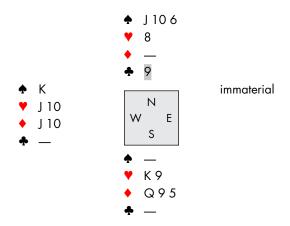


On dummy's next club take care to discard a heart, since to complete the strip you are going to have to cross on a heart. If you throw a diamond at this point, West will also discard a diamond, and will throw his last diamond on the last club. Then when you cross via the VK and play a spade, he will have a heart winner to cash. (Try it yourself.) So instead you discard a heart and West must do likewise. The diamond threat has played its role in the strip. Now you play the last club and can throw your diamond, as does West. This is the ending.



You merely cash your red-suit winners and throw West in by leading a low spade.

The two-loser triple squeeze is actually easier and (assuming you trust West to have the ♥10 from the lead and East's discouraging ♥2 at Trick 1) safer to play — but there is one potential pitfall. You must cash the ♠A (Vienna Coup) before running clubs to free up spade discards from the South hand. With one club remaining you arrive at this ending:



South throws a diamond but West has no answer.

As you can see, both the specific order in which you cash winners and the preservation of entries can be very important considerations in these positions.

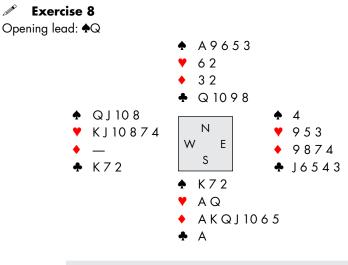
## The Case 2 Repeating Squeeze

It is a simple matter to discover the conditions under which the second squeeze will occur in Case 2, because the reasoning runs parallel to that used in Case 1.

When North holds the two threats and the squeeze card is in the South hand, a triple squeeze cannot repeat against East. East can just abandon the threat held by South. After that, when declarer attempts to cash the winner produced by this squeeze, East will not be squeezed again because of the lack of **U**.

If West is being triple squeezed then he can attempt to break up the second squeeze only by abandoning his guard in whichever North hand threat will create an entry problem (e.g. if South's only entry is in one of North's suits, West abandons that suit). However, if the North and South hands both hold entries in their own threat suits then this is impossible.

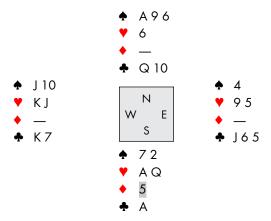
**Rule:** When the North hand (opposite the squeeze card) holds two threats, a triple squeeze will never repeat against East. Against West it will always repeat if the South hand has an entry in its own threat suit and one of the North threat suits contains an entry; in all other cases, with rare exceptions, the second squeeze will fail.



West	North	East	South
1♥	pass	pass	dbl
pass	1♠	pass	2♥
pass	4♠	pass	4NT
pass all pass	5♣*	pass	6NT

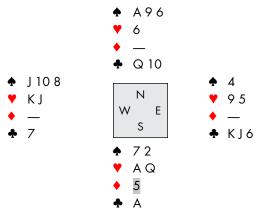
Playing IMPs or rubber bridge, the play is routine. Take the ♠K, return a spade and duck when West splits, to set up a spade finesse; or, if you prefer, duck the first trick to establish the virtually proven spade-heart squeeze. Just run your winners and watch the spades. If the last spade is not good by Trick 12, drop West's ♥K.

At matchpoints, though, something better may be required, and it is worthwhile to try for an overtrick with a repeating triple squeeze. Take the •K and run the diamonds to arrive at this position if, as you suspect, West has the **♣**K.



On the last diamond, West is squeezed in three suits. If West discards a club, you throw a spade from dummy, cash the A, cross to dummy with the A and cash the  $\bullet Q$  to execute the second squeeze. So instead, West must abandon hearts or spades. He obviously cannot discard a spade as that will immediately produce two extra tricks, so suppose he discards a heart. Dummy throws a spade as before and now the play of the top hearts will squeeze West again.

You are still able to make your contract even if East unexpectedly has the **♣**K.

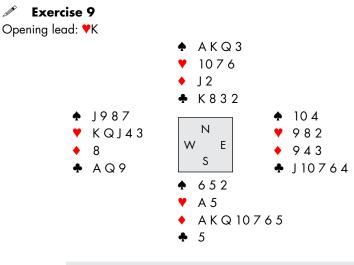


In this position West will throw his club on the last diamond. When you cash the A West will show out, so you will know the current position while West has to throw a spade. You can now play the A and another spade and throw West in. This will compel him to lead a heart and give you the contract.

### Case 3: Three Threats Opposite the Squeeze Card

When North holds all three threats, the squeeze always succeeds against West. However, against East it always fails, for the obvious reason that the North hand must discard a threat on the squeeze trick, thereby freeing up one of East's guards.

For the same reason — that one threat will have been discarded — the squeeze cannot possibly repeat under any circumstances.



West	North	East	South
			1♦
dbl	redbl	2♣	3♣
pass	3♠	pass	4♦
pass all pass	5♣*	pass	6♦

You have eleven tricks but you need either a spade break or a squeeze for your twelfth trick. The hand literally plays itself. Run diamonds. Poor West cannot even indulge in any deception. On the seventh diamond West has to discard from this:

# West ♠ J987

The practical importance of Case 3 is slight, for two reasons. First, it is comparatively rare in play. Second, even when it is present, very often some other line of play will seem to offer a better chance of success. Therefore, there will be no further reference to Case 3 in this book.

#### The Two-Trick Threat

It may happen that declarer's holding in one threat suit is such that, if the suit is given up by the defender, two tricks will be established at once. The spade suit

in Exercise 8 was an example of this. Such a threat is called a **two-trick threat**, to distinguish it from the simple or one-trick threats with which we have dealt hitherto.

It has seemed best not to mention the two-trick threat previously, in order to avoid discussing too many subjects at once. Nevertheless this weapon is a highly useful adjunct to the triple squeeze. Not infrequently, when the conditions for repetition are wanting, a two-trick threat can produce that second trick.

A triple squeeze always creates the possibility of a second simple squeeze as long as the defenders can not attack **U** and given that **E** is in place. The victim tries to attack **U** by the selection of the suit he will give up in the first squeeze. However, with a two-trick threat the victim is limited in which suit he can abandon — obviously, abandoning the guard in that suit immediately gives declarer a second winner.

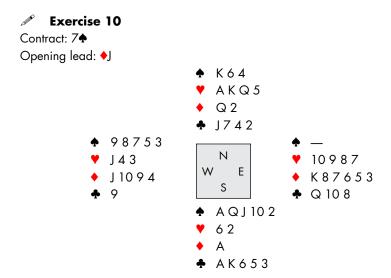
Let's look briefly at how a two-trick threat might impact different variations of the triple squeeze.

Suppose the North hand holds a two-trick threat accompanied by an entry in its own suit and South holds two threats and the squeeze card (Case 1). Previously, on page 179, we found that West 'can escape the second squeeze by giving up his guard in North's threat suit'. Here, though, this strategy would hand declarer two tricks right away. The only alternative is to give up the guard in one of South's threat suits, whereupon the lead of the established winner immediately inflicts a simple squeeze. West can take his choice — heads you win, tails he loses.

Let's suppose now that the North hand holds two threats while South has a two-trick threat with an entry in its own suit (Case 2). This is an analogous situation to the one described in the previous paragraph. Here also it is easily seen that either defender is invariably out of luck.

If the two-trick threat is in the hand containing two threats, it is generally no better than a simple threat. In order to attack **U**, the victim wants to discard from his guard against the single-threat hand anyway. Even if the two-trick threat is in the single-threat hand, if it has no entries in its own suit the squeeze will normally not repeat in any case, for lack of E. The defender abandons the suit containing an entry to the single-threat hand, which is removed when that suit is cashed out. The presence of a two-trick threat doesn't change that.

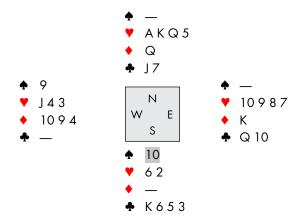
**Rule:** When the lone threat is a two-trick threat accompanied by an entry in its own suit, the squeeze always gains two tricks against either defender. In all other cases, with rare exceptions, the two-trick threat is merely equivalent to a simple threat.



You win with the ◆A in hand as East plays the ◆8. You cash a top spade and East shows out.

You have eleven tricks. One chance to make the contract is to find the  $\Phi Q$ doubleton, but otherwise you are going to need a squeeze. In view of the spade division and the play to Trick 1, there is a fine chance that East holds all the stoppers. If so, East will be subject to a triple squeeze which will produce two winners.

The play is about as difficult as patronizing a vending machine. Just deposit your money (five spades) and out pops the contract. Here is the position after you cash one club and all the spades but one.



On the last spade you throw a club from dummy. East must hold clubs since discarding a club would immediately yield the contract. When he discards a red suit, you immediately cash that red suit, repeating the squeeze.

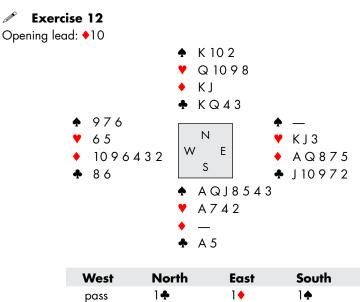
#### Exercise 11 Opening lead: 4J AQ752 AQ7 5 4 875 J 10 9 8 K 4 3 Ν 1098532 KJ4 Ε 8 2 J1096 S 3 1094 6 6 AKQ73 AKQ162

West	North	East	South
			1♣
pass	1♠	pass	2♦
pass	2♥*	pass	3♣
pass	4♣	pass	4NT
pass	5♥	pass	7NT
pass	pass	dbl	all pass

East must have spades covered for his double, so you go up with the ♠A as East plays the ♠4. You cash two clubs, West discarding the ♥2 on the second club. You play off the remaining clubs, throwing small major-suit cards from dummy.

Since East holds all the guards he must abandon a major suit — throwing a diamond would immediately yield the contract. You then cash the winners in that major, squeezing East in diamonds and the remaining major suit.

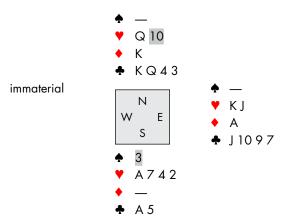
When this deal was actually played, West threw two diamonds and East one, so the hand was a spread. However, when West shows out on the club at Trick 3, East can see that he will have to find three discards. If he plans ahead and throws the  $\checkmark$ 1, the  $\checkmark$ 4 and the  $\spadesuit$ 3, in that order, and West keeps all his diamonds, they can at least make declarer hesitate. East can help further by dropping his \oplus 9 on the first round of the suit. If the defenders can convince declarer that East still has the majors covered, he might start cashing diamonds and ruin his chances.



*****		-45.	500
pass	1♣	1♦	1♠
3♦	3♠	pass	4NT
pass all pass	5♣*	pass	7♠

You put in dummy's  $\blacklozenge$ , ruff East's  $\blacklozenge$ Q and play the  $\clubsuit$ A, East discarding a diamond. Perhaps you expected too much of partner's raise in competition, but dummy is a severe disappointment and you have arrived in a very thin contract. For his bid East is very likely to hold the heart honors, and with West holding three spades plus lots of diamonds, East undoubtedly has the club length. If so, the triple squeeze is in force with the  $\bullet$ K, the  $\bullet$ 4 and the  $\heartsuit$ 7 as threats. However, with North holding two threats, the squeeze will never repeat against East. No hope!

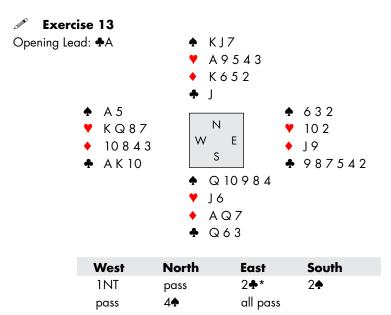
But look! Holding so many spades and diamonds, West may have no more than two hearts: if so, the closed hand has a two-trick threat. Run all the spades throwing three hearts from dummy.



In the diagrammed position, declarer throws a heart from dummy on the last spade, and East has no good discard. A heart will give up the whole suit, while if he throws either minor he will be subject to a repeating squeeze. In real life, following dummy's third heart discard, East will also throw a heart, because this saves the day if West's hearts are as good as  $\checkmark$ 7x or  $\checkmark$ 6xx.

#### The Divided Two-Trick Threat

Although it is much less common than the situation discussed where the twotrick threat is in one hand, a possibility worth keeping in mind is that the two components of a two-trick threat may be divided between declarer's two hands.

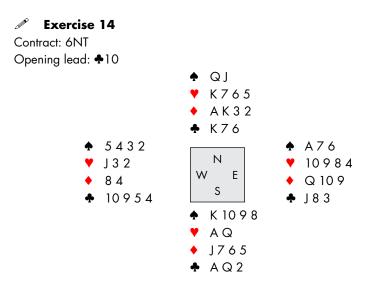


When the ♣A holds, West shifts to the ♠A and another spade, East following. You win the second spade in hand, ruff a club and cross back to hand with the ◆A to play another trump, West discarding a low heart. Obviously West has nearly all the high cards and is already under some pressure, so you continue with two more spades.

West will see that he can hold you to your contract by discarding diamonds; but that the contract can be defeated if East has the ♥J. Unquestionably West will abandon hearts, establishing the divided two-trick threat for an overtrick.

# The Two-Trick Threat in a Simple Squeeze

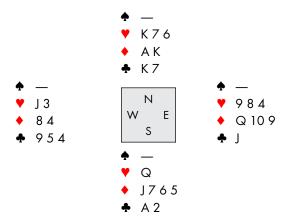
In addition to typical simple squeezes, variant forms are possible. For one such, see the deal below. In a triple squeeze, the two-trick threat is a common phenomenon. In a simple squeeze it is rare indeed: in fact, the following deal is the only one of its kind that this writer recalls having seen in actual play.



Declarer wins the first trick with the  $\clubsuit$ O and plays the  $\spadesuit$ 8. East takes the  $\spadesuit$ A and returns the ♥10, the ♥A winning. Declarer plays three more rounds of spades, and East discards the \$\displays 8\$ on the last spade winner.

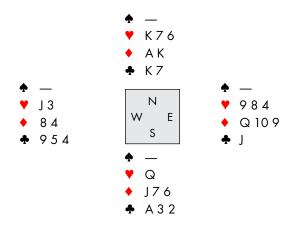
At this point declarer has eleven tricks: three spades, three hearts, two diamonds and three clubs. The twelfth trick could come from a friendly diamond position or from a heart-diamond squeeze.

After six tricks the indications are that East holds four hearts and three diamonds: if so, he is doomed. On the spades, dummy has discarded diamonds.



Now declarer cashes the clubs. If East throws a heart, the result is obvious; if he yields a diamond, South cashes the top diamonds, returns to the \(\forall \Q\) and takes the good diamonds.

This deal is highly interesting, not only as a playing problem but from a theoretical standpoint as well. If we trade the ◆5 and ◆3, is **BLUE** present? Here is the changed deal after six tricks.

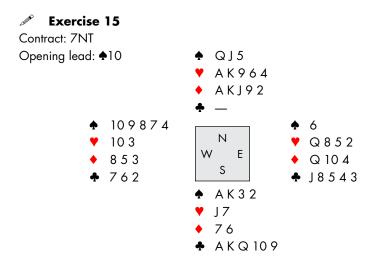


South is now going to play clubs, putting pressure on East. **BLUE** is not present, though. L and U are okay. E is present for the diamond threat, but if that entry (the ♥Q) is used and the diamond threat cashed, North's ♥K will go to sleep, for no net gain. That is: with the •5 and •3 traded, East can discard a diamond without costing his side anything, which means that he is not 'busy in two suits'.

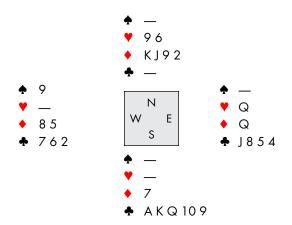
As the cards lie in the original diagram, though, **BLUE** (in a variant form) is indeed present. If East establishes the two-trick threat, sacrificing a heart winner leaves a net gain of one trick. Declarer never makes the ♥K, but instead scores two extra diamond tricks.

# **Multiple Two-Trick Threats**

Deals containing even two two-trick threats are rare indeed. However, the following deal contains no fewer than three two-trick threats.



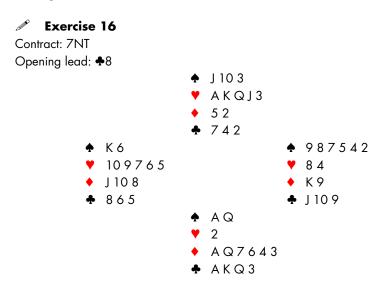
You win with dummy's  $\clubsuit$  and continue with the  $\clubsuit$ Q, East discarding the  $\blacktriangledown$ 2. At first glance, there are two mildly promising chances: the ♣J coming down in three rounds, or diamonds 3-3 with the queen onside. After two tricks the triple squeeze — always a possibility, of course — looms up more prominently. You cash two hearts and a diamond to reduce the danger of ambiguity, then finish the spades. This will be the ending:



You will be fairly certain that East has one diamond left but will still have to decide whether to finesse or to play for the drop.

To the student of bridge theory this deal is one of the most interesting in the book. You must recognize that all three two-trick threats, hearts, diamonds and clubs, are 'effective': that is, if any one were replaced by a simple threat, East could kill the contract by abandoning that suit. Also, if dummy held so much as one club, and assuming you would not then take the club finesse, each of the red threats would be 'merely equivalent to a simple threat'.

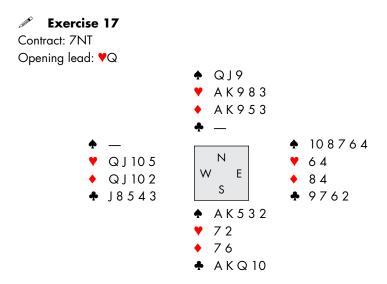
The celebrated deal following, known as 'The Great Vienna Coup', was propounded in Vienna around the middle of the nineteenth century as a doubledummy problem in whist. South, on lead with clubs as trumps, is supposed to take thirteen tricks. To translate this into bridge terms, merely have West lead a club against South's 7NT.



Playing this deal double-dummy as in the problem, you can count eleven tricks with the diamond finesse and the club break. West is guarding spades, hearts and diamonds, though, so the triple squeeze is in play. If you start by running the clubs, West is squeezed on the fourth club. Obviously, discarding a diamond gives up all hope, so let's say West discards a heart as the least of evils. Now the A must be cashed (Vienna Coup) before crossing to dummy and running hearts. The last heart squeezes West in diamonds and spades.

This deal contains two two-trick threats — spades and diamonds — but is not a genuine specimen of the genre, because the play proceeds in the same way, and leads to the same result, with the spades replaced by a simple threat. If you want to see this, just discard a spade on the fourth club, regardless of what West has done. This is just one more example of the fact that when a two-trick and a simple threat lie in the same hand, the former is no better than a simple threat.

West leads a club because he was required to do so by the conditions of the original problem. In real life he probably would lead a heart, which ends any hope of making thirteen tricks. However, if he leads a diamond, we discover in another way that the two-trick spade threat is counterfeit. Now declarer may have no choice but to discard a spade from dummy on the fourth club, yet the second part of the squeeze still remains intact.



You take the first trick with dummy's ♥A and East plays the ♥4. When you then play the  $\Phi Q$ , West discards the  $\forall 5$ . Both opponents follow to the  $\Phi K$ .

After the bad spade break you have only four spade tricks, plus two in each of the red suits and three clubs for a total of eleven. Unless the ♣I falls in three rounds (and even that would give you only one more trick), the only chance is a repeating squeeze.

This hand contains two genuine two-trick threats, the hearts and the diamonds. With West holding both red-suit guards, you can make thirteen tricks. Run your four spade winners. West can discard one club, one heart and one diamond. On the fourth spade he cannot give up a red suit, since that immediately concedes thirteen tricks, so he must discard another club. Now running the clubs squeezes West again in the reds.

However, if either of the red suits were a simple threat, West could escape by giving up his guard against that threat. (Trade the two lowest hearts from North's hand for East's diamonds or the two lowest diamonds for East's hearts.)

#### **REVIEW PROBLEMS**

#### Problem 1

TO SOLUTION

Opening lead: •2

♠ KJ9 A 10 6 5 ΚJ ♣ K1063 ♠ Q 10 8 7 5 **∀** K9 9743 Α9

West	North	East	South	
1♦	dbl	pass	2♠	
pass all pass	3♠	pass	4♠	

You win the first spade in hand with the ♠10 as East follows. You play a diamond to the ◆K, but East surprisingly wins with the ◆A and returns the ◆6 to West's •Q. West then lays down the trump ace; plan the play from here.

#### **Problem 2**

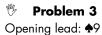
Opening lead: •2

TO SOLUTION

* <b>*</b> *	A 8 6 2 K 6 3 8 6 5 I 8 3
	] 0 3
<b></b>	K Q 3
<b>Y</b>	A 10 9 7
•	10 9 4 3
*	ΑK

West	North	East	South	
			1NT	
all pass				

East takes the ◆A and continues with the ◆J. He then switches to the ◆J. Plan the play.

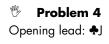


TO SOLUTION

<b></b>	8 5 4
•	AKQ1087
•	_
•	A765
<b></b>	AJ6
<b>Y</b>	6 5
•	AKQJ1054
•	$\circ$

West	North	East	South
pass	1♥	1 🏚	2♦
pass	3♥	pass	4NT
pass all pass	5♦*	pass	7NT

East plays the ♠Q and you win with the ♠A. You play two rounds of diamonds and East shows out on the second, playing the ♠2. How should you proceed?



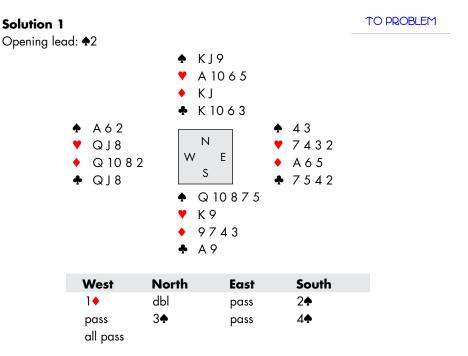
TO SOLUTION

<b></b>	Q95			
•	A Q 4 3			
•	QJ97			
*	K 6			
<b></b>	A 10 8			
•	K 5 2			
•	AK85432			
•	_			

West	North	East	South
			1♦
pass	1♥	2♣	2♦
pass	3♣*	pass	5♣*
pass	5◆*	pass	7♦

Maybe you should not have jumped to the grand slam quite so quickly. You are going to need to find a trick or two. How?

#### **SOLUTIONS**



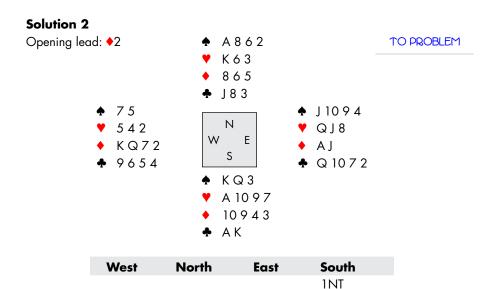
You win the first spade in hand with the ♠10 as East follows. You play a diamond to the ◆K, but East surprisingly wins with the ◆A and returns the ◆6 to West's •Q. West then lays down the trump ace.

Make sure to throw the  $\bigstar K$  under the  $\bigstar A$  to unblock spades. West continues with a spade, which you win in hand. On the bidding, there is a good chance that, apart from the A, East has a yarborough. If so, West will crumble on the last spade.

If you do not unblock spades you will be forced to use a heart or a club to return to hand, in which case West can abandon the opposite suit. That is, if you cross on a club he abandons hearts and vice versa. Now when you cash the winners in that suit you have no re-entry to the South hand and no access to the diamond winners. (Notice that East's sevens come into play.) Try it yourself.

Did you notice the major defensive error that East made? When you play on diamonds, East should not cash the second top diamond but should instead return a small spade for West to duck. Now West is in control of both spades and diamonds. If you touch either suit, he can cash enough winners to defeat the contract.

On this deal, South holds an entry in each of North's suits: thus, no matter what West does, the second entry condition (opposite-threat entry) will be in effect for the second squeeze.

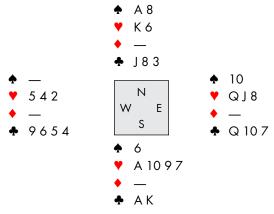


East wins the  $\bullet$ A and continues with the  $\bullet$ J. He then switches to the  $\bullet$ J.

There is probably nothing to do here except take your seven top tricks, but it can cost nothing to try for more. The first duty, clearly, is to lose some tricks, so win with the  $\Phi Q$  and lead a diamond, on which East throws a club. The average West would cash his other diamond, but this West, being a squeeze player himself, leads back a spade. You win in hand and push out the last diamond (a losing squeeze card). East, hoping to hold you to one overtrick at most, would likely contribute a heart, establishing the concealed two-trick threat, but let's assume he throws a spade instead.

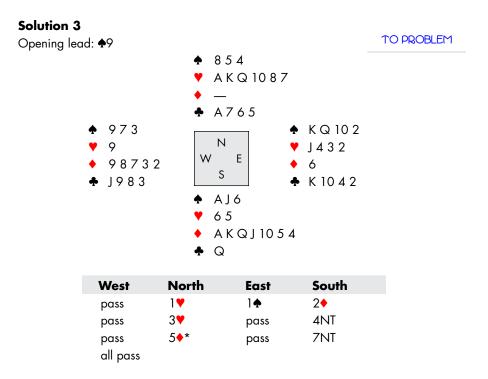
Here is the position.

all pass



You cash the ♣AK, and on the run of the spades East will be squeezed again in clubs and hearts.

There is a defense that will hold the result to -120. If West leads hearts each time he is in on the two diamonds, you do not have the communications for the second squeeze. Although you can win the first heart with the ♥K, you have to throw a heart from dummy on the fourth diamond to preserve the club and spade threats. Now East can give up either black suit and there is no longer a second squeeze because you do not have an entry to the closed hand. (Try it.)

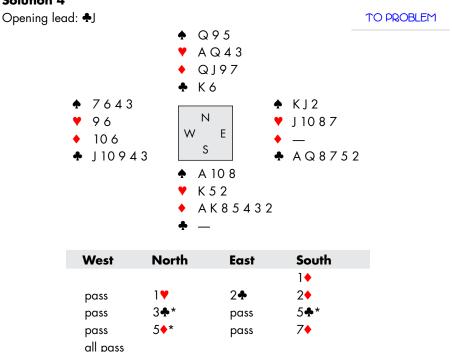


East plays the  $\mathbf{AQ}$  and you win with the  $\mathbf{AA}$ . You play two rounds of diamonds and East shows out on the second, playing the  $\clubsuit 2$ .

If hearts run then the hand is trivial, so you consider what to do if they fail to break. In that case, the only chance seems to be a spade-heart squeeze undoubtedly against East. However, this squeeze will fail because it is impossible to cash the Free winner (the A) and then return to hand.

Hold it! There is a chance after all. If you discard dummy's ♣A and East holds the ♠K, he will be subject to a triple squeeze. Will this squeeze gain two tricks? Obviously yes: you can squeeze him again by cashing the  $\mathbf{AQ}$  (or, if he throws the  $\Phi K$ , the  $\Phi I$ ). Evidently this is another case where two losers are better than one.

#### Solution 4



A 3-3 heart break is not good enough; unless the \*K is singleton, you are going to need a squeeze. East is likely to have almost all the high cards on the auction and certainly has the ♣A. You will need to have a threat in the South hand and that can only be the ♠10. For the squeeze to work, East must have the ♠K and the  $\Phi$ J, along with the  $\Phi$ A. If hearts don't break, you will need a repeating triple squeeze, so East will have to have any long hearts.

You play off six diamonds, throwing spades from dummy. East pitches four clubs and a spade, but on the sixth diamond he has to give up a guard. If East abandons hearts then you run four hearts, squeezing him again, while his throwing a club instead leads to the same outcome. East should abandon spades, since it is the single threat in the hand which plays after him. However, as it turns out, spades is a two-trick threat (the \$108) so the spade suit will produce enough extra tricks for you. If West had the \$\infty\$8, though, the second squeeze would fail for lack of **U**. Try it by exchanging the  $\clubsuit 8$  and the  $\spadesuit 7$ .

#### CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY

A triple squeeze consists of three simultaneous simple squeezes, operating against the same defender. In the standard form, **BLUE** operates but  $\mathbf{B}$  = Busy in three suits and  $\mathbf{L}$  = two losers remaining.

A triple squeeze will repeat (i.e. lead to a subsequent simple squeeze that gains a second trick) only if additional conditions are met.

There are three forms of the basic triple squeeze. If South holds the squeeze card:

- Case 1: The North hand holds one threat. The squeeze works against either defender. The squeeze will not repeat if West is the target. If East is the target, it will repeat if North and South each have entries in their own suit and in other exceptional cases.
- Case 2: North holds two threats. The squeeze works against either defender except in the rare case that North's only entry is in South's threat suit and South has no winner in any of the three threat suits. In this one case the triple squeeze only works on West. A triple squeeze cannot repeat against East. Against West it will repeat in certain circumstances.
- The three-suit Vienna Coup is similar to a Vienna Coup in a simple squeeze. You have to unblock an honor opposite the threat in some situations.
- Case 3: North holds three threats. The squeeze is positional. It always succeeds against West and always fails against East. The squeeze cannot repeat.

When the lone threat is a two-trick threat accompanied by an entry in its own suit, the squeeze always gains two tricks against either defender (either the victim will abandon the two-trick suit or the squeeze will repeat). In all other cases, with rare exceptions, the two-trick threat is merely equivalent to a simple threat.

# ADVANCED THREE-SUIT SQUEEZES

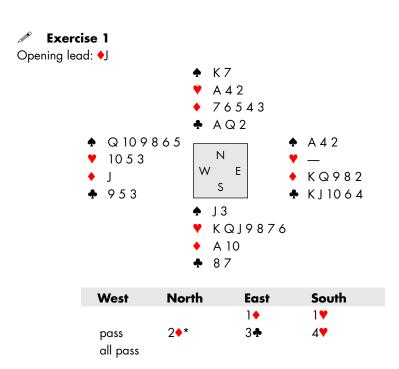
We have now finished our study of the basic or typical types of three-suit squeeze, that is, those in which declarer has two losers remaining. We now proceed to consider some positions that may be less familiar to the average reader.

If your time is limited, you may omit this chapter without serious damage to your game. While it is true that any one of the types of squeeze discussed might confront you tomorrow, the combined frequency of all of them is not high. This means that the space devoted to this subject is somewhat out of proportion to its practical importance. It has seemed worthwhile to take that space, for three reasons. First, some of the situations may never have been systematically studied before. Second, a number of them are so keenly interesting, merely as problems in analysis, that some readers will surely enjoy studying them for their own sake, apart from any thought of their playing value. Third and most important: if you should encounter one of these squeezes and are able to recognize and handle it, you are quite likely to score a clear top even against good competition.

The first part of the chapter will be devoted to three-suit strip-squeezes (three losers or more), the latter part to one-loser squeezes. Perhaps this is the spot for a general remark. It may be that the reader is becoming weary of this incessant harping on 'number of losers'. However, anyone who does not realize that the loser-count is the central feature in all squeeze play, from the simple squeeze up, should go back to Chapter 1 and start all over again. 'How many losers do I have? How many can I stand? If I can't reduce my loser count, what squeezes (if any) are available with the number I have now?" These questions should spring to mind instantly, just as soon as you begin to consider the possibility of a squeeze.

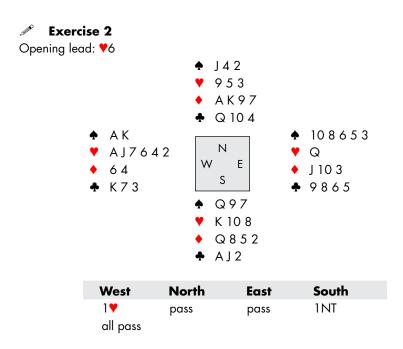
# The Three-Suit Fragile-Stopper Strip-Squeeze

Suppose that one defender is solely responsible for three suits, with at least one fragile stopper. Say also that declarer has three or more losers in hand. The first thought would be to duck one or more tricks and then use one of the plays already in our repertoire; but, for any one of a variety of reasons, this might be inadvisable or even impossible. In that case, declarer can resort to a three-suit strip-squeeze. Just as with the two-suit strip-squeeze, the plan is to effect a throwin that will ultimately force a lead away from the fragile stopper.



East follows with the  $\diamond 2$  and you win with the  $\diamond A$ . East probably has the  $\diamond K$ based both on the bidding and his play of the low diamond at Trick 1. When you run the trumps, East will be squeezed in three suits. In this case the five-card ending should not be hard to read. In dummy you keep the AQx and the Kx. East will have to keep the Ax, the K and two clubs including the K. If East has bared the  $\bigstar K$  you will see four club pitches (on the auction, he is surely 5-5) so it will be hard to miss. If East has kept two clubs then you will see that all the diamonds except the king have gone. In either case you will know what to do: either play the A, dropping East's K, or throw East in with a diamond to lead away from the  $\bigstar$ K. Since East's  $\bigstar$ A is also effectively a fragile stopper, exiting with ace and a low club also works if he hangs on to it.

Note that in this squeeze you had four losers. As an exercise you might like to try drawing trumps and giving up one diamond (leaving three losers) or two diamonds (leaving two losers). You can make the contract in each case.



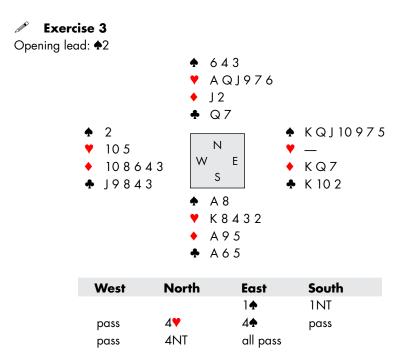
East plays the \(\forall \) and you win with the \(\forall K\). You run four rounds of diamonds. West discards the ♣3 and the ♥2 and East the ♠3. West's heart discard shows that he is under pressure: the run of the diamonds has forced a winner from West's hand. Given East's pass over 1♥, West must hold the ♠AK, so you can now safely lead spades towards dummy. West wins and can run hearts but he will have to give you a trick in the end, as he is forced to lead away from his fragile club stopper. Even if West had bared the \*K and you did not read that he had done so, the squeeze would have performed its magic since West would have to give you a spade trick instead. Once that sixth heart is gone, West is done.

# **Rectifying the Count: Three Losers**

In a three-suit strip-squeeze, when the defender is unable to retain an exit card you can have any number of losers remaining, from three up. When that card will have to be squeezed out, however, you must have only three losers. This is the same concept as the two-loser strip-squeeze.

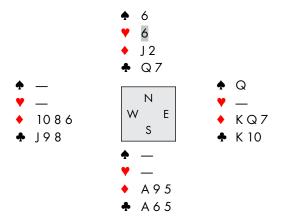
The truth of these statements is easily proven. The standard three-suit squeeze, already described, matures with two losers. Here the victim must keep an exit open, which puts an extra busy card in his hand and ripens the squeeze one trick earlier. A single example is sufficient to prove the possibility of failure with more than three losers: see Exercise 3 below. (Of course other examples are easily found.)

In the standard (two-loser) triple squeeze the location of threats is restricted in two ways: there is not room for all three threats to be in the same hand as the squeeze card, and the squeeze will fail if all three lie to the right of the busy defender. In the **fragile-stopper strip-squeeze** there are no restrictions: all three threats and the squeeze card may lie in either hand, due of course to the fact that the presence of an extra loser opens up an extra space, as in our next exercise.



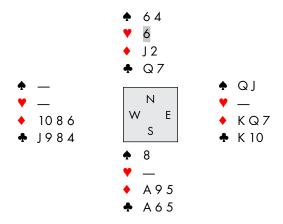
Despite your heart fit, you decide ten tricks in notrump will be easier than eleven in hearts. East plays the \( \blacktrightarrow \) at Trick 1 and you duck. Since West's lead is undoubtedly a singleton, the usual reason for ducking is not present. However, with all those spades East would have preempted originally if he had nothing much outside. He must therefore have a reasonable hand, probably including all the missing high cards, which means that a three-suit strip-squeeze is ahead. In our usual parlance, this gives East a diamond guard, surplus winners in spades and a fragile club stopper.

East continues with the ♠K. You win this spade, perforce, as West discards the \\$3. Now you play hearts to reach this position as you are about to lead the last heart from dummy:



You have taken six tricks, five hearts and the ♠A; you have this heart and two aces to come, for a total of nine. If East throws the ♠Q or a club on the last heart, you have your tenth trick immediately, so he must throw a diamond. If East discards a small diamond, you can throw him in by playing ace and another diamond; now he will have to lead away from the \*K to give you your tenth trick. Discarding a high diamond doesn't help East, though, since now the spade throw-in will force him to give you a trick in one of the minors.

Let's see what happens if you do not duck the first trick. Again you run hearts and eventually reach this ending:



On the last heart, West throws a club and East parts with a spade. The spade throw-in does not work now since East can still exit with a high diamond. You can no longer make the contract.

These are tricky situations. You need to look closely to see the difference between Exercise 1 and Exercise 3. In the latter, ducking the first trick was both safe and necessary. In the former, if you duck 'on general principles', West can defeat you either by leading a spade and scoring a diamond ruff or by switching to a club. In Exercise 1, then, you must not duck at Trick 1, and it turns out that having four losers does you no harm.

In the two-suit strip-squeezes we considered in Chapter 4, you have one solid suit, while in each of two other suits you have a card (the threat) higher than anything that the weak defender can produce. There is also a fourth suit, an **escape suit**. The victim is very apt to hold an exit card in that suit, and unless you duck down to two losers he will be able to keep that card.

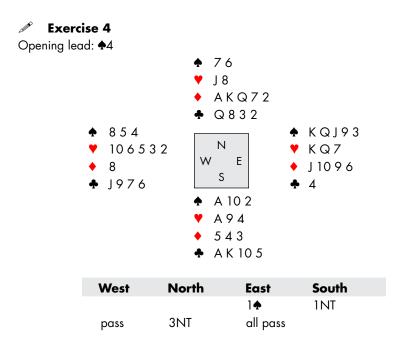
In this last problem you have one solid suit, and in each of the other three suits you have a threat higher than anything held by the victim's partner: in other words, there is no escape suit. Thus your first thought might be that no exit would be possible in any case. Exercise 3 shows that this is not true. The loophole is this: in one threat suit (here, diamonds) the defender holds enough high cards to kill the threat, and has in addition, in that same suit, a possible exit card. With the ♠3 traded for the ♦3 in Exercise 3, it would be perfectly safe to win the first trick. (Play it through yourself.)

In the two-suit problem the case where you must rectify the count or fail is quite frequent. In the three-suit case, on account of the peculiar condition just stated — 'enough high cards to kill the threat...' etc. — this situation is comparatively rare. (Here and in all similar contexts the world 'frequent' means, of course, frequent among plays of the type under consideration. No endplay, not even the simple squeeze, is frequent in the broad sense of that word.)

## The Three-Suit Delayed Duck Strip-Squeeze

Like the fragile-stopper squeeze, the delayed duck squeeze also has its threesuit counterpart. Just as with the two-suit delayed duck strip-squeeze, the three requisites are **CLuE** — Companion, Lead and Entry. Also, while you may or may not hold the master card in the throw-in suit, you must hold the master in at least one of the other threat suits — for if you do not, the opponent can run off his full quota of tricks at once when he gets in.

We have seen that with rare exceptions the three-suit fragile-stopper squeeze succeeds regardless of the number of losers. The same is true of the three-suit delayed duck, and for the same reason: there is no escape suit. The exceptional case, where the squeeze will fail unless you rectify the count, will be discussed later.



You allow East's ♠I to hold the first trick. You have eight top tricks, and if either minor runs you have at least nine tricks. If both minors run, you have eleven top tricks. East is likely to hold the VKQ, so by ducking the first spade trick you have rectified the count for a spade-heart simple squeeze in that case, and will end up making twelve tricks altogether. It is fairly safe to win the second spade and you do so, West following with the  $\clubsuit$ 5.

What if neither minor splits? If East has four clubs then all is well since you can pick up the club suit. If West has the clubs then surely East has to have the diamonds. It is almost impossible for West to hold four diamonds as well as four clubs and three spades: East would have six hearts as well as five spades. With this hand he may well have opened 1♥, not 1♠, and also might have bid again even over 3NT.

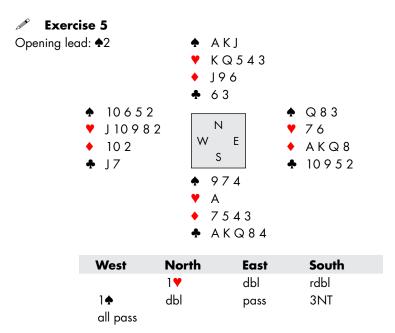
If East has four diamonds and West has four clubs then East can be subjected to a delayed duck. If this is the layout you must play clubs early to squeeze East. So you try the A and the Q and East does show out on the second club, discarding the \(\nsigma 7\).

You will not be sure of the diamond break (and whether to duck a diamond) unless the second diamond lead comes from the closed hand. When West shows out, you will know to duck a diamond to East. However, first you must extract a spade winner from East so you cash a high diamond at Trick 5, and then a third club to hand at Trick 6 forces East to discard a spade. Now when West shows out on the second diamond the duck is safe. You can actually make your contract on the layout shown above without playing a round of diamonds before the third club, but then you must duck a diamond without knowing the split. This puts you in danger of going down when diamonds are 3-2, if West can win the second diamond, cash a club and then lead a spade to East. It would be very embarrassing to go down on a hand with ten top tricks. (Try it both ways, playing no diamonds, or two high diamonds, before the third round of clubs.)

Note that this is a four-loser squeeze. Also notice that if you win the first trick, the squeeze — now with five losers — still operates. Ducking two spades will also work but this does give up the chance of winning eleven tricks when everything splits. The reason why it does not matter how many losers you have is that you are squeezing East out of surplus winners only. He has neither exit cards nor a fragile stopper. In a sense you always had nine tricks, by ducking a diamond. Some authors refer to this squeeze — where the defender's discards do not set up any winners for you — as a **non-material squeeze**.

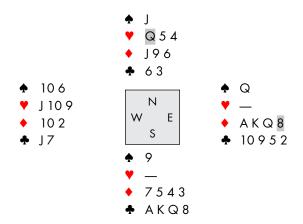
## **Repeated Duck**

The extraordinary deal following, one that was actually played and recorded, illustrates a type of exceptional case that we have not previously discussed.



You win with the  $\triangle$ A as East follows with the  $\triangle$ 8. You have eight top tricks, but you believe East's  $\triangle$ 8 and do not expect the spade finesse to work. If clubs are 3-3 you have enough tricks. If not, you may be able to put a defender under pressure by running your major-suit winners. So you unblock the  $\triangledown$ A and play a spade to dummy's  $\triangle$ K. You cash the  $\triangledown$ K (discarding a club) and the  $\triangledown$ Q; on the latter East discards the  $\triangleright$ 8.

While it is no certainty, if you believe that East has the three top diamonds plus four clubs there is a squeeze. In fact, East is already being squeezed and is throwing away a potential diamond winner. You have reached this position:

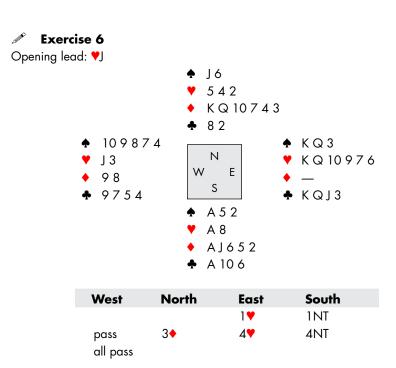


You can now discard the ♣8, the club threat, and hit East with the triple delayed duck: that is, lead diamonds three times to establish the fourth. It is remarkable enough that three ducks were possible; even more remarkable is the fact that the situation could be recognized in time to use it. An example of a double delayed duck, also from actual play, will be presented later.

It should be obvious that this phenomenon, repeated ducks, may occur also in a two-suit strip-squeeze. For a striking example, simply trade the  $\Phi Q$  and the •I in Exercise 5. Now East is busy in two suits only, yet the operation of the squeeze is unaffected, albeit for the overtrick this way.

### The Guaranteed Case: Three Losers

Earlier in this chapter we showed that (provided all other conditions are right) a three-suit squeeze with a fragile stopper always works when there are three losers. This occurs because the defender must keep an exit card in addition to protecting all of the suits, which creates an extra busy card in his hand. The same thing is true of a three-suit delayed duck strip-squeeze. The defender has to guard three suits but also has to keep an extra card in the target suit (else he allows this suit to be set up), and this creates four busy cards. If you have more than three losers, the squeeze may fail.



East overtakes the ♥I with the ♥Q and you duck. East continues with the ♥K, and when you play the ♥A, West plays the ♥3. In view of East's ferocious bidding, there is a possibility that along with six hearts he has all the black-suit honors: if so, you are in business.

You run the diamonds. After Trick 7 East is down to the ♠KO, ♥10 and ♠KQJ. The last diamond extorts a club, whereupon the ♠10 can be set up. Note that the card extracted from East is neither an exit card nor a surplus winner merely a potential winner.

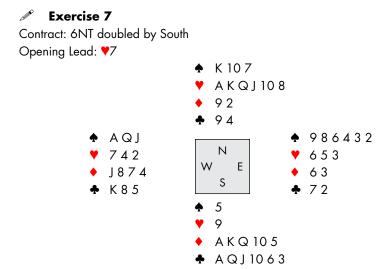
Make sure you understand that the squeeze would have failed if you had taken the first trick. (East need keep only one heart winner: ducking a heart to set up dummy's last heart will do no good since dummy does not have an entry.) Also, on this deal the defense had a chance. It is very difficult for the defender to work out, but if East switches to the •K at Trick 2 he can defeat you; now it will not be possible to duck a club since the defense has too many winners established. (Try it.)

### The Two-Trick Gainer

We know that in an important percentage of cases the pure three-suit squeeze (discussed in Chapter 5) will gain two tricks. The same is true of three-suit stripsqueezes. This may happen in any one of several ways:

- The defender may abandon one of his stoppers, whereupon (under proper conditions) the new winner inflicts a two-suit strip-squeeze. Or, if declarer effects a delayed duck, creating a trick in the throw-in suit,
- The defender may have a fragile stopper in each of the other suits, so that his return gives declarer a second trick; or
- Declarer may have held a two-trick threat in the throw-in suit, so that the duck sets up two tricks at once.

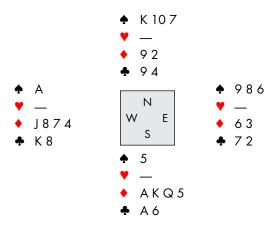
All three of these cases are illustrated, depending on West's discard, by the truly remarkable deal from actual play<sup>1</sup> that follows!



The opponents allow you and your partner to conduct an uninterrupted and undistinguished auction ending in 6NT, which West doubles. You win the opening lead in dummy and take stock. It is likely that West has all the outstanding high cards for his double — the spade honors and the K — and very possibly a diamond stopper as well. If diamonds break you have twelve tricks, so you assume they don't break, in which case you will need a squeeze. You start by running four more hearts, on which you throw clubs from hand, preserving the ♣A and the ♣6. East throws two spades and West throws the ♣5 and the ♠I.

After five tricks it looks as if West really is protecting something in diamonds, so you pitch the ◆10 on the sixth heart as West drops the ♠Q. Assuming you have read the position correctly, this is the ending:

<sup>1.</sup> This deal was played by US international Don Oakie and reported in the Detroit News.



Now the spade throw-in does the work: whether West returns a diamond or a club, dummy has an entry to the  $\bigstar K$ .

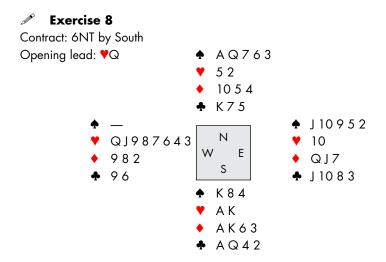
Notice that the throw-in produces two spade winners — case (c) above. However, the second spade is unnecessary, because when West returns a minor he makes the nine of that suit a winner — case (b). In fact, if East had the ♠QIx left instead of low spades, the play and the result after the heart lead would be the same. If West discards a diamond instead of the  $\Phi Q$ , the fourth diamond winner completes the spade-club strip-squeeze — case (a).

It detracts not at all from the sparkling sheen of declarer's performance to remark that this deal is tailor-made for our defensive rule. A glance at dummy shows West that he will have to find three discards. If he throws the \$8, \$5 and ♠Q in that order, it would seem that even this declarer will have his work cut out for him. West has one unknown card — is it the  $\clubsuit$ I or the  $\clubsuit$ 7?

If there ever was a deal that looks constructed, this is surely it. Among many other strange features, we have the two doubleton nines, each playing a vital role! Had the deal been presented without reference to its origin, the reader would say with a shrug, 'All very nice, except that it would never happen.' Anything and everything will happen in bridge, though, if you just play long enough.

Beside cases (a), (b), and (c) listed above, there is a fourth way whereby a second trick may sometimes be gained:

(d) With three losers in hand, declarer effects a delayed duck. This loses a trick and creates a winner, thus in a single stroke reducing the loser count to one; whereupon, granted proper placement of threats and entries, the victim will be subject to a simple squeeze.

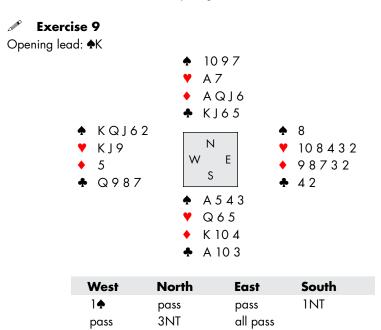


West opens 4♥ as dealer, and you end up as declarer in what looks like a good slam. East contributes the **1**0 to the first trick. You win and play a high spade (it doesn't matter which hand wins the spade) as West shows out. Despite the fact that you now have only eleven tricks, you still have lots of chances. If either minor breaks 3-3 then you can assure the contract by ducking a diamond. We will examine that in a moment.

For the sake of practice, suppose that you had a glimpse at the East hand and saw that he held the \QI and one or two companions. Now you can try your hand at a triple squeeze. Simply play another heart at Trick 3. If East is 5=1=3=4 then he must discard a spade. (If he discards a diamond, the diamonds are good for four winners and the contract. If he discards a club then he will be squeezed in diamonds and spades when you cash the clubs.) If East is 5=1=4=3 then he can discard a club for now, but again when you run clubs he will be squeezed in diamonds and spades. Let's assume East is 5=1=3=4 and he does throw a spade on the second heart. Now you can duck a spade, win the return and squeeze East in the minors on the run of spades. You have achieved a triple squeeze forcing East to throw a secondary spade guard, followed by a duck, followed by a simple squeeze!

The above is all very pretty, but in fact when you have not seen East's hand the correct line of play to follow is to duck a diamond. This works whenever either minor is 3-3. If diamonds break 3-3, then either opponent might win the diamond trick. You win the return and cash your remaining red-suit winners. East is almost certainly 5=1=3=4 and will now be squeezed in the black suits. In the unlikely case that East has two hearts then his distribution is 5=2=3=3, and after ducking a diamond you have twelve tricks with clubs breaking. If diamonds do not break 3-3 and clubs do, then East must be 5=1=4=3. After you duck a diamond, East will eventually be subject to a diamond-spade squeeze when you run clubs.

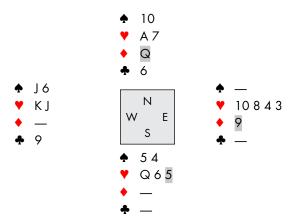
Once East follows to the first heart and spades break 5-0, the slam cannot be made unless one of the minors breaks 3-3 or the \OI falls doubleton. Since East is known to have a heart and five spades and at least four of one minor, he cannot have four of the other minor. Therefore West must be guarding the second minor and there is neither a triple squeeze nor a simple duck to set up an eleventh winner and eventually a squeeze for a twelfth.



You duck the first spade and win the second as East shows out throwing the ◆2. Since West opened the bidding, it seems safe to give him the ♥K and the •Q along with the top two spades. If his clubs are exactly Qxx, you have ten top tricks. Even if the club finesse were to fail (surprisingly), you would still have nine tricks since the defenders cannot get West in to cash the spades. You are playing matchpoints, however, and you would like to take as many tricks as possible.

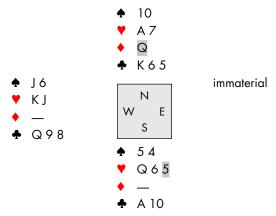
You decided to win the second spade because if clubs were 3-3 you would be able to make eleven tricks on a throw-in. You finesse the club through West, and when that works you play the AK. If the suit breaks 3-3, you run all your minor-suit winners. West must keep two hearts and so will be able to hold only one spade in the three-card ending. You can then throw him in with the spade to lead away from the ♥K.

Suppose clubs do not break, though, as on the actual layout above. No harm is done by winning the second spade and it is possible that you can make ten tricks anyway. Suppose you proceed along the same lines. When you see clubs don't split, you play your diamond winners to arrive at this five-card ending:



When you lead the last diamond, West must hang on to his 49 (if he doesn't, playing the 46 produces another overtrick for you — try it). However, whether he discards a heart or a spade, you can still make a tenth trick, exiting to West with a spade if necessary and endplaying him in hearts.

Wait, though — is there a way to take eleven tricks even if West started with four clubs? Suppose that you play a club to the jack at Trick 2 and then run diamonds before playing any more clubs. If clubs are 3-3 West may throw clubs, but that is not a problem. If clubs are 4-2 West will not be able to throw any clubs (if he does you will arrive at the same ending discussed earlier, just as though clubs had been 3-3 all along). This is the situation as you lead your last diamond:



If West throws a spade you can duck a spade to him, setting up a spade winner in your hand and endplaying West to give you another trick in clubs or hearts. If West discards a heart instead, you cash both hearts: now if he throws a spade you can duck a spade to set up your eleventh winner, while a club discard gives you another trick immediately. Finally, a club discard gives you three club tricks: you cash them, arriving at our familiar three-card ending where West has only one spade, with which he gets endplayed.

Notice that playing even one more round of clubs after the club finesse destroys your communications for this strip-squeeze (try it). As it turns out, this line works equally well when clubs are 3-3, since it does not matter whether you play diamonds or clubs first in that case. It is therefore clearly superior to the first approach we considered.

What happens if you duck the spade at Trick 2? You do establish a standard triple squeeze with the  $\clubsuit 5$ , the  $\triangledown Q$  and the  $\clubsuit 6$  as threats. However, this squeeze will not repeat because West can throw his club stopper on the squeeze card (the last diamond), so you will gain only one trick. Try it yourself.

So we see that winning the second spade trick, followed by taking the club finesse and cashing diamond winners, will produce eleven tricks on the one assumption that West's opening bid was reasonable. We have already seen that in a two-suit squeeze, two losers may be better than one. Stepping up the losercount as usual, we should expect to find that, in a three-suit squeeze, on occasion three losers may be better than two. This deal illustrates that fact.

## The One-Loser Triple Squeeze

We know that a standard triple squeeze matures when declarer still has two losers remaining. It might seem that a one-loser triple squeeze would be merely equivalent to a simple squeeze: if the defender is unable to maintain his fences on two fronts, what matter whether or not he is busy on a third?

The above generalization, plausible on the face of it, will not stand inspection. (It would hold, of course, in all cases where a simple squeeze was actually established or establishable.) The fact is that the one-loser triple squeeze has many applications. Some of these will be presented in the next few pages; but the most useful of all must be deferred to Chapter 7, where we shall find that this squeeze is the very backbone of a large family of highly important end plays.

There is good reason to feel sure, in advance of any investigation, that the one-loser triple squeeze will be useful on occasion. The standard (two-loser) squeeze is completed by the last Free winner. Here, with only one loser, the squeeze will occur one trick earlier, on the next-to-last Free winner, which opens up another space in declarer's hand. Anyone who has developed the slightest feeling for squeeze play knows without being told that this extra degree of freedom is bound to be a lifesaver in some cases.

#### Exercise 10 Contract: 7NT by South Openina lead •10 ♠ K743 AQ962 AJ73 96 J 10 8 2 Ν 7 108543 Ε 109863 K 7 4 S 108652 AQ5 ΚI Q 5 2 AKQJ9

You win the opening lead with the ◆A and note that thirteen tricks will be easy if the suits divide. You start by unblocking hearts, playing the ♥K and the ♥J. On the second heart West throws the ◆3. You cash the ♠A and two clubs, but East discards the \display 4 on the second club.

With hearts and clubs both known to break badly, you now have only twelve top tricks. If spades are 3-3 you are still home, but if not you will need a squeeze. What if East is guarding spades? Then there will be no elementary squeeze on the hand: no spade-heart squeeze for lack of U, no heart-diamond squeeze for lack of **E**, and no spade-diamond squeeze because it is impossible to cash the Free winners without destroying E. The one-loser triple does work, however: East will perish on the next-to-last club winner, at which stage dummy still has an idle card. The deal is unusual in that declarer has no solid suit.

If you take this line, though, and it turns out that West is guarding spades, then by Trick 6 the contract can no longer be made. Once you have cashed the second club, the club-spade squeeze against West fails. If you cash the  $\Phi Q$  first and then cross to dummy on a spade to cash the heart winners, then **E** fails; in the alternative, you end up blocking the spades for the same result. This is true even when West has the •K along with the spade and club guards. Since you must either cash the clubs or refrain from doing so, on this deal you have to make a decision about the lie of the cards and then play for the appropriate squeeze. The odds seem to favor the actual layout, with spade length in the East hand. This is because if West started with four spades, he has only one diamond left meaning that East signaled with the •7 at Trick 1, despite having a higher spot card available.

#### Exercise 11 Contract: 6NT by South Opening lead: 49 5 AKQ105 AQJ1063 986432 AQJ Ν 653 742 Ε 63 1874 S 7 2 K 8 5 K 107 AKQJ108

This is the same deal as Exercise 7, rotated for convenience. We have, however, a different declarer, and the outcome may depend on the opening lead. A club lead beats the contract but the case of present interest arises when a spade is led. East wins with the ace, and if he carelessly returns a spade, you can test diamonds. When East turns up with the diamond length then a spade-diamond simple squeeze is easy to execute. No great acumen is required of East, however, to see that the only possible winning return is a heart, because this cuts declarer's communications. It is now impossible to cash the winners in either minor suit and then return to hand, and therefore there is no spade-diamond or spade-club simple squeeze. Of course, the diamond-club squeeze fails because both threats are in the lower hand. However, the one-loser triple runs like a clock. When you run the hearts East is squeezed in three suits. (Try it.)

It is interesting to note that if you throw all of North's clubs away, even the \*A, you still make all the remaining tricks. East is caught in a repeating squeeze with the \*9 as the club threat. This is a case of two losers being not better than one, but just as good.

One important difference between Exercises 10 and 11 may have escaped your notice. In Exercise 10, the squeeze card (the next-to-last club winner) extracts dummy's last idle card, so that on the last club declarer will have to discard one of the threats; in Exercise 11 the North hand still has an idle card available for play on the last heart.

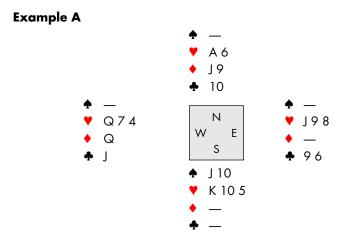
At double-dummy this distinction would be trivial; in actual play it may be vital, in this way. When declarer has to throw a threat card on the last Free winner, as in Exercise 10, serious ambiguity may still be present (though not, of course, in that particular deal). When the extra idle card is available, as in Exercise 11, the luckless victim will have been squeezed twice before declarer has to make up his mind, and the danger of ambiguity is usually nil. Compare

Exercises 7 and 11 to see the point more clearly. In Exercise 7 we saw that farsighted discarding by West will give declarer the meanest kind of guess, with the odds probably against his guessing right. In Exercise 11, however, what if East does embark on a career of deception by discarding the \$8 and the \$5, in that order? That last heart hits the table, dummy discards an idle diamond and what is East to do now?

It is a nice exercise (which we shall leave for the reader) to write out the conditions under which that extra idle card will be present.

## The Simple Guard Squeeze

Suppose all conditions for a simple squeeze are present except that **E** is lacking. The victim may have to keep certain cards in a third suit to protect his partner against a finesse. In that case, the third suit may provide a needed entry.



In this diagram, you have two threats against West, the ◆I and the ◆10. You only have one loser. If you could somehow play hearts and spades and still have an entry to dummy then West's remaining two cards would be busy. You lack an entry, however — no E. Now the heart suit comes into play. West is actually squeezed in three suits because he must keep \(\forall \)Qx to prevent you from taking a heart finesse against East.

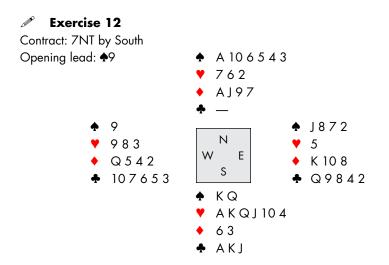
On the AI West can discard a heart, but the A10 ruins him. Note that East's ability to help in hearts provides West with an extra idle card, because his VQ has to be kept only once guarded. It follows that this triple squeeze pinches on the last Free winner. This type of one-loser triple squeeze is called a guard squeeze, for the obvious reason that one defender 'guards' his partner against a finesse. More precisely, it is a **simple guard squeeze**, because only one opponent is squeezed. (However, since one opponent is responsible for two suits and carries half the load in a third, perhaps it should be called a 'two-anda-half-suit squeeze'.)

There are only two simple guard squeeze positions that rate to be called typical, or standard. In the following definitions, South is assumed to hold the squeeze card.

Type 1: East is the defender. The conditions for a simple squeeze exist except that North has no entry in either threat suit. The North hand holds a finessing combination in a third suit which can be established unless East retains certain cards. This squeeze will fail unless South has a winner remaining in his own threat suit when the squeeze is reached.

Type 2: West is the defender. The conditions for a simple squeeze exist except that North has no entry in either threat suit. The North hand holds a winner plus a small card in a third suit, and West must retain certain cards in that suit to protect his partner against a finesse.

It would seem that the guard squeeze possibility is especially easy to overlook. When all conditions for a simple squeeze are present except that **E** is lacking, do not fail to look for the possibility of an entry in that third suit.

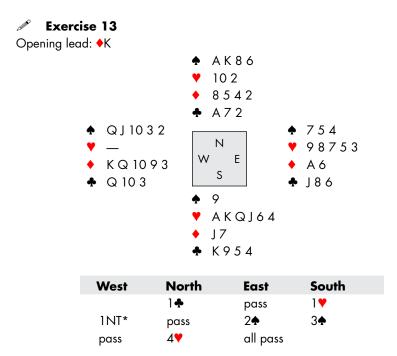


You win the first spade with the AK and cash the Q, but West shows out, throwing the \$\ddagger\$3. You have twelve top tricks. There are several simple-squeeze prospects, but for one reason or another all will fail. For example, you might have the threats for a club-spade squeeze against East but you will have no entry to the North hand after you cash the Free winners. You might have threats in spades and diamonds against East but a squeeze based on those suits fails because you lack **U**. Check the simple squeezes yourself.

However, East is likely to have at least one high diamond, since West might have led diamonds otherwise. If that is the case and East also has the  $\mathbf{A}Q$ , he is in the hot seat right now. When you start to run hearts, East can part with two clubs and a diamond in comfort. On the next heart, in practice East would probably abandon clubs hoping West had a club stopper — but even if East throws a diamond on the fifth heart, what will he throw on the sixth?

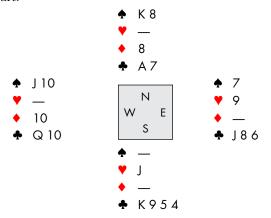
A better line of play would be to run all the hearts at once, Tricks 2-7, because this might possibly elicit a helpful discard, and cannot do any harm.

Try playing this slam by cashing the two clubs ahead of the last heart. You will discover the truth of the sentence in the definition of Type 1: 'This squeeze will fail unless South has a winner remaining in his own threat suit when the squeeze is reached'. In all such cases as this, if South has no winner remaining in his own threat suit, the number of busy cards held by North will equal the number held by East, and since the North hand has to discard first, it will be squeezed. If South still has a winner in his hand, however, this gives East an additional busy card while making room for an idle card in the North hand.



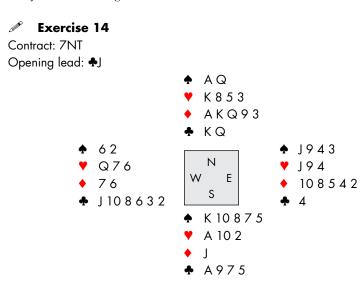
East overtakes with the A and returns a diamond. West wins and switches to the  $\Phi Q$ . While you have ten tricks on top, you would dearly love to make an overtrick for a top score playing matchpoints. West is 5-5 in spades and diamonds, but the spade-diamond simple squeeze is out since neither threat is accompanied by an entry. However, it is worth playing on in case West has the three club honors, in which event the next-to-last heart will slay him. Of course, it is asking a great deal for West to hold all the high clubs, and indeed, that is more than you need. If he holds any two of those cards, he is in the grip of a 'two-and-a-half-suit' squeeze, and will buckle on the last heart.

In any case you start by ruffing a spade (East might have started with 10xx). You then draw trumps, starting low to the ten, West showing out on the first round. You run all the hearts, arriving at this position as you are about to lead the last heart:



When you lead the ♥ West has to throw a club, and you can take the club finesse at Trick 12. There is very little risk involved in taking the finesse because West's last two cards are pretty well known to be a spade and a diamond.

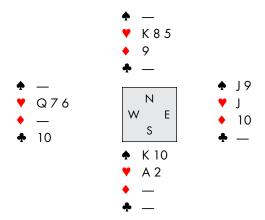
In an earlier book, Squeeze Play in Bridge, I made the statement that 'BLU never squeezed anybody' — yet on this deal it seems that **BLU** did squeeze somebody. Of course, that is not really true, because **E** was there all the time. We just didn't recognize him at first — he looked so different in his new suit.



You win the club lead with the queen. You have twelve top tricks and lots of chances for a thirteenth. You start by playing the \*K and East shows out on this round, throwing a heart. Continuing to unblock suits, you lead a diamond to the ♦], cash the ♣A on which East throws the ♥9 and you throw a heart from the North hand. You then play the ♠A and ♠Q. You play two more top diamonds and West shows out on the third round, throwing a club. You discard a spade and the ♥10. (We will see why you discard the ♥10 rather than the ♥2 soon.)

You have arrived at a decision point. When you play the last diamond you must discard a spade or a club. If spades were 3-3 all along then if you discard a club you have the rest of the tricks. The club discard will also work in some cases where East has given up his card in the heart suit, as we will see, so you discard a club.

If spades break 3-3 you are home, so let's look at what happens when they don't break. If West guards spades the contract will fail (you have no **U** against West). So you assume that East has the spade guard. That being said, East can have only two hearts remaining. This is, in fact, the position:



There is no spade-diamond squeeze against East for lack of **E**, but when you play a heart to the ♥A, the ♥I falls. East was in fact triple squeezed by the ♣A earlier in the hand. You can now see the importance of throwing the ♥10. You needed to unblock the heart suit so that you can finesse West.

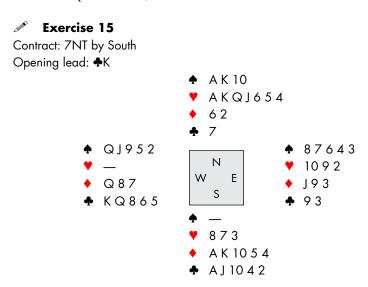
Let's go back to that decision point. If, based on the play to that point, you decide that spades are not breaking, then there is an alternative line that works regardless of the distribution of the heart honors. Let's change the deal and give West the ♥] (or ♥9), trading for the ♥6. Notice that East was already squeezed on the second club at Trick 2 and had to release a heart so that you can now discard the spade threat from your hand. Now when you come back to your hand and play the ♠K, West will be squeezed in hearts and clubs. This line will also work on the layout as shown.

Which is the better line? At the point where you have to make the decision you know that West has six clubs, two diamonds and two spades. There are only three cards unknown. If West has three spades all along, he started with two hearts. East has thrown two hearts already. So if spades break, the hearts will now come down. This means that it is perfectly safe to throw a spade at the decision point: you haven't give up anything. Of course if East started with four hearts and three spades he surely wouldn't have discarded spades, so it is almost certain that the spades are not breaking.

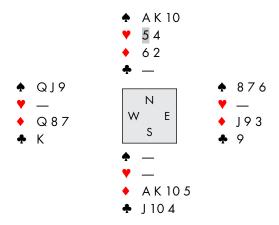
### *In summary*

The only time you need to look for a simple guard squeeze is when all the conditions for a simple squeeze are present except that a necessary entry is lacking (and in addition there is no double squeeze). It is easy to construct layouts where the necessary entry is present and where a guard squeeze is also present; but these turn out to be merely simple squeezes played the hard way. Thus the sphere of usefulness of the simple guard squeeze is restricted to the case stated.

For an exceptional case, look at this next deal.



Clearly, 7 is the best contract, but you are in 7NT and need to make it. You have twelve tricks and need to find a thirteenth. You start by running your heart suit, and West shows out on the first heart, throwing a club. If West holds all the spade and diamond honors, there is a simple squeeze. A guard squeeze is possible if West holds the spades and one of the top diamonds. On the next two hearts you can throw a club and a diamond; the defenders each throw two spades. This is the situation as you lead the second-last heart.



East has no problem with a discard and neither do you, but West must throw a diamond. On the last heart West throws another diamond. However, this doesn't help you. What happened? With all requisites for a guard squeeze apparently present, what went wrong?

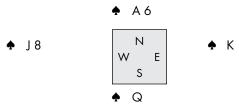
Say that, as here, one player has stoppers in two suits and protects his partner in a third. If declarer has the same number of winners in the guard suit as the number of cards in the suit that must be retained by the defender, the squeeze is there; but if he has more, the excess provides room for extra idle cards in the defender's hand, and the squeeze fails.

In this deal, the remedy is obvious: just cash a diamond at Trick 2. Note, though, that with dummy's •2 traded for a small black card, the grand slam cannot be made. While this exceptional case is not common in play, one should always keep an eye open for it. When you hold two winners and a middle card opposite two small in the guard suit, cash one of the winners before using up your entries.

## The Clash Squeeze

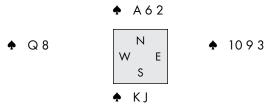
There are some special types of guard squeeze where the victim has to keep a partial guard for other purposes than preventing a finesse against his partner. In a **clash squeeze**, as in any guard squeeze, both defenders have a role to play.

#### Example B



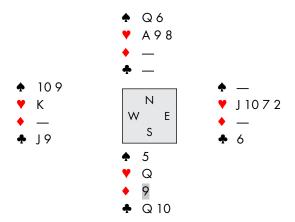
In Example B, East has to keep the  $\bigstar K$  to stop the  $\bigstar Q$  from scoring. The  $\bigstar Q$ is called the **clash threat**. The clash threat, here the  $\mathbf{AQ}$ , would normally fall under the  $\triangle$ A because the  $\triangle$ K acts as a guard forcing declarer to play the  $\triangle$ A from dummy when the  $\mathbf{A}Q$  is led. If the defender can be forced to release the  $\mathbf{A}K$  then the  $\Phi Q$  becomes a winner. However, East by himself cannot guard the spade suit. West has to hold on to both of his spades as well or the  $\clubsuit$ 6 will be a winner.

### **Example C**



In Example C, West must keep both the  $\mathbf{AQ}$  and the  $\mathbf{AS}$  to neutralize South's  $\mathbf{AJ}$ . If the  $\bigstar$ K had already been played, the position would be analogous to Example A.

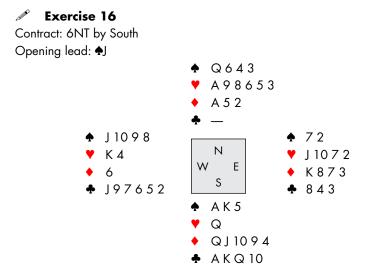
Clash squeezes may be positional or they may work on either defender. Examples A and B are not positional and will work just as well if you switch the East-West hands. Of necessity, the hand opposite the clash threat holds a side entry because otherwise declarer would be unable to disentangle the clash suit if the defender weakened his holding in it. Here is an end position for the **simple** clash squeeze:



South cashes the ♦9, squeezing West in three suits. A discard from either black suit, where declarer has a standard threat, is clearly fatal. If instead West throws the VK, declarer cashes the VQ and AQ to leave dummy high. Note that the presence of the club winner in the South hand gives North an idle card, making the squeeze equally effective if you swap the East-West cards.

You will notice that declarer has both the threats and the correct loser count for a simple squeeze against West in the black suits. He is just unable to execute that squeeze because he cannot cash the VA and then return to hand to cash the diamond.

Normally you attempt a guard, clash or other two-and-a-half suit squeeze because something is lacking, usually E or U, for a simpler squeeze. Here the requirements for a simple clash squeeze are actually higher than those for a simple squeeze. Given the chance, you would have cashed the \(\forall A\) earlier in the play so as to make the position of the VK irrelevant. The simple clash squeeze is thus of limited practical use. A single example of a full deal will suffice:



West leads the ♠I and you win in hand. You have eleven easy tricks and plenty of chances for a twelfth.

You lead the ◆Q for a finesse, which holds. You continue with the ◆J, rising with dummy's ace when West shows out. You concede the next diamond to East, who returns a spade. You win in hand and finish the diamonds, throwing hearts from dummy. If the **V**K does not appear, you test the clubs and then the spades. In practice, since it would save the day if your heart were the ♥ rather than the ♥Q, West will surely abandon the clash suit, allowing you to cash the ♥Q.

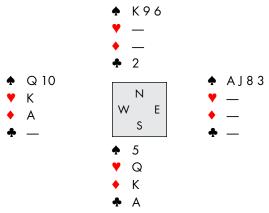
Once West fails to find the double-dummy lead of the ♥K, there is nothing the defenders can do. Note that West does not start with a singleton ♥K: the earlier diamond plays forced him to give up the suit. In a one-loser triple squeeze a defender cannot keep guards in three suits for very long.

Both the guard squeeze and the clash squeeze can appear as a double squeeze. However, the double guard squeeze and the double clash squeeze are closely related to compound squeezes and will be therefore discussed in the next chapter.

## The Mole Squeeze

The **mole squeeze** is another variety of guard squeeze. In the standard guard squeeze the defender has to retain a partial guard in a suit to protect his partner from being finessed, while in the mole squeeze the defender has to retain a card or cards in a suit to keep his partner from being endplayed. The victim also needs to defend against standard threats in two other suits. You may recall that in Chapter 3, I said that a holding of low cards facing AQ9 provides a sure endplay (assuming the defender has no exit cards). In a mole squeeze you might have AQ8 facing low cards — if you can force someone to discard the nine, ten or jack then you will have a sure endplay holding. The mole squeeze is more common than the clash squeeze. With the guard squeeze and the clash squeeze you may have more than one loser, in the mole squeeze you always have at least two losers — otherwise there would be no throw-in element. Here are a couple of layouts.

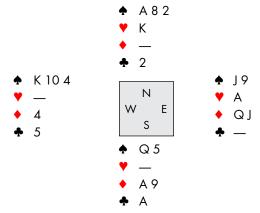
#### **Example D**



South needs two of the last four tricks at notrump. An immediate throw-in would not work. If declarer leads a spade and covers West's card, East can win and exit with a low spade for West to win. Instead, South cashes the A, squeezing West in three suits.

In this layout you may notice an absence both of entries and threats in the upper hand. Such is the nature and power of the mole squeeze. Of course, if one of the standard threats lay opposite the squeeze card, you would need an entry to it.

#### Example E



South needs four of the five remaining tricks at notrump and we assume has reason to place the cards as they are. The A extracts a spade discard from East, whereupon South cashes the A, removing West's exit card (the now redundant ▼K goes from dummy), and advances the ♠O. West covers and is allowed to win the trick. West then has to return a spade, allowing the  $\triangle A8$  to score.

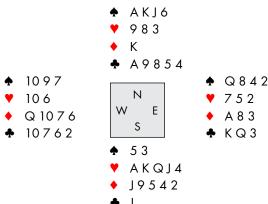
In Example E you have threats split between the two hands. Unusually, you also have the mole threat (the  $\clubsuit$ 8 if you want to think of the threat as a single card) under the victim. I have included this position partly because it closely resembles a possible position for a two-loser guard squeeze. Add a diamond to each hand (the •K to South and low ones to the others) to see what I mean.

The minimal entry and positional requirements for the mole squeeze make it relatively easy to set up. The difficulty lies more in recognition, appreciating how a discard can change a 'not quite good enough for an endplay' holding into the real thing. Sometimes you can execute a mole squeeze almost without trying. Here is an example:

### Exercise 17

Contract: 4♥ by South (matchpoints)

Openina lead: \$10



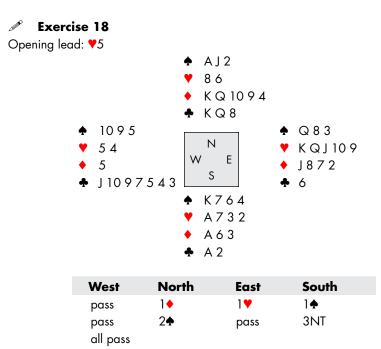
You win West's \$10 in dummy with the \$A. East, who is already alive to the fragility of the defensive spade holding, plays a modest 4. Your first task is to set up some diamond ruffs. East wins the  $\bigstar K$  with the  $\bigstar A$  and switches to a trump. You win, ruff a diamond, cash the A and ruff a club. You then ruff a second diamond and a second club. You notice that both defenders have followed to three rounds of each minor but the •O and •10 are still outstanding.

Turning to trumps, you draw a second round with the king and both follow. Ten tricks are certain now since you already have eight and can score your last trump and the •K. At matchpoints, of course, you are setting your sights higher than that. If the spade finesse works, that is eleven tricks, and if West has either 4-4 in the blacks or 4-4 in the pointed suits, a third round of trumps will produce a simple squeeze for twelve. There is also some chance of a squeeze on East if West has led from ♠Q109 alone and East has the last diamond.

As you lead the third round of trumps, you have in your hand the  $\heartsuit$ Q,  $\diamond$ ]9 and ♠5. In dummy you have the ♠KJ6 and ♠9. Unless West throws the ♠10, you intend to discard the club from dummy. In practice, West has both minors guarded but holds neither the  $\Phi Q$  nor the long spade. Nevertheless, he finds himself squeezed. He releases the \$7\$ but now when you take the spade finesse and it loses, there is a silver lining. East is endplayed, forced to concede the last two tricks to dummy's  $\bigstar$ K6, and you make eleven tricks. The mole squeeze would be equally effective if West's spades were \$1098 rather than \$1097 (or \$987 if that were possible).

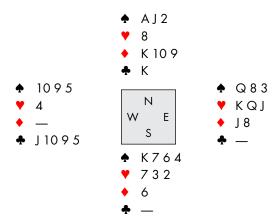
## A Four-Loser Squeeze

We know that sometimes two losers may be better than one (Exercise 7 in Chapter 4 and Problem 5 in Chapter 5), and also that three losers may be better than two (Exercise 9 of this chapter). We shall now demonstrate that, in rare instances, four losers are better than three.



East plays the ♥9. It is unlikely that East has a diamond stopper in view of his announced heart length and West cannot guard the suit, even if he has five. (Of course the suit should be played starting with the ace, to guard against this contingency.) Thus eleven tricks are probably solid, with two chances for a twelfth — the spade finesse or a spade-heart simple squeeze if East appears to hold the  $\bullet$ O. Better duck the first trick to set up the squeeze. Wait, though — if diamonds run and the spade-heart squeeze is on, the two-loser strip-squeeze will serve exactly as well as the elementary form. So, instead, you should win the first trick.

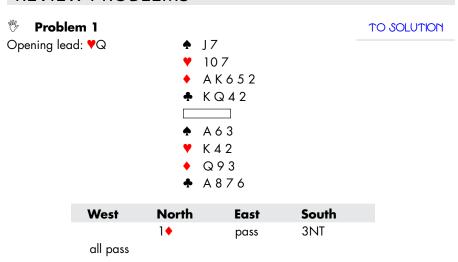
You play two top diamonds and get the bad news. If East guards all three suits, as certainly seems possible on the bidding and play, you have a three-suit strip-squeeze and you can still make eleven tricks. You cash two clubs to arrive at this position:



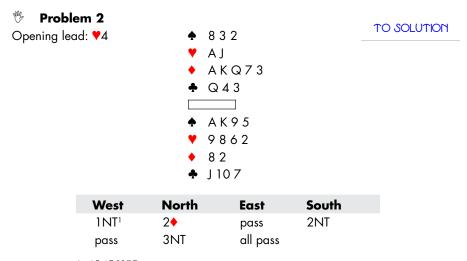
The last club squeezes a heart winner from East, and you can now safely duck a heart. East wins and cashes one more heart winner but then has to give you a trick in one of the other suits. You make eleven tricks because you hung on to those four precious losers. (Play it.) The basic requirement for deals of this type is therefore easily discovered: the hand containing the last Free winner must also still have a card in the enemy's suit, for the throw-in.

Every beginner would win that first trick as a matter of course — why lose a trick you are able to win? It is amusing to note that while here you are not thinking like a novice, you succeed by playing like a novice — winning the first trick!

### **REVIEW PROBLEMS**

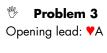


East wins with the ♥A and returns the ♥6, which you duck to West's ♥J. West switches to the ♠10; you play low from dummy, East plays the ♠Q and you win with the A. You try two rounds of clubs but West discards a spade on the second. Both opponents follow to the  $\mathbf{Q}$ . How might you make the contract if diamonds don't break?



15-17 HCP.

Unfortunately, your partnership has abandoned penalty doubles of 1NT. You play the ♥J from dummy and East follows with the ♥3 (count) — now you have nine easy tricks if diamonds break. However, when you play diamonds West discards the \$\displays 5 on the third round. Can you still make the contract?



<b></b>	A Q 3
•	8652
•	A 10 3
*	A Q 3
<b></b>	KJ10642
•	Q 4 3
•	K 8 5 4
•	_

West	North	East	South
1♥	dbl	pass	<b>4</b>
all pass			

The defense starts out with three rounds of hearts. East shows out on the second heart, throwing the ♣2, then ruffs his partner's ♥7 with the ♠8 and returns a spade. What now?





West	North	East	South	
1NT	pass	pass	dbl	
pass	pass	2♠	2NT	
pass	3NT	all pass		

You cover the ♠Q with the ♠K, which wins, and play a diamond. Everyone follows to this trick. How do you proceed to make the maximum number of tricks?

TO SOLUTION



TO SOLUTION

<b>^</b>	6542
T	0 3 4 2
<b>Y</b>	9642
•	K 6 2
•	J 5
<b></b>	A 10
•	AKQJ5
	A I 5

West	North	East	South
1♠	pass	pass	dbl
4♠	pass	pass	4NT
all pass			

A Q 6

You call for dummy's ♠2 and East discards the ♣2. You didn't enjoy the auction much, but here you are. Can you find a way not just to make the contract but actually to collect an overtrick?

# Problem 6 Opening lead: 4J

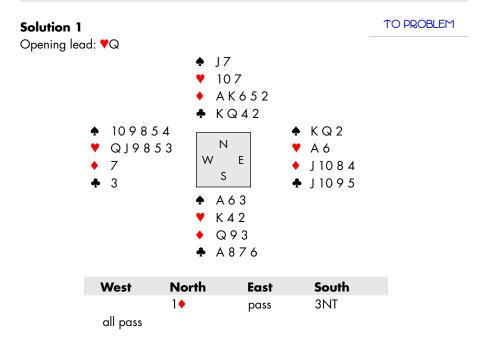
TO SOLUTION

<b>† *</b>	K 9 5 K 9 7 4 A Q 9 5
	10 2
<b></b>	Q
<b>*</b>	AJ862 K6
<b>♣</b>	AKQJ7

West	North	East	South	
	1♦	pass	1♥	
pass	2♥	pass	4NT	
pass all pass	5♥*	pass	6NT	

The opening lead runs around to your  $\Phi Q$ , East encouraging with the  $\Phi 7$ . You play a club to the ten and then a club to the ace, West throwing the \$\diam4\$ on the second club. Next you try the ♥K, on which East discards the ♠2. What now?

### **SOLUTIONS**

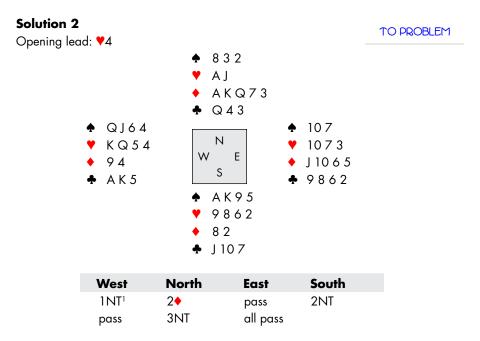


East wins with the ♥A and returns the ♥6, which you duck to West's ♥1. West switches to the ♠10; you play low from dummy, East plays the ♠Q and you win with the ♠A. You try two rounds of clubs but West discards a spade on the second. Both opponents follow to the  $\mathbf{Q}$ .

You have eight tricks. Your ninth trick can come from diamonds, but if diamonds are 4-1 and you duck a diamond, the defense will be able to take too many tricks. There is one chance, however. If East has the diamond stopper then he is 4-4 in the minors. If East has the  $\bigstar K$  to go along with the  $\bigstar Q$  then you have him in a delayed duck triple squeeze. You simply cash the ♥K, and East is going to have to discard a spade or give up one of the minors. He obviously can't throw the  $\Phi Q$  so he must throw a small spade: now the suit is blocked and you can safely duck a diamond if you need to.

It is actually simplest to play the ♥K early to minimize communications problems, and it really can't cost to do so. If you don't, you will need to be careful to keep entries to the South hand so you can cash the VK before you duck the diamond and still be able to get back to either hand afterwards. Perhaps the best plan is to try clubs first, keeping the A as an entry; then, to avoid blocking diamonds, you play a diamond to the  $\mathbf{Q}$  and another towards dummy, ducking if West shows out (after cashing the ♥K of course).

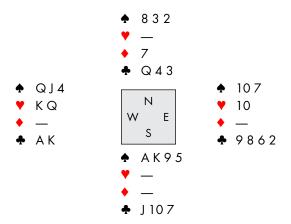
What if you had ducked the second spade? You now have a simple squeeze in the minors on East. Obviously this is a better approach since you do not require a specific spade holding in the East hand. Equally obviously, if you win the second heart the contract is easy to make since you avoid the spade switch, though that line might not be so clever if hearts are 5-3 and West's spades are such that it is hard for him to find the switch. However, the conditions of this problem were that you ducked two hearts and won the second spade; at the table you might have found a better approach.



1. 15-17 HCP

You play the ♥I from dummy and East follows with the ♥3 (count) — now you have nine easy tricks if diamonds break. However, when you play diamonds West discards the  $\clubsuit$ 5 on the third round.

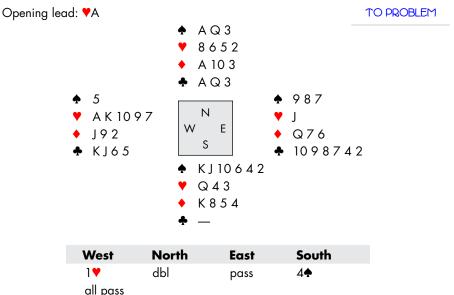
You can still make the contract. You know that West has every outstanding high card and he will come under pressure on the run of the diamonds. Concede a diamond to East — West discards the •6 and you have discarded two hearts so far. East returns a heart and the VA wins in dummy. West's spade discard suggests that he originally had four of them, since he would probably not be quite so willing to come down to the  $\bullet$ Ol doubleton. If so you have a complete picture of the remaining cards:



On the last diamond, you throw a spade from hand and West has no answer. If he discards a heart, you can set up a club winner — he will only have one heart to cash to go along with the defense's other three tricks. Similarly, discarding a top club will do no good. At the table he will probably discard a spade on the chance that you have only the AK remaining. Every card in West's hand is accounted for, though, so you will have no problem cashing the AK to set up your own spade winner.

Make sure that you do not discard a spade from your hand on either the third or the fourth diamond. If you do, when East is in on the fourth diamond he can return a spade. Now West keeps all of his spades, discarding a heart instead. Ultimately West will be able to set up a spade winner to add to the defense total before you can set up a club. Try it. However, assuming you have kept all four spades, you can still make the contract even if East finds the spade return. If West has discarded a spade as described above, then you can simply duck a spade and your long spade will be your ninth trick. If West has discarded a heart instead, what you do depends upon the size of East's spade return. If it is low (the seven), you duck to make the spade suit safe; then you win West's heart switch in dummy and cash the fifth diamond to squeeze him out of his heart winner. If East's spade is the ten, you can simply win the spade and play clubs. The defense can no longer set up enough winners to defeat the contract.



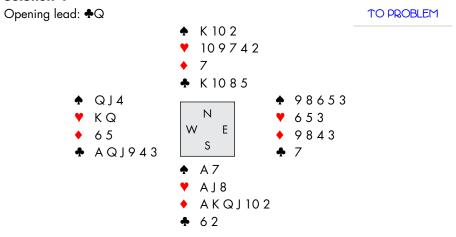


The defense starts out with three rounds of hearts. East shows out on the second heart, throwing the  $\clubsuit 2$ , then ruffs his partner's  $\checkmark 7$  with the  $\spadesuit 8$  and returns a spade. What now?

West probably holds the ♠K, but no heart-club squeeze is possible for lack of **E**. Another possibility is to hope that West holds the •QI, for then a heartdiamond simple squeeze will work. You will cash the A and then run the trumps, discarding dummy's clubs.

Before you embark on this, though, is there a better line of play? The superior diamond threat is the ♦8, not the ♦10. The ♦10 gives you one chance: that West has the ◆QI. Using the ◆8 as your threat, you have three chances: West may hold the  $\bullet$ QI,  $\bullet$ Q9, or  $\bullet$ I9. You cash the  $\bullet$ A and then play all your spades, making sure to discard the \$10 from dummy. In a three-card ending West will have to keep a top club and a heart and therefore only one diamond. Dummy, which has the  $\forall 8, \clubsuit Q$  and  $\spadesuit A3$  remaining, can part with one of the now useless threats against West, retaining the A3. You are now able to cross to dummy on a diamond, dropping West's last diamond (here the ◆I) and finesse against East's diamond stopper.

#### Solution 4



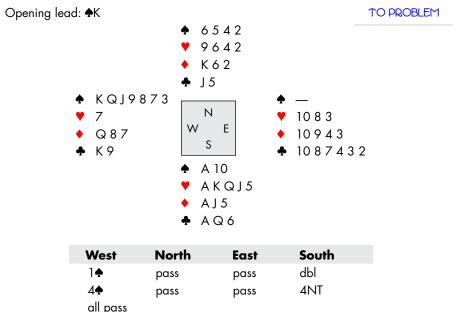
West	North	East	South	
1NT	pass	pass	dbl	
pass	pass	2♠	2NT	
pass	3NT	all pass		

You cover the ♣Q with the ♣K, which wins, and play a diamond. Everyone follows to this trick.

On the bidding West is marked with all of the high cards. You run the diamonds, discarding hearts from dummy. As the last diamond is being played, West is down to:

If West throws a club or a heart, he sets up two more tricks and you make six. If he throws a spade, he can hold you to eleven tricks. The spade discard prevents the squeeze from repeating, as it destroys the entries needed for the second squeeze. Try it.

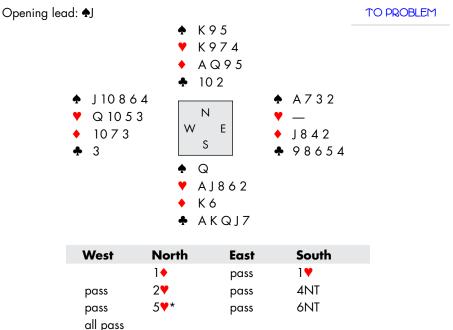




You call for dummy's  $\spadesuit 2$  and East discards the  $\clubsuit 2$ . West is likely to have all of the high cards. If so, you can make 4NT by squeezing West and then endplaying him. You might win the second spade and run all of the hearts. In the six-card ending West will only be able to hold one spade to go along with three diamonds and two clubs. Now you can throw him in with either of the minors: he can cash a spade but eventually will have to give you a trick in the other minor.

Your goal was to make five, though. So win the first spade and run all of the hearts. West will have to discard a spade on each of the last four hearts. You hold on to all of the spades in dummy and discard a club instead. Now you play a spade. If West cashes his second spade, dummy's last spade is good and West is still endplayed — forced to lead a minor and give you the eleventh trick. If West chooses not to play a spade but instead returns a minor, you cash the winners in that suit, cross to dummy with the •K if necessary, and play another spade, endplaying West a second time.

#### Solution 6



The opening lead runs around to your ♠Q, East encouraging with the ♠7. You play a club to the ten and then a club to the ace, West throwing the \$4 on the second club. Next you try the  $\forall K$ , on which East discards the  $\spadesuit 2$ . What now?

If East had taken his ♠A at Trick 1, you would have an easy spade-heart squeeze on West. Now you need something more exotic. Cross to hand with the •K and run three more top clubs, forcing West to discard a diamond on the last one, after which dummy can let go of a spade. Finally, the VA forces East to throw his last small spade, and come down to the ♠A and ♦ 184. After that, you play the A, and exit with the K to endplay East in diamonds. A mole squeeze.

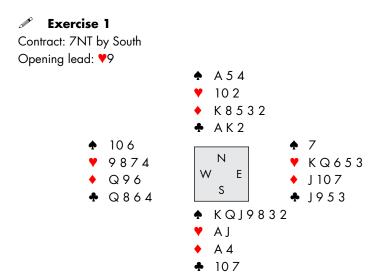
#### CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY

- The three-suit fragile-stopper strip-squeeze: With rare exceptions more than three losers are possible but if the victim has an exit card you will need to rectify the count (to two losers). All three threats and the squeeze card can lie in the same hand.
- The three-suit delayed duck: **CLuE** applies, but (with rare exceptions) the squeeze can operate with more than three losers. Repeated ducks are possible.
- Just as in a pure three-suit squeeze, the three-suit strip-squeeze may gain two tricks in several ways. For example, declarer executes a delayed duck to establish one trick, and the defender may now have to lead away from a fragile stopper to concede a second trick.
- The one-loser triple squeeze is a frequent component of compound squeezes (see Chapter 7). It may also be a useful end position in a standard squeeze situation; the squeeze occurs one trick earlier (on the next-to-last Free winner), and thus frees up a space in one of declarer's hands.
- A simple guard squeeze is a type of triple squeeze (it can be regarded as a two-and-a-half-suit squeeze). The victim has to guard two suits and has to retain a card or cards in a third suit to prevent a finesse against his partner. In a typical guard squeeze position, the two-suit squeeze fails because **E** or **U** is lacking, but the potential finessing position in a third suit exerts extra pressure on the victim.
- A clash squeeze is a type of two-and-a-half-suit squeeze where the victim has to keep a partial guard to protect against declarer cashing the clash threat — the clash threat itself being a card which would otherwise fall under declarer's own winner in the same suit.
- A mole squeeze is a type of guard squeeze where the victim is squeezed in two suits and also must retain a card or cards in a third suit to prevent his partner from being endplayed.

#### CHAPTER 7

# THE COMPOUND SQUEEZE

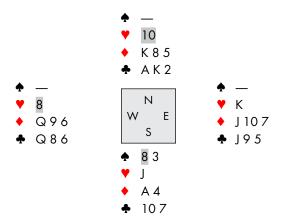
Let us introduce our subject by looking at a deal.



East plays the ♥Q and you win with the ♥A. Twelve tricks are assured, but can you make thirteen? A player who is skilled in elementary squeeze play sees almost at a glance that a squeeze is available if diamonds divide unevenly and East has the ♥K. If East has the diamonds, then there is a heart-diamond simple squeeze; if West has the diamonds, there is a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

Right: ٧J Left: **\$** Common: **+**2

What if diamonds split 3-3, though? As long as East holds the ♥K, a squeeze can still be inflicted against any adverse distribution or defense whatsoever; a proof of this statement will be forthcoming presently. Declarer starts by cashing five top spades to arrive at this position:



Now he leads the sixth spade, on which West and North can discard hearts. Let us look first at East's problem. He sees that West must have both minor-suit queens, for with either of those cards declarer would simply claim. After six tricks, East knows that declarer holds two more spades, the  $\forall$  and the  $\triangle$ A. If his other three cards include two small diamonds, leaving West with only Qx in that suit, a diamond discard will be fatal. However, since West surely still has at least  $\Delta$ Qxx, two of East's clubs may be safely thrown. He therefore releases the 5.

Now to declarer's problem. Each adversary can be trusted to know that the closed hand has no winners remaining except the A and a spade. Therefore, a defender with four diamonds would see that one could be safely thrown: the fact that no diamond has appeared is strong evidence that the suit is 3-3. If so, East can no longer guard clubs, which means a different Type R double squeeze is in operation:

Right: **۷**J Left: **4**2 Common: **\\ 8** 

Cash the ♣AK, return to the ◆A and play the last spade — quick, Watson, the needle!

Returning to my earlier claim, it is the easiest task imaginable to prove that, provided East holds the **V**K, there is a squeeze that will prevail against any distribution or any defense. We have already noted that an elementary squeeze exists if diamonds are not 3-3; the same will be true, of course, if clubs are 6-2 or worse. The remaining case is where both minor suits are guarded by both adversaries.

East is now busy in three suits. We know that a one-loser triple squeeze pinches on the next-to-last Free winner. On the sixth spade, East will perforce surrender his stopper in either diamonds or clubs. Instantly the position becomes a typical double squeeze, with the last spade as the squeeze card, just as if East had never held a stopper in the suit that he has now abandoned.

If East had yielded in diamonds instead of clubs, the only difference would have been in the sequence of winners: one club (having two winners in a suit in the two-threat hand in a Type R double squeeze is rarely necessary), then the •AK and finally the last spade.

As always in such spots, let me offer a word of caution. Even with the existence and efficacy of the squeeze guaranteed, declarer's success is not guaranteed, because he may (sometimes with good excuse) go wrong at the fork and misguess which suit has been abandoned by East. More about this as we go along.

### The Compound Squeeze

The broad class of squeezes to be discussed in this chapter may be described in general terms as follows:

- Declarer has only one loser remaining.
- He holds threats in three suits.
- One of these threats is guarded by only one defender and the threat lies over the stopper.
- The other two threats are guarded by both adversaries.

Under these conditions the defender holding three guards will be forced to abandon one suit on the next-to-last Free winner (a one-loser triple squeeze). This creates a typical double squeeze, assuming the necessary entry conditions, no matter which suit has been abandoned under the pressure of the triple squeeze.

Since this play is a 'compound' of a triple squeeze followed by a double squeeze, let us name it the **compound squeeze**. A triple squeeze is equivalent to three simples; a double squeeze consists of two simples. Perhaps we should say, then, that a compound squeeze is a quintuple squeeze?

We know that ambiguity, uncertainty as to what has happened when the fork is reached, may in some cases cloud the picture. It is probably true that this trouble is more serious in a compound squeeze than in the elementary forms, for an obvious reason: it is seldom possible to probe deeply into the adverse holdings in the two doubly-defended suits. Nevertheless, in the great majority of cases, declarer can by careful reasoning make his decision with a good chance of success. And even a 50-50 guess is better than nothing!

### Two Fundamental Requirements

Let us begin by pointing out two conditions that are necessary for every compound squeeze. The first has been noted already, but is worth restating for emphasis.

Condition 1: In every compound squeeze, declarer must hold one threat guarded by one defender only, with the threat lying over the stopper.

Condition 2: In every compound squeeze, each of the doubly-guarded threats must be accompanied by an entry in its own suit.

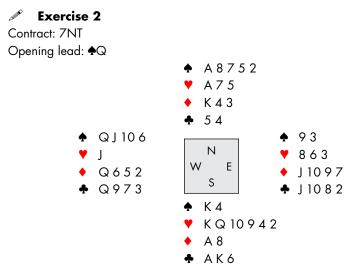
#### **Proof of Condition 1**

After the triple squeeze, the hand must have reduced to an ordinary double squeeze. We know that in every double squeeze at least one threat must lie over the stopper (U). If all three threats are guarded by both adversaries, each can retain his stopper (or stoppers) against the threat (or threats) lying to his right, and the double squeeze will fail. Therefore, there must be one singly-guarded threat, and that threat must lie over the stopper.

#### **Proof of Condition 2**

We know that in every double squeeze, the Common threat must be accompanied by an entry in its own suit. Here, however, either of the doubly-defended suits may become the Common suit, according to the discard on the triple squeeze: therefore, each of the two threats must be so accompanied.

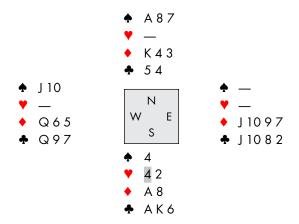
Of course Conditions 1 and 2, though necessary, are not sufficient. That is, without those conditions there is no squeeze; with them, perhaps there is a squeeze. The additional requisites differ in various cases: the two above (together with the one-loser requirement) are the only ones applying to all compound squeezes.



You win with the ♠K and lead the ♥K, both defenders following. Now you have twelve top tricks, and you also have threats in the other three suits.

The best chance is to assume that West holds four spades: then Condition 1 is in force. In other words, only one defender (West) can protect against one of the threats (spades) and that threat lies over that defender. Each of the doublyguarded threats (the  $\blacklozenge$ 4 and the  $\clubsuit$ 6) is accompanied by an entry so Condition 2 is satisfied also.

You run off three more hearts to arrive at this position:



On the next heart, West must give up either diamonds or clubs. Now you have a double squeeze with West guarding spades and East guarding whichever suit West chose to discard. However, given your excess of entries, you don't need to worry about the exact position: you can throw a club and a spade from dummy on the last two hearts, regardless of the defenders' cards. This deal is more complex than Exercise 1, in that the double squeeze will be of either Type R or Type C2, at West's whim (R if he abandons clubs, C2 if he abandons diamonds). In another respect, though, it is simpler than Exercise 1, because the entire heart suit can be run off ahead of the fork.

Astute readers will also have noticed that a compound squeeze is also possible if West has the only guard in diamonds rather than spades (although of course this distribution is less likely). It works in exactly the same way as when West has the sole spade guard — try it by moving two diamonds from the East to the West hand, trading them for a spade and a club. However, if the suit solely guarded by West is clubs, the squeeze will not work since the club threat does not lie over West. Try it by moving two clubs from East to West in exchange for a spade and a diamond.

## **Classification of Compound Squeezes**

From now on, let us call the singly-guarded threat the **Basic threat**. This term is introduced not merely for brevity, but also to keep constantly before us the fact that the holding of such a threat is the basic requirement for every compound squeeze. The doubly-defended threats can be called the **Ambiguous threats**. These threats are indeed 'ambiguous' because we do not know which one will be abandoned by the defender who is squeezed in three suits.

Quite evidently, either the two Ambiguous threats will be together in one hand opposite the Basic threat or the Ambiguous threats will be divided between declarer's two hands. This suggests dividing all compound squeezes into two classes; for reasons that will become clear very shortly, we shall designate these as Type R and Type L.

### Type R compound squeeze

If the two Ambiguous threats lie in the same hand, the subsequent double squeeze will be of Type R, and the Basic threat will become the (single) Right threat of the double squeeze.

We can easily see this to be true. A Type R double squeeze is defined as one in which the single-threat hand holds the Right threat. In the double squeeze which will follow the triple squeeze, we know that one of the singly-guarded threats will be the current Basic threat (since it is already singly guarded) and we know that it is the threat in the single-threat hand. We also know that it must lie over the guard, so the opponent who is guarding it lies to the right. Therefore the double squeeze must be a Type R double squeeze. The defender who is being triple-squeezed, based on the suit he abandons, will determine which of the other two threat suits becomes the Left threat and which the Common threat.

### Type L compound squeeze

If the two Ambiguous threats are divided between declarer's two hands, one of them will be accompanied by the Basic threat. The eventual double squeeze may be of Type R or Type C, according to the triple squeeze victim's choice of discard. The Basic threat will become the Left threat in either case — it will lie over the hand that guards it, which will always be to the left of the single-threat hand. Let us call this a **Type L compound squeeze**.

The above is a slight oversimplification, in that certain exceptions are possible. We shall ignore such cases for the time being.

#### The Restricted and Unrestricted Forms

From a different point of view, all compound squeezes may be divided into two classes on an entirely different basis. In every compound squeeze, the triple squeeze is inflicted by the next-to-last Free winner. In all cases the player guarding the Basic threat is triple-squeezed and may pick which of the Ambiguous suits to give up. This choice will lead to two different double squeezes.

In many deals the fork is reached at that point: before making his next play, declarer must decide as best he can which suit has been given up and plan his play accordingly (as in Exercise 1). However, in another large group of positions it is possible to cash the entire Free suit before making the decision (as in Exercise 2). That is, you can continue to play winners while keeping both of the possible double squeezes in play and defer the decision until later.

This leads to two subclasses of the Type R and Type L compound squeezes:

*Unrestricted*: You can continue to play the entire Free suit before deciding on the nature of the double squeeze. The Free suit may lie in either hand, and the entire Free suit may be run off without having to discard anything vital from the other hand. It is only then that you have to decide how to execute the final double squeeze, depending on what the defenders have discarded.

Restricted: You need to determine the nature of the double squeeze before the run of the Free suit is complete (normally when the defender being triple-squeezed is forced to abandon a suit).

The two forms differ in two important respects.

(a) In the restricted form, for the compound squeeze to operate, the Free suit must always lie in the hand that holds only one of the threats; in the unrestricted form, that suit may lie in either hand (proofs will follow later).

(b) In the restricted form, ambiguity is frequently present in some degree, and sometimes the ambiguity is substantial; in the unrestricted form this danger is usually slight, because that last Free winner is a real abrasive. Look again at Exercise 2.

Sorry to have to introduce so much terminology, but if you are to recognize compound squeezes quickly and play them accurately, a knowledge of these classifications — Type R and Type L, restricted and unrestricted — is necessary. A few great experts, by sheer card genius, can think their way through each individual problem as it arises, with no rules to go by; but the vast majority of players, including your author, lack that ability.

With comparatively rare exceptions, all compound squeezes fall into one or another of these four standard forms. Let us proceed to examine the four cases in detail. As usual, throughout the text (but not necessarily in the Exercises), South will denote the hand containing only one threat. Note, too, that in many of the Exercises that follow the defense falters, allowing the compound squeeze to succeed. When there is a successful defense available it will be noted at the end of the Exercise and you will be given another chance to play the deal against perfect defense. Additionally, in compound squeeze play, the defense can frequently choose which suit they want to make the Common suit in the double squeeze. In these cases, there will generally be an opportunity to show both paths.

### Case 1: The Type R Unrestricted Compound Squeeze

Requirements for a Type R unrestricted compound squeeze:

- South holds the Basic threat (guarded by East only), with the Ambiguous (doubly-defended) threats opposite.
- The Basic threat is accompanied by a winner.
- South has an entry in one of the three threat suits.

Note that AKx in the Basic suit opposite a small card can satisfy the second and third conditions since in this case the ace is both a winner and an entry.

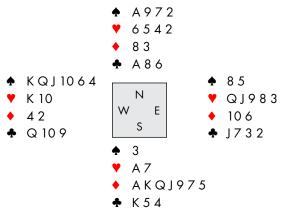
### Play of a Type R unrestricted compound squeeze

The Free suit may lie in either hand, and the entire Free suit may be run off without having to discard anything vital from the other hand. Next, cash the winners from the Right and Left threat suits in the two-threat hand, then cross the table and lead the final squeeze card (the last Right winner).

#### Exercise 3

Contract: 6♦ by South (West has overcalled in spades)

Openina lead: •K

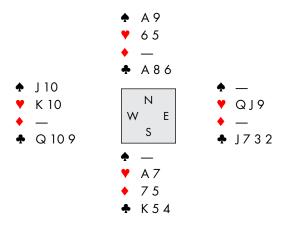


You have eleven tricks and you are going to need a squeeze to make twelve. Suppose you duck the first spade (to rectify the count) and ruff the second spade. (Don't win the second spade with the ♠A — you have nothing that you can afford to throw from the South hand if you do!)

You now have a Type R unrestricted compound squeeze. Let's check the conditions:

- (a) There is only one loser.
- (b) The Basic threat is the ♠9 and the two Ambiguous threats, the ♥7 and the  $\clubsuit$ 5, lie opposite.
- (c) The Basic threat is accompanied by a winner, the  $\triangle$ A.
- (d) North (the one-threat hand) has an entry in one threat suit, the  $\triangle$ A.

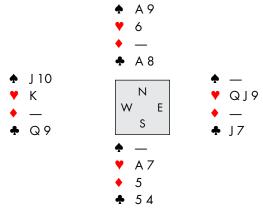
So the spade threat will become the Right threat, with North the single-threat hand. In this type of squeeze, the entire Free suit may be cashed, reducing West to rags and tatters. You will arrive at this position as the second last diamond is led.



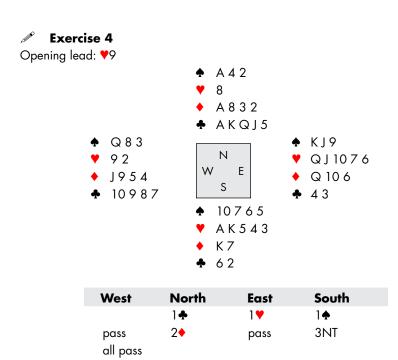
Let's say that West discards hearts on the next two diamonds. You throw a club and a heart from dummy. You will be pretty sure at that point that East has the heart guard. You now have a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

Right: **•**9 Left: **Y**7 Common: **4**5

Can the defenders beat the contract? Suppose that West plays a club at Trick 2 instead of continuing spades. You must win the club in your hand to keep an entry to dummy, and now West can abandon the heart suit. You will arrive at this ending:



When you lead the last diamond from your hand, you have no effective discard from dummy. The best choice seems to be the small heart, but then the double squeeze fails due to a lack of entries. Try it. A similar difficulty occurs if West switches to a heart at Trick 2. This is a very challenging defense, however, and West can be forgiven for missing the needed shift!



You have ten top tricks, assuming clubs break no worse than 4-2. Can you make eleven? A long spade is one idea, but it is going to be very hard to shut out East's hearts completely even if spades are 3-3. Other than that, a squeeze of some sort seems most likely.

East guards the Basic threat, hearts. Let's assume that East and West can both guard the other two suits — that is a fairly likely case. Let's see what happens if you duck the first two hearts (pitching a diamond from dummy) and East persists with a third heart, which you win. On the third heart, West throws a spade and so does dummy.

You plan to run clubs and squeeze East in three suits: East will have to give up either spades or diamonds, setting up a double squeeze. Let's check to see if all the conditions are right for a compound squeeze:

Declarer has only one loser remaining. Declarer holds threats in three suits. One of these threats is guarded by only one defender and the threat lies over the stopper. The other two threats are guarded by both opponents.  $\checkmark$ Each of the doubly-guarded threats is accompanied by an entry in its own suit.

To meet these conditions the threats are:

Basic: **Y**5

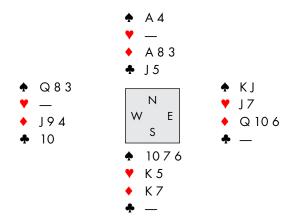
Ambiguous 1: ♠4 (since there is no entry in spades the ♠10 is not

the threat)

Ambiguous 2: **♦**8

This is a Type R squeeze because the two Ambiguous threats lie in one hand. It is an unrestricted squeeze because the Basic threat (hearts) is accompanied by a winner and South has an entry (the  $\bigstar K$ ) in one of the three threat suits.

Let's see what happens when you run the clubs:



On the next club East has to give up a guard in either spades or diamonds. Say East abandons diamonds as you throw a spade. You now have a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

Right: **Y**5 Left: **8** Common: **\$**4

The last club extracts another diamond from East, and you throw another spade from hand. When you cash the A and K, East must give up his spade guard. Now, playing the ♥K squeezes West in spades and diamonds.

What would have happened if East had switched to another suit at Trick 3? As the cards lie, any spade or diamond would do. After the spade switch you have no entry to the ambiguous spade threat and East beats you by abandoning diamonds. After the diamond switch, either you win in hand and have no subsequent entry (clearly hopeless) or you win in dummy and leave the Ambiguous diamond threat with no entry (when East beats you by abandoning spades). For reasons that will become apparent later in the chapter, a spade switch is the better defense.

### Case 2: The Type R Restricted Compound Squeeze

The Type R compound squeeze becomes restricted when the South hand holds only the Basic threat, but the conditions for an unrestricted squeeze are not satisfied. This may happen in either of two ways:

- (a) the Basic threat is unaccompanied by a winner (the more common situation), or
- (b) South has no entry in either of the Ambiguous suits and the North hand holds only one small card in the Basic threat suit.

To understand this, let's go back to the necessary condition for a Type R double squeeze to succeed:

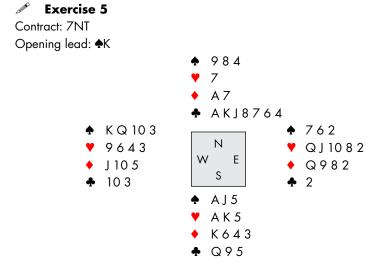
In every Type R double squeeze the last winner of all, which will be from the Free suit or the Right suit, must lie in, and be led from, the one-threat hand.

- In (a), the Right threat is not accompanied by a Right-suit winner.
- In (b), South's Right-suit winner must be used for re-entry.

So to meet the condition for a successful Type R double squeeze, the last Free-suit winner must be reserved as the final squeeze card and the one-threat hand (South) must hold that Free-suit winner. That means that after the triple squeeze, it must be possible to cash North's Right and Left winners and then return to hand to lead the last Free winner.

To summarize, in a restricted Type R compound squeeze:

- South, with the Basic threat, must hold the Free suit.
- After the triple squeeze, you cash North's winners in the Right and Left threat suits.
- You return to hand and lead the last Free-suit winner.



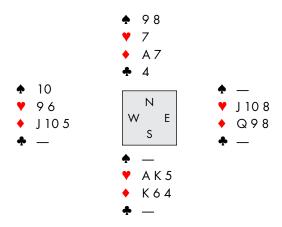
You win the opening lead and count your winners: twelve. The only realistic chance for a thirteenth trick is a squeeze, most likely a compound squeeze. Since the South hand cannot hold all the threats for a double or compound squeeze, or indeed any typical squeeze involving West, the \$\displays 9\$ must be the spade threat. Therefore you must assume that West has the \*KQ10. If West alone guards diamonds, you have a simple squeeze. If East alone guards diamonds, then there is a double squeeze with North as the single-threat hand. The threats will be:

Right: **4**9 Left: **♦**6 Common: **Y**5

If both defenders guard diamonds, you will need to play a compound squeeze with the  $\clubsuit 9$  as the Basic threat. When you run clubs, West will be squeezed on the second-last club and forced to give up either hearts or diamonds. Suppose that these are the East-West discards on the first six clubs:

- 1. East discards the ♥Q, two spades, a diamond and a small heart.
- West discards two low hearts, a low spade and finally the  $\Phi Q$ .

A total of four hearts and four spades have been discarded by the defense during the run of the clubs. This is what you expect the situation to be now:



All the spades have been accounted for but the \$10, which is surely in West's hand since otherwise he would not have discarded the  $\Phi Q$ . East, who threw the ♥Q first thing, probably has the ♥J and ♥10 and is guarding hearts. West must have thrown away his heart guard.

At this point you have a Type R double squeeze with North as the singlethreat hand, and these threats:

Right: **4**9 Left: **♥**5 Common: **♦**6

You cash the top hearts, return to the ◆A and play the last club to squeeze both opponents on the same trick. Assuming East throws a diamond to keep hearts, you throw the ♥5 on the last club; if West also throws a diamond, to keep the  $\spadesuit$ 10, the  $\spadesuit$ 6 takes the last trick.

You may have noticed that there was an alternative way of playing the last six tricks.

At Trick 8 you can play the last club, at which point East will have to give up the diamond guard. You can throw your small heart and West will also throw a heart. Then you cash hearts and West is squeezed in diamonds and spades.

Why do I recommend playing the simultaneous double squeeze, with the Left-suit winners cashed before the last Free winner? There is one very good reason — less ambiguity. Suppose the discards had been the same while West's shape had been not 4=4=3=2 but 4=3=4=2. In this case East would have four hearts and two diamonds left. If you play the last club without having first cashed the top hearts, you are liable to go wrong. When East throws a heart, you are going to think he has given up the heart suit when in fact he hasn't. You will throw away the •6 and the contract with it. You avoid this problem if you cash the heart winners. You will know, when West follows to one heart or two, how many East has left. On the assumption that any missing heart is with East, you cannot go wrong.

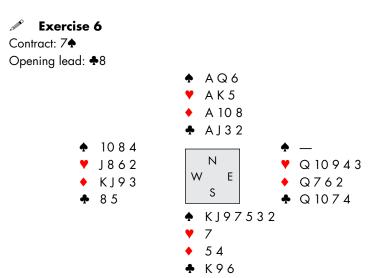
What happens if West gives up diamonds instead of hearts? In this case you once more have a Type R double squeeze, with North as the single-threat hand, but now these threats:

Right: ♠9
Left: ♦6
Common: ♥5

This time you cash the king-ace of diamonds before playing the last club to complete the squeeze.

Again, double-dummy, it would be equally effective to play the last club before cashing both top diamonds. For the same reason as earlier, doing so would not be a good idea at the table: you couldn't be sure whether West had kept two diamonds or one. By cashing the  $\bigstar$ K as well as the  $\bigstar$ A, you give yourself a count on the suit and remove any subsequent guesswork.

Does the fact that you could run the entire Free suit before cashing any top cards in South's suits mean this is really an unrestricted compound squeeze in disguise? No: if you run all the clubs, you have to decide what to throw from the South hand (i.e. which is the Left suit and which is the Common suit) before you have seen a second forced discard from West. In the unrestricted variety, you get to see that extra discard, nearly always resolving which suit West has kept, before you have to make a firm decision.



After the opening lead, it seems almost certain that East has the  $\clubsuit Q$ . It also seems quite likely that West has a singleton or doubleton in clubs, so the  $\clubsuit Q$  cannot be ruffed out (after throwing a club on a top heart). A squeeze seems to be your best chance. After winning the first trick, with the  $\clubsuit A$  of course,

you run off five spades. While it appears that East has the club guard, both red suits are very probably guarded by both opponents. However, with a club entry to your hand and with the \$\displays 9 as the Basic threat against East, you may have a compound squeeze.

By the time you have played six spades, East is in trouble. East must come down to six cards, and to guard all three suits he would have to keep two clubs, two diamonds and three hearts. So East must abandon diamonds or hearts. At the table East will probably abandon diamonds and keep hearts, especially if West has signaled a strong diamond holding during the discarding.

This establishes a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

**4**9 Right: Left: 10 Common: **Y**5

You cash the ◆A and the ♣K and the last trump squeezes each opponent in turn. This deal illustrates Case (b).

The deal also has a peculiar feature, which is worth noting for its theoretical interest. As soon as East trims down to one diamond, South's \$\ddot5\$ qualifies as a threat against West, and the double squeeze may also be played as a Type C2 with these threats (North is the single-threat hand):

Right: **♦**5 Left: **4**9 Common: **Y**5

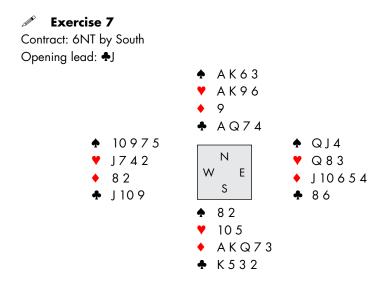
You can easily see how it works as a Type C2 squeeze (assuming East has abandoned diamonds) by playing the seventh spade before cashing the ◆A. You will have to discard the ◆10 from dummy but this is not a problem since the ◆5 is the threat at this point.

Work out for yourself what happens if East throws a heart instead of a diamond on the sixth spade — you will find there is less flexibility.

## **An Exceptional Case**

Suppose that South has a Type R compound squeeze that is restricted because there is no entry in either of the ambiguous suits — case (b). The requirement for this squeeze is that North must hold a small card in South's Basic threat suit. What if that small card is lacking, though? Since South has no entry in any threat suit it would appear that there is no compound squeeze, but there is still one chance.

If the Free suit is evenly divided between the two hands, and if it is possible to win the last trick in that suit in the one-threat hand, that last Free winner furnishes the means of return, with the last Right winner still available as the final squeeze card.

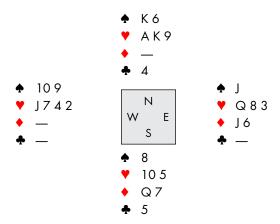


If both minors break kindly, there are twelve tricks after giving up a diamond. If only one of them behaves, you are short one trick and will need a squeeze.

After winning with the A in dummy, you duck a diamond. East wins and shifts to the  $\Phi Q$ , which you win. Next you play the  $\Phi Q$  to test clubs: both defenders follow to the second round of clubs so you are part-way home. How do you continue? If diamonds break 4-3, there is no problem; if East guards diamonds and both defenders guard the other two suits, you may have a compound squeeze.

The North hand has the spade and heart threats and the South hand has the diamond threat (the Basic threat). However, you have no entry to the South hand in any of the threat suits. If dummy held a small diamond instead of a small club you would have a Type R restricted compound squeeze. You can see, though, that on this deal as it stands you can use the Free suit, clubs, as a re-entry to the South hand and then use the winner in the Basic suit (the  $\diamondsuit$ Q) as the final squeeze card.

So you cross to hand with the  $\bigstar K$  and play diamonds. (In order to keep an entry to the South hand you make sure to unblock the  $\clubsuit7$ .) East throws a spade on the third club, and West shows out on the third round of diamonds, throwing a spade. This is the position:



After seven tricks, only three spades are outstanding. If East has two of the three, then West has discarded a spade in order to keep five hearts, which doesn't make sense. So East has abandoned spades and you now have a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

Right: Left. **4**6 Common: **Y**9

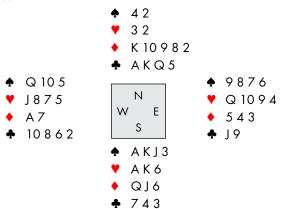
You cash the ♠K and still have the club entry to return to your hand, East being forced to throw a heart on this trick. Now you play the •Q to complete the squeeze. This is still an example of the Type R restricted compound squeeze.

### An Elementary Squeeze Played as a Compound Squeeze

In elementary squeeze play it may happen that only a simple squeeze is present, but with no way to tell whether East or West is to be pulverized. We have previously seen how, granted proper conditions, declarer solves the problem by playing the deal as a double squeeze.

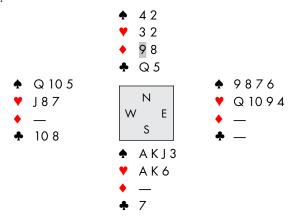
Needless to say, a similar situation may arise at our present level, and in fact is very common. That is: your holding in one of the Ambiguous suits — perhaps in both of those suits — is such that only one defender can guard the suit, but you have no way to locate the guard. Then, granted the requisite conditions, you can play your contract as a compound squeeze.

### **Exercise 8** Contract: 6NT by South Opening lead: #2



You win the club lead and play on diamonds to knock out West's ◆A. West persists with another club, and you win this as East follows with the \*I. At this point you have eleven top tricks. If clubs are 3-3 you have twelve tricks, but the play so far suggests that clubs are 4-2. You also have the possibility of the spade finesse or a squeeze.

The simplest line of play is to run diamonds. West throws a small heart (attitude) on the third round of diamonds, and this is the position as you lead the fourth:



Remember that the defenders tend to try to help each other with either count or attitude signals. On the next diamond East throws the ♥10 (attitude). You throw a spade and West plays the ♥7. At this stage you need to start thinking whether West has trimmed down to a doubleton heart or a doubleton spade. You need to cash both winners in his shorter major before playing the last diamond — playing the last Free winner first is not an option here like it was in Exercise 5.

You play a spade to the  $\triangle A$  and cash the  $\forall A$ . Nothing exciting happens, though the VOI9 are still out. East's earlier signal makes it likely that he still has the  $\mathbf{\heartsuit}O9$  — a further clue is that if East has only one heart left, then he has thrown a heart from three rather than a spade from five. All the indications are that West has given up his heart guard. Accordingly you cash the  $\forall K$ , on which West plays the ♥J and East the ♥9. You play a club to the ♠Q as East throws a small spade, and lead the last diamond from dummy. East discards a spade. There is only one heart missing, the  $\mathbf{VQ}$ , and the play so far indicates that East has it — so now you are home. You discard your heart as West follows. You are now sure that each defender has exactly one spade so you play a spade to the  $\Phi K$ , dropping West's  $\Phi O$ .

The difficult part of compound squeeze play lies in weighing the evidence and reading the position when the crux is reached. If you watch carefully, the defenders' discards will provide some hints.

Let's now look at positions where the North hand holds the Basic threat (guarded by West only), with the Ambiguous threats divided between declarer's two hands. Then the eventual double squeeze will be either Type R or Type C, with the Basic threat becoming the Left threat in both cases.

### Case 3: The Type L Unrestricted Compound Squeeze

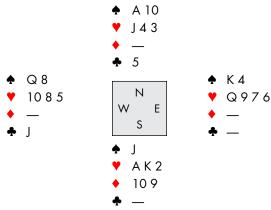
When the North hand holds the Basic threat, with the Ambiguous threats divided, and South's threat is accompanied by two winners in its own suit with small cards opposite, the Free suit may lie in either hand, and the entire Free suit may be cashed. After the triple squeeze, the conditions for both a Type R and a Type C2 double squeeze will also need to be present.

#### Exercise 9 Contract: 7♦ Opening lead: #Q A 1072 143 7 AK532 Q86 K 9 4 3 Ν 1085 Q976 653 8 4 S 876 QJ104 J 5 A K 2 AKQJ1092

You have twelve tricks. Unless the \(\forall \Q\) is doubleton you are going to need a squeeze to make the thirteenth trick. However, you have threats in three suits, and if you can isolate the club threat then you are likely to have some sort of squeeze. After the club lead you have only one other entry to dummy so you must take the club ruff before you leave dummy. Start by cashing the other top club, throwing a spade from hand, and ruffing a club.

After three tricks it seems almost certain that West has the club guard, so that the necessary Basic threat (\$\.\displaystyle 5\) is in place. The Ambiguous threats (the ♠10 and the ♥2) are divided, and South's heart threat is accompanied by two winners. Notice that the ♥J cannot be the threat in that suit, as that would mean all three threats were in the North hand.

You start running the trumps. On the first three rounds, you throw two spades from dummy and East throws the 49. On the next diamond, both defenders throw small spades and you discard a club from dummy, to arrive at this position:



What do you know about the situation right now? West has the ♣J. East has one protected spade honor, and perhaps both. You play another diamond and West throws the \$8; both dummy and East let a heart go. It appears that West has abandoned spades and is still protecting hearts and clubs. East is keeping spades and hearts. So you have a Type C2 double squeeze with these threats:

Right: **1**0 Left: **4**5 Common: **V**2

On the last diamond West throws the ♠Q, dummy the ♥4. East has to throw another heart and now a spade to the ace squeezes West. If West had kept spades instead of hearts, you would have laid down the VAK to complete the Type R double squeeze.

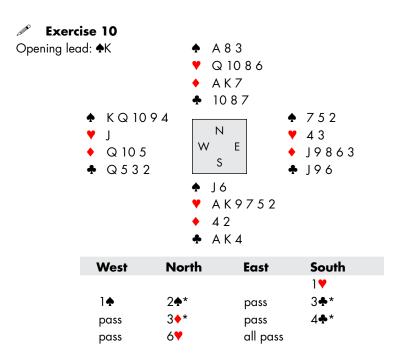
Before we leave this exercise, let's consider what happens if you don't cash the second club honor before ruffing the third club. After all, the Basic threat could be set up equally well by ruffing a club at Trick 2, leaving the \*K in dummy. If it seemed to you that declarer ran a needless risk in cashing the A (clubs might be 6-1), then you should look more closely at the deal, because this is the key play.

You do not have the entries to cash the \*K later and then execute the rest of the squeeze. If West understands compound squeeze play, he will keep his spades, whereupon the Type R double squeeze cannot be executed. With the top club sitting in dummy, East does not get squeezed on schedule since he has an extra idle card and can throw his club, keeping spades and hearts. Once East is not squeezed, there is no subsequent squeeze on his partner. (Play it yourself.)

### Conditions for Both Squeezes

To play this and similar deals correctly, you have to keep in mind the fact that in a Type L compound squeeze, with the Ambiguous threats divided, either a Type R or a Type C double squeeze may eventuate. So call on your knowledge of double-squeeze technique to determine a sequence which will keep both types in play.

In a Type R double squeeze, if South holds neither a Common winner nor the last Left winner, then all the Left winners must be cashed while South still has a Free- or Right-suit entry, in addition to the final squeeze card. This means, in Exercise 9, get rid of that Left winner — the ♣K!

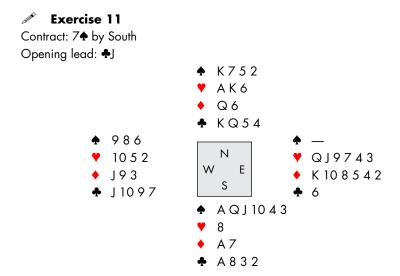


You need to find a twelfth trick somewhere, almost certainly via a squeeze. Since you will not be able to duck a spade later because West will play a third round to eliminate the threat, you duck the spade lead. East plays a discouraging \$2 on the first trick. A club switch at Trick 2 would change the hand from unrestricted to restricted, which is always undesirable for declarer as we shall see later. So you drop the \$J\$ under the \$K\$ to make it safe for West to continue spades, and he decides to do so. You win with the \$A\$ and start on the trumps. West throws a spade on the second round, and on the third heart both East and West discard spades. On the next three hearts, West throws clubs and East diamonds. Since West has kept diamonds and East clubs, you can now cash the \$A\$K to complete the double squeeze.

## Case 4: The Type L Restricted Compound Squeeze

When the North hand holds the Basic threat (guarded by West only), with the Ambiguous threats divided, and South's threat accompanied by only one winner in its own suit, South must hold the Free suit. The decision on what squeeze to play for must be made after the next-to-last Free winner.

After the triple squeeze, the conditions for both a Type R and a Type C1 double squeeze will also need to be present. The reason why South must hold the Free suit is this: West can always produce a Type C1 double squeeze if he so wishes, and we know that a Type C1 squeeze will fail unless the last Free winner is in the same hand as the Common threat.



You win the club lead in dummy with the \*K to preserve entries to the South hand and draw three rounds of trumps. East throws three hearts. If clubs break 3-2 you will be claiming shortly, but what if West has four clubs? Can the contract still be made? If West has the •K, you could play for a club-diamond simple squeeze. If, however, East has the ◆K then you don't have a double squeeze because the ◆Q and the \$\,\delta\$ (you can't have all three threats in dummy) lie under their respective stoppers: you do not have U, so BLUE fails. For a squeeze that does not depend upon the location of the ♦K to work, you need to be able to use the ♦7 as one of the threats against East. So maybe a compound squeeze would work with dummy's  $\clubsuit 5$  as the Basic threat in clubs (to have it over the stopper).

Since the Basic threat is in the two-threat hand, this is a Type L compound squeeze; in fact, since the Basic threat is now accompanied by only one winner in its suit, this is a Type L restricted compound squeeze. So you will run the Free suit and the decision must be made after the next-to-last Free winner.

You run spades now and West will have a problem on the fifth spade: he will have to abandon a red-suit guard. Suppose he gives up diamonds; in this case you have a choice. If you stick with using the \$\frac{1}{2}\$ as the club threat, you have a Type R double squeeze. The threats would be:

Right: **♦**7 Left: **\$**5 Common: **%**6

While this is not difficult to execute (cash the  $\clubsuit Q$ ,  $\clubsuit A$ ,  $\blacklozenge A$ , and then the last spade), you might like the alternative even better. Using the \$\displays 8\$ in your hand the threats are:

Right: **4**8 **♦**7 Left: Common: **9**6

Since North, the one-threat hand in this variant, has two winners in the Common suit, you have a Type C2 squeeze — usually the easiest double squeeze to execute. Try it.

West can make it harder for you by abandoning hearts. Now you have an RFL squeeze and the tricks must be cashed in that precise order — Right winners (hearts), Free winner (spade) and then Left winners (clubs). The threats are:

Right: **%**6 Left: **4**.5 Common: **♦**7

Exercise 12

You therefore cash the ♥AK, return to the ♣A, cash the last trump and finish with the  $\clubsuit$ O.

What happens if you win the first trick with the A? As before, if West gives up hearts, the squeeze will be RFL. You start by cashing the Right winners, hearts (throwing a club from hand). However, you do not have the communications now to cash the remaining winners in the correct order to execute the squeeze. Try it. If West gives up diamonds, instead, you can still make the contract. You will have, as before, a choice between a Type R and a Type C2 double squeeze. Since there are fewer constraints on the order in which you must cash winners for these double squeezes, they still work without the A as a re-entry.

#### Contract: 7NT by South Opening lead: #3 ♠ K643 A 3 19642 10.5 J97 Q 8 2 Ν J 7 2 10965 W Ε Q8 1075 S ♣ Q8732 ♣ J94 A 10 5 KQ84

A K 3 ♣ AK6 After an aggressive auction where you and your partner only bid notrump, you have arrived in 7NT. Trick 1 is completed by dummy's ♣10, East's ♣J and your ♣K. Your ambitious contract looks a little better when you cash the top two diamonds and the  $\diamondsuit$ Q falls doubleton; at least you now have twelve tricks. The thirteenth must come from a squeeze. How do you continue?

Who has the heart guard? If West does, there is no compound squeeze because the single threat lies under the guard. So you might as well play East for the hearts. You play a third diamond and West discards the \$2.

Some counting is required. From the play in the club suit, you expect that West led from a five-card suit. East started with three diamonds, three clubs and (by assumption) four hearts. You play another diamond to put some pressure on East. If your card-reading is correct, and East were to discard a spade at Trick 5, the double squeeze would be Type R (North being the single-threat hand) with these threats:

Right: **†**6 Left: Common:

The sequence of cashing winners would be first the hearts and the  $\triangle A$ , then the ♠K and the last diamond.

Alternatively, a club discard by East at Trick 5 produces a Type C1 double squeeze with these threats:

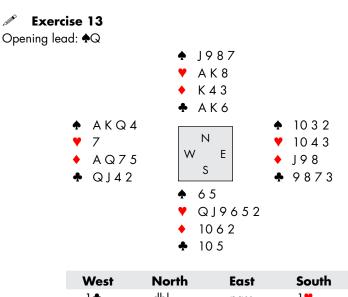
Right: **%**6 Left: **98** Common: **\$**6

You do not always have to play a C1 in the sequence Right-Free-Left, but here you do because you cannot cash the heart winners and return to dummy to cash the last diamond without destroying the vital spade entry. So you play your winners in this order: ♠K, ♥A, diamond and then hearts. (If dummy had a heart more — trade the ♥2 for the ♠3 — it would okay, indeed preferable, to play clubs, the **Y**KQ, the **Y**A and then the last diamond.)

### **Compound Squeeze Defense**

Chances for the defense to kill the squeeze are relatively more frequent in compound squeeze play than in elementary squeeze play because, due to the greater number of conditions required for the squeeze, declarer is subject to attack on more fronts. In the following deals, correct defense, with no double-dummy reasoning, will foil declarer's villainous schemes.

Cover the South and East hands in the next diagram before reading on.



West	North	East	South	
1♣	dbl	pass	1♥	
dbl	pass	2♣	pass	
pass	2♥	pass	3♥	
pass	4♥	pass	pass	
dbl	all pass			

You are defending with the West hand. East plays the ♠2 at Trick 1, showing an odd number of spades (you assume three). So you can see two spade winners and likely another minor winner later. You cash another spade, on which East plays the ♠10, which you take as a suit-preference signal for diamonds; you exit with the ♠A and a low diamond; declarer wins with the ♠K in dummy and partner confirms that he likes diamonds (well, as much as he likes anything with a hand this weak!). Declarer plays off the two high trumps in dummy, ruffs a spade to hand and then runs trumps, East following to the first three rounds. What do you discard on the second-last trump?

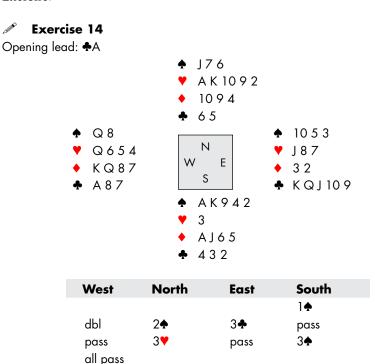
If you discarded your last diamond you have given up the ship. The next heart will complete the double squeeze, since neither you nor partner will be able to guard clubs. You can see that the last heart will force you out of clubs, so the only hope is to assume that East has a club stopper. Then the only possible squeeze is a spade-diamond simple, which will fail for lack of **E**.

Let us take a moment to fit the hand into our general theory. The Basic threat is the ♠J and the Ambiguous threats are divided. It is a Type L compound squeeze, but with the fatal flaw that the diamond is not accompanied by an entry. So if West keeps the ♠Q, making the ♠10 the Common threat, the double squeeze fails.

Note that declarer could have made your task harder by returning to hand with a trump rather than a spade ruff. You would then have been squeezed on the

fourth round of trumps rather than the fifth and would have to abandon clubs at that point. You would need to hold on to both your spades to stop declarer from ruffing out the suit.

Again, cover the South and East hands if you plan to work through the next Exercise.



You are West, defending 3♠ by South. You lead the ♣A and partner plays the ♠K. You continue with another club to partner's ♠9. Partner switches to the  $\bullet$ 3, and you win with the  $\bullet$ Q. Hoping that the switch is from  $\bullet$ Jxx, you continue with a low diamond. Unfortunately, dummy's ◆9 wins as partner follows with the ◆2. Declarer plays the top two spades and a third spade to the ◆J as you throw a heart. Then comes a diamond to the ace as partner throws the \$10, which suggests that declarer has the remaining small club. Now declarer plays the ♠9. At this point you can count that declarer has nine tricks — five spades, two hearts and two diamonds — so your job is to hold declarer to +140. What do you discard?

There is no point in discarding a club. You will have to give up the heart suit anyway on the next spade, so it cannot be right to discard a club now. You can use this as a general rule in similar situations.

**Rule:** there is no point in abandoning one of the doubly-guarded suits and then abandoning the other on the next trick.

You might as well give up the suit that gives you two discards. If you do discard a club on the actual layout, declarer will have a Type C2 double squeeze (North is the single-threat hand) with these threats:

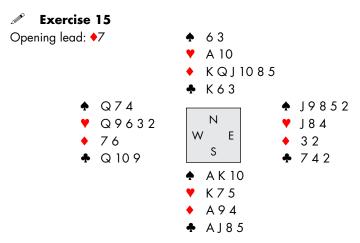
Right: ◆J

Left: ◆4

Common: ▼10

Looking back, a better defense would have been for East to continue with a club at Trick 3, setting up a trump winner and beating the contract. After the diamond shift, 3• is cold if declarer rises. After he ducked, you still had time to play a club. Well, at least you prevented the overtrick.

From declarer's point of view, in this type of Type L Compound Squeeze there are two flaws. One is that the Basic threat, the •J, lies under the guard, the •K. The other, arguably more serious, flaw is that the Ambiguous club threat has no entry. Once West throws away the •7, the squeeze can work.



West	North	East	South
			1♣
pass	1♦	pass	2NT
pass	4♣*	pass	4NT*
pass	5♣*	pass	5♠*
pass	7NT	all pass	

West has obviously made a passive lead. Declarer has twelve tricks and he could simply take the club finesse for an extra trick. However, there is no rush, and there are several other possibilities. If West holds four clubs, then he has the only club guard and there will be a compound squeeze with these threats:

Basic: ♣6
Ambiguous: ♥5 and ♠10

Since the Basic threat, the \$6, is alone, this will be a Type R compound squeeze. Indeed it will be Type R unrestricted, because there is a winner (the \*K) with the Basic threat, and the North hand has an entry in another threat suit with the ♥A. On the second-last diamond South will have pitched down to two clubs, and West will have to give up either hearts or spades. In either case a successful Type R double squeeze matures. You can see how this works by switching the ♣2 for the **\forall 3** in the diagram.

If East solely guards spades then there will be a Type L compound squeeze using spades as the Basic threat, although this seems less likely. However, in either case it is safe to start by running diamonds and this might clarify things and he can always decide to finesse in clubs later. So declarer starts playing off diamond winners.

Let us now look at the situation from East's point of view. East realizes that he will have to make four discards on the run of the diamond suit. It is best to plan them early. He can count twelve top tricks since declarer has all the remaining aces and kings. Partner has to have three queens, though, or declarer would have thirteen tricks and too many high-card points.

East must keep the ♥I to prevent a first-round finesse of the ♥10; he should also keep three spades in case West has only  $\mathbf{\Phi}Qx$ , but his main job is to keep a tight grip on those power-packed clubs. On the run of the diamonds, East must hold on to all three clubs and the \(\forall \), which means he can keep three spades as well. West meanwhile only needs to keep three clubs for as long as South does, which means he can protect both majors by retaining the same length in each one as South. If East discards a club, however, then West is left to guard clubs alone and declarer ends up with the same squeeze as when West started with four clubs (discussed above).

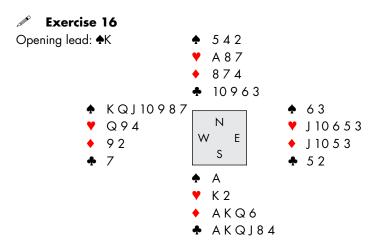
### Compound Squeeze Defense — Key Points

The following, while it is only a small fraction of what could be written on the subject, does list a few cardinal principles of defense which should always be kept in mind.

- Point 1. Do not try to hang on to a suit that you will surely be forced out of, at the expense of surrendering a possibly valid stopper in another suit. As we advised earlier, pick your poison and swallow all of it down!
- Point 2. Putting Point 1 into practice normally means that you retain your stoppers in suits held on your right and in suits for which declarer has no entry accompanying the threat.
- *Point 3.* Never forget that in squeeze defense, just as surely as in offense, cards that look hopelessly insignificant may play the starring role. Example: East's clubs, Exercise 15.

- Point 4. Do not be overawed by a high card until you have determined whether that card actually plays a role.
- Point 5. When your partner advertises a guard in a certain suit, do not jump to the conclusion that you can always afford to discard that suit, for two reasons. First: if declarer can depend upon you always to abandon the suit where your partner holds a guard, his task in reading the situation when the decision point is reached is greatly simplified. Second: in some cases your partner's guard will ultimately be squeezed out, so that the load will fall on you.
- Point 6. Do not signal possession of a guard unless the information will be of more help to your partner than to declarer. Quite often, declarer's choice of plays would be very uncertain but for the fact that an eagerbeaver opponent has given the show away by a foolish signal. This admonition applies to bridge in general, not merely to squeeze play: it should be memorized by everyone at an early stage of his bridge education. Declarer should be aware, however, that in many situations the defenders have no choice but to signal, lest partner keep the wrong cards in a situation where it is possible to defend successfully.

Cover the West and South hands on the next exercise.



West	North	East	South
			2♣
3♠	pass	pass	4♣
pass	5♣	pass	5♠
pass	6♥	pass	7NT
all pass			

Take the East seat on this deal and plan the defense. Look only at your hand and the dummy. Declarer wins Trick 1 with the  $\triangle A$  as you follow with the  $\triangle 3$ , and then plays two rounds of clubs. West shows out on the second club, discarding the  $\bullet$ Q. This is probably a suit-preference card, suggesting a guard in hearts. Declarer has six clubs, so you have to make four more discards. What will they be?

You can safely throw two hearts, but if you throw the third heart you are giving up the heart suit. Since you are going to do that anyway, you may as well do it right away and hold on to the 46. Partner apparently has the rest of the spades so perhaps your •6 can be a guard. You may not be able to visualize exactly how the squeeze will play out, but you can defend this way on general principles following Point 1 of our defensive list above.

How does West cooperate in the defense? He has seen you start discarding hearts immediately, playing your lowest heart first. Your partner will realize that he has the only heart guard. Declarer will now play diamonds. Even if West isn't sure that you have the last spade, he should throw his spades away since he knows that you are not guarding hearts. Throwing spades is his only chance.

Can you see what declarer was trying to do? Declarer wanted to play a compound squeeze with these threats:

Basic: **♦**6

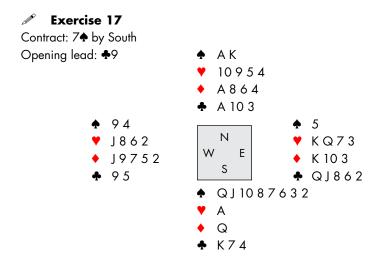
Ambiguous: ♥7 and ♠5

For a double squeeze to work, though, the eventual Common threat must be accompanied by an entry. Unfortunately for him, when you hold on to the \$6 and abandon hearts the Common threat becomes spades, and since the North hand does not have a spade entry the resulting double squeeze fails. Of course, it was not necessary for you to figure all this out to find the right defense.

In our opinion, the simpler forms of compound squeeze (i.e. the unrestricted) are hardly more difficult, as regards declarer's play, than some forms of double squeeze. In undertaking to attain real proficiency in compound squeeze defense, however, you are faced with one of the most exacting tasks in bridge. There are many reasons for this, but let us mention just one.

In a double squeeze, each opponent is busy in two suits. In a compound squeeze, one opponent is busy in three suits, often without realizing that fact until too late — indeed, perhaps with no one at the table realizing it, even after the deal is over. In Exercise 16, if East had played the ♠6 to the first trick there would have been no defense to the slam, and it is conceivable that four good players could hold a post-mortem without discovering that the contract could have been defeated.

Let us study one more deal, first as declarer.



You win with the ♣A in dummy. You have twelve tricks and you have very little chance of a thirteenth except via a squeeze. It seems East is the only defender guarding clubs. You expect the other two suits to be guarded by both opponents so you will need a compound squeeze. There is one problem: there is no entry to the heart suit, one of the threats. That means that if both opponents guard hearts, turning it into the Common suit in the double squeeze, the squeeze will fail because you have no entry in the Common suit.

You could try ruffing out the heart suit. If West holds five hearts, which seems plausible since he seems to be short in clubs, then you will have a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

Right: **♣**7
Left: ♥10
Common: ◆8

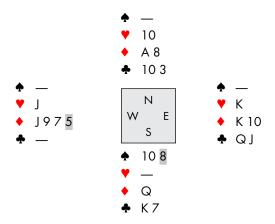
(If East holds five hearts as well as the clubs there is a trump squeeze, but that is less likely.)

There is also a chance that if hearts are 4-4 the defenders will not discard correctly, so you would like to keep that option available as well. You start by cashing the ♥A and crossing to dummy with a spade. You ruff a heart, play a spade to the king and ruff a third heart. Then you play three more rounds of spades, West discarding the ♠5, the ◆2 and the ◆5.

Now imagine you are East. Partner leads the ♣9; declarer wins this with the ♣A in dummy, cashes the ♥A and ruffs two hearts while drawing two rounds of trumps. On the second trump you discard a low club. Now declarer plays off three more rounds of trumps. Partner discards a club and two low diamonds while declarer throws two diamonds from dummy. You can afford a diamond and a club. What do you throw on the next trump?

Declarer holds the ♣K, a trump and a diamond. There is one club outstanding, the \$7. Even if you lead top of nothing (so that partner might have three clubs) several things suggest playing declarer for the missing club. First, declarer would probably have won Trick 1 with the \*K in hand if he started with only a doubleton; second, partner would have discarded two clubs rather than one if he could. And finally, if South holds the  $\mathbf{Q}\mathbf{x}$  (he will have two diamonds if he has only two clubs), you will find yourself caught in a criss-cross squeeze.

So partner is guarding diamonds and hearts, even if declarer has the  $\mathbf{\Phi}Q$ . You must hold on to the clubs and abandon one of the red suits. You can work out that you must discard a diamond: if hearts is the Common suit, the double squeeze will fail since there is no entry in that suit. This is the five-card ending:



Hearts were 4-4 all along and the defense was perfect, so the 7♠ contract failed.

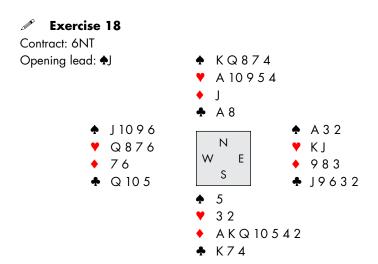
# The Alternate-Threat Squeeze

When we first classified compound squeezes, we stated that with relatively few exceptions all compound squeezes fall into four categories:

Type R, restricted and Type R, unrestricted

Type L, restricted and Type L, unrestricted

It is now time to consider the exceptions.



Try playing this deal yourself before continuing. East wins dummy's AQ with the  $\triangle A$  and returns the  $\bigcirc 9$ . You now run the diamonds. It looks like a Type L restricted compound squeeze with these threats:

Basic: **\$**8 Ambiguous: ♥10 and ♣7

You must be prepared for both a Type R and a Type C1 double squeeze. If West gives up the club guard, the Type R double squeeze works out perfectly: six diamonds, A, K, K, last diamond. However, if West keeps his clubs, the double squeeze is Type C1 with these threats:

**Y**10 Right: Left: **♠**8 Common: **♣**7

The last Right winner must precede the last Free winner and it can't be done without destroying the vital club entry: no squeeze. Wait a minute, though! With West down to one heart, the  $\checkmark$ 3 is a threat against East. With the  $\checkmark$ 3 as the threat, a Type R double squeeze is in effect: cash the last diamond, discarding the ♥10, then play dummy's winners.

# **Summary**

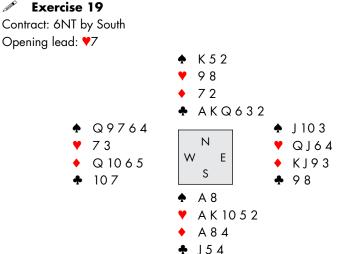
This deal is an example of a specific type of compound squeeze which might be called the **alternate-threat squeeze**. It is evidently a hybrid between the Type R and the Type L compound squeezes. With the \$\infty\$10 as the threat, the compound squeeze is Type L restricted, succeeding if West keeps hearts, failing if he keeps clubs. With the **\forall 3** as the threat, the compound squeeze is Type R unrestricted, succeeding if West keeps clubs, failing if he keeps hearts. Owing to the presence of the alternate threat, declarer is able to pick the winning route in either case. The Basic threat must be accompanied by at least one winner ( $\bigstar K$ ), so it can serve as the final squeeze card in case the alternate threat has to be used.

In the alternate-threat suit (hearts in the above example), nothing more is needed than a winner and a small card opposite two small. Since these requirements are modest indeed, it might seem that the hybrid ought to be comparatively common in play. The stringency lies elsewhere. At the moment when declarer takes control, South's hand is tightly packed with busy cards, and is in fact cut to a very precise pattern: this accounts for the relative rarity of the alternate-threat variant.

In support of that statement we point out that in the example above, if East returns a spade, the closed hand will be squeezed on the second trick. (Oh sure — East could and should wreck the machine by ducking the first trick, but isn't the going rough enough without that?) In fact, after East wins with the  $\triangle A$ , any return except a diamond will defeat the contract. On a heart switch West gives up clubs and, with no winner in the heart suit, the Type R double squeeze fails. A club return causes similar problems if West keeps hearts.

We have had previous instances (Exercise 9 in Chapter 2 is one, and doubtless there are others) where an 'alternate threat' was present. However, in those cases this feature was of theoretical interest only, because a single threat would suffice. In the present problem, the squeeze can be defeated unless both threats are available.

Although not too common in play, as a problem in analysis the alternatethreat squeeze is one of the most fascinating in our repertoire. If you do not agree, please skip Exercises 19-22.



East plays the ♥ at Trick 1. Unless the original lead is a falsecard, a subsequent heart finesse will ensure the contract, so declarer is playing for the overtrick. The hand looks like a Type L restricted compound squeeze with:

Basic: **Y**5 Ambiguous: ♠5 and ♦8

In addition, if only one defender guards diamonds, the ◆7 will make an equally good alternative threat; this will depend on East's discards.

You play off five winners in the club suit, pitching a diamond and a heart on the fourth and fifth clubs. On the run of the clubs East discards the •3, •9 and  $\bullet$ J, while West throws the  $\bullet$ 10,  $\bullet$ 4 and  $\bullet$ 6. How do you continue?

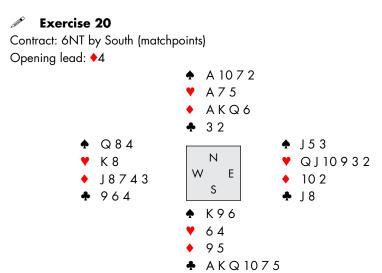
After seven tricks it appears that East has given up his diamond guard, but the resulting Type C1 double squeeze (with North as the single-threat hand) does not work. The threats are:

**\**8 Right: Left: **Y**5 Common: **4**5

In all Type C1 double squeezes the last Right winner (diamonds) must precede the last Free winner (clubs) and this is impossible here. However, if we use dummy's ◆7 as the threat, we have a Type R double squeeze with threats:

Right: **Y**5 Left: **♦**7 Common: **\$**5

Play the last club, throwing the \$\infty\$8 from hand, then finesse the heart, and finally cash the last two red-suit winners (the ◆A and the ♥A) in either order to complete the squeeze.



You win the diamond lead, East playing the ◆10, and play a couple of rounds of clubs. When the club suit splits 3-2 you have twelve tricks, but unless you are very lucky in spades you will need a squeeze for that vital matchpoint overtrick. Based on the opening lead, it seems likely that West has the diamond guard. If West also has the  $\bullet QI$  or four spades to an honor, then you have a simple squeeze on West. If East holds the only spade guard then you have a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

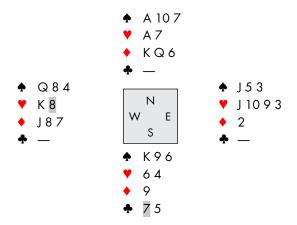
Right: Left: **♦**6 Common: **Y**7

The play for that squeeze is easy because the only winner in a threat suit that you need for the ending is the  $\forall$ A.

If the spades are 3-3 with split honors then you will need a compound squeeze, with an Ambiguous threat in each major. Notice that, in addition to the cards listed above, both the  $\spadesuit 10$  and the  $\heartsuit 6$  are potentially available as threats — it will depend upon the opposing discards.

In any case, it can't hurt to play more clubs, so you continue to do so. On the next club, you discard the  $\clubsuit$ 2 from dummy and East discards the  $\blacktriangledown$ Q. On the fourth club, you discard a heart from dummy, West discards the ◆3 and East the ♥2. On the fifth club, West discards the ♥8. What is the situation and how should you proceed?

From the play so far, it looks as though West started with five diamonds and three clubs. He is very likely to be 3=2=5=3 or 2=3=5=3, although the former is more likely since East has never thrown a spade. You envisage this layout:



It seems as though you might have had a Type L compound squeeze with these threats:

Basic: **♦**6 Ambiguous: ♠9 and ♥7

After the heart discard you appear to have a Type C1 double squeeze with these threats:

Right: Left: **♦**6 Common: **4**9

Unfortunately this squeeze will bog down for the same reason as in the previous deals (you cannot conveniently cash the Right winner, the ♥A, and return to hand). Fortunately, the alternate threat, the \(\forall 6\), comes to the rescue, making the double squeeze Type R with these threats:

Right: **♦**6 Left: **9**6 Common: **4**9

Throw a spade on this trick and a heart on the last club (or vice versa). Then cash the heart and diamonds to squeeze each defender in turn.

Due to the presence of an alternate threat in spades as well as in hearts, another way to finish the play would be a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

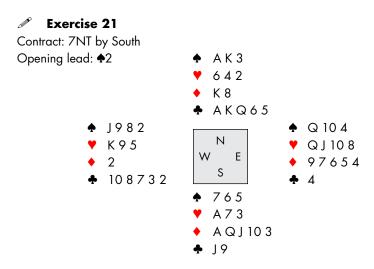
Right: **Y**6 Left: **♦**6 Common: **1**0

Discard the \(\forall 7\) on the fifth club, cash the red-suit winners, return to the \(\Phi \text{K}\), and shovel out the last club.

The phenomenon of alternate threats in two suits is possible only when declarer has two winners remaining in the third threat suit. In Exercise 19 this feature would have been present if the \$4 had been traded for the \$4.

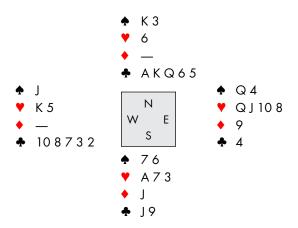
Note that if you use the ♠10 as the spade threat, the extra winner in diamonds makes room for one idle card, a spade, in the tight hand (South), but using the ♠9 that hand has no idle card. It would seem that West could make the going very rugged by taking the other branch of the alternate-threat fork — that is, by pitching a spade on the fifth club. Now — has West come down to two spades and VKx (when you need to delay cashing the last club, just as if West had never guarded spades), or three spades and the singleton ♥K (when the alternate-threat options come into play)?

The rigidity of form of this type of squeeze will stand out more clearly if we compare these last two deals suit by suit for their underlying winners and threats. The rotation between North and South is irrelevant, as is the interchange between the red suits. If we ignore the possible use of the \$10 as a threat in Exercise 20, they are as alike as two baseballs.



West leads the  $\clubsuit$ 2. You win with dummy's  $\spadesuit$ A and East plays the  $\spadesuit$ 10 (attitude). If clubs are no worse than 4-2, you have all the tricks you need, but in case clubs do break badly you start by running diamonds. West shows out on the second diamond, discarding the ♥9. On the next two diamonds, West discards the ♠8 and the 49 as you discard hearts from dummy. What do you think is the current situation?

If anyone has five clubs, it surely must be West. East appears to have begun with three spades and five diamonds, and West certainly didn't start with all the missing hearts. That being the case, West's remaining cards are a spade, two hearts and five clubs. This is the position:



The standard threats are these:

Right: **4**3 Left: **4**6 Common: **Y**7

However, this RFL squeeze would require you to discard the club threat without having tested the suit (although on the lie of the cards it will work — try it).

Turning to the alternate threat, the  $\clubsuit$ 7, we have a Type R double squeeze with these threats (North is the single-threat hand):

Right: Left: Common: **Y**7

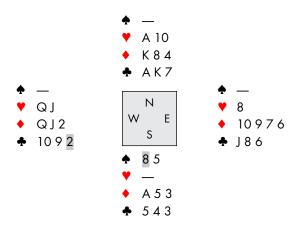
Cash the last diamond, discarding the spade. When you run the black suits you complete the squeeze.

This deal is just another baseball, except for the minor point that at doubledummy the Type L compound squeeze (using the 43 as the threat) could be executed. This, of course, is due to South's possession of a re-entry in clubs.

#### Exercise 22 Contract: 7♠ by South (West has opened 3♥) Openina lead: **Y**K 10762 A 10 2 K 8 4 **AK7** 94 Ν KQJ9743 865 10976 Q 12 S 1092 Q186 AKQ1853 A 5 3 543

You decide to ruff the opening lead to avoid having to decide what to discard from the South hand for now. You are a trick short, and the only hope is a squeeze. The opening lead and bidding make it probable that West has the only heart guard. If East has five or more cards in one of the minors, you will have a double squeeze. Of course, you have no way of knowing how suits are breaking at the moment, so it is better to assume that both defenders have minor-suit guards and plan for a compound squeeze. You have the ♥10 as the Basic threat; the Ambiguous threats are in clubs and diamonds. As it is accompanied by an entry in its own suit, the normal club threat is the \$7; then, as North cannot hold all the threats, the ◆5 is the normal diamond threat. The possible alternate threats of the \$\infty\$8 and the \$\infty\$3 may come into play depending upon the opposing discards.

In any case you might as well run some spades to see what happens. West has no spades and he starts by discarding four hearts. East throws the  $\P$ Q and then the **V**6. On the next spade West throws a club and you need to decide what to throw from dummy.



Your first thought is probably to use dummy's •7 as the club threat. If West has abandoned diamonds, there is a Type R double squeeze with these threats:

Right: **♦**5 Left: **V**10 Common: **♣**7

That plays smoothly. However, given the discards to date, it appears that West has given up his club stopper, suggesting a Type C1 double squeeze with threats:

Right: **♣**7 Left: **V**10 Common: **♦**5

This will fail (check it), so you turn to the alternate threat, the 45. With the ♣5 as a threat, you can afford to run all the spades. So you cash them, throwing the  $\blacklozenge 4$  on this trick and the  $\clubsuit 7$  on the next (or vice versa). Then cash the  $\clubsuit AK$ (forcing West to abandon diamonds) and finally the ♥A to squeeze East.

Let's check what happens if you play dummy's ♥A at Trick 1. It turns out that you can still make the contract on a trump squeeze — but that discussion will have to wait until Chapter 8. If you are playing in 7NT, however, you cannot make the contract on the lead of the ♥K. Obviously you must take the ♥A at Trick 1, and your hand is squeezed on the first trick. If you discard a diamond, West discards diamonds, making the Common threat the ♣5; now the resulting squeeze will fail for the obvious reason that there is no winner accompanying the Common threat.

If you discard a club then West surrenders clubs. This leads to the failing Type C1 squeeze we looked at earlier with these threats:

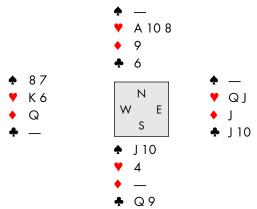
**♣**7 Right: Left: **V**10 Common: **♦**5

It should perhaps be said that while it is true that in theory 7NT fails, the defense is very difficult. West is groping in the dark, and even a great expert might easily fail to find the correct defense; yet the fact remains that the squeeze is pseudo. Do you wonder that the alternate-threat squeeze strikes our fancy?

# The Double Guard Squeeze

Look at the following example.

#### **Example A**



Let us assume that South knows the location of the outstanding minor-suit cards. He looks for a Type R restricted compound squeeze with the ♣9 as the Basic threat, but sees that the diamond threat is not accompanied by an entry, which means a compound squeeze would fail. However, if East holds two of the heart honors he is in trouble anyway.

On the \$\int I\, East discards a heart. On the last spade he can take his choice: another heart discard establishes the finesse against his partner; a diamond discard sets up the heart-diamond simple squeeze on West.

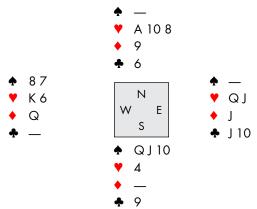
## The Double Guard Squeeze — Two Fundamental Requirements

In the situation above, the Basic threat is the ♣9 and the Ambiguous threats are the ♥10 and the ♦9. One of the Ambiguous threats, the ♥10, serves a secondary function, providing the possibility of a finesse if the defender to its left does not keep enough cards.

- With rare exceptions, the guard threat will have exactly one winner with it and a small card opposite. If the 'small' card opposite is so high that it could potentially block the suit, you will also need a side entry to the guard threat, normally in the Right suit.
- In order for the guard squeeze to operate, then as in the Type R unrestricted compound squeeze, the Right threat (here the 49) must be accompanied by a Right winner. This is the only way to make room for an idle card in the North hand, to discard on the last Free winner.

Let's demonstrate the latter by replacing the  $\mathbf{Q}$  with the  $\mathbf{Q}$  in the example above.

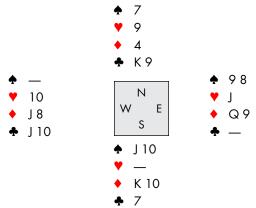
#### Example B



With the ♣Q replaced by a spade, one of East's clubs is released for discard on the second spade, whereupon the third spade squeezes the dummy.

## Another example

### **Example C**



If the diamond honors are divided, declarer envisages a Type L restricted compound squeeze with the \$\Pi\$9 as the Basic threat, but lacking the vital requisite of a heart entry. On the first spade West discards the •8. However, on the last spade, West will have to discard his heart stopper in order to protect his partner against the diamond finesse, whereupon the \$\display K\$ inflicts the heart-diamond simple squeeze on East.

The end position we are looking at, which consists of a simple guard squeeze on one opponent followed by either a simple squeeze on the other or (at the defender's option) a successful finesse, is called a double guard squeeze. Like its brother the simple guard squeeze, it pinches on the last Free winner.

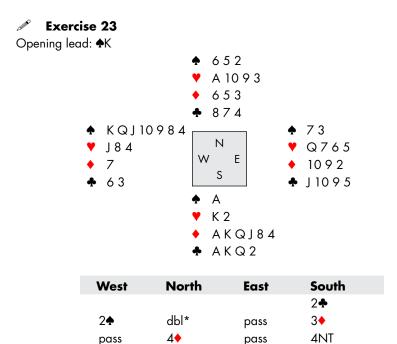
The need for a double guard squeeze arises when a compound squeeze is present except that a necessary entry is missing. This suggests the division of all double guard squeezes into two classes, according to whether the compound squeeze in question is Type R or Type L.

Due to the multiplicity of entry requirements that may be present in a compound squeeze, the double guard squeeze may occur in a variety of situations. The statements following cover the two cases that seem most likely to occur in play. South, as usual, is the hand containing one threat — the Basic threat in Type R, or an Ambiguous threat in Type L.

Type R double guard squeeze: A Type R compound squeeze is present except that one of North's threats is not accompanied by an entry. East must retain certain cards in the other Ambiguous suit, the guard suit, to protect his partner against a finesse. This squeeze will fail unless South has a Right winner remaining.

Type L double guard squeeze: A Type L compound squeeze is present except that North's Ambiguous threat is not accompanied by an entry. North holds an entry in one of the other threat suits. West must retain certain cards in South's suit, the guard suit, to protect his partner against a finesse.

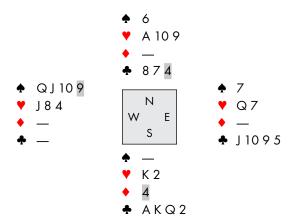
Note that Example A above was Type R, while Example C was Type L.



7NT pass pass all pass You win with the  $\triangle A$  as East follows with the  $\triangle 3$ , and now you play off two top

diamonds. West shows out on the second diamond, discarding a spade.

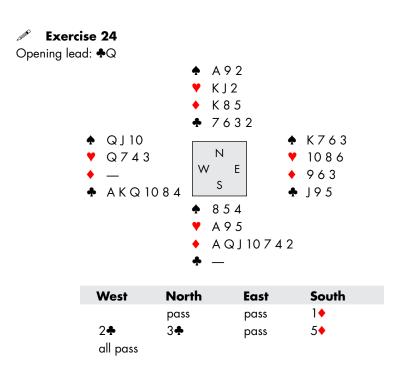
Of course if clubs split 3-3, you have enough tricks. If not, you assume that East has the four clubs as well as a spade higher than dummy's \$\infty\$6. If East has five hearts or the  $\nabla QI$ , you have a simple squeeze on him in clubs and hearts. If the heart guard is split between East and West then you have a Type R compound squeeze (Basic threat ♣2, Ambiguous threats ♠6 and ♥10) except that the spade has no entry. The saving feature is that the ♥10 is high enough to be a guard threat: East has to hold two hearts else you can finesse against the ♥J, and therefore he has to abandon spades on the last diamond.



East is triple squeezed, since he has to provide support for West's heart guard. He must throw a spade since any other discard means immediate disaster. You now have a simple squeeze on West in the majors. Three rounds of clubs complete the story.

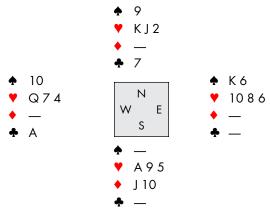
By the way, did you notice that East cannot afford to signal with the ♠7 at Trick 1? If he does, then you have an immediate double squeeze — so much for automatically giving count.

What happens if you try clubs first before playing the last diamond? It is okay to play one round of clubs, it is okay even to play two rounds of clubs — but a third round of clubs destroys the squeeze. On the final diamond, all of North's cards will be busy and dummy will be squeezed ahead of East. Try it.



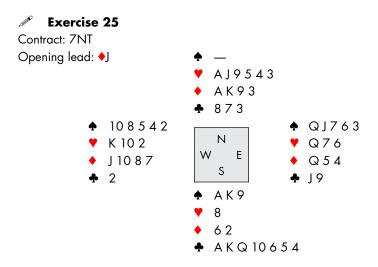
East plays the \$5 (count) to the first trick and you discard a spade. West switches to the  $\Phi Q$  and you duck again as East plays the  $\Phi 7$ . You win the next spade, East playing the ♠3. Your goal is to try and make your game without resorting to a heart finesse.

With ten top tricks, you ducked twice to rectify the count. Your first task is to isolate the Basic threat, so you ruff a club in hand, play three rounds of diamonds ending in dummy and ruff another club. If East has both heart honors, there is no squeeze. If West has both, there is a heart-club simple squeeze. If the hearts are divided, then you have a Type L compound squeeze with the \$7 as the Basic threat, except that the spade has no entry; but the guard squeeze brings succor.



You have reached this position. You lead the second-last trump, discarding the ♥I from dummy. Now, on the last diamond, West can do whatever makes him happiest as you discard the \$7, the Basic threat (assuming it is not high).

It might be helpful to emphasize the principle of play illustrated here. In every Type L guard squeeze, when the squeeze is complete the Basic threat is discarded (assuming it has not become a winner). On the above deal, declarer can succeed by finessing the VI, but the squeeze works if West holds either the ♥10 or the ♥Q. This deal also illustrates that good play often goes unnoticed. If South simply finesses the VI, nobody may notice that there was a better way to play the contract.



There is no opposition bidding after North opens 1, and you find your way to 7NT. You win the opening lead with the ♦A and survey your twelve tricks. Could there be some sort of squeeze for a thirteenth? You have very little information about the opposition hands, so you might as well play a trick or two and see if you can find out anything. You play two rounds of clubs. East follows, but on the second club West throws the  $\clubsuit 2$ . When you cash the  $\clubsuit A$ , East plays the  $\spadesuit Q$ and West the 44.

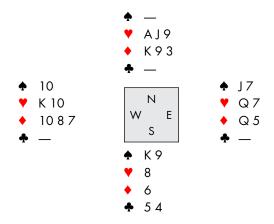
It seems likely that East has at least one heart honor: West might have led a heart if he had the ♥KQ. East obviously has the ♠I to go with the ♠Q and may well have started with the \(\Phi\)QI10. Assuming that East guards spades, then:

(a) If East has both hearts, you have a spade-heart simple squeeze.

(b) If the hearts are divided, you have a Type R compound squeeze with the ♠9 as the Basic threat. However, once East discards on the last club, abandoning a red suit, you need to cash that red-suit winner (which will be a Left winner) before playing the last spade winner. At this point, you have no re-entry to hand, so the Type R compound fails. However, you do have what we might term a 'dual guard squeeze' since East has to guard both red suits: you have a guard threat in two suits.

What are the chances for each squeeze? Should you play for the simple squeeze or the guard squeeze?

Well, you are assuming that East held a (probably long) spade suit headed by the  $\bullet$ Q110. If he also held the  $\forall$ KQ plus the  $\bullet$ Q, he would probably have taken a bid. So the vote goes to (b): just finish the clubs. After West has thrown his spades you arrive at this position, where you do in fact have a squeeze:



On the next club you throw the \dot3 or the \dot9 from dummy. East can afford a heart or a diamond, but on the last club dummy throws the opposite suit to the previous trick; East then has to abandon a second red suit. This leaves you with a simple squeeze on West in the red suits when you cash the  $\Phi K$ .

As the cards lie in our original diagram, with the ♠10 in the West hand, the squeeze is pseudo; but East has made it almost impossibly difficult for West, and almost all Wests would abandon spades. East has said, 'Partner, you may throw spades freely, because I can handle that suit' — the truth being that East can defend both reds but is helpless in spades. West should have followed the first defensive principle stated earlier: retain your stoppers in suits held on your right and in suits for which declarer has no entry with the threat. Spades were on his right and entryless, so definitely the suit to keep.

#### Exercise 26 Contract: 6♠ by South Opening lead: •2 53 AK62 AK76 1074 K 8 4 2 Ν 1053 Q987 Ε Q 10 4 2 1953 6.5 Q198

You win the first trick with the ◆A and finesse the spade. West wins and plays another diamond, so you go up with the ◆K, discarding a club. Now you play three more rounds of spades, throwing the \*2 from dummy. On the spades, East throws the  $\Phi Q$ , the  $\nabla 7$  and the  $\nabla 8$ . It appears that both defenders are guarding diamonds.

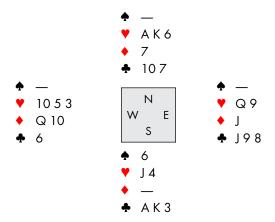
AQJ1076

J 4 8 A K 3 2

East has announced that he can guard clubs. The discard of the  $\Phi Q$  suggests that East started with the \(\Phi\)QJ9x, so clubs is the Basic suit in a possible compound squeeze. The play in diamonds, as well as East's failure to pitch one, tends to confirm that the suit indeed started 4-4, as suggested by the opening lead. So East began with four hearts and has chosen to abandon the heart suit.

The compound squeeze would be Type R with the  $\clubsuit 3$  as the Basic threat, but it is flawed in that the diamond threat is not accompanied by an entry. Since West's heart spots are poor, this fault is repaired by the fact that East still has to protect his partner's finessing position in hearts.

You continue with the fifth round of spades, throwing a diamond from dummy. West throws the  $\clubsuit 5$  and East throws the  $\spadesuit 9$ . This is now the position:



Watch out! One of those hearts must be cashed and, of course, the blocking ♥J removed too. You might as well do it now: lead the ♥I to the ♥K and then return to hand with a club.

You cannot cash the second top club yet — remember, you need to have a winner with the threat in hand to give dummy an idle card. First you play the last spade. West throws his ◆10, dummy throws a club and East has an unenviable choice. If he throws the  $\mathbf{VQ}$ , you can finesse the  $\mathbf{V6}$ , so let's say he parts with his diamond. Now you play the final club winner to squeeze West in the red suits. (You will notice here that if West had held the ♥9 and East a small one, then the guard squeeze would not operate, as East could discard the last heart with no cost.)

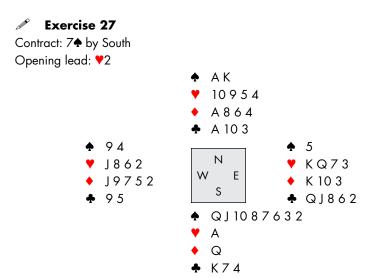
It is a measure of the progress in bridge technique that many end positions, promulgated years ago as difficult double-dummy problems, are now solvable at the bridge table, provided declarer follows established principles of play. Doubledummy addicts will recognize this last endgame layout as the famous Whitfield Six.

As a side note, it would have made for a much stronger defense if West had ducked the AK at Trick 2. If you had then crossed back to dummy with a heart to repeat the spade finesse, you would have been doomed to defeat. Perhaps it is another measure of bridge progress that today almost all expert players would routinely duck the  $\bigstar$ K.

Now that we have studied the double guard squeeze, you might like to revisit Exercise 4 with the  $\clubsuit$ 7 and the  $\spadesuit$ 8 traded. You should then be able to see why a spade switch was better than a diamond.

Since the guard squeeze, either simple or double, is far from common in play, it might seem that we have devoted an excessive amount of space to this device. However, Terence Reese believed that guard-squeeze positions occur with some frequency, but are apt to be missed. Our own experience, though much less extensive than that of Mr. Reese, would point to the same conclusion. At any rate, you must surely agree that the guard squeeze would be one of the easiest of all endplays to overlook.

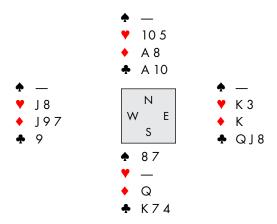
The **double clash squeeze** is even rarer than the double guard squeeze but it too can rescue a failing compound squeeze. It is time to replay the 74 contract that we encountered in Exercise 17, this time with a different lead.



You may recall that after a club lead, won in dummy, you tried to execute a compound squeeze by running the spades. East was able to defend the position by keeping hearts, the Ambiguous threat that had no accompanying entry.

After the less hostile heart lead (the same would be true on a trump lead), dummy's A entry remains intact and the grand slam is makeable. The clash threat in diamonds now comes into play. East has to keep at least one diamond or South's singleton  $\bullet$ Q will be a winner, and this restricts his discarding options. How does the play go?

You win the ♥Q with the ♥A and draw trumps. You then ruff a heart to hand and run trumps to reach this position:



You lead another trump, discarding the ♣10 from dummy (don't worry — you are going to unblock the clubs in a minute). East has already had to bare the ♦K to protect the other suits, throwing two clubs, a heart and two diamonds. He is now out of winning options. At the table he should throw the ♦K, hoping that your diamond is not the queen. Let's assume he makes the more testing discard of a heart.

Knowing that the hearts probably started as 4-4 from the opening lead of the  $\checkmark$ 2, you have little difficulty in reading the position. You cross to the  $\clubsuit$ A and ruff a heart, isolating the heart guard in the West hand. You then finish with the  $\clubsuit$ K, catching West in a simple squeeze in the red suits.

If the lead had been a trump, it would be less obvious that hearts were 4-4, but your natural assumption is that clubs are 2-5 (as this maximizes the chance East has the sole club stopper), so you should be able to read what East has kept in that case too.

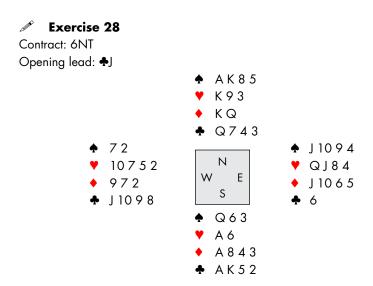
# A Compound Squeeze with Two Losers

By this time we have two facts clearly in mind

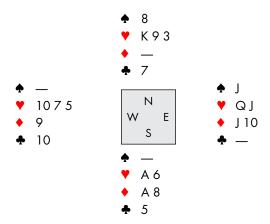
- (a) The compound squeeze consists of two parts: first a triple squeeze, then an elementary squeeze.
- (b) The typical compound squeeze occurs with only one loser remaining.

It may happen that with a compound squeeze in prospect and two losers still in hand, an early duck to rectify the count is not feasible. Then, under favorable conditions, declarer makes use of the fact that the standard triple squeeze is a two-loser squeeze, which means that the first half of the compound can be executed at once — that is, without a duck. After the triple has occurred, the picture may be so changed that it is possible to lose a trick in order to set up the elementary squeeze.

This kind of thing seems most likely to occur in deals where all four suits are guarded. In the typical case where two of the four are doubly guarded, you have a sort of super-compound squeeze which can lead to a variety of interesting alternatives.



You are playing 6NT; you have eleven top tricks and a potential for twelve if either spades are 3-3 or clubs 3-2. Even if neither black suit is kind, you have good squeeze chances. You win with the A and unblock the top diamonds, everyone following. You now test spades, starting with the  $\Phi$ K and  $\Phi$ Q. On the third round of spades, won by the A, West discards a heart; so much for the spade break. You now play the remaining club honors ending in dummy, as East discards the  $\checkmark$ 4 and  $\checkmark$ 8. This is the position:



East undoubtedly has diamonds guarded. Unless he is falsecarding, he also has two heart honors. If so, leading a club (a losing squeeze card) to the ninth trick will complete the guard squeeze.

It detracts not at all from the brilliance of this play to point out an alternative method. Run through the first eight tricks to the position above. East is believed to have a spade and two diamonds remaining, and therefore only two hearts. If so, leading the 48 from dummy will set up a heart-club simple squeeze on West.

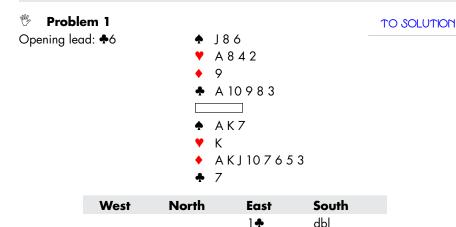
Note that this method succeeds even if East's ♥8 is a falsecard (trade the ▼I and the ♥7); it would also have worked with the ♥9 and the ♥2 exchanged. Astute readers will notice that there is also a squeeze available if you duck the opening club lead in both hands, but there is no reason to assume that the clubs do not break 3-2 and that you didn't start with thirteen tricks. The lead of the ♣I from ♣J10, ♣J109 or even ♣J10x would be quite attractive.

### **REVIEW PROBLEMS**

pass

pass

all pass



2

**5**♥\*

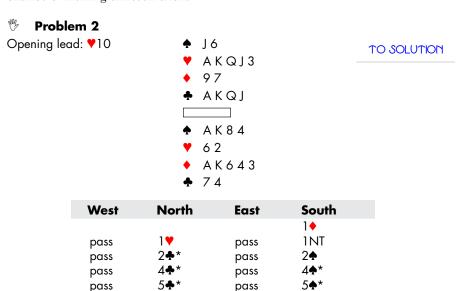
East follows with the ♠K at Trick 1. The opening club lead is quite annoying since it takes out your entry to dummy before you can cash the VK. You finesse the ♦J and then play a top diamond, both defenders following. What is your best chance of making thirteen tricks?

pass

pass

4NT

7NT



If hearts break then you have thirteen tricks, but you want to make this contract even if hearts are not splitting. What is your plan?

all pass

7NT

pass



<b></b>	10 9 2
<b>Y</b>	K 8 5
<b>♦</b>	K 9 4
•	A K 7 4
<b></b>	KQJ643
<b>Y</b>	A 9 3
<b>♦</b>	A 7 3
•	6

TO SOLUTION

TO SOLUTION

West	North	East	South
			1♠
3♣	4♣	pass	4♠
all pass			

You win with the ♣A, East following with the ♣2, and play a trump. West wins the ♠A and returns the ♣J. You play low from dummy, East discards the ◆8 and you ruff in hand. You lead a spade to dummy, both following. Eleven tricks are now assured but you want to try for twelve and a top board. Can you do it?





West	North	East	South	
			1 🛧	
pass	1♦	pass	1NT	
pass	2♣*	pass	2♠	
pass	4♣*	pass	4♥*	
pass	7NT	all pass		

You didn't get to  $7 \blacklozenge$ , so you are going to have to find your thirteenth trick without a ruff. You win with the  $\spadesuit A$  in dummy and play four rounds of diamonds, throwing a spade on the fourth as East parts with the  $\P 4$ . West shows out on the third round and throws the  $\P 7$  and the  $\spadesuit 10$ . Now what?



<b></b>	A 9 8 7 2
<b>Y</b>	3 2
<b>♦</b>	9 2
*	AJ64
<b></b>	K
<b>Y</b>	AK97
<b>♦</b>	AKQ10876
*	10

TO SOLUTION

TO SOLUTION

West	North	East	South
		pass	2♣
pass	2♦	pass	3♦
pass	3♠	pass	4♦*
pass	4♠*	pass	4NT*
pass all pass	5♥	pass	7NT

You have only twelve tricks in notrump, but where there are twelve there may be thirteen. East plays the  $\mathbf{AQ}$  at Trick 1 and you win with the  $\mathbf{AK}$ . You play three rounds of diamonds, discarding a spade from dummy on the third round as West discards the  $\mathbf{A4}$  and East the  $\mathbf{A3}$ . How do you continue?

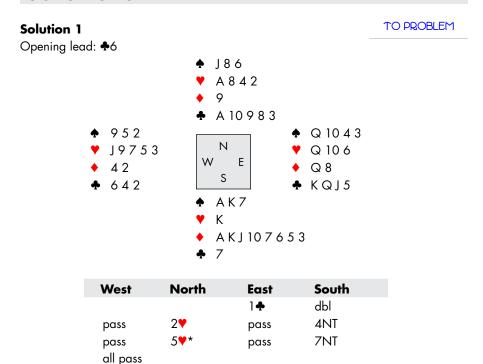




West	North	East	South
			2♣
pass	<b>2</b> ♦*	pass	3♠*
pass	4♣*	pass	4NT
pass	5♣*	pass	5NT
pass	7♠	all pass	

You don't have thirteen tricks off the top — hardly a surprise after your optimistic bidding — but you do have chances. How do you play your grand slam?

### **SOLUTIONS**

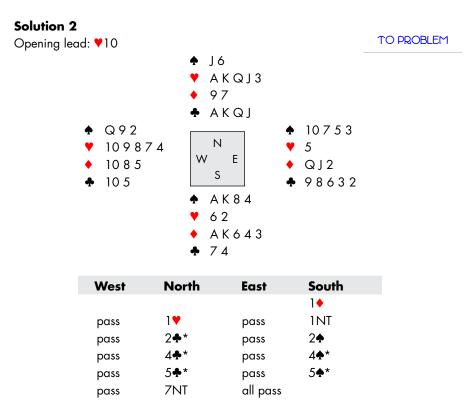


The opening club lead is quite annoying since it takes out your entry to dummy before you can cash the ♥K. You finesse the ◆J and then play a top diamond, both defenders following.

Clearly East has almost all of the remaining high cards, although West might just have a jack or so. Barring a highly improbable 7-1 heart break, the only legitimate chance of a squeeze is a spade-club simple squeeze on East, which to satisfy **U** means using the \$\display\$7 as the spade threat. However, if West's spades are as good as \$9xx, no squeeze is possible because all three threats lie under the stoppers. There is a much more promising prospect, though — that gorgeous pseudo compound, because those diamonds will really apply the heat.

Can the defense figure out how to defeat the contract? Yes, if West takes the time to draw all the available inferences. Declarer is known to have eight diamond tricks and three other aces, for eleven in all. East has clubs guarded. Declarer pretty well has to have the  $\bigstar K$  or the  $\bigstar Q$  and the  $\forall K$  or the  $\forall Q$  on the auction. Since declarer did not take a spade finesse at Trick 2 we presume that either he has the  $\bigstar K$  or he can take the finesse later. That brings him up to twelve tricks for sure.

If declarer has the VK and another heart, he has thirteen tricks. West can work out that this is rather unlikely because it would mean East opened 1 hwhen holding five spades and four clubs. Almost certainly declarer's shape is 3=1=8=1. Even if his heart is the king, he is going to be a trick short because of the heart blockage. West just has to hang on to spades to protect his partner from a spadeclub squeeze.



If hearts break then you have thirteen tricks, but you want to make this contract even if hearts are not splitting. If West holds the diamond length, then you have a diamond-heart simple squeeze. If diamonds are 4-2 with East holding the stopper, then you have a Type R double squeeze with these threats (North is the single-threat hand):

Right: **Y**3 Left: **♦**6 Common: **♠**8

If diamonds are 3-3, then (assuming both hands can guard spades) you can play the slam on a compound squeeze.

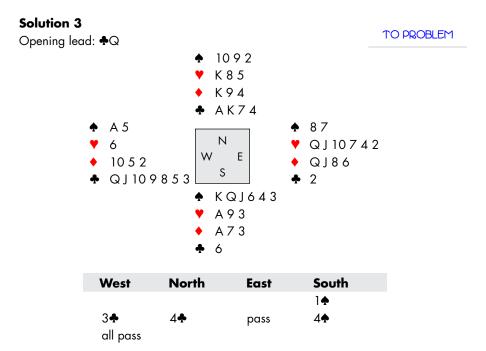
As it turns out, it doesn't matter how the cards lie — it can't hurt to play clubs first. When you play four rounds of clubs, you discard a spade and a diamond from hand and West discards two diamonds. Whatever his original diamond holding, West is not likely to be guarding diamonds any more, so you can now play for the Type R doubles squeeze described above. You first cash the top diamonds and then the hearts.

Trade the  $\triangle$ O for the  $\triangle$ 3, and now suppose West discards spades. Again, it doesn't really matter how many diamonds he started with, you can still play for a Type R double squeeze with these threats (North is the single-threat hand):

Right: **Y**3 Left: **\$**8 Common: **♦**6

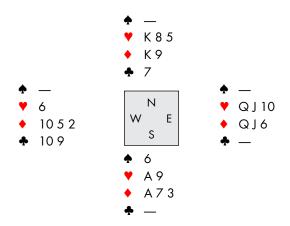
Now you cash the top spades first and then play hearts.

What happens if you play a second heart at Trick 2, getting ready to claim? As it turns out, you can still make the contract. The disadvantage is that you will need to guess the way the rest of the cards lie between the East-West hands quite early, since one squeeze does not fit them all. Try moving the spade cards around and working through the various different squeezes that result.



You win with the A, East following with the 2, and play a trump. West wins the ♠A and returns the ♣J. You play low from dummy, East discards the ♦8 and you ruff in hand. You lead a spade to dummy, both following. Eleven tricks are now assured but you want to try for twelve and a top board.

What you know so far is that West has seven clubs and two spades. If his red suits are 2-2, then there is a heart-diamond simple squeeze against East. You win the second spade in dummy and unblock the  $\bigstar K$ . East discards the  $\blacktriangledown 7$  — the exact low red card you discard is immaterial, so let's say you throw the  $\checkmark$ 3. Now you play two more spades; West discards clubs, East discards two more hearts and you throw a club from dummy.



East's discards have made it abundantly clear that West cannot guard hearts, which means you have a Type C1 double squeeze with these threats:

Right: **9**8 Left: **♣**7 Common: **♦**7

Remember 'the last Right winner must precede the last Free winner', which says the right order is  $\forall K, \forall A$ , spade.

At one table, North played in notrump, making five: 'There were eleven tricks for the asking', he said. Change 'eleven' to 'twelve' and we will agree. With the  $\bigvee$ Q led, the  $\triangle$ A driven out and the  $\triangle$ Q returned, an easier double squeeze would be hard to find.

#### Solution 4

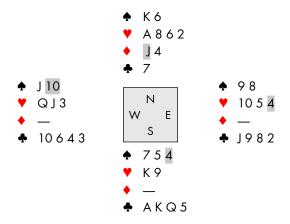
Contract: 7NT TO PROBLEM Opening lead: AQ A K 6 A 8 6 2 AKQJ4 7 Q J 10 983 Ν QJ73 1054 Е 8 7 952 S 10643 J982 7542 Κ9 1063

You win with the ♠A in dummy and play four rounds of diamonds, throwing a spade on the fourth as East parts with the \(\forall 4\). West shows out on the third round and throws the  $\checkmark$ 7 and the  $\spadesuit$ 10.

AKQ5

As the cards lie, all three suits start doubly guarded, which means of course that there is no genuine squeeze. However, pseudo compound squeezes are often very difficult to defend. Once East throws the \(\forall 4\) on the fourth diamond, you can make the contract no matter what West does.

Let's look at the position when you led the fourth diamond from dummy:



Once East discards the V4, West alone guards hearts, which become the Basic threat in your Type L unrestricted compound squeeze. The Ambiguous threats are the ♠6 and the ♣5. It does not stay as a compound squeeze for very long: on this same trick, West has to give up either the spade suit or the club suit, either of which leads to a successful double squeeze.

When West discards the ♠10, you can read the position from the play so far quite easily. In fact, two endings are available.

### (a) a Type R double squeeze with threats:

Right: **98** Left: **^**7 Common: **\$**5

### (b) a Type C2 double squeeze with threats:

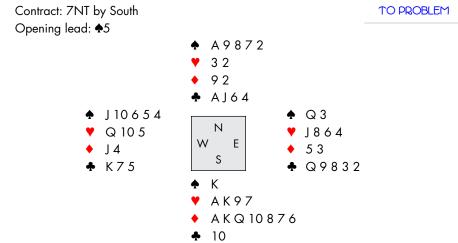
Right: Left: **98** Common: **\$**5

Both squeezes are easy to execute: the Type C2 is the one envisaged by the 'unrestricted' tag but you do not have to cash the last diamond yet. You could cash the spade and heart winners before leading it. Assuming you are right about which defender has which suit, that sequence would be equally effective for the Type C2 and the Type R. Of course this is not an alternate-threat squeeze, where both threats are essential; this is simply a choice of squeezes.

If West throws a club instead of the ♠10, you have a Type R double squeeze. Try it.

We have spoken of defensive errors, but in this deal, to ask that West abandon hearts, East clubs, is asking almost too much of human nature, given their holdings in the suits. Yet this is the only way to beat the slam. Once again the principle of keeping suits where the stoppers lie over the threats and abandoning those lying under would have saved the defense.

#### Solution 5

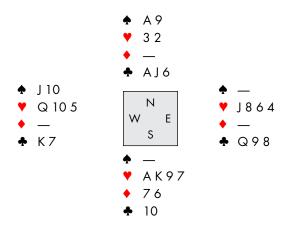


You have only twelve tricks in notrump, but where there are twelve there may be thirteen. East plays the  $\mathbf{AQ}$  at Trick 1 and you win with the  $\mathbf{AK}$ . You play three rounds of diamonds, discarding a spade from dummy on the third round as West discards the  $\spadesuit 4$  and East the  $\spadesuit 3$ .

It seems unlikely that West has the \(\Phi\)KQ, or he might well have led that suit. If East has both clubs, then you have a Type C2 double squeeze with these threats:

Right: Left: **\$**9 Common: **9**9

If the club honors are divided (as is the case in the diagram), there looks to be a Type L unrestricted compound squeeze with the \$\int 9\$ as the Basic threat, and the ♣] and ♥9 as the Ambiguous threats. So you run off the diamonds. Happily this will work for the C2 double squeeze too. You run five rounds of diamonds to arrive at this ending:



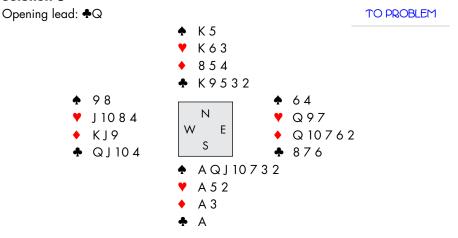
On the next diamond, West has to abandon either hearts or clubs. Let's assume that he throws a club. This sets up a Type C2 double squeeze with these threats:

Right: Left: Common:

You finish the diamond suit and then cash the two black aces to complete the squeeze. When this deal actually came up in play, seeing that there was no chance unless his partner held the  $\Phi Q$ , West threw all his clubs (as most players would do). Declarer smoothly completed the double squeeze. If East held the ♠KQ, the discards would be similar, and the double squeeze would continue on the same lines. So you get a 'twofer'.

On the deal as shown, however, West can come up with a better defense. He can see what will happen if he abandons clubs, so he should yield hearts. It would appear that the resulting Type R squeeze will fail since you can't cash the Left winner, the ♠A. (Try it, trading the ♥9 for the ♥8.) Fortunately, if West holds two of the top three missing hearts (as is the case here — the ♥Q and the ♥10), then there is a double guard squeeze available. We leave you to work out the details for yourself, but here's a hint: against correct defense, the critical card is that insignificant-looking  $\checkmark$ 9.

#### Solution 6



West	North	East	South
			2♣
pass	2◆*	pass	3♠*
pass	4♣*	pass	4NT
pass	5♣*	pass	5NT
pass	7♠	all pass	

You don't have thirteen tricks off the top — hardly a surprise after your optimistic bidding — but you do have chances. You win with the ♣A, play two high trumps ending in dummy and ruff a club. Your plan is to try to isolate the club guard in case West doesn't have the \$10. It is possible that West has sole guard of hearts or diamonds to go with the club guard and a simple squeeze will work, but it seems more likely that East has a guard in at least one red suit. If East alone guards hearts than you have a Type R double squeeze using the ♥5 as the Left threat — you don't have an RFL squeeze with the ♥6 as the Right threat because you can't cash the winners in the order hearts-spades-clubs. Another likely situation is that both East and West guard the red suits. If that is true, you have a Type R unrestricted compound squeeze with the 49 as your Basic threat and the  $\circlearrowleft$ 3 and  $\circlearrowleft$ 5 (not the  $\circlearrowleft$ 6 as above) as Ambiguous threats.

You run your spades. (This will also work if you have a simple squeeze on West.) On the actual deal West will have to give up one of the Ambiguous suits and the resulting double squeeze will get you home.

#### CHAPTER 7 SUMMARY

A compound squeeze consists of two parts: first a triple squeeze, then an elementary squeeze. In general, these are the conditions for a compound squeeze:

- Declarer has only one loser remaining.
- He holds threats in three suits.
- One of these threats (the Basic threat) is guarded by only one defender and the threat lies over the stopper.
- The other two (Ambiguous) threats are guarded by both opponents. Each of the Ambiguous threats must be accompanied by an entry in its own suit.

Classification of compound squeezes (some exceptions to these rules are noted in the chapter)

#### • Type R compound squeeze

If the two Ambiguous threats lie in the same hand, the subsequent double squeeze will be of Type R, and the Basic threat will become the (single) Right threat of the double squeeze.

### • Type L compound squeeze

If the two Ambiguous threats are divided between declarer's two hands, one of them will be accompanied by the Basic threat. The eventual double squeeze may be of Type R or Type C, according to the triple squeeze victim's choice of discard. The Basic threat will become the Left threat in either case.

- Unrestricted: You can continue to play the entire Free suit (which may lie in either hand) before deciding on the nature of the resulting double squeeze.
- **Restricted**: You need to determine the nature of the resulting double squeeze before the run of the Free suit is complete (normally when the defender being triple-squeezed is forced to abandon a suit). The Free suit must always lie in the hand that holds only one of the threats.
- An **alternate-threat squeeze** is a hybrid between the Type R and the Type L compound squeezes. Owing to the presence of an alternate threat in at least one suit, declarer is able to pick a winning route whatever the defense

discards. The Basic threat must be accompanied by at least one winner to serve as the final squeeze card in case the alternate threat has to be used.

The **Double Guard Squeeze** consists of a simple guard squeeze on one opponent followed by either a simple squeeze on the other or (at the defender's option) a successful finesse. Like its brother the simple guard squeeze, it pinches on the last Free winner.

If your holding in one or both of the Ambiguous suits is such that only one defender can guard the suit, but you have no way to locate the guard, it may still be possible to play your contract as though it were a compound squeeze.

If an early duck to rectify the count for a one-loser compound squeeze is not feasible, it may be possible to execute the (two-loser) triple squeeze at once. After this, it may be safe to lose a trick and set up the elementary squeeze.

Points to remember when defending a compound squeeze:

- Do not try to hang on to a suit that you will surely be forced out of, at the expense of surrendering a stopper in another suit.
- Normally retain your stoppers in suits held on your right and suits for which declarer has no entry accompanying the threat.
- Cards that look hopelessly insignificant may be vital, while high cards may be irrelevant.
- When your partner advertises a guard, do not assume that you can always afford to discard that suit.
- Do not signal possession of a guard unless the information will be of more help to your partner than to declarer.

# THE TRUMP SQUEEZE

It is difficult to find in published books an explicit, clear-cut definition of a **trump squeeze** (sometimes called a **ruffing squeeze**). The definition used in this book is as follows:

A trump squeeze is a squeeze in which declarer's ability to ruff plays an essential role after the squeeze is established.

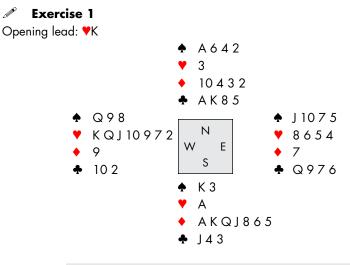
This evidently excludes all such deals as (for instance) Chapter 1, Exercise 10, where the squeeze is established by ruffing one opponent out of a threat suit, after which the play is strictly of notrump character.

There are many different types of trump squeeze; some of them are similar to the notrump version and some are unique. It would be impossible to develop a detailed understanding of trump squeezes in only one chapter. The goal of this chapter, therefore, is simply to get you started on your study and to introduce you to the nature and variety of such squeezes. We shall not attempt to give examples of all the possible variations of every type, but confine ourselves to showing a typical example or two of each.

In a simple trump squeeze, one adversary is squeezed in two suits. In fact, there are ruffing variations of other squeezes we have previously encountered, although these are rarer: double, triple, and compound trump squeezes, and even trump strip-squeezes. As most of these come up very infrequently, in some sources the trump squeeze is defined, too narrowly in my view, as merely a variation of a simple squeeze. Here we shall call each squeeze by its original name, adding the prefix 'ruffing' to indicate that it is a trump squeeze.

# The Ruffing Simple Squeeze

Let's begin by looking at a ruffing simple squeeze.



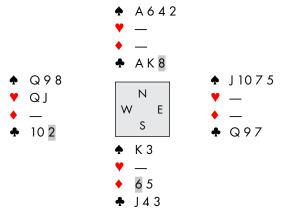
West	North	East	South
			1♦
3♥	dbl	pass	4♥
pass	4♠	pass	4NT
pass	5♥*	pass	5NT
pass all pass	6♣*	pass	7♦

You win the heart lead and draw trumps in one round. Dummy is a disappointment, and you are one trick short. It appears that unless there is a very lucky club position you must rely on a squeeze. Since West is likely to have seven hearts to go with his diamond, he is not going to have too many black cards.

If East has five spades and the guarded  $\Phi Q$ , you will have a simple black-suit squeeze after a Vienna Coup. You cash the top clubs and then run diamonds, and East will be squeezed. Since West would probably have bid more than 3\* if he had an eight-card suit, East is unlikely to have five spades and four clubs. He could have five spades and  $\Phi$ Oxx, but 4-4 in the black suits is a more likely holding. If East has only four spades then you can ruff a spade and isolate the spade guard. However, this puts you in the failing case for a simple squeeze that we discussed in Chapter 1 — the North hand's only entry is in South's suit, while South has no entry in either suit.

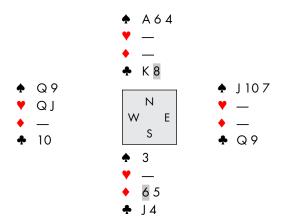
In fact, you can squeeze East even if he has only four spades to go with his club stopper. West's spade guard can be ruffed out later! You run trumps, keeping all four spades in dummy. East must also hold four spades, since if at any point he throws a spade you can cross to dummy and ruff a spade, setting up a winner.

When you are about to lead the second-last trump, you have arrived at this position:



When you lead the ♦6, you throw a club from dummy. If East throws a spade, you can set up a spade trick by ruffing, and dummy will be high. If East discards a club, you cash the top clubs and the #J becomes your thirteenth trick.

If you prefer, you can start by cashing one club winner and the  $\Phi K$ , since you have enough entries to dummy if East later discards a spade and you can always return to hand via a spade ruff if you need to. You will still be able to get to dummy to ruff a spade and then return to cash the last one. This will be the ending as you are about to play the second-last diamond, the squeeze card; again you throw a club from dummy.



Evidently this is merely a criss-cross squeeze, differing from the simple squeeze version only in that the element of trumps is necessary: North has an entry in South's suit, and South an entry in North's, either literally (first sequence above) or by means of a ruff in North's suit (second sequence).

You may have spotted a third possible sequence. If for some reason you had cashed both top spades then, so long as you had not touched clubs, the trump squeeze would still work. For entry purposes, dummy's second club winner is just as good as the  $\triangle A$ . Try it and see.

The trump aspect of a ruffing squeeze may be significant for a number of reasons. Here, the threat of ruffing out the spade suit required the defender to keep an extra card — effectively the guard was isolated through the mere possibility of ruffing out the suit. We need a name for this new kind of potential winner, one that may become a winner through a ruff. Following the practice of other writers, let us call it a **ruffing threat**; the suit which contains it will be the ruffing-threat suit.

Trumps can also overcome flaws in the standard version of the squeeze. In some positions, a ruff could provide an entry. In the typical case, BLUE must be present with the exception of one condition. The presence of an extra busy card in the defender's hand means that the squeeze will occur one trick earlier than in the notrump squeeze — that is, on the next-to-last Free winner (which is usually, but not necessarily, a trump). This means that declarer still has a trump remaining after the squeeze has occurred, and this may save the day. Note that, in Exercise 1, the spade ruff must be postponed until after the squeeze has taken place: if you ruff earlier, you will fail.

Much of the time, the issues in a simple trump squeeze are the same as those that we encountered in Chapter 1, in terms of the positioning of threats and entries, and how that positioning determines which defender can be squeezed. The criss-cross position is more common in trump squeezes, however, so let's look more closely at the characteristics of this type of ruffing simple squeeze. We shall assume in our definition that South will hold the final trump and that the North hand has the ruffing threat. The squeeze card will be either the secondlast trump or the last Free winner.

### The Ruffing Criss-Cross Squeeze

You have two threats, split between the two hands.

- (a) The ruffing threat is jointly guarded by both defenders, but the victim holds the length in the ruffing-threat suit.
- (b) The other threat is solely guarded by one defender, the victim. (Either opponent may be the victim, as always in criss-cross squeezes. Try Exercise 1 again, reversing the East-West hands.)

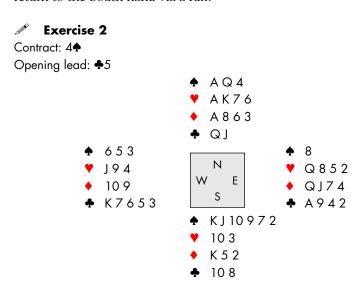
You cannot immediately isolate the guard in the ruffing-threat suit, normally because you need an entry in that suit after the squeeze matures.

The North hand must have two entries, at least one of which must be in South's threat suit at the time the squeeze matures. You must have a way back to the North hand after your ruff if the victim abandons the ruffing-threat suit. If the final Free winner in the North hand is the squeeze card, then that counts as one of the entries.

As with the notrump criss-cross squeeze, you sometimes have to guess which suit the defender has abandoned. If East in Exercise 1 above had started with 5-3 in the black suits and had cunningly unguarded his ♣O early, you might well have tried to ruff out the spades when what you actually needed to do was drop his  $\clubsuit$ O.

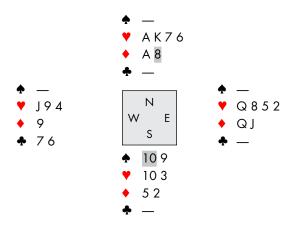
The squeeze is performed as follows:

- 1. Run all of your trumps but one: the victim will be squeezed either on the second-last trump or when you cross to the North hand with the last winner in the other Free suit.
- 2. During the course of the squeeze, you obviously keep enough cards in the North hand in the ruffing-threat suit to retain a ruffing threat. As a result, you will have to discard all North's idle cards in South's threat suit, which would otherwise leave that suit blocked. If the victim gives up the ruffing-threat suit, you cash any top winners in that suit and establish it by ruffing, returning to the North hand via an entry in South's threat suit to cash the last winner. If the victim discards from South's threat suit, you cash all North's winners and then return to the South hand via a ruff.



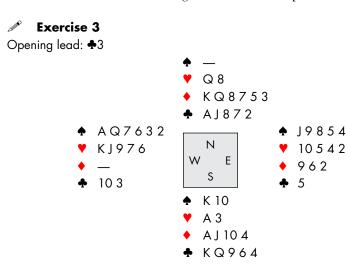
East wins the first trick with the A and returns the A. West wins with the Aand shifts to the  $\blacklozenge$ 10, which you run round to the  $\blacklozenge$ K as East plays the  $\blacklozenge$ 7. At this stage you have ten tricks and your contract, but you may be able to make an overtrick.

You start by drawing trumps in three rounds. On the second and third spades, East discards the  $\diamondsuit$ 4 and the  $\diamondsuit$ 4. It looks as if East started with four diamonds; if he also has four (or more) hearts, you have him. You continue to play spades, taking care to keep all the hearts in dummy. As you are about to lead the secondlast spade, this is the position:



You lead the ♠10, the second-last trump, throwing the ♦8 from dummy, and East is squeezed. If he discards a heart, you can ruff out the hearts. If he throws a diamond, you can cash dummy's top winners to leave your hand high.

The ruffing squeeze would have been equally effective if it had been West who started with 4-4 in the red suits, though in that case you could also have played for a simple squeeze, isolating the heart guard and then watching to see whether West threw the missing heart on the last spade.

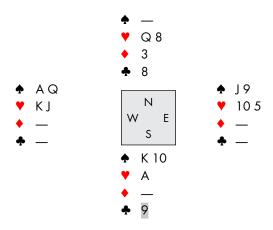


West	North	East	South
			1NT
2♣*	3♣*	3♠	4
pass	4♠	pass	4NT
pass all pass	5NT*	pass	7♦

After taking a conservative position with your opening bid, you catch up later and end up in 7♦. If West starts with the ♠A or a heart lead from the king, your contract is easy; unfortunately, he leads a club.

You win and draw trumps in two rounds. If you were playing in clubs, you would have no trouble taking thirteen tricks, simply ruffing two spades in the North hand and throwing a heart on the long diamond. However, that approach won't work in diamonds. On the auction West probably has the ♠A and the ♥K, and you have a simple squeeze if he does. Your problem is that you don't have the entries for a notrump-style simple squeeze.

If you run all your minor-suit winners ending in dummy, you have entry problems. If you have cashed the ♥A first, you have no entry to the South hand; if you haven't cashed it, you have to bare it and will then not be able to get back to the \(\forall\) in dummy if West abandons hearts. Likewise, if you cash your winners ending in the South hand you have no way back to dummy. However, since you are playing in a trump contract this can be overcome using the trumps for communication. You cash all but one of your diamonds, throwing a heart from hand, and then all but one of the clubs, reaching this position:



Now, when you lead the ♣9, West has two unpalatable options. He can throw a spade, in which case the spade ruffing threat comes into play. Alternatively he can throw a heart, in which case you cash the ♥A and ruff a spade to return to dummy for the  $\nabla Q$ .

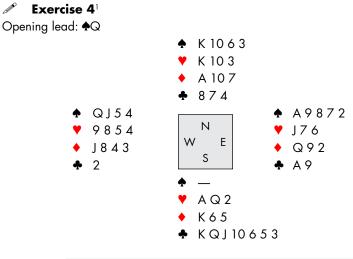
As you can see, this deal is quite similar to the previous ruffing simple squeeze. We have a ruffing threat, a blocked suit (hearts) and the use of a ruff to access one of the hands after cashing a winner if the defender discards from the blocked suit.

One difference is that the non-trump hand this time has only one late entry (the ♥A); the ability to win the squeeze trick in this hand compensates for the lack of a later entry. Another difference is that you have less information about the victim's shape. West could be 5=6=0=2 rather than 6=5=0=2. If he is like most defenders, he will discard down to the ending shown and it will not matter what shape he started with. An expert in squeeze defense will make your life harder: once he can see what is coming, he will decide which major is he going to abandon, giving him the option of doing so before you have played your final club winner.

### The Ruffing Double Squeeze

A ruffing double squeeze operates against both opponents but otherwise is rather different from other double squeezes. There is no direct ruffing equivalent of the double squeeze, other than positions that you could play via isolating the stoppers. This is because it is impossible to have specific threats against both opponents and the necessary entries while keeping the position tight against both opponents.

In a typical ruffing double squeeze, declarer has threats in two suits only. One of the suits is like the Common suit in a double squeeze, guarded by both opponents, and only one of them needs to retain a stopper. In the other suit, you need a ruffing threat so powerful that it acts against both opponents, i.e. they both need to retain a stopper in it. As you would expect, the trump element comes into play in some fashion. Just as in the simple trump squeeze, in some cases the trumps may be used to ruff out a guard after the squeeze has matured. Both opponents may have to guard against a ruff in the same suit. You also often have an element of a guard squeeze — the opponent to the right of the ruffing threat needs to hold on to a guard to prevent a ruffing finesse against his partner.



West	North	East	South
		1♠	2♣
2♠	3♠	pass	4♠*
pass	4NT	pass	5♠*
pass	6♣	all pass	

You are going to need to do a bit of thinking at Trick 1 since you have to make a decision about whether or not to cover the opening lead. It appears that West has the  $\bullet QI$  and East the  $\bullet A$  (along with pretty well all the missing high cards). If you cover, that will transfer responsibility for guarding the spade suit to West. Even if this is the right strategy, though, there is no rush to do it. You can isolate West's spade guard later by leading the  $\bigstar$ K from dummy, forcing East to cover. So you play low from dummy on the opening lead, and ruff in hand.

You toy with the idea of a throw in; perhaps East has the singleton ♣A. However, you will require East to be exactly 6=4=2=1, leaving West presumably with  $\Phi QIx$  — and if that's the case, it will be easy to set up the  $\Phi 10$ . At Trick 2, therefore, you lead the \*K. East wins with the \*A and plays back another trump. (Nothing else is better.) Now you know you need a squeeze.

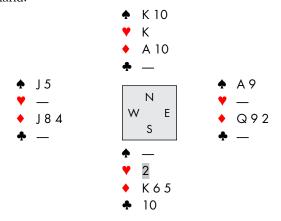
One consideration is a simple squeeze against East, but the •6 must be the threat or you will not have **U**. For that to work, East will need to have five diamonds and West will therefore be 4=6=2=1. With a weak hand and that distribution. West would probably have bid 44 at his first turn instead of 24. Another possibility is that West is guarding diamonds, but with no diamond honors, East does not have anything like an opening bid, so the only realistic possibility is that East has a doubleton diamond. In that case you can transfer the

This deal was originally analyzed by Roy Hughes and appears in his book Card by Card (Master Point Press, 2006).

spade menace to West and then the spade-diamond simple squeeze against him will work. However, this layout still seems unlikely.

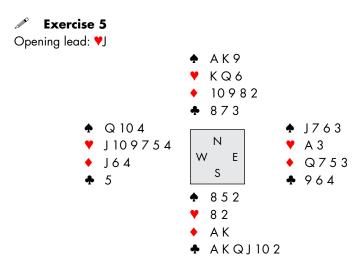
The ruffing double squeeze seems a better prospect. This will work when the diamonds are split with each player holding a diamond honor. The position is an interesting variation of a pure double squeeze in that there are threats in only two suits, but each player is still subject to a single squeeze and so the double squeeze works. Both players are squeezed in the same two suits! You can consider diamonds as the Common suit but the power of the trumps is so great that each player must separately guard spades. West must always keep the • guarded, or his partner will be subject to a ruffing finesse, setting up the ♠10; East must hold the guarded A, or else declarer can simply ruff it out, setting up the K.

So, after drawing trumps, you cash both of the Free suits, except for the final trump. You must end up in dummy after the squeeze trick, so the VK will be the final winner (and the squeeze card). You arrive at this position as you lead the ♥2 from hand:



West must throw a diamond, since the alternative is to give up his spade guard. If East now throws a spade, then you can ruff out the A. Meanwhile, if East throws a diamond, you cash the A and return to hand with a ruff to cash your diamond winners. Notice that you do not actually need the ◆K in this end position. Indeed if East had switched to a diamond when in with the A, you would have had to play the  $\bigstar K$  earlier. With the  $\bigstar K$  gone, the ending would be four cards for each player and have the familiar features of a blocked suit with a ruff providing communication.

# The Ruffing Guard Squeeze

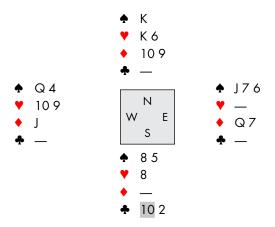


West	North	East	South
			1♣
2♥	3NT	pass	4♣
pass all pass	4 <b>♠</b> *	pass	6♣

You put up the ♥K from dummy and East wins the ♥A. If only the ♥A had been onside, as you had a right to expect, you would have twelve tricks, but such is not the case. East returns the \$\displays 10 West's \$\displays 10 and dummy's \$\displays A. You draw trumps in three rounds as West discards two hearts. Clearly the \$\infty\$6 in dummy is a threat against West and it looks as though both defenders are guarding spades. If the  $\clubsuit 3$ is truly fourth highest, then West is probably 3=6=3=1.

A double squeeze might be a possibility if you can isolate the diamond threat. For a normal double squeeze to operate, the South hand must have one of the threats, which can only be the 48. Here that won't work because spades are going to be the Common suit and South's spade suit does not contain an entry. Fortunately, there is still a chance with a trump squeeze if West holds one of the diamond honors. West must hold on to his diamonds so that you can't execute a ruffing finesse against East, while East must hold on to all his diamonds else you can ruff out the •Q. West has the heart guard, and cannot also hold the spade guard; he will be triple squeezed on the run of the clubs.

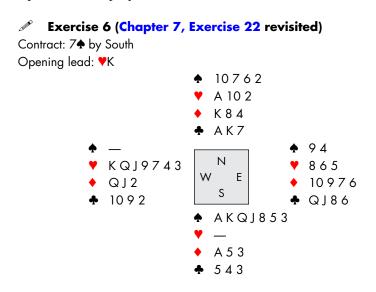
You cash your diamond winners and play clubs. This is the ending as the second-last club is about to be played:



Suppose West discards a spade. Dummy discards a heart, as East pitches a spade. Now you play a heart to the ♥K and East is trump squeezed in diamonds and spades. Try it.

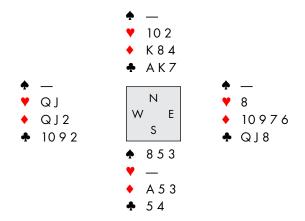
### The Ruffing Compound Squeeze

In Chapter 7, you were promised a return visit to one of the Exercises which had a potential trump squeeze variation.



In the original solution, you ruffed the opening lead in hand to defer having to make a discard. We are now going to look at what happens if you take the \(\nspec{A}\) at Trick 1.

Let's suppose you discard a club from hand and run spades. This is the position after four rounds of spades. You have a Type L ruffing compound squeeze.



On the fifth spade West is triple squeezed. He obviously cannot throw a heart because you can ruff out his other heart honor, so he must pick one of the minors. Whether he throws a club or a diamond, you can discard a diamond from dummy and East discards a heart. If he has discarded a diamond, you now have a double squeeze with clubs as the Common suit. If he discards a club, then diamonds is the Common suit. In either case the threats will be the  $\heartsuit 10$ , the  $\diamondsuit 5$  and the  $\clubsuit 7$ . It will be either a Type R double squeeze or a Type C1 double squeeze depending on which minor West has discarded.

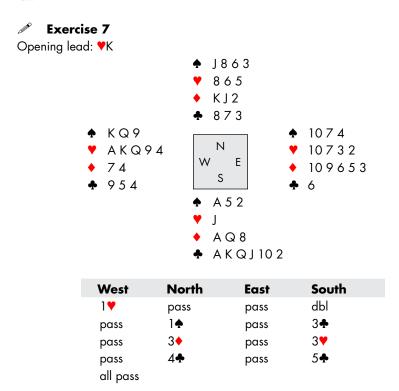
You cash out the winners in the suit that West has discarded. For example, if West discards a diamond, you cash out the top two diamond winners ending in your hand. If West discards a club, you cash out the club winners and you can still return to the South hand with a heart ruff to play off the remaining trump. After the club discard you cannot use diamonds as your transportation because there will be no communications after the squeeze is complete. (Try it vourself.)

Back at Trick 1, what happens if you discard a diamond instead of a club? The North hand holds the threats in hearts and diamonds now, so the club threat has to be in the South hand. However, there is no entry in clubs, so the squeeze will fail if West abandons diamonds and makes clubs the Common suit.

# The Ruffing Strip-Squeeze

In Chapter 4, we began looking at squeezes with more than one loser, that is, various types of strip-squeeze. In addition to overcoming entry problems, trumps can play an important role in completing the strip.

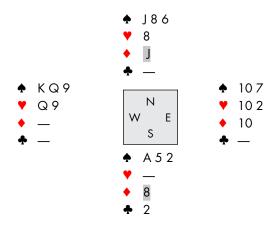
The next deal demonstrates a more complex squeeze, a ruffing strip-squeeze with a fragile stopper. Having studied the notrump version of this squeeze, you will find it very familiar and not substantially more complex. The ruffing variant allows you to overcome an obstacle that would cause the notrump version to fail.



West starts off with two rounds of hearts. You ruff the second round and draw trumps in three rounds, East discarding two diamonds. From the auction it seems very likely that West has both spade honors: with heart support, a singleton club and even as little as the  $\Phi Q$ , surely East would have bid something. That being the case, the best way to make the contract is to find a way to reach a three-card ending with West holding the AKQx. In that end position, a low spade exit will force him to win the trick with one honor and then lead away from the other. The problem is that there is no way to remove all of the hearts from the West hand.

Let's say that you attempt to get down to a four-card ending. You are still holding a trump, while West must hold three spades (to stop you from setting up a spade trick by force) and will also have a heart. When you lead the last trump, West can keep the heart and throw a spade. Ruffing a heart early in the hand will not work either. It doesn't change the situation at all. (Try it.) There is a solution, though: you squeeze West first, and then ruff out his heart exit.

Start by playing off all the trumps but one, then cash your diamond winners ending in dummy. You need to be in dummy at this point to be in position to ruff the last heart. This is the ending as you play the last diamond to dummy:



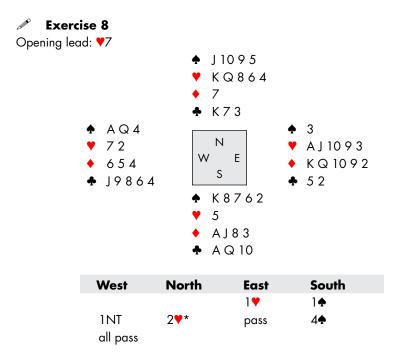
West must throw a heart (say he tries the ♥Q) on the diamond trick (a spade discard would allow you just to duck a spade and set up your long spade). Now that West has been squeezed, you ruff dummy's heart, achieving the three-card ending you desire. When you lead a spade towards the ♠J, West gets endplayed.

### **Unique Trump Squeezes**

We mentioned above that there are some trump squeezes that are not analogous to other types of squeeze, endings in which the trump suit plays a different role. In some of these squeezes, the trump suit is itself, in some fashion, one of the threat suits.

### The crossruffing squeeze

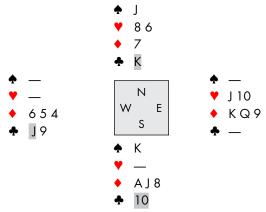
Sometimes you have a ruffing threat in each hand and no convenient way to simplify the position. A defender who has to protect two ruffing stoppers has to keep an extra card, meaning the squeeze nearly always bites when you have two trumps left, one in each hand. The normal requirements apply for a ruffing threat: you need two entries (the squeeze card can usually count as one of these) for each threat so that you can both set up and cash a winner in the suit. In a crossruffing squeeze one of the entries to each hand will be a ruff.



You play the ♥K from dummy and East's ♥A wins. Seeing the singleton diamond in dummy, East switches to a trump. West wins with the  $\Phi Q$ , cashes the  $\Phi A$  and plays a third round of trumps, East discarding the  $\bullet$ 10 and the  $\bullet$ 2.

East needs the ◆KQ for his opening bid, something his ◆10 discard confirms. If you had one more entry to dummy, you could play a dummy reversal (ruffing two hearts) combined with a simple squeeze against East in the red suits, but that is not an option on the actual layout. You will need some sort of ruffing squeeze, delaying some of the ruffs until after the squeeze card, the third round of clubs.

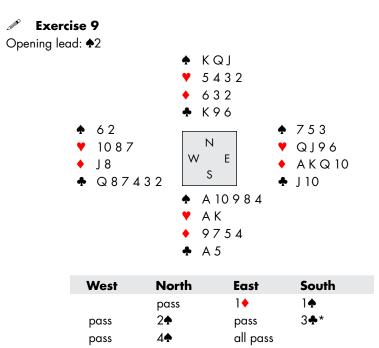
The usual rule for a crossruffing squeeze is to have one trump in each hand. Currently you have more trumps in the South hand than you do in dummy, and you therefore want to ruff a heart to even up the trump holding. Accordingly, you win the third round of trumps in dummy. You then cash the  $\mathbf{VQ}$ , throwing a diamond as West follows, and ruff a heart. Now you turn to the clubs. In which hand do you want to win the third round? You have a ruffing entry in both hands, with the  $\bullet$ A as another entry to hand but no comparable entry to dummy. This tells you to win the third round of clubs in dummy. This is the position as vou do:



If East throws a heart, you ruff a heart to leave dummy high and cash the ◆A. If East throws a diamond, you cross back to the ◆A and ruff a diamond to set up your own hand. Since you have a count on the heart suit, there is nothing East can do even if he sees the end position coming.

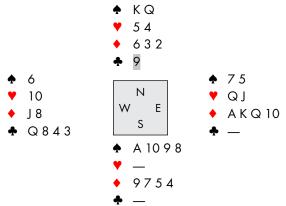
### The knockout squeeze

The following squeeze has been given a rather interesting name: the **knockout squeeze**. It is a triple squeeze where one of the defenders must either give up a guard or underruff, an act that sets up an extra trick for declarer. Here is an example:



You win the annoying spade lead in dummy. You have three top diamond losers and quite likely a fourth, as the suit is unlikely to be 3-3 on the auction. It doesn't seem possible to get a tenth trick by ruffing a diamond in dummy: the defense will have three more chances to continue trumps and they are likely to have a choice about who wins the second round of diamonds. A dummy reversal would have been possible on any other lead but now you are an entry short. Perhaps you can squeeze East, who surely must have most of the high cards. It is very unlikely that East holds the only club guard, but if he has four hearts then maybe there is some way to squeeze him in the red suits. Of course, one snag is the lack of an entry to dummy's heart threat. The loser count also looks to be a problem: it is impossible to give up three diamond tricks safely after the spade lead. The defense can just keep leading trumps and ultimately cash their fourth diamond winner. That means this is going to have to be a squeeze where you have more than one loser. In fact, on this deal you will have four losers!

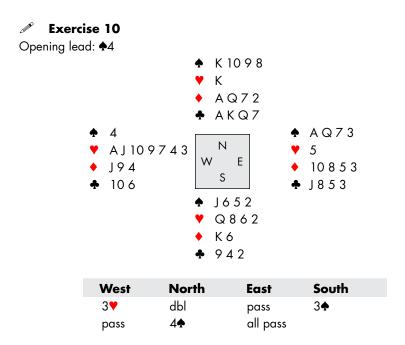
You cash the top two hearts to unblock the suit, then take the A and Kand play a third club from dummy, intending to ruff this in hand. This is the position:



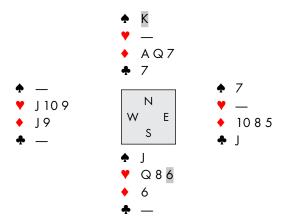
What is East to play on this trick? If he throws a heart you can set up a heart winner in dummy via a ruff. If he throws a diamond, you can eventually set up a diamond winner. He can instead ruff in front of you, but then the defense cannot prevent you from making a diamond ruff in dummy, since East is no longer able to lead a third round of trumps. This is a non-material squeeze in that East is not throwing away a winner or even, in the usual sense, a guard. East is 'only' throwing away a low trump — but in so doing he gives up his ability to remove dummy's third trump.

#### The backwash squeeze

Our final example will be the delightfully named **backwash squeeze**, described by Ottlik and Kelsey in Adventures in Card Play (Gollancz, 1979). A backwash squeeze is similar to a knockout squeeze in that declarer ruffs a loser on the squeeze trick and one of the possible actions open to the defender is underruffing. In a backwash squeeze, the defender sits over both threats and the squeeze would ordinarily fail because declarer lacks **U**. However, the defender also has to hold on to trumps and this creates too much pressure; in the triple squeeze the squeeze comes a trick earlier, so the hand under the defender does not get squeezed first. The name refers to the idea that the defender is caught in the 'backwash' of declarer's ruff.



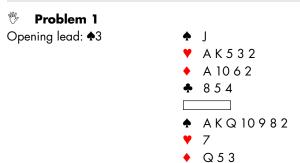
West leads a trump; East wins and plays two more rounds of spades, West discarding two hearts. Having won the third spade cheaply, you lead dummy's ♥K; West wins and returns the ♣10. Although a 3-3 club split looks less likely than ever, in theory you have ten tricks, assuming that you can ruff a diamond in hand, cash the  $\P Q$ , get back to dummy and draw the last trump. Your tricks will be three diamonds, a heart, three clubs and three trumps. However, East is overwhelmingly likely to be able to ruff the  $\nabla Q$ , so that line of play will not work. There is one that might, though. From the bidding and play it seems likely that East is 4=1=4=4 with a singleton heart. You cash two more club tricks, play a diamond to the  $\bigstar$ K and prepare to ruff a heart. This is the position:



Now you ruff a heart with the ♠K. East is guarding both clubs and diamonds but sits over the dummy. You do not have **U** in the normal sense, but East is now squeezed anyway. That is, because East also has to hold the \$7, he is therefore triple-squeezed. There are three variations:

- If East discards the  $\clubsuit$ J, you take the top diamonds and lead the  $\clubsuit$ 7. If East ruffs this, you overuff and claim; if he discards, you throw away the ♥Q, and the ♠J takes the last trick.
- If East discards a diamond, you play your diamond winners and East will have to ruff the third diamond. You can overruff and cash the \(\forall \infty\).
- 3. If East underruffs, you obviously have the rest of the tricks. You didn't really need any more winners! This is a non-material squeeze. East is not giving up a winner; he is giving up the ability to trump one of your winners.

#### **REVIEW PROBLEMS**

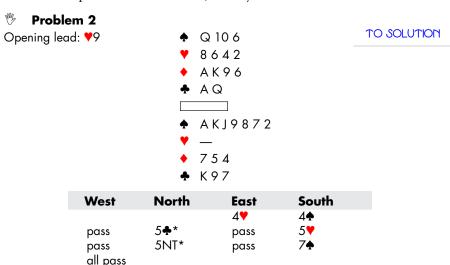


West	North	East	South
			2♣
pass	2 <b>♦</b> *	pass	3♠*
pass	4◆*	pass	4NT
pass	5♥*	pass	5NT
pass all pass	6 <b>∀</b> *	pass	7♠

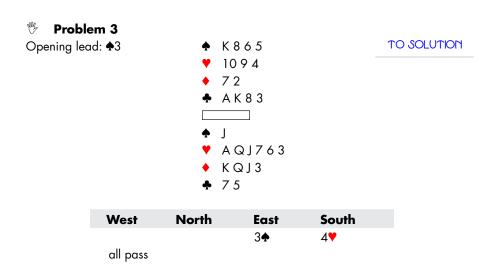
ΑK

TO SOLUTION

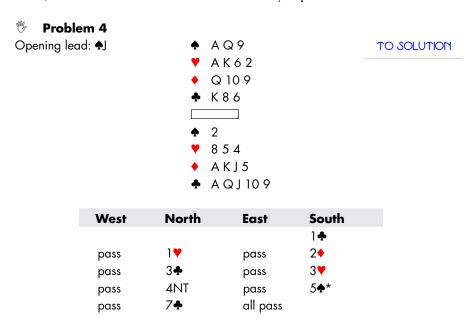
You win with the ♠A in hand as East follows with the ♠4. You continue spades, discarding a diamond from dummy, and both defenders follow. On the third spade, a heart goes from dummy and East shows out, throwing the ♠8 (attitude). On the fourth, West discards the ♠4, dummy the ♠6 and East the ♣3. You play a fifth round of trumps: West throws the ♣6, dummy a club and East the ♣2. What now?



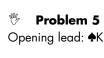
East overtakes with the ♥10, you ruff in hand and begin to play trumps. West follows to all three spades. East discards three hearts, the ♥A, ♥5 and ♥7. How do you proceed?



You duck the opening lead in dummy; East wins with the  $\Phi Q$  and shifts to the ♥2, on which you play low. West wins with the ♥K and continues with a second heart, on which East discards the \$2. How do you proceed?



Not wishing to go down at Trick 1, you rise with the  $\triangle A$ , and East plays the  $\triangle 6$ . You draw trumps in three rounds, West discarding the ♠3, and play four rounds of diamonds. The diamonds are 3-3; West throws the \$7 and East the \$4. How do you plan to make your grand slam?

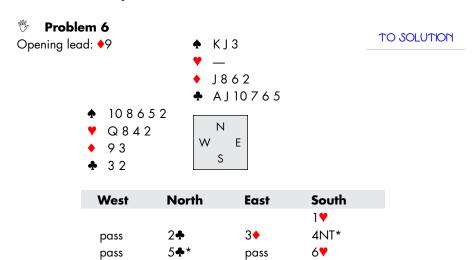


<b></b>	A 2
<b>Y</b>	A K J 9 3 2
<b>♦</b>	AKJ
•	K 5
<b></b>	76
<b>Y</b>	8
<b>♦</b>	5 4 2
<b>+</b>	AQJ10864

TO SOLUTION

West	North	East	South	
2♠	dbl	3♠	5♣	
pass all pass	5NT	pass	7♣	

You win the ♠A and East plays the ♠3. You draw trumps in four rounds; East, who shows out on the first round, discards the  $\blacklozenge$ 10 (attitude),  $\blacklozenge$ 6,  $\spadesuit$ 8 and  $\spadesuit$ 9. You play the ♥A and the ♥K. West follows to the first heart with the ♥4 but discards the \$4 on the second. Show that the contract is guaranteed on the assumption that West has six spades.

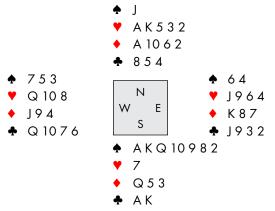


You are West, defending this slam. Partner plays the ◆7 at Trick 1 and declarer wins with the ◆A. He then plays the ♥A and the ♥K, partner following, and continues with the ♥J. You win with the ♥Q as partner shows out, discarding the ♣9. Your play.

#### **SOLUTIONS**

TO PROBLEM Solution 1



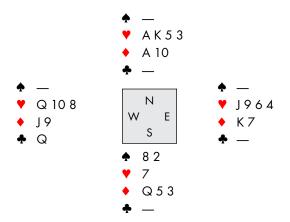


West	North	East	South
			2♣
pass	2♦*	pass	3♠*
pass	<b>4</b> ♦*	pass	4NT
pass	5♥*	pass	5NT
pass all pass	6♥*	pass	7♠

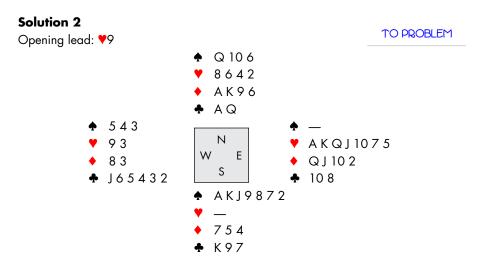
You win with the  $\triangle A$  in hand as East follows with the  $\triangle 4$ . You continue spades, discarding a diamond from dummy, and both defenders follow. On the third spade, a heart goes from dummy and East shows out, throwing the \$\infty\$8 (attitude). On the fourth, West discards the 4, dummy the 6 and East the 3. You play a fifth round of trumps: West throws the \$\,\Phi\_6\$, dummy a club and East the \$\,\Phi\_2\$.

You are a trick short of making your grand slam. Without the spade lead you might have tried to ruff out the heart suit, but that became impossible at Trick 1. However, there might be a squeeze on West if he holds the ◆K and at least four hearts. You could play the VAK, ruff a heart and then run off the trumps. A similar squeeze against East will work if he has the ◆K and five hearts; you would cash the ◆A (a Vienna Coup) to set up the squeeze, and use the ♥A as a late entry to dummy. A final possibility is a Type R double squeeze with hearts as the Common suit if West has six clubs and East has the •K, which again would require a Vienna Coup, but this layout is rather less likely. Clearly you cannot try every option, since each has different requirements.

You have run off some of the trumps, which could not hurt, and this has given you more information. You next cash the AK, to which all follow. These are the remaining cards:



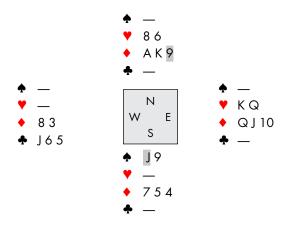
While East could be falsecarding, the play suggests that he has the ◆K and that both opponents guard hearts. You play off your next spade; West throws the ♥8 and dummy the ♦10, while East parts with the ♥4. It appears that you have trump-squeezed East, but you do have to guess the ending. If East has kept only one diamond then you must cash the •A and use the trump as an entry to the South hand. If you believe that East has given up the heart guard then you cash hearts and ruff a heart, using the ◆A as a re-entry to dummy. If the play goes as described, you should aim to set up hearts. Very few opponents would be farsighted enough to abandon the diamond guard at Trick 3.



West	North	East	South	
		4♥	4♠	
pass	5♣*	pass	5♥	
pass	5NT*	pass	7♠	

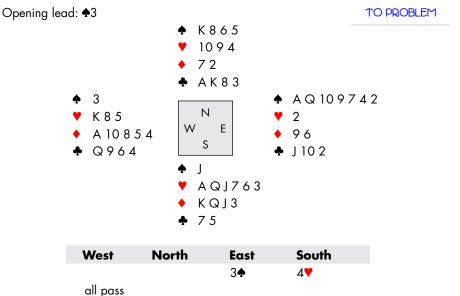
East overtakes with the ♥10, you ruff in hand and begin to play trumps. West follows to all three spades. East discards three hearts, the  $\forall$ A,  $\forall$ 5 and  $\forall$ 7.

You have twelve easy tricks, but the thirteenth is going to have to come from a squeeze. After drawing trumps, you unblock the club suit as everyone follows. You ruff a heart back to hand, West following. You cash the ♣K, dummy and East discarding diamonds. Based on the bidding and play, it seems that East started with a 0=7=4=2 pattern. This is therefore the position:



East is the only one guarding hearts or diamonds. Your threats are the  $\blacklozenge$ 7 in the South hand and the ♥8 in the North hand. When you lead the ♠J, you throw the •9 from dummy. If East throws a heart, you can set up the last heart winner; if East throws a diamond, you can cash the top diamonds and get back to the ◆7 in your hand by means of a ruff. This is a classic ruffing squeeze. The North hand has entries in South's threat suit and South has trumps in lieu of entries in the North threat suit.

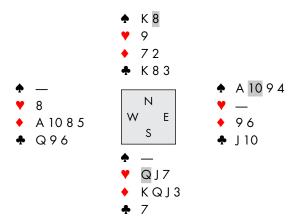




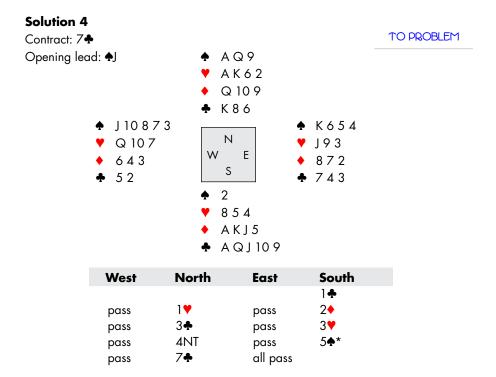
You duck the opening lead in dummy; East wins with the  $\Phi Q$  and shifts to the ♥2, on which you play low. West wins with the ♥K and continues with a second heart, on which East discards the  $\clubsuit 2$ .

There seems little doubt that the A is offside. If you play diamonds next, West will win and return the third trump. You might have a club-diamond simple squeeze on West, but that would require West to have five clubs along with four or five diamonds. West *could* be 1=3=4=5, that is certainly possible. However, assuming you read the position, you can also make the contract if West has only four clubs. You can ruff some spades to exert pressure on him, and this approach will succeed on any deal where the simple squeeze would work. Let's see how the play would go.

After winning the second heart in dummy, you ruff a spade high. You cross on the A and ruff another spade high. This is the position:

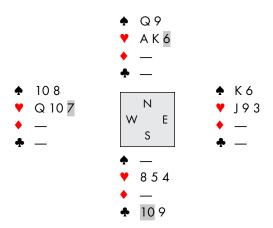


When you play the spade from dummy and ruff high, West is squeezed in three suits. If he throws away a club, you can ruff out clubs and reach the last club with the \( \brace \)9. A diamond discard allows you to set up diamonds, and if he underruffs then you will have a trump in dummy to ruff your last diamond — a knockout squeeze.

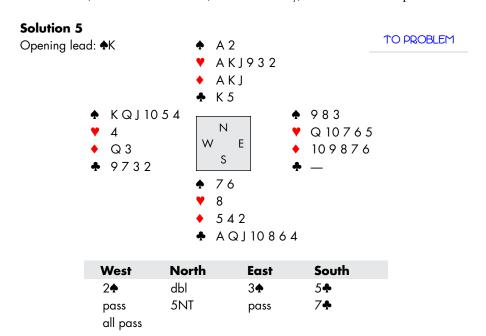


Not wishing to go down at Trick 1, you rise with the A, and East plays the A. You draw trumps in three rounds, West discarding the ♠3, and play four rounds of diamonds. The diamonds are 3-3; West throws the  $\clubsuit$ 7 and East the  $\spadesuit$ 4.

Your best chance to make the grand slam is a ruffing double squeeze. Here both opponents are guarding the same two suits, hearts and spades. West must keep at least two spades to prevent you from leading the  $\Phi Q$  to take a ruffing finesse against East, while East must hold on to two spades or you can just ruff out his  $\bigstar K$ . In the end, either they will both have to give up hearts or one will have to give up spades. And that is enough. After running the diamonds you now play your second-last trump in this position:



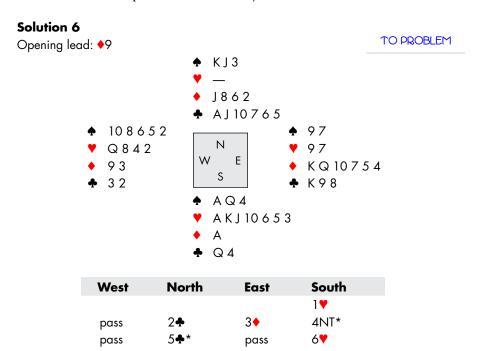
On the \$10, West throws a heart, as does dummy, and now East is squeezed.



You win with the  $\triangle$ A and East plays the  $\triangle$ 3. You draw trumps in four rounds, throwing a spade and a heart from dummy; East, who shows out on the first round, discards the  $\diamond 10$  (attitude),  $\diamond 6$ ,  $\diamond 8$  and  $\diamond 9$ . You then cash the  $\forall A$  and the ♥K, discarding your spade. West follows to the first heart with the ♥4 but discards the \$4 on the second.

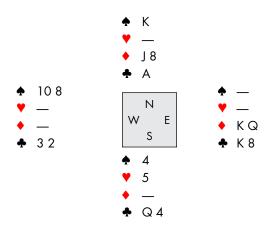
You know that West has six spades, one heart and four clubs, and therefore exactly two diamonds. East has to be 3=5=5=0. Having discarded all his remaining spades and two diamonds, East will be in trouble on the next club. So you ruff a heart back to hand and lead a club, throwing the ◆J from dummy. If East throws a diamond, then the queen is coming down wherever she is, with no need for a finesse. If East discards a heart, then you can bring the heart suit home for the extra winner, using one diamond entry to establish it and the other one to cash it.

On this deal the victim initially has to keep two extra cards to maintain his stopper because you have a heart entry and two further entries to dummy. Notice that once you tested the hearts and found you needed a trump squeeze, it was vital to have both top diamonds in dummy.



You are West, partner plays the  $\bullet$ 7 at Trick 1 and declarer wins with the  $\bullet$ A. Now he plays the  $\forall$ A and the  $\forall$ K, partner following, and continues with the  $\forall$ J. You win with the  $\mathbf{VQ}$  as partner shows out, discarding the  $\mathbf{\Phi}9$ .

On the auction and play so far you are certain that a second diamond will not cash. The ♣9 suggests partner has the ♣K. If you just make the automatic continuation of a diamond, declarer can make the contract. He ruffs the diamond, plays off all the hearts but one as well as two spade winners, and leads the last spade to dummy. This will be the position:



East is trump-squeezed in clubs and diamonds on the lead of the  $\clubsuit$ 4.

However, for the squeeze to work, declarer needs a late club entry to the North hand. If the A is gone then he will not be able to set up a diamond winner in dummy and get back to it. The ruffing squeeze will fail. (Try it.) If you could stop declarer from winning the third round of spades in dummy, that would also defeat the squeeze, but you are not in a position to do that. While you may not be able to work out all the details at the table, it makes sense to attack dummy's vulnerable entry and switch to a club at Trick 5.

#### CHAPTER 8 SUMMARY

There are ruffing versions of most of the squeezes studied earlier in the book. Typical examples will include a ruffing threat — a suit where one or more winners can be established by ruffing if the defender abandons his guard. For example:

#### **Ruffing Simple Squeeze**

- can overcome a flaw in BLUE
- squeeze often occurs on next-to-last Free winner

#### **Ruffing Criss-Cross Squeeze**

- two threats, one in each hand
- ruffing threat guarded by both opponents but since victim holds the length, cannot isolate the guard immediately

### **Ruffing Double Squeeze**

- quite different from a regular double squeeze, in that only two suits are involved
- two threats operate on both opponents, one being a ruffing threat
- the ruffing threat is so powerful it must be guarded by both opponents

# Ruffing Strip-Squeeze

• trumps can be used to overcome entry problems or help remove an exit from a defender's hand

Distinctive Trump Squeezes include:

# **Crossruffing Squeeze**

- ruffing threats in each hand protected by a single defender
- need two entries to each hand (including the squeeze card). One of these entries in each hand will be a ruff.

#### **Knockout Squeeze**

• triple squeeze where one defender must give up a guard or underruff (which will allow declarer an extra trick)

#### **Backwash Squeeze**

- type of triple squeeze with the trump suit as one threat
- the defender sits over both standard threats but also has to hold on to a trump.
- declarer ruffs a loser high on the squeeze trick.

# ENTRY SQUEEZES

In this chapter we shall discuss some specialized squeezes, most of which involve overcoming entry problems. It will of necessity be just a brief look at these more unusual types of squeeze.

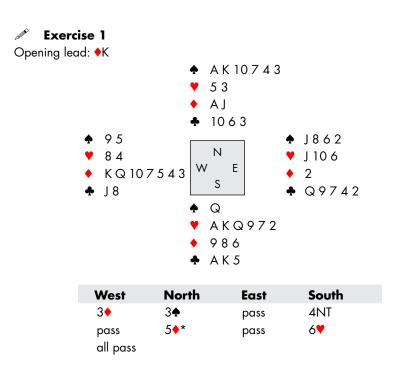
There are a number of squeezes that can be used to circumvent entry issues caused by a blockage in a suit. In the typical example, declarer has enough tricks but is not able to cash all of them. A squeeze may be necessary to achieve a winning end position.

# The Stepping Stone

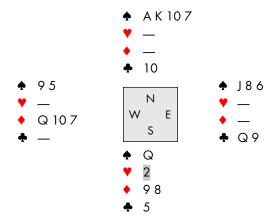
Is there such a thing as a one-loser strip-squeeze? As we pointed out in Chapter 5, there cannot be if declarer is able to cash all his winners — it is just a pure squeeze. However, suppose you have a blocked suit somewhere and no immediate means to avoid the blockage. In this case you may need to arrange for an opponent to give you access to the blocked winner — and it is possible you will need to squeeze him out of some exit cards before you can achieve this.

The **stepping stone**<sup>1</sup> operates in the same fashion as an ordinary stripsqueeze except that one of the threat suits is blocked. The defender must choose between being thrown in to allow access to the blocked suit or allowing declarer to overtake in the suit without loss.

<sup>1.</sup> The stepping stone and the winkle were first described and named by Terence Reese.



You win the first diamond since you expect the suit to be 7-1 on the bidding, something East's  $\diamond 2$  appears to confirm. You draw trumps, West discarding a diamond on the third round. You have twelve tricks but the premature removal of dummy's  $\diamond A$  leaves you with some difficulty cashing them. You could overtake the  $\diamond Q$  in the hope the  $\diamond J$  falls doubleton, but there is no rush for that. You run some trumps, cash the  $\diamond AK$  (both defenders follow to the clubs) and reach this position:



You play the last trump to squeeze East out of his exit card in clubs. (Assuming you read the position, it does not help East to throw a spade here and keep two

clubs — you would just overtake the  $\Phi Q$ .) You then cash the  $\Phi Q$  and play a club. East scores his  $\bullet$ O but has to concede the last two tricks to dummy.

You played for East to be the victim of this stepping-stone squeeze because you placed West with nine red cards and you found him with at least two clubs. However, if you had reason to believe that West was protecting spades — say if he had three or fewer cards in the rounded suits — the end position would be just as effective. West would have to trim down to a bare  $\mathbf{Q}$  so as to keep  $\mathbf{A}$  xx. You would then cash the  $\Phi Q$  and exit to him in diamonds.

# The Entry Squeeze

The **entry squeeze** is a triple squeeze where one of the 'threats' is an entry. This squeeze, originally described by Geza Ottlik, extracts something non-material but nevertheless important from the defender. The defender does not hold winners or guards in a suit, but his intermediate cards prevent declarer from utilizing a necessary entry. Squeezes which relate to entries are not that common in general, but this type is particularly rare.

To clarify: imagine you have KQJ4 in hand facing A532 in dummy and want to take some finesses in a different suit against the hand on your right. If the entry suit breaks 3-2, you can cash the king and queen, overtake the jack with the ace and later lead the four to the five to cross to dummy again. If the suit breaks 4-1, you will not be able to do this unless you can persuade the defender with the four-card holding to part with one — which is why you need a squeeze (either genuine or pseudo).

#### Exercise 2 Contract: 3NT by South (East opened 1◆) Opening lead: 10 Q 3 1962 K 1082 862 10985 KJ7 Ν 8743 Q 105 Ε 3 1765 S 10543 A Q 7 A 6 4 2 ΑK AQ94

There are so few values outstanding that it scarcely seems possible for West to hold the ♠K, so you therefore play low from dummy at Trick 1. East overtakes with the ♠J, which you allow to hold, and when East returns the ♠K you duck that too. You win the third spade with the A, throwing a club from dummy. You then lay down the A. West follows but his card is the 3, not the 1.

KJ9

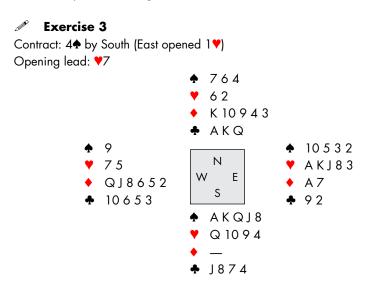
You expect East to have the ♣AQ. However, leading clubs twice from dummy is going to be difficult since East is also likely to have the three missing diamonds. If you are to neutralize the effect of the ◆I, you will have to lead the ♦9 to the ♦K and then run the ♦10 or the ♦8. This will give you one entry for leading clubs but you need two. One option is to cash the VAK, hoping the VQ will fall. If that does not work, perhaps East has the ♣AQ doubleton. Of course, the actual layout is more likely.

The only available squeeze card is a loser, the  $\clubsuit$ 6, so you duly lead it. West wins and dummy throws a heart. What is East to do? He is down to three cards in each of three suits. If he throws a heart, you will be able to cash the \AK, cross to dummy and score the ♥J. If he throws a club, he will be down to ♣AQ alone and a single lead through him will suffice. He therefore parts with one of his 'worthless' diamonds. After this, you win the heart switch and take two rounds of diamonds ending in dummy. You lead a club to the ♣I and return to dummy with the \$10 to play clubs again.

Of course, East could have defeated you with an early switch to a heart but this is only because your heart honors were doubleton.

# The Jettison Squeeze

The **jettison squeeze** is another type of blocked-suit squeeze which works on one defender. One variation is the one-loser simple squeeze version. One of two threats is in a blocked suit, and if the defender discards from this suit you can throw away the blocking card.

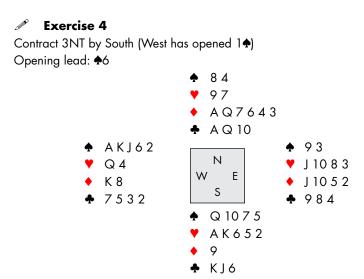


East wins the first two tricks with top hearts and plays a third heart; you play low and West ruffs with the  $\bullet$ 9. The  $\bullet$ Q continuation goes to the  $\bullet$ K and the  $\bullet$ A, and you ruff in hand. When you now lead the A, West discards a diamond. East is known to have nine cards in the majors, so he is not a favorite to hold three or more clubs. As a result, while in theory you have enough winners to take the rest of the tricks, it is not likely you can disentangle the entries. If East has fewer than three clubs, you cannot cash three clubs to unblock the suit before drawing trumps, while if you draw all the trumps and then play dummy's club winners, you have no way back to hand to enjoy the ♣J.

The winning line is to take exactly two top clubs and draw East's trumps. When you lead the ♥Q in the three-card ending, West is squeezed. If he discards a diamond, dummy is high, while parting with a club allows you to 'jettison' dummy's last high club and make the final two tricks with the \$18 in your hand. The squeeze works in a similar way if you ruff the \(\forall \Q\) in dummy, play two top clubs and then run the trumps. (Try it.)

# The Entry-Shifting Squeeze

In the previous squeezes we have seen positions where communications present obstacles that need to be overcome. In this next Exercise, the fluidity of the entries provides an advantage to declarer, in that he can choose to win the squeeze trick in either hand depending on the defender's discard.



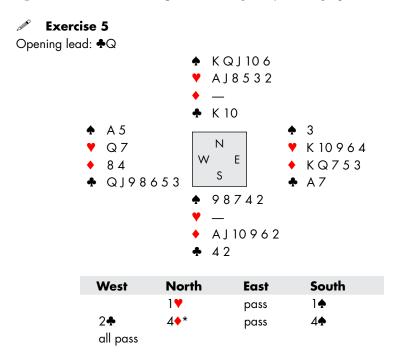
The first trick goes to East's ♠9 and your ♠10. At this point you have only seven top tricks, but the auction suggests that the  $\bullet$ K is onside, bringing your total to eight. You cannot afford to lose a trick to East so you cannot duck a trick and hope for a 3-3 split in one of the red suits.

The best choice is to play back a spade. If West does cash out spades, there might be a red-suit squeeze against East if he has both guards. In fact, as the cards lie, that is indeed the case. However, this West is familiar with squeeze play. He takes only three spade winners and then exits with the ◆K. Foiled again! You have to win this trick, else West will simply cash the last spade. However, all is not lost: if East is at least 4-4 in the red suits, you can still subject him to an entry-shifting squeeze.

You are now going to perform what amounts to a delayed duck squeeze on East. On the second club he will have to come down to five cards and thus give up one of his red-suit guards. You can then give up a trick in that red suit to establish your own winners. Your communications are very limited, however, since you do not have a diamond in the South hand. Also, if East gives up a heart guard, you will have to cash the ♥AK before ducking a heart, to prevent West from gaining the lead and cashing his spade. Fortunately, there is a way to end up in the right hand to cash your tricks: since you only have to cash two clubs to execute the squeeze, you can use the third club trick for your communications.

To make this work you will need to make the decision about clubs after East has made his discard on the squeeze card. So you must lead the squeeze card from the North hand, and your remaining clubs have to be such that you can pick which hand will have the club entry. You can do this in a number of ways, but the simplest is to cash the ♣A first and play the ♣K under it. You will be left with  $\clubsuit Q10$  facing  $\clubsuit J6$ . Now you play the  $\clubsuit Q$ . If East throws a heart you play the ♣6, so that your last club entry will allow you to access the heart suit once it is established. If East throws a diamond you play the \$\\ \], allowing access to the North hand for diamonds.

For obvious reasons, this ending is also sometimes referred to as a **seesaw squeeze**. Here is an example of a ruffing entry-shifting squeeze.



The defense starts off winning the first two club tricks and continues with the A and another spade.

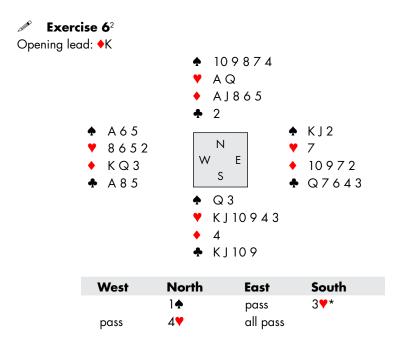
You have nine tricks on a crossruff and you have to set up one of the red suits for your tenth trick. Which is it to be? The only thing that can hurt you is a 5-2 break (or worse). After the overcall it seems likely that East is the only defender with length in a red suit. As it turns out, East is guarding both suits.

You can give yourself the best chance by keeping your entries fluid. On the ♠A make sure to unblock a spade honor from dummy. It really can't hurt to do so and is good technique anyway. East is actually squeezed on this trick. If he throws a heart then it is more likely hearts are splitting than diamonds. You win the second spade with the \\ \ddot 6 in dummy and play hearts. If East throws a diamond instead, you win the trick in hand and play on diamonds. Try it both ways.

We are going to look at two more squeezes. At least in some manifestations, these squeezes relate more to issues with blocked suits and communications for the defenders than to entry problems for declarer.

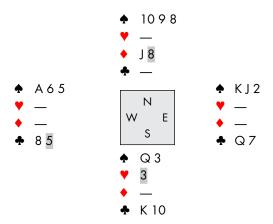
#### The Winkle

A **winkle** is a type of a strip-squeeze and endplay. Both defenders have winners in a suit but the suit is blocked. The defenders have the option of unblocking the suit, which sacrifices a trick, or allowing declarer to complete the endplay. Since the defenders can't safely unblock their suit, they have to provide the communications that declarer needs.



You win with the ◆A in dummy and continue with a club to the ♣9, taken by the ♣A. West returns a trump. Now you ruff a diamond, ruff a club and then ruff a diamond back to hand. At this point you still have two spade losers, along with the club you have already lost and another potential club loser. You run your heart winners, drawing West's trumps at the same time, and arrive at this position:

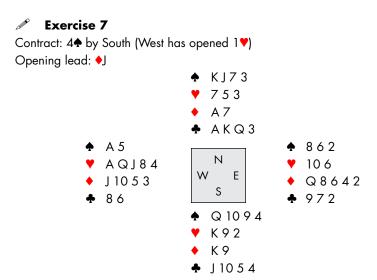
<sup>2.</sup> This deal was played by Chip Martel (USA) in the 2000 Bermuda Bowl and reported in the *Daily Bulletin*.



When you lead the last trump, West can throw a club and dummy can spare a diamond. Now it's East turn. He can't throw a club so he must discard a spade — but which one? If he throws a small spade, you lead a low spade. East can take his two spade winners but will have to lead away from the fragile club stopper. Alternatively, West can win the second spade, but by doing that he sets up dummy's ♠10. If East discards the ♠J instead, you succeed again with the low spade exit. Now the defenders have to give you either a spade winner or an extra club winner.

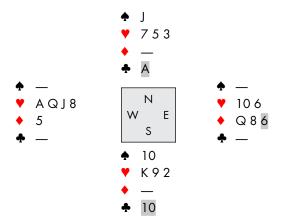
# The One-Suit Squeeze

The last type of squeeze to examine is the **one-suit** (or **single-suit**) **squeeze**. Can you squeeze someone in only one suit? This seems like a contradiction in terms. Let us look at an example.



You win the first trick in hand and play a spade. West wins with the ace, and exits with the \$\infty 3\$. Your aim now is to escape three heart losers, so you want to eliminate the other suits before playing hearts. You will then lead a heart from dummy and either cover East's spot with the \*9 or duck if East's card is higher than the nine. If West started with six hearts, or \(\forall AQ\) 10x, one opponent or the other will be endplayed. Your chances are not good, however. If (as is more likely) East has a doubleton  $\mathbf{VQ}$ ,  $\mathbf{VI}$  or  $\mathbf{V10}$  and is awake enough to play it when you lead a heart from dummy, you will go down.

In any case it can't hurt to draw trumps and play off the club winners ending in dummy. On the third trump West throws the ◆10 and on the third club he throws the \(\forall 4\). This is the ending as you lead the last club:



Suppose West throws a diamond. At this point you know that his remaining cards are all hearts, so it cannot hurt to play the ¶ next. A remarkable thing occurs on this trick. East throws a diamond but West, who is down to only hearts, has no sensible pitch. If he throws the \\display{8}, there is no way he can avoid the heart endplay, but parting with the ♥J is no better. When you lead a heart from dummy, East must put up the ♥10 to protect West from an endplay. You cover with the ♥K and West is still endplayed, as the plays in the heart suit have promoted your ♥9. The ♠J squeezed West.

The one-suit (or single-suit) squeeze is a cross between a material and a nonmaterial squeeze. The example shown is a subclass of the strip-squeeze. The defender has an awkward holding in a single suit. You strip the defender of his exits and give him a choice between being endplayed or giving up something material in the target suit.

#### **REVIEW PROBLEMS**

# Problem 1

TO SOLUTION

Opening lead: •K

983 A K 9 1063 ♣ A 10 8 3 A 4 QJ108643 AKJ4

West	North	East	South
			1♥
2♦	3♦	pass	4NT
pass	5◆*	pass	5NT
pass	6♥	all pass	

You win the first trick, East playing the ♠7 (attitude). When you lead the ♥Q, West shows out, throwing the ◆2. How do you continue?

# Problem 2 Opening lead: •6

TO SOLUTION

♠ A 10 8 6 **∀** KJ5 Q 10 4 **♣** 643 ♠ QJ74 Q 1076 ♦ A J ♣ AQ8

West	North	East	South
		2♦	2NT
pass	3NT	all pass	

The opening lead runs to your ◆J. You lead the ♠Q, which holds as East plays the ♠5. West covers the ♠J and you win in dummy, East discarding the ♣2. You continue with the ♥K. East wins with the ♥A and plays a small diamond to your ace. Can you make eleven tricks from here?

# **SOLUTIONS**

Opening lead: •K



983 A K 9 1063 A 10 8 3 K Q 10 J7652 Ν 752 W Ε Q98752 S KJ76 Q952 A 4 QJ108643

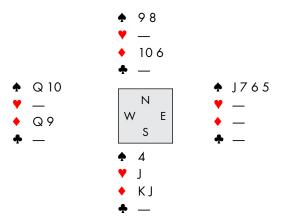
West	North	East	South
			1♥
2♦	3♦	pass	4NT
pass	5◆*	pass	5NT
pass	6♥	all pass	

AKI4

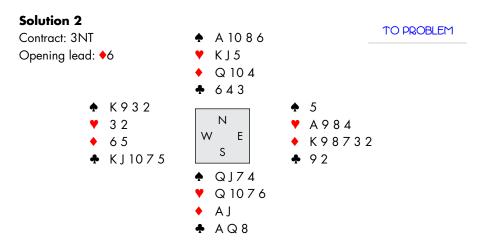
You win the first trick, East playing the  $\clubsuit$ 7 (attitude). When you lead the  $\heartsuit$ Q, West shows out, throwing the  $\diamond 2$ .

With the diamond finesse almost certainly wrong, collecting your twelfth trick is going to require a squeeze or an endplay, possibly both. West surely has high cards in the black suits for his overcall, since he can have little but length in diamonds. The lead suggests West's spades are better than his clubs, but when East plays an encouraging \$\display\$7 on the first trick you can abandon thoughts of an easy spade-diamond squeeze. The best you can hope for is \$KQ10 on your left — but that is just good enough.

You are going to have to strip East of exit cards outside spades, and for that you will need a 4-4 club break and all dummy's entries. After the ♥Q wins Trick 2, the sequence is: ♣A, club ruff, ♥A, club ruff, ♥K, club ruff. Now you cash one top diamond, which brings you to this ending, with the position of virtually every card known:



You lead the last trump, presenting West with a painful decision. Unable to abandon diamonds, he must part with a spade — but which one? If West keeps the  $\Phi Q$ , you throw a spade from dummy, and endplay him with a low spade to give you a diamond trick. If he throws the  $\Phi Q$ , you discard a diamond from dummy, and again exit with a low spade. Now East is caught in a dilemma: if he lets his partner's \$10 hold, West is endplayed in diamonds, while if he overtakes with the ♠I, he is himself forced to concede a spade trick to dummy.



You may think deals like this never happen in real life, but this one is similar to one played by Michael Rosenberg (USA). After East has made the mistake of returning a diamond when he is in with the \(\forall A\), you run your hearts and then your spades. On the last spade, West, who is down to all clubs, must make a discard from ♣KJ107. Suppose he discards the ♣10. When you next lead a club from dummy and East plays the 49, you can cover; your A8 has been promoted into a major tenace and West is endplayed. If West comes down to ♣KJ10 instead, you simply duck a club to him.

# An End and a Beginning

We have concluded our present discussion of squeezes, but this can be just the beginning of your own experiences with squeeze play. It is impossible in a book with a finite number of pages to do justice to all the variations and varieties of squeezes. Some ideas for further research, education and enjoyment are listed below.

Adventures in Card Play by Geza Ottlik and Hugh Kelsey (Gollancz, 1979)

The Encyclopedia of Card Play Techniques at Bridge by Guy Levé (Master Point Press, 2007)

Kelsey on Squeeze Play by Hugh Kelsey (Cassell, 2008 — a compilation of four books orginally released between 1985 and 1990)

Bridge Squeezes For Everyone by David Bird (Master Point Press, 2002)

There is also useful information in The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge (ACBL, 2001; new edition in preparation)

Internet references are *sui generis* ephemeral in nature. At the time of writing (November, 2009), the following were available:

www.doubledummy.net — Double Dummy Corner, operated by Hugh Darwen, and has a great number of double dummy problems. If you look for problems by theme, you will find a number of interesting and challenging squeeze problems.

http://www.rpbridge.net — Richard Pavlicek has many interesting and educational articles on this website. In the section on 'Odds and Theory' there is a very useful series of articles on squeeze play.

A number of online encyclopedias have descriptions of different types of squeeze play, especially endings — for example www.wikipedia.com, www.bridgeguys.com and www.bridgehands.com.

Marvin French has produced a document, available at www.marvinfrench. com, which provides a summary of squeeze play. He uses many of the same concepts and terminology as this book but adds some different approaches of his own.

Finally, if you visit www.ebooksbridge.com, additional problems and examples are available for free download by readers who wish to practice their squeeze technique.

#### GLOSSARY

As usual, South is defined as the hand with the squeeze card (simple squeezes) or the single-threat hand (others).

Alternate-threat squeeze

A hybrid between the Type R and the Type L compound squeezes. Owing to the presence of an alternate threat in at least one suit, declarer is able to pick a winning route whatever the defense discards.

**Ambiguous threat** 

In a compound squeeze, a threat guarded by both defenders.

**Automatic squeeze** A squeeze that operates against either defender.

**B** (see **BLUE**)

One defender is **B**usy in more than one suit, his partner being helpless.

Backwash squeeze

A triple squeeze in which declarer ruffs a loser high on the squeeze trick; one of the possible losing actions open to the defender, who sits over the two standard threats, is underruffing.

**Basic threat** 

In a compound squeeze, the threat guarded by only one defender.

**BLUE** (see B, L, U, E An acronym for the basic conditions required to establish many types of squeeze. **B**usy, **L**oser, **U**pper, **E**ntry.

**Busy card** 

A card that plays a useful role, as a potential winner or a guard, for example.

C (see CLuE)

The target suit must contain a threat and a Companion (a small card in the same suit).

Clash squeeze

A type of guard squeeze involving a clash threat.

Clash threat

A type of blocked threat, where the card involved would normally fall under one of declarer's winners.

CLuE (see C, L, E)

An acronym for remembering the conditions for a delayed duck squeeze. Companion, Lead, Entry.

Common threat

In a double squeeze, the threat guarded by both opponents.

Compound squeeze A complex ending involving a triple squeeze followed by

a double (or sometimes simple) squeeze.

**Criss-cross squeeze** A simple squeeze type where North holds a winner in

South's threat suit, and South holds a winner in North's

threat suit.

Crossruffing

squeeze

A simple squeeze in which declarer has a ruffing threat in

each hand.

Delayed duck squeeze

A strip-squeeze in which the defender is forced to discard either a safe exit card or one or more winners in the target suit. After this, declarer can duck in the target suit to set

up the winner(s) he needs.

Double guard squeeze

A compound squeeze consisting of a simple guard squeeze on one opponent followed by either a simple squeeze on the other or (at the defender's option) a successful finesse.

Double squeeze

An ending in which both opponents are squeezed. The two squeezes result in the gain of one trick.

E (see BLUE and CLuE)

There is an **E**ntry to the established threat.

Elimination

A tactic preparatory to an endplay whereby all the cards in one or more suits are removed from a defender or from declarer's two hands.

End play

A vague term meaning the play of the last few tricks on a deal.

**Endplay** 

In modern usage, the word 'endplay' is used to mean a play that forces an opponent to lead and results in that opponent losing one or more tricks that he might otherwise have won.

**Entry condition** 

A possible arrangement of the threats in a squeeze.

Entry-shifting squeeze (also seesaw squeeze)

An ending in which the fluidity of entries allows declarer to choose to win the squeeze trick in either hand depending on the defender's discard.

Entry squeeze

A non-material triple squeeze where one of the defender's possible discards allows declarer a vital entry.

**Escape suit** In a strip-squeeze, a suit in which the defender has an

exit card.

**Established** A squeeze is established when declarer is ready to begin

playing his string of winners, including the squeeze card.

A threat is established when it becomes a winner.

Exit card A card with which a defender could exit safely after a

throw-in.

Failing entry case A potential simple squeeze position where South's threat

suit provides North's only entry. No squeeze is possible.

Fragile stopper A stopper that will disappear if it is led away from.

Fragile-stopper strip-squeeze

A squeeze that removes safe exits from the victim's hand before he is thrown in to lead away from a fragile

stopper.

Free suit A suit that does not contain a threat card.

A card (or group of cards) that prevents declarer from Guard (stopper)

obtaining extra winners in a suit.

Guard squeeze A type of triple squeeze where one defender must 'guard'

his partner against a finesse.

Idle card A worthless card that can be discarded without cost.

Isolating the menace (isolating the threat)

A preparatory tactic ensuring that only one defender can

protect against a specific threat.

Jettison squeeze A type of squeeze against one defender, in which declarer

can throw away a blocking card if the defender discards

from that suit.

Knockout squeeze A triple squeeze where one of the defenders must give

up a guard or underruff, in either case setting up an extra

trick for declarer.

L (see **BLUE** and

CLuE)

1) in **BLUE**, declarer has the correct number of **L**osers remaining. 2) in CLuE, a small card in the target suit

must be available to **L**ead after the squeeze.

In a double squeeze, the threat guarded by the hand to the Left threat

left of the single threat.

A simple squeeze type where the North hand holds a Long-threat entry

threat with an entry in its own suit.

Losing squeeze card

A card led by declarer which loses rather than wins the squeeze trick.

Lower hand The hand to the right of (under) the intended victim.

See threat. Menace

Mole squeeze A variety of guard squeeze in which the defender has to

retain a card or cards in a suit to keep his partner from

being endplayed.

Non-material squeeze

A squeeze in which the defender's discards do not set up any winners for declarer, but result in the gain of something less tangible, such as a finessing position or an entry.

(sequential) double different tricks. squeeze

**Non-simultaneous** A double squeeze in which the opponents are squeezed on

Notrump squeeze

A type of squeeze (which may in fact occur at a trump contract) where the play, after the squeeze is established, is essentially of notrump character.

Notrump strip and endplay

An ending (which, like the notrump squeeze, may occur in the course of a trump contract) in which the ruff and discard possibility is not present: the victim's return must usually be such as to give declarer a trick in the suit played.

suit) squeeze

**One-suit (or single-** A cross between a material and a non-material squeeze. The defender has an awkward holding in a single suit, and either is endplayed or has to give up something material in the target suit.

Opposite-threat entry

A simple squeeze type where the only entry to the North hand's threat is in South's threat suit.

Positional squeeze A squeeze that depends on the victim being in the right

position, forced to discard ahead of the upper hand.

Progressive squeeze See repeating squeeze.

Pseudo squeeze A position where there is no genuine squeeze, but a

defender may think that he is being squeezed, and make a

fatal blunder in discarding.

Reached A squeeze is said to be reached when the squeeze card is

about to be played.

Rectifying the

count

The process of losing as many tricks as may be necessary to correct the loser count in order that the squeeze will

operate.

Repeating squeeze A triple squeeze in which, once one threat is unguarded,

the threat becomes a new winner, which then inflicts a

simple squeeze and gains another trick.

Restricted

A compound squeeze in which declarer needs to determine **compound squeeze** the nature of the resulting double squeeze before the run of the Free suit is complete (normally when the defender

being triple-squeezed is forced to abandon a suit).

RFL double squeeze

A subclass of Type C1 double squeeze where the South hand contains exactly one winner in the Common suit, which is also an entry, and a Free winner; the North hand contains the Left threat, which includes an entry, the Right threat, and no winner in the Common suit.

Right threat In a double squeeze, the threat guarded by the hand to the

right of the single threat.

Ruffing squeeze See trump squeeze.

**Ruffing threat** A potential winner, one that may become a winner

through a ruff.

See entry-shifting squeeze. Seesaw squeeze

Semi-strip and endplay

A position where one defender is thrown in at a time

when his partner still holds one or more trumps.

Show-up squeeze A squeeze which forces a defensive high card to 'show up'

in play, thus avoiding the need to risk a finesse.

Simple squeeze A two-suit squeeze on a single defender.

Simultaneous double squeeze

A double squeeze in which both opponents are squeezed

on the same trick.

A squeeze occurs when a player is forced to discard a busy Squeeze

card, because his hand no longer contains any idle cards.

Squeeze card The card that, when played, forces the fatal discard.

Squeeze trick The trick to which the squeeze card is played.

A strip-squeeze in which one of the threat suits is blocked. Stepping stone

> The defender must choose between being thrown in, to allow access to the blocked suit, or allowing declarer to

overtake in the suit without loss.

Stopper See guard.

Strip See elimination.

A squeeze of which the purpose is to remove surplus Strip-squeeze

winners or exit cards from a defender prior to a throw-in.

A squeeze that forces the defender to give up one or more

All strip-squeezes start with at least two losers.

Suicide squeeze An ending in which the squeeze card is led by one

defender, thereby squeezing the other.

Surplus winners In a strip-squeeze, defensive winners over and above the

one on which the throw-in is to occur.

Surplus winner

strip-squeeze winners, after which he can be safely thrown in to lead

away from a fragile stopper.

Target suit The suit in which declarer would like to set up extra

winners.

Threat (menace) A potential winner for declarer.

Threat suit A suit that contains a threat card.

Throw-in A play that gives the opponent the lead.

Throw-in winner The defensive winner with which an opponent is to be

given the lead.

Transferring a

A preparatory tactic, often involving a ruff or a finesse, guard (stopper)

which transfers the responsibility for guarding a suit from

one defender to the other.

Triple squeeze A squeeze in which one defender is solely responsible for

three suits.

Trump squeeze
(ruffing squeeze)

A general classification of squeezes in which declarer's ability to ruff plays an essential role after the squeeze is established.

# Trump strip and endplay

A play where one defender is thrown in while declarer still has at least one trump remaining in each hand. Any return will either allow declarer to make his trumps separately via a ruff and discard or will give up a trick in some other fashion, such as by leading into a tenace.

#### Two-trick threat

A holding in a threat suit such that, if the suit is abandoned by the defender, two tricks will be established at once.

#### Type C double squeeze

A double squeeze in which the single threat is the Common threat.

#### Type L compound squeeze

A compound squeeze in which the two Ambiguous threats are divided between declarer's two hands.

#### Type R compound squeeze

A compound squeeze in which the two Ambiguous threats lie in the same hand.

### Type R double squeeze

A double squeeze in which the single threat is the Right threat

U (see BLUE)

There is at least one threat in the hand to the left of the victim (i.e. it lies in the **U**pper hand).

# Unrestricted compound squeeze

A compound squeeze in which declarer can continue to play the entire Free suit before deciding on the nature of the resulting double squeeze.

# Upper hand

The hand to the left of (over) the intended victim.

# Vienna Coup

A tactic where declarer cashes all his winners in one threat suit before playing the squeeze card, in order to prevent that threat from becoming blocked.

#### Vise squeeze

A squeeze in which the defenders own a finessing position in a suit. One defender holds high intermediates and the other defender a winner in the suit. The defender with the intermediates is squeezed, and declarer can establish his own trick in the suit thereafter.

#### Winkle

A type of a strip-squeeze and endplay where both defenders have winners in a suit but the suit is blocked. The defenders can either unblock the suit, which sacrifices a trick, or allow declarer to complete the endplay.

# Reading this book will make you a better bridge player

When *Bridge Squeezes Complete* first appeared in 1959, it unlocked the mysteries of squeeze play – until then the province of top experts only. Love explained clearly and carefully how squeezes work – from the simplest squeeze to the most complex. He gave rules for recognizing squeezes, and for executing them when they occurred, that every player could understand. Love's system of classifying squeezes has been used by most subsequent writers. In other words, the book has lived up to the original foreword by Woodson and Norwood, who wrote, 'We confidently predict that this work will become an all-time classic.' Indeed, the book appears on most published lists of 'the top ten bridge books ever written'.

However, even a classic, like a Renaissance painting, may need restoring eventually. The game of bridge has changed a great deal in the last fifty years, and contemporary theorists have built on Professor Love's foundation to advance our knowledge and understanding of squeeze play. With respect and appreciation for Love's original accomplishment, Linda Lee and Julian Pottage have revised the book to make it more accessible for today's reader. They have reanalyzed every exercise using modern software tools, modifying and replacing where necessary. The bidding has been completely updated. Love's original explanations have been expanded: very little is now 'left as an exercise for the reader'. Finally, a substantial number of new examples have been added, especially in the areas of trump squeezes, entry squeezes and non-material squeezes.

*Bridge Squeezes Complete* is a masterpiece. In this new edition, it will be as valuable to the modern player as the original version was to its readers half a century ago.

Editing, new content and analysis for this edition by:



LINDA LEE (Canada) is a WBF World Master who is equally at home teaching beginners and analyzing complex squeezes. In addition to several books, Linda is the author of the popular bridge blog, http://linda.bridgeblogging.com.

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