

13. Declarer play at suit contracts - 2: Answers

Here are the suggested analyses and lines of play for the four examples on page 2.

1. You need to start a cross ruff, clubs in dummy and spades in hand. You end up making 10 tricks: 2 black aces, 3 club ruffs in dummy, 5 trumps in hand (3 of them being spade ruffs)

2. This is another cross ruff. You have an unavoidable diamond loser, so you need to ruff your three little club losers in dummy. But first you need to cash your diamond winners. When planning to do a cross ruff, always cash any side suit winners first!

3. Counting losers from your own hand, there are two - a diamond and a club. A 3-3 club split would save you, but clubs are 4-2. Now look at the hand from dummy's point of view. You can draw trumps using dummy's three high trumps, and ruff 3 diamonds in your hand. This is called a DUMMY REVERSAL. Ruff the second diamond with the ♠K, cross to the ♣K and ruff another diamond with the ♠Q. Cross to the ♠10, ruff the last diamond. Now use your last trump to cross to the ♠A, and draw the third round of trumps with the ♠Q. You have 6 tricks so far, now take 3 hearts and 3 clubs to make your slam.

4 and 5. You need to ruff diamonds twice to establish the 5th diamond in dummy for a club discard. You need 3 entries to dummy to do this - two for ruffing and one to cash your winner, once trumps are drawn. You need to use your trump suit for one entry in example 4, for 2 entries in 5. In example 5, the third time you cross to dummy must be with a trump that draws the last trump from defenders, so you need to plan carefully.

6. You need to take the spade finesse twice in order to make this contract. You need those big hearts in dummy as entries in order for you to lead spades twice towards your hand. If you start by drawing trumps you lose a spade and a club.

7. You need to lead hearts from dummy 3 times. If East ruffs, throw your heart loser. If he doesn't ruff, play a heart winner. You will eventually ruff your last heart high, or, if East has ruffed, you will throw a club on a heart winner after drawing trumps, then ruff your club loser. (This one is tricky - if you don't see it, deal out the cards and play it!) This hand can also be made using the DUMMY REVERSAL method, ruffing 3 of dummy's diamonds in your hand, and drawing the last trump using dummy's last trump.