

Better Bridge

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Jan Wohlin of Stockholm provides International Bridge Press Association members with bridge hands for unrestricted use. After a lapse of several months four puzzlers appeared in the January IBPA Bulletin. Here is one:

North			
S	6 3 2		
H	5 3 2		
D	A J		
C	Q 8 6 4 3		
West		East	
S	9 8	S	A K 7 5 4
H	6	H	9 7 4
D	K 10 9 8 7 6 2	D	4
C	K 10 7	C	J 9 5 2
South			
S	Q J 10		
H	A K Q J 10 8		
D	Q 5 3		
C	A		

Dealer — West. North-South vulnerable.

West	North	East	South
3 D	Pass	Pass	4 H
All Pass			

Having preempted in diamonds West chose a spade lead against four hearts. East took the first two tricks and gave him a ruff. Declarer won a diamond return in

dummy with the jack and drew trumps. When East turned up with three hearts South gave up the idea of trying to ruff his queen of diamonds in dummy. Certainly East, in the bidding, could not hold three diamonds.

Declarer ran all his trumps. Now, many players treat trumps as a security blanket. They fear releasing control in the form of their last trump. Yet it is this card that often exerts the pressure that cracks the defense. South had no such fear. Here is the position at the moment he cashed the eight of hearts,

S	—	S	—
H	—	H	—
D	K 10	D	—
C	K 10	C	J 9 5 2
S	—	S	—
H	8	H	—
D	Q 5	D	—
C	A	C	—

West had no safe discard. If he let go a club declarer would cash the ace, enter dummy with the ace of diamonds and claim the queen of clubs as his tenth trick.

Throwing a diamond would not help. Now the ace of diamonds is cashed first and the

closed hand regained with the ace of clubs to score the queen of diamonds.

Declarer had executed a crisscross squeeze after forcing West to commit himself. West could have destroyed this at trick four by shifting to a club rather than a diamond, knocking out declarer's entry, but it would have availed him naught.

South would still run trumps and reach this five card ending:

S	—	S	—
H	—	H	—
D	A J	D	—
C	Q 8 6	C	—
S	—	S	5
H	—	H	—
D	K 10 9	D	4
C	K 10	C	9 5 2
S	—	S	—
H	10 8	H	—
D	Q 5 3	D	—
C	—	C	—

Now West is caught a trick earlier when South leads the ten of hearts. If he parts with a diamond declarer finesses the jack of diamonds, cashes the ace and ruffs a club to reach the good queen of diamonds.

Letting go a club instead enables South to set up dummy's queen by ruffing after a successful diamond finesse.

Either way — crisscross squeeze or trump squeeze — West is helpless.

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