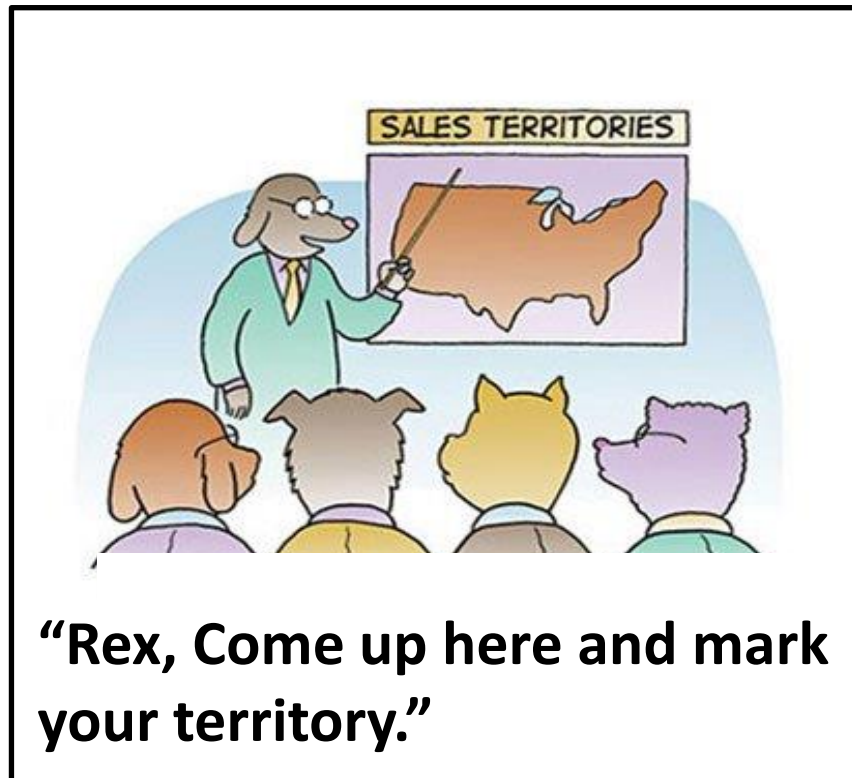


Playing and Defending Suit Contracts



Tom Snow
(805) 305-5035
coinerbop@gmail.com



Time for a Joke



Two pirates, Long John and Blackbeard, meet in a bar. Blackbeard has a patch over one eye, a hook for a hand, and a wooden peg leg. “Ye gads, matey,” says Long John. “What happened to ya?”

Blackbeard says, “Me pirate ship was attacked, and a lucky shot lopped off me leg. So now I got me a wooden peg.”

“And yer hand?” asks Long John.

“When me ship sank, a shark bit me hand off. So now I got me a hook.”

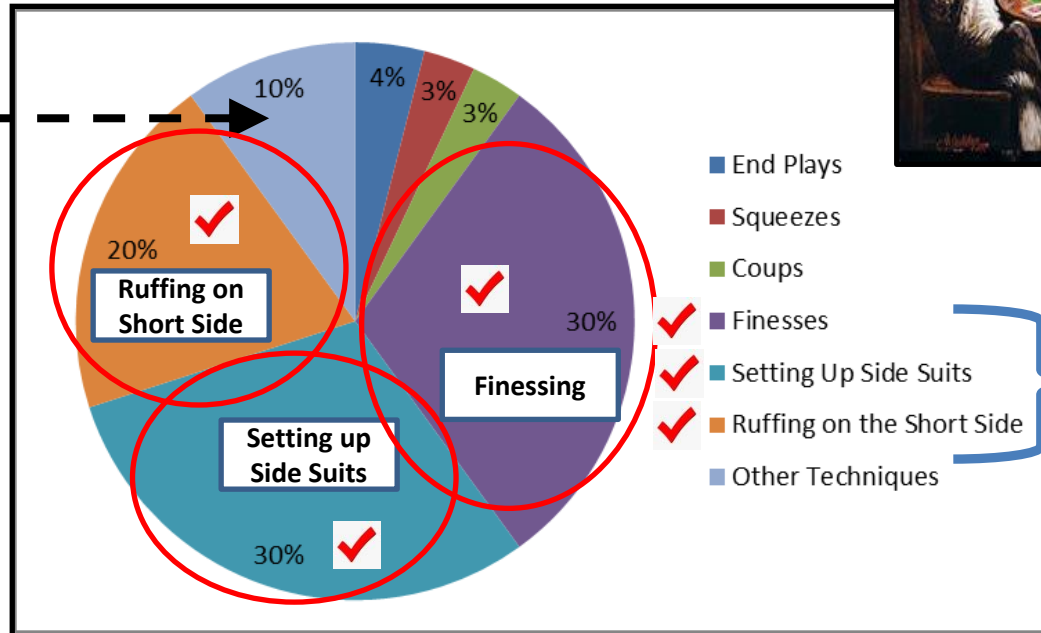
“OK, but what’s with the eye patch?”

“I was standin’ on a dock, and the biggest seagull I ever saw poops right in me eye.”

“But ya don’t go blind from no seagull poop.”

“True,” says Blackbeard. “But it was me first day with the hook.”

Types of Plays in Suit Contracts



3 Main Ways to Get More Tricks

Other Techniques include:

- Safety Plays
- Dummy Reversals
- Unblocking Plays
- Hold Up Plays
- Uppercuts
- Discovery Plays
- Cross Ruffs

When Dummy Hits in a Suit Contract



Besides the rare coups, endplays and squeezes, there are really only two primary questions a declarer in a suit contract should be considering:

Consideration #1:

Is there a secondary source of tricks? In other words, where can I dump losers of one suit (not trumps) on winners of another?

- 1) How can I set that suit up?
- 2) Will I lose tricks in any side suits first?
- 3) Are the opponents threatening to ruff a suit? Do I need to draw trumps first?
- 4) How do I get back to that long suit?

When Dummy Hits in a Suit Contract



Consideration #2:

Should I draw trumps or not?

**“There are two kinds of bad declarers in this world:
those that *never* draw trumps
and those that *always do.*”**

To Draw Trumps Or Not?

REASONS TO DRAW TRUMPS:

- 1) To prevent the opponents from ruffing your good non-trump tricks.
- 2) To prevent the opponents from overruffing you.
- 3) To prevent the opponents from uppercutting you.



Uppercut: If either opponent can ruff a side-suit, they will promote a trick for their partner.

REASONS **NOT** TO DRAW TRUMPS:

- 1) To ruff on the short side of trumps to gain a trick.
- 2) To take a quick discard.
- 3) You need the trump suit as an entry to winners.
- 4) One outstanding trump is high, and you need all your trumps to crossruff.

How many trump tricks do you make in each example?

Ruffing on the Short Side of Trumps

Example 1

North

♠ K1094

♦ ---

South

♠ AQJ87

♦ 762

Contract: 4S

Opening Lead: Q♦

5 trumps tricks here

Q♦

Plus 3 more here

Only these 5 trumps tricks

Example 2

North

♠ K94

♥ 10842

Q♥

South

♠ AQJ105

♥ ---

Contract: 4S

Opening Lead: Q♥

When playing a suit contract, count your losers and find ways to get rid of them.

Then determine how you can set up more with:

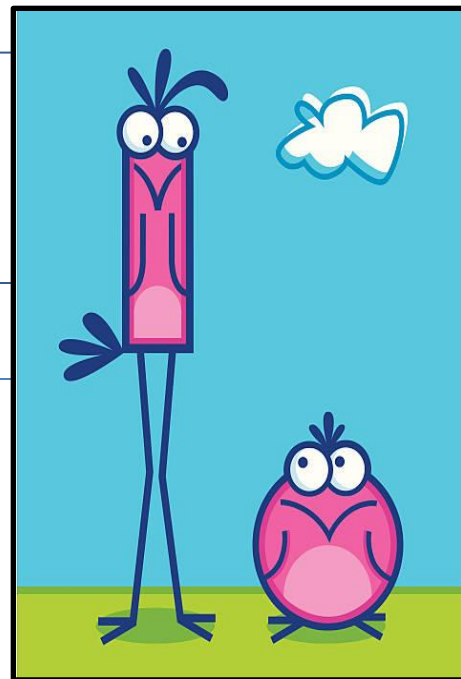
- 1) Long suit(s)
- 2) Finesse(s)
- 3) Ruffing on the short side of trumps

Just like playing a NT contract.

When do I draw trumps?

- If I do it too late, they may score some ruffs.
- If too early, you can't ruff losers in dummy.

1) To Ruff on the Short Side of Trumps



Contract: 4S

Opening Lead: Q♥

Q♥

North

♠ 1043

♥ A742

♦ 9752

♣ J4

South

♠ AKQJ5

♥ 96

♦ AK4

♣ A73

Take the A♥, then give up a ♣, **before you draw trumps.**

When you regain the lead, ruff a ♣ in the dummy and draw trumps.

2) To Take a Quick Discard



Contract: 4S

Opening Lead: K♥

K♥

North

♠ J82

♥ A108

♦ 952

♣ AQ76

South

♠ KQ1075

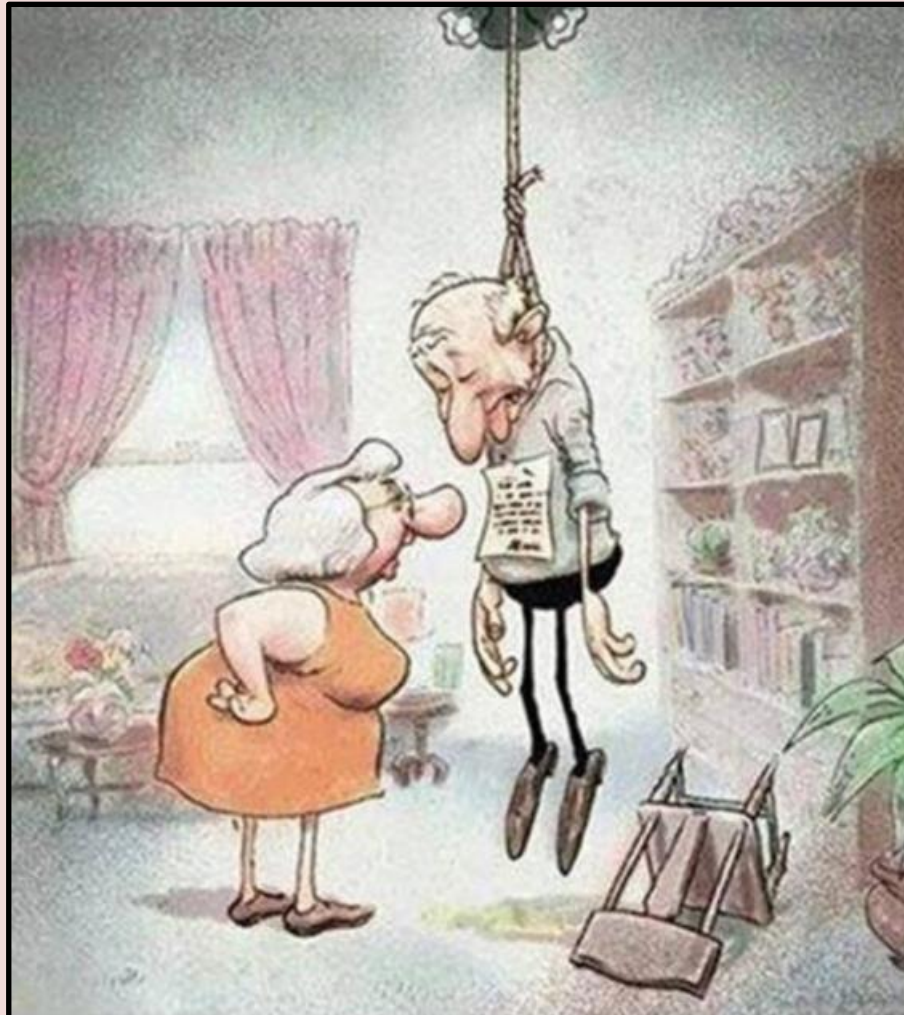
♥ 843

♦ KQJ

♣ K4

You need to take the A♥, then cash 3 ♣'s, discarding one of your losing ♥'s, **before** you give up the lead in trumps.

One More Joke



"You misspelled 'constant criticism'."

3) You Need Trumps as an Entry



Contract: 4S

Opening Lead: K♦

K♦

North

♠ J82

♥ J6

♦ 753

♣ AQ752

South

♠ AKQ95

♥ 92

♦ A942

♣ KJ

Take the A♦, draw 2 rounds of trumps and cash the K♣ and J♣.

Then play a trump to the dummy and run your ♣'s. You will lose only 2 ♦'s, making 5.

4) One High Trump is Out and You Need All Yours



Contract: 4S

Opening Lead: K♦

K♦

North

♠ 9872

♥ J6

♦ 9832

♣ AQ3

South

♠ A643

♥ AK32

♦ A7

♣ K76

Play low on the first ♦ and take the 2nd one.

Now play a low ♠. Take whatever they return and cash your A♠. Let them keep their high trump as you crossruff.

Mentoring Time



Hand #1

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1D	Pass	1H	Pass
2H	Pass	4H	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North
♠ 962
♥ KQJ3
♦ AK932
♣ 8

West
♠ QJ104
♥ 875
♦ 75
♣ KJ74



East
♠ K75
♥ 64
♦ QJ104
♣ Q1093

Do NOT draw trumps first.

Best Lead: Q♠

South
♠ A83
♥ A1092
♦ 86
♣ A652

It is much better to ruff enough ♦'s to set up that suit than to ruff ♣'s in the dummy (not enough entries, and one less trick).

The 3rd D should be ruffed high to prevent being overruffed. Makes 5.

Hand #2



<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	Pass	1S	Pass
2S	Pass	3H	Pass
3S	Pass	Pass	Pass

Lead = J♦

Best Lead: 5♠

West
♠ 75
♥ K1086
♦ J109
♣ K1085

North
♠ K93
♥ 7
♦ Q7432
♣ J763

East
♠ A64
♥ Q543
♦ K865
♣ Q2

South
♠ QJ1082
♥ AJ92
♦ A
♣ A94

Do NOT draw trumps first.

Declarer should ruff as many hearts in dummy as he can.
Defenders should be leading trumps.

* New Minor Forcing (1 round)

** If North doesn't have 3 spades, his next responsibility is to bid the other major with 4 of them.

Hand #3



<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1D	Pass	1S	Pass
1NT	Pass	2C*	Pass
2H	Pass	4H	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North
♠ K4
♥ QJ65
♦ AK52
♣ 984

Lead = 9♦

West
♠ AJ8
♥ 1094
♦ 9876
♣ A107

East
♠ 532
♥ 82
♦ QJ10
♣ QJ652

Do NOT draw trumps first.

South
♠ Q10976
♥ AK73
♦ 43
♣ K3

South needs to set up spades before drawing trumps.
Take the A♦ and lead the K♠ (or play to the A♥ and lead a spade toward the dummy).

Hand #4



<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
			Pass
1H	Pass	1S	Pass
2S	Pass	4S	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North
 ♠ K1043
 ♥ AQJ83
 ♦ K3
 ♣ 54

West
 ♠ 2
 ♥ 7652
 ♦ 1087
 ♣ KQJ76

East
 ♠ QJ85
 ♥ K109
 ♦ J4
 ♣ 10983

**Draw some trumps
and leave the high ones outstanding.**

Best Lead: K♣

South
 ♠ A976
 ♥ 4
 ♦ AQ9652
 ♣ A2

Declarer wins the A♣, draws 2 rounds of spades and runs the ♦'s, pitching a club from dummy first.

N/S makes 5S.

•3H is a Help Suit: Pard, I want you to have something in hearts.

** 4H shows extra HCPs and an important card in hearts.

*** 5H shows 2 aces.

Hand #5



<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1C	Pass	1S	Pass
2S	Pass	3H*	Pass
4H**	Pass	4NT	Pass
5H***	Pass	6S	

North
♠ A1092
♥ A75
♦ K65
♣ K102

Lead = 2♥

West
♠ 83
♥ 10932
♦ J73
♣ Q654

East
♠ J76
♥ QJ8
♦ 10982
♣ 987

South
♠ KQ54
♥ K64
♦ AQ4
♣ AJ3

Draw trumps right away.

South should take the ♥ lead and draw trumps.

After cashing the ♦'s and the high ♥, he exits with his losing ♥. End Play!

Hand #6

I spent 30 minutes talking to them to learn more about their culture until the barman told me they were umbrellas..



<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	Pass	1H	Pass
2C	Pass	3C	Pass
3H	Pass	4H	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North
♠ AJ52
♥ Q107
♦ 2
♣ KQ1042

West
♠ K876
♥ 653
♦ KJ1087
♣ 9

East
♠ 1093
♥ 82
♦ AQ654
♣ J73

South
♠ Q4
♥ AKJ94
♦ 93
♣ A865

Lead: 9♣

Do **NOT** draw trumps first.

Declarer can afford to play a ♦ at trick #2, before drawing trumps!

East can take it and (maybe) give his partner a ♣ ruff, making 5S.

South's possible ♠ loser goes away.

Hand #7



<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
		1D	DbI
3D*	4S	5D	DbI
Pass	Pass	Pass	

North
 ♠ 9
 ♥ 8754
 ♦ 10843
 ♣ K1092

West
 ♠ KJ64
 ♥ Q96
 ♦ A
 ♣ A8764

East
 ♠ A108753
 ♥ J103
 ♦ 5
 ♣ J53

South
 ♠ Q2
 ♥ AK2
 ♦ KQJ9762
 ♣ Q

Lead: 4♠

Do NOT draw trumps first.

After the J♥ return at trick #2, declarer should set up the K♣ for a ♥ discard while there's still a quick entry to the dummy. Down 1. E/W make 4S.

Hand #8



<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	3H	3S	4H
4S	Pass	Pass	5H
Pass	Pass	5S	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North
 ♠ ~~10~~ ~~9~~ ~~3~~
 ♥ ---
 ♦ K9
 ♣ ~~A~~ ~~Q~~ ~~10~~ ~~9~~ ~~7~~ ~~6~~ ~~4~~ ~~2~~

West
 ♠ A5
 ♥ ~~10~~ ~~9~~ ~~4~~
 ♦ A10843
 ♣ ~~K~~ ~~J~~ ~~5~~

East
 ♠ 2
 ♥ ~~A~~ ~~Q~~ ~~J~~ ~~8~~ ~~7~~ ~~3~~ ~~2~~
 ♦ 762
 ♣ ~~8~~ ~~3~~

South
 ♠ KQ108764
 ♥ ~~K~~ ~~6~~ ~~5~~
 ♦ QJ5
 ♣ ---

A♠ and another ♠ beats 5S.

Lead: 10♥

Do NOT draw trumps first.

You must ruff 2 ♥'s in dummy (before drawing trumps), and pitch one on the A♣.

If the A♣ get trumped by East, 3 ♥'s must be ruffed in dummy. E/W make 3H.

Hand #9



<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
Pass	Pass	1H	1S
2D	Pass	3H	Pass
4C	Pass	4H	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North
 ♠ 973
 ♥ 6
 ♦ AQJ83
 ♣ A763

West
 ♠ ~~K~~QJ105
 ♥ 83
 ♦ K952
 ♣ Q9

East
 ♠ 82
 ♥ 10752
 ♦ 104
 ♣ K10842

Do NOT draw trumps first.

Lead: K♠

South
 ♠ A64
 ♥ AKQJ94
 ♦ 76
 ♣ J5

Declarer should take his A♠, in case West has 6 ♠'s.
 He should then take the ♦ finesse before drawing trumps, then again, after drawing trumps - makes 5S.

Hand #10

Shows ♥ support and 11+ HCPs.



<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	Pass	1H	1S
2S*	Pass	4H	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North
 ♠ A7²
 ♥ KJ82
 ♦ Q1092
 ♣ 42

West
 ♠ ²KQ1065
 ♥ Q3
 ♦ J85
 ♣ KJ7

This is an Attitude Signal, denying the J♠.

East
 ♠ 84
 ♥ 76
 ♦ K643
 ♣ 109865

Do NOT draw trumps first.

Lead: K♠

South
 ♠ J9³
 ♥ A10954
 ♦ A7
 ♣ AQ3

Declarer should duck the opening lead. There's no rush to draw trumps.
 West will be end-played in all suits. Making 4H.

4th Suit Forcing (to game)

Hand #11

Club control and slam interest

North	East	South	West
		1D	Pass
1H	Pass	1S	Pass
2C*	Pass	3C	Pass
3S	Pass	4C	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5D*	Pass
5H*	Pass	5S	Pass
6S	Pass	Pass	Pass

North
 ♠ A1082
 ♥ AJ976
 ♦ 10
 ♣ K102

No Q♠

3 or 0 key cards

West
 ♠ 3
 ♥ ~~K~~Q1032
 ♦ J743
 ♣ Q95

East
 ♠ Q976
 ♥ 85
 ♦ Q982
 ♣ 874

- 1) Take the A♥ and ruff a ♥ low.
- 2) Cash the A♦ and K♦, pitching a ♣.
- 3) Ruff a ♦ in dummy low.
- 4) Cash the K♣, then the A♣ and ruff a club in dummy low.
- 5) Lead a ♥ from dummy – East will pitch the Q♦.

Lead: K♥

Do NOT draw trumps first.

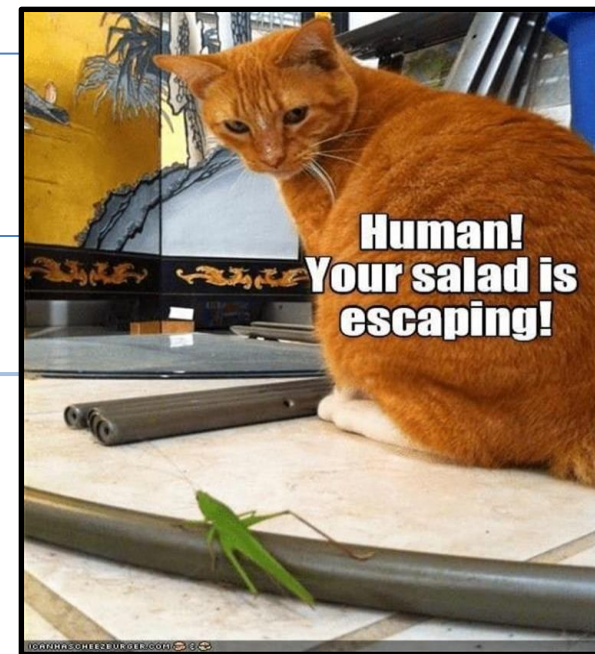
Sometimes you can force the opponents to break the trump suit for you.

South
 ♠ KJ54
 ♥ 4
 ♦ AK65
 ♣ AJ63

N/S make 6S, and maybe 7.

By just playing winners without drawing trumps, declarer will find the Q♠ the easy way.

Hand #12



North	East	South	West
			Pass
1D	Pass	1H	Pass
2H	Pass	3C	Pass
3D	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5S*	Pass	5NT*	Pass
6D*	Pass	7H	Pass
Pass	Pass		

KC Blackwood

Have a king?

2 key cards and the Q♥

Shows the K♦

Lead: QS

West
 ♠ QJ75
 ♥ 75
 ♦ 762
 ♣ K763

North
 ♠ 10862
 ♥ KQJ8
 ♦ AK93
 ♣ 8

East
 ♠ 94
 ♥ 64
 ♦ J1054
 ♣ Q10942

Do NOT draw trumps first.

Use them to get to your hand to ruff ♣'s.

South knows North has the A♦ and K♦, and that he will have more than 2 ♦'s with only a singleton ♣.

That provides a discard for his 3♠, so the ♠'s in North's hand can be ruffed in South's hand.

South
 ♠ AK3
 ♥ A10932
 ♦ Q8
 ♣ AJ5

N/S make 7H.

The extra tricks come from ruffing ♣'s on the short side of trumps (North's hand), but trumps are needed for entries.