MALENY CONTRACT BRIDGE CLUB

This is the Number 12 bridge article for members of our club.

Last Week's Problem

North Deals
None Vul

	♠ K Q 7 4 ♥ 8 6 3 ♦ Q 9 8 2 ♣ 5 3	
♠ 10 5 3 ♥ J 10 ♦ J 10 6 4 ♣ A Q 10 4		♠ 8 6 2 ♥ 9 7 5 4 ♦ K 7 3 ♣ K 7 2
	♠ A J 9 ♥ A K Q 2 ♦ A 5 ♣ J 9 8 6	

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
	Pass	Pass	1 ♣
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 NT[1]
Pass	3 NT	All pass	

1. 18-19 HCP, balanced

Lead: ♣ 4

This time all four hands are given. To start, cover the East and West cards and see if you can work out how you might make the contract. Then have a look at all four hands.

West leads the 4 ♣ and East wins the K♣.
East plays 7 ♣, South the 8♣ and West wins the 10♣.
West leads the A♣ and the Q♣. What do you discard from North? East discards 2 ♠ on the fourth club.

West leads J♦. You take it from here. How do you cater for the possibility that hearts do not split 3-3? Clue: This week is about squeeezes) If the defenders could see all four hands, how would they defend differently to beat the contract?

You have 8 top tricks (4 spades, 3 hearts and 1 diamond). Your ninth trick could come from the 2♥ if it is the last remaining heart. Alternatively, it could come from the Q♦ if West had led the J♦ holding the K♦ as well. Which is more likely? Before any cards were played, either hand is equally likely to have the K♦, so the chance West has this card was 50%. However, West's lead of a diamond after winning his clubs would be extremely foolish as it gives you the chance of 2 immediate diamond tricks without any possible gain. If West had the K♦, West would know it is not possible for East to have the ace since South needs to have it for his bid. The J♦ lead must indicate that East has the K♦.

What about the 2♥ becoming a trick? If hearts break 3-3 (about 36% before any cards are played), you can easily establish it as a trick by playing A♥, K♥ and Q♥ first. What if they are

not 3-3? Only one opponent can have 4 or more hearts to stop the threat of the 2♥ becoming a trick. If it is East that has the long hearts, he won't be able to keep his K♦ and 4 hearts when you take your 8 tricks (there will only be 4 cards left). Your Q♦ or your 2♥ will be your ninth trick, depending on East's discards.

There are two things you must be careful of.

Don't play the Q♦ at trick 5 when West leads the J♦; you need to keep that in case East discards the K♦ later. West will be able to beat your other diamonds, so if you do play the Q♦ East can happily discard his K♦ without giving you a trick.

You must take your spade tricks before you play all your heart winners. You need the top hearts as any entry to your 2♥ if East discards his fourth heart. Hearts either break 3-3 or they don't. You don't need to play them before the spades just see if they break 3-3.

To cater for hearts being 3-3 or the opponent with the 4+ hearts also having the K♦ (East in this case), you should:

Trick 5: Play the 2♦ from North and A♦ from South.
Tricks 6-9: Win A♠, J♠, K♠ and Q♠; South discards the 5♦ on the last spade.
Trick 10-12: Play A♥, K♥ and Q♥ if the K♦ has not appeared.
You only need to take note of whether the K♦ has been played. You don't need to worry about counting the hearts. If the K♦ hasn't been played, the 2♥ will win the last trick unless West has 4+ hearts and then you had no chance anyway.

If the cards are distributed as above and West had seen all the cards, he would realise that winning all his club tricks early was a mistake. Instead, he would play the J♣ at trick 3, before taking his last two club tricks. This establishes a diamond trick for the defence. East will have no trouble finding discards when North plays his top spades and North-South will take their 8 top tricks and no more.

Here is another hand. Like the last one, you must cash your winners in the right order to execute the squeeze.

North Deals
None Vul

♠ J 6 5 3
♥ A K 2
♦ K 7 6 4
♣ Q 9

N
W E
S

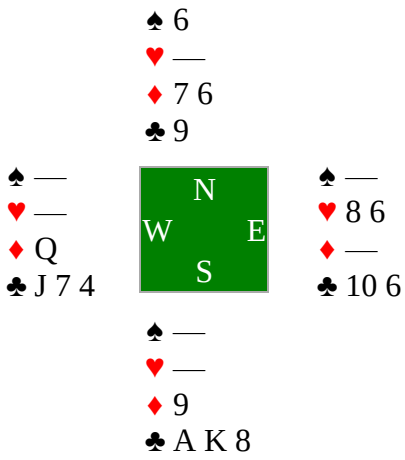
♠ K Q 8 7
♥ 5
♦ A 9 5 3
♣ A K 8 4

You (South) bid to 6♠ on this hand after North opens 1♦ and supports spades. The opponents pass throughout.
West leads the J♥. What is your plan to justify your slightly exuberant bidding?

You will lose 2 trump tricks and go down unless trumps are 3-2, so assume they are 3-2. If so, you appear to have 11 tricks (4 spades, 2 hearts, 2 diamonds, 3 clubs). You must lose the A♠ and the fourth spade trick comes from trumping a club in North or a heart in South. It seems like you will lose a diamond trick also. You can discard one diamond from each hand on winners in the other hand, but you will be left with 3 diamonds in each hand and only the ace and king to take tricks. Since today's article is about squeezes, there probably is one that might work.

Clearly only one opponent can guard the clubs (i.e. stop you from winning a fourth club trick) and only one opponent can guard the diamonds. If you are lucky, it will be the same opponent and that opponent will be squeezed to enable you to make your twelfth trick.

North wins the first trick with the A♥.
Lead the 3 ♠ from North and draw three rounds of trumps. At some stage, the opponents will win A♠.
When they are in with the A♠, suppose they lead a diamond. Win it with the A♦ in South's hand.
Finish drawing trumps. They must split 3-2 for you to have any chance.
Go to North's hand (if necessary) and lead K♥ (discard 5 ♦ from South) and 2 ♥ trumping with South's last trump.
Go to North's hand with the Q♣.
You now hope the same opponents had to guard the clubs and diamonds and the position is something like:



Lead North's last trump and discard the remaining diamond from South.
West can either discard the Q♦ so North's 7 ♦ is high or a club in which case South's 8♣ will be a winner. Either way you have 12 tricks.

If the opponents return something other than a diamond when in with the A♠, the order of play will be different, but you should play the hearts and A♦ early and aim to be in North's hand when it is time to play the last trump for the same ending.

Here is another example of a simple squeeze.

North Deals ♠ K 9 3
None Vul ♥ A K J 9 8

♦ 4
♣ K 6 5 2

♠ A 6 2
♥ 6 3
♦ A K Q J 10 5 3
♣ 3

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
	1 ♥	3 ♣	3 ♦
Pass	3 NT	Pass	6 ♦
All pass			

Lead: ♣ 4

East wins the first trick with the 10♣ and leads the 8♣. You trump high of course since you are confident that East has 7 clubs . Sure enough West discards the 4 ♠.

You have 11 top tricks (2 spades, 2 hearts and 7 diamonds). there are a couple of opportunities for a twelfth (heart finesse, hearts 3-3 and maybe others).
You draw trumps in three rounds. West discards 5 ♠ on the third round.

Is there a way to play now to guarantee the contract?
Although this hand is about squeezes, we should try counting the distribution and a discovery play. We know East was dealt 7 clubs (West only had 1) and 3 diamonds (West had 2). So East has exactly 3 major suit cards. What are they? We don't know but there are a couple of ways to find out.

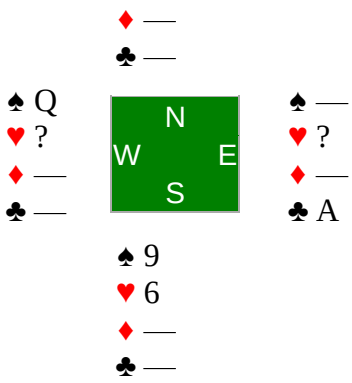
Lead the 3 ♥ from South to North's A♥. If East discards, we know that West has the Q♥ and the heart finesse will work for our twelfth trick.

Suppose East follows with a small heart. Play the 3 ♠ from North and win with the A♠ in South's hand. If East discards, then he has 3 hearts. Lead a 6 ♥ from South to North's K♥ and play another heart from North, trumping in the South hand. Both opponents will follow and the hearts are high in dummy. The K♠ is an entry.

If East follows to the 3 ♠ lead from North, play 2 ♠ from South to North's K♠. If East follows, he started with 2 spades and 1 heart. Lead a club from North and trump in South's hand. Take the heart finesse secure in the knowledge East has no more hearts.

If East discards on the second spade lead, he started with 1 spade and 2 hearts. We don’t know who has the Q♥. If West, we should finesse and if East, we should play K♥ and watch the Q♥ drop. However, a type of squeeze will remove the need to guess. Lead a club from North and trump in South's hand. Play all of South's diamonds, discarding all but the K♥ and J♥. This is the position after South plays the last diamond.

♠ —
♥ K J



West has to keep a spade or South's 9♠ is high. Therefore, he had to discard all but one of his hearts. East only has one heart left. South leads the 6 ♥ to North's K♥ and the J♥ will take the last trick. There was no need to guess who had the Q♥.

This squeeze is a bit different from the previous ones. It's aim was not to win an extra trick, but to show up who had the Q♥ and it is called a show up squeeze.

The simple squeeze is one of many different squeeze variations, some quite complex. A list of many squeeze types can be found in https://www.lajollabridge.com/French/misc/Squeeze-Refresher.pdf with examples of end positions illustrating each of them.

Next week we will switch from a brief introduction to simple squeezes back to some defensive issues. Here is an example. You are East.

South Deals
None Vul

♠ K 2
♥ K 10 6 4
♦ J 7 5 3
♣ K Q 2

N
W E
S

♠ 8 7 3
♥ Q J 9 2
♦ A 4
♣ J 10 9 8

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
			1 NT[1]
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 NT	All pass	

1. 15-17 HCP, balanced

Lead: ♠ Q

West's Q♠ wins the first trick. West continues with 4 ♠ and North's King wins. How many tricks can you count for the opponents? What is your plan?