

# Learning Points – Squeeze for an Overtrick

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Declarer Play Level: Intermediate

North Deals	♠ 872		
NS Vul	♥ J10		
MPs	♦ Q876		
	♣ 10852		
♠ AK54	N	♠ J1093	
♥ 9753	W 5 E	♥ 8	
♦ A52	S	♦ KJ43	
♣ J7		♣ AQ63	
Steve		Bruce	
	♠ Q6	EW:1N,4♦, 5♠	
	♥ AKQ642	NS: 1♥	
	♦ 109		
	♣ K94		

Tuesday Club Game, July 13, 2010 Ms. Kay Mulford, Director.  
Cincinnati Bridge Association Bridge Center, 2860 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, OH 45241 (513) 631-8070 . Bruce Parent is my partner. We play 2/1 Game Force.

Sometimes an overtrick happens because one or both defenders have to protect one card too many in 2 or 3 suits. Here's an example.

## The Bidding

East has a minimum opener with fine shape and all HCP working. South has a natural ♥ overcall. North has 4 ♠s and good values, so a negative double is the first step forward. North has nothing to say. East describes a minimum holding with 4 ♠s. South announces a robust ♥ suit (likely 6) and West has a choice to make. West suspects East is short in ♥s (1 loser). Top trumps suggest not more 0-1 loser in ♠s. The ♦A suggests 0-1 loser in ♦s. With one loser in ♣s the combined estimated loser count between the hands is an optimistic 3. Note West could have involved partner in the game decision by bidding 3♦ – a Help Suit Game Try in Opener's suit – suggesting game if Hxx is enough

North	East	South	West
Pass	1♦	1♥	Double <sup>1</sup>
Pass	1♠ <sup>2</sup>	2♥	4♠

All Pass

1= Negative Double; 2= Minimum with 4 ♠s

South leads the ♥A

help. 3♦ cannot be a place to play since we have a 4-4 ♠ fit. In any event West knows that 22-23 HCP with no wastage in the opponent's suit should make game often.

## The Play

Declarer appears to have a possible loser in all 4 suits. If the ♠ finesse works, then East will need help to hold losers to one in each of the 3 remaining suits. 23 HCP suggests that many will not bid this game, however there is no wastage in ♥s.

Declarer ruffed the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of ♥s as all followed. With the fall of the ♥J10 from North, the ♥97 are threats to South's ♥Q. East plays the ♠J and South covers. The ♣J from Dummy is won by South's ♣K, setting up East's ♣6 as a threat to (Trick 6 →)

North's ♣10. South returns a low ♥ ruffed by North and East. Declarer draws a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of trumps and plays a small ♦ to the ♦A.

The play of the ♠K puts pressure on North and elicits a small ♣. East simply discards a small ♦ (If North had pitched a ♦, East would pitch a small ♣). North could not guard both ♦s and ♣s. The ♦ finesse now brings in the rest of the tricks. 4♠ making 5 for +450 was worth 9.5 MPs of 11 (3 other pairs tied this result).

	♠		
	♥		
	♦ Q87		
	♣ 1085		
♠ K5	N	♠	
♥ 9	W 5 E	♥	
♦ 52	S	♦ KJ4	
♣ 7		♣ AQ6	
Steve		Bruce	
	♠		
	♥ Q64		
	♦ 10		
	♣ 94		

Position after Trick 6 - West to lead

Pair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
MPs	2	7	5.5	5.5	9.5	2		9.5	2	9.5	2	9.5	2
Result	170	420	200	200	450	170		450	170	450	170	450	170

## Post Mortem

What kind of squeeze is this? South's return of the small ♥ for North and East to ruff created a simple squeeze against North. South is likely a 2623 hand so North rates to protect both minors. Once trumps were drawn, all declarer had to do was return to the dummy and play the last trump. North could not make a discard without giving up an overtrick.

Many squeezes show themselves as the hand matures and declarer is looking for the fulfilling trick or an overtrick. Losing the ♣K finesse served to correct the count for the squeeze (declarer was left with one loser and 2 threat cards in the minors). Notice how declarer established threats and postponed drawing trumps to establish winners in ♣s. Notice how declarer was well placed for the ♦ finesse once the squeeze card was played.

When the ♦ finesse works the overtrick is ensured. Risky to finesse in ♦s you say? After all South overcalled and rebid freely. Shouldn't declarer expect the ♦Q in South's hand? Perhaps in a team game, but in Matchpoints an overtrick is worth its weight in gold.

## Learning Points

1. Don't obsess over squeezes. When they occur, simply counting will help you find them. Just make it a practice to establish winners and threats before you choose to cash out.
2. Play Help Suit Game Tries. Both Loser count and strength in the suit are helpful when making the game decision. Be sure partner knows what a good help suit try looks like.
3. Be sure to involve partner in close decisions. Two heads are better than one.

Keywords: Working Points, Help Suit Game Try, Threat Cards, Correct the Count, Simple Squeeze