

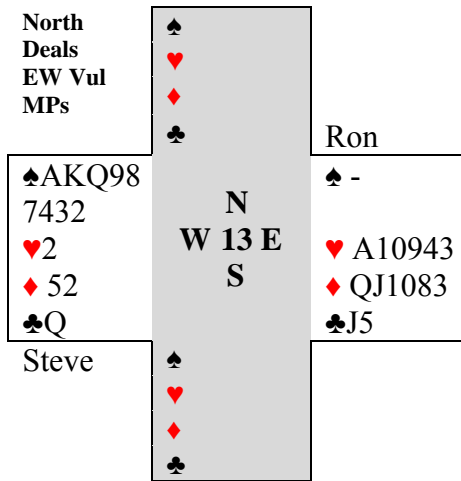
Learning Points – Finding a Sound Slam in Competition

By Steve Moese. Edited by Mike Purcell

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Slams Level: Intermediate/Advanced

Tuesday Night Club Game, August 16, 2011, Mr. John Altman, Director. Cincinnati Bridge Association Bridge Center, 2860 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, OH 45241 (513) 631-8070. Ron Babcock is my partner. We play Precision.

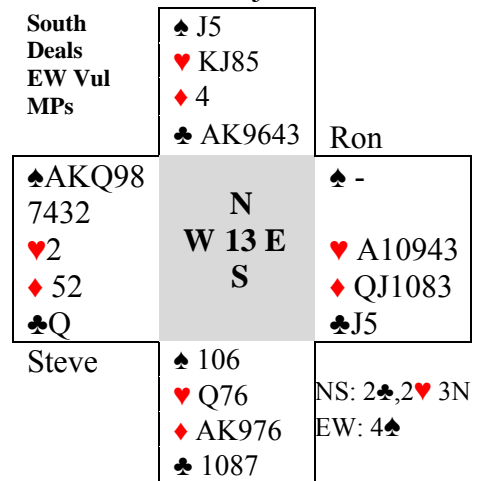
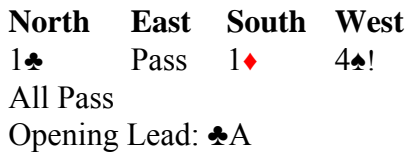


The difference between a fair score and a great score in Matchpoint Pairs is often one more trick. Can you find the overtrick?

The Bidding

NS appear to have about half the HCP by the time West bids. East was unable to overcall 1♣ – likely a weak hand, less likely an opening hand with ♣s and no good bid. In today’s game South’s 1♦ response tends to indicate a lack of interest in the majors. Ask!

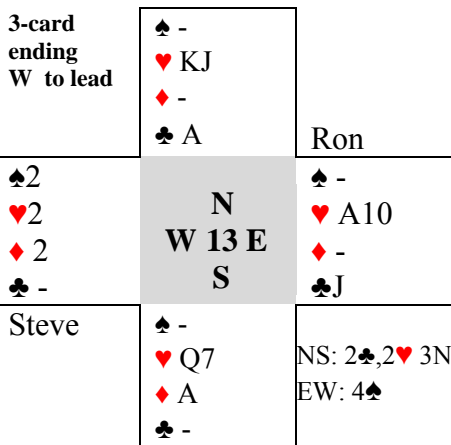
Vulnerable against not means EW cannot afford to go down 2 in any contract (doubled is -500; their game is worth 420-480).



What do you call a 9-card suit? **Trump!!!** The ♣K or a red Ace from partner would guarantee 10 tricks as long as ♠s broke no worse than 3-1-0 around the table.

The Play

It wasn’t the opening lead, but the ♦ switch followed by the ♣ continuation that presented declarer with a slim chance, a thread, to the all important 11th trick. Can you see it yet? West ruffed trick 3 and studied the hand. There were 2 possible chances for an overtrick – a ♣♥ simple squeeze against North or a Double squeeze against both opponents (North guards ♣s, South guards ♦s and both guard ♥s). Fascinating that declarer does not have to choose between them! Simply play off the spades, watch ♥ & ♦ discards.



← The final 3-card ending, West leads the ♠2 and North perforce pitches the ♥J (Pitching the ♣A sets up dummy’s ♣J). Declarer now pitches the ♣J from dummy (it’s work done). Now South is squeezed in the red suits. After much thought South parted with the ♥7. The ♥2 to the ♥A crashed both ♥ honors, setting up the ♥10 for the all important overtrick. Note that if South pitches the ♦A, West simply cashes the ♦2 (you did keep a count of ♦’s right?). Curious how the final 3 cards for West were deuces. Now you see why 3 deuces beat a pair of Aces! Making 5 was a tie for top.

	Contract	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W
	4♠ W		620	3.50	1.50
	4♠ W		620	3.50	1.50
	4♠ W		620	3.50	1.50
	4♠ W		620	3.50	1.50
	4♠ W		650	0.50	4.50
	4♠ W		650	0.50	4.50
	4♠ W	100		1.00	0.00
	4♠ W		620	0.00	1.00

Notice if South decides to cash 2♦ tricks before returning ♣s, declarer is held to 10 tricks.

Post Mortem

Even when you can count 10 tricks, look around for a free try for an overtrick. The cards might cooperate. Partner will enjoy it too! Here West would succeed if North held ♥KQJ or if both opponents held ♥honors (as in this case). You don't often see the deuce as a threat card – but it can happen!

Learning Points

1. Be disciplined with Vulnerable preempts. Don't give nonvulnerable opponents a free shot at a +500 or more.
2. Squeezes for 1 trick require the loser count be adjusted. If we hold too many losers, opponents will not have busy cards to hold. The opponents failed to cash their winners, rectifying the count for declarer (2 tricks lost, 10 winners, and 1 trick for the possible squeeze).
3. Consider a Squeeze when opponents are known to be long in suits where you hold possible threats behind them.

Keywords: Vulnerable Preempt, Simple and Double Squeeze played as one.