

Think and Play

Advanced Declarer Play

Advanced Declarer Plays:

- Elimination (or Strip) and Throw-in Plays
- Trump Coups
- Squeeze Plays

All these plays have two things in common. They require:

- a specific distribution to work, and
- the defender who is being subjected to this play has no idle card which can be used to escape the trap.

The opportunity to use squeeze plays and trump coups are rare, but elimination and throw-in plays (often just called end plays) can occur at least once in a session.

Trump Coups (Rare)

Trump Coups are a means for declarer to avoid losing what appears to be a certain loser in trumps.

For a standard trump coup, the defender with the apparent trump trick is sitting under declarer's long trump suit which is in his hand or dummy, and to achieve the trump coup declarer must reduce that long trump suit to the same number as the problem defender before playing through the defender's hand.

This requires declarer to have:

- a shortness in a suit in the hand with the long trump suit, so that she can ruff this suit to reduce her trump length, and
- sufficient entries to the hand with the long suit to effect the ruffs, plus one more to get back to the other hand to lead through the defender.

The defender's distribution must also be such that she cannot ruff an off-suit while both declarer and dummy must follow to it.

Example: Double Reduction Trump Coup

	♠ AKxx	Contract 6H by South
	♥ xx	Lead QC
	♦ KJx	
	♣ Axxx	
♠ Jxx		♠ xxx
♥ x		♥ Jxxx
♦ 109xx		♦ Axx
♣ QJxxx		♣ xxx
	♠ Qxx	
	♥ AKQ10xx	
	♦ Qxx	
	♣ K	

Declarer wins the KC and draws trumps only to find West showing out on the second round. Declarer now appears to have a diamond and a trump (heart) loser.

To avoid this declarer leads QD which East wins and, say, exits with a spade. Declarer wins in hand with QS and crosses to the dummy with the JD and ruffs a club. Declarer now crosses to the dummy with KD and ruffs a second club.

Double Reduction Trump Coup

	♠ AKxx ♥ xx ♦ KJx ♣ Axxx	Contract 6H by South Lead QC
♠ Jxx ♥ x ♦ 109xx ♣ QJxxx		♠ xxx ♥ Jxxx ♦ Axx ♣ xxx
	♠ Qxx ♥ AKQ10xx ♦ Qxx ♣ K	

This is now the end position. Having effected the double trump reduction to reduce her suit length to the same as the problem defender (RHO), declarer now crosses to the dummy for the last time and plays the AC. If the RHO discards a spade, declarer also discards a spade, plays the AS and continues with any spade over-ruffing RHO to complete the trump coup. If she trumps the AC, declarer over-trumps and draws RHO's last trump before cashing the two spades.

Trump Coups

Dir: South
Vul: None

Feb 18, 2014

♠ 8 3 2

♥ K Q

♦ A K 7

♣ Q J 7 4 3

♠

♥

♦

♣

♠ A J 10 7 6 5

♥ 10 9 8 3

♦

♣ A 8 2

W	NORTH	E
S	SOUTH	T

Lead QD

<i>Bidding</i>			
<i>W</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>
1NT #	Pass	2♥*	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	Dble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

15-17 HCP

* Transfer to spades

Normally you would expect to lose 1 x spade and up to two hearts if you throw your losing clubs on AD and KD.

But what does South have for her double all on her own at the four level?

Trump Coups

Feb 18, 2014

Dlr: South
Vul: None

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

♠
♥
♦
♣

To feel that she can beat your 4S, South must have the AH and probably feels she has three trump tricks because she holds all the outstanding trumps viz KQ94. She may have the KC as well but shouldn't be counting on it for a trick. *How are you going to avoid losing three trumps tricks with South sitting over AJ10xxx in dummy?*

Trump Coups

Dir: South
Vul: None

Feb 18, 2014

♠ --
♥ 762
♦ QJ10643
♣ K1096

♠ 832
♥ KQ
♦ AK7
♣ QJ743

North
27
South

West East

♠ AJ10765
♥ 10983
♦ --
♣ A82

♠ KQ94
♥ AJ54
♦ 9852
♣ 5

	♠	♥	♦	♣	N
N	-	2	-	-	-
S	-	2	-	-	-
E	3	-	1	4	-
W	3	-	1	4	-

6
15 9
10

Lead QD

Bidding			
W	N	E	S
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	Dble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The solution lies in a trump coup. You must reduce the dummy down to the same length as South (i.e. ruff twice) and throw her on lead where she has no idle card with which she can exit. If you can make 4S doubled, even seeing all four hands, then you and the computer can celebrate with a glass of wine because you will likely be the only declarers that do.

Trump Coups

♠ -- Feb 18, 2014

Dir: South
Vul: None

♥ 762
♦ QJ10643
♣ K1096

♠ 832
♥ KQ
♦ AK7
♣ QJ743

North
27
South

♠ AJ10765
♥ 10983
♦ --
♣ A82

♠ KQ94
♥ AJ54
♦ 9852
♣ 5

	♠	♥	♦	N
N	-	2	-	-
S	-	2	-	-
E	3	-	1	4
W	3	-	1	4

Lead QD

Bidding			
W	N	E	S
1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	Dble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

15-17 HCP

* Transfer to spades

You ruff! the diamond lead in order to have sufficient entries to do the double trump reduction and you lead a heart. South takes AH and her best defence is to continue a heart. You win and finesse QC, North covering. You win in dummy and take a ruffing finesse of 9H, South covering. You ruff in hand, cash AD , discarding a club from dummy and ruff the KD in dummy!

Trump Coups

Lead QD

Dir: South
Vul: None

♠ --
♥ 762
♦ QJ10643
♣ K1096

♠ 832
♥ KQ
♦ AK7
♣ QJ743

West 27 East

♠ North
South

♠ AJ10765
♥ 10983
♦ --
♣ A82

♠ KQ94
♥ AJ54
♦ 9852
♣ 5

	♠	♥	♦	♣	N
N	-	2	-	-	-
S	-	2	-	-	-
E	3	-	1	4	-
W	3	-	1	4	-

Bidding			
W	N	E	S
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	Dble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

This hand is an example of the fascination of bridge. It features a double reduction trump coup and throw-in combined with both a ruffing and natural finesse....time for that glass of wine is it?

The end position is as above and you have so far lost only one trick to the AH. You cash the 10H discarding a club and lead a small club. South can ruff and exit with her last diamond which you ruff with the 7S in dummy and exit with the JS..... or South can discard her last diamond, you win JC and lead a spade to the 10S. Either way South can only make 2 trump tricks.

Elimination and Throw-in Plays

The opportunity to execute an elimination and throw-in play is much more common than trump coups for declarers, possibly as often as twice per session.

To execute this play, declarer needs to strip out all side suits before throwing one of the defenders in and forcing her to make a lead to declarer's advantage.

The opportunity for elimination plays occurs more often with distributional hands and where declarer has a lot of trumps and can ruff out the side suits. However, elimination plays can also arise with flattish hands where everybody is obliged to follow suit.

Two examples of elimination plays have already been discussed in earlier lessons viz Board 4, March 2 (Session 2 Finesses and Percentage Plays) and Board 3, March 9 (Session 3b Counting).

Elimination and Throw-in Plays:

Dir: East
Vul: None

♠ J 9
♥ A Q 7
♦ J 8 7 6 4 2
♣ K 4

March 30, 2015

♠
♥
♦
♣

W	NORTH	E
E	30	S
S	SOUTH	T

♠
♥
♦
♣

♠ A K 6
♥ 10 6 5
♦ 9
♣ A J 10 6 3 2

Bidding			
W	N	E	S
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥*	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* Heart feature rather than a heart suit which South has denied holding.

Lead by West KD dropping East's QD followed by a switch to 4S, 9S and 10S.

If the club finesse works and clubs are 3-2 you have 6 x club tricks, 2 x spades and 1 x heart for your contract. Spades may be a problem but you can't afford to duck or you will have no entry to your long clubs. You win KS and finesse the QC through East which wins but West shows out. You now need an extra trick from hearts. *Plan your play.*

Elimination and Throw-in Plays:

♠ J9
♥ AQ7
♦ J87642
♣ K4

Dir: East
Vul: None

March 30, 2015

♠ 543
♥ 9832
♦ AK1053
♣ 8

West	North	East
	30	
	South	

♠ Q10872
♥ KJ4
♦ Q
♣ Q975

	♠	♥	♦	♣	N
N	3	1	1	1	3
S	3	1	-	-	2
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

♠ AK6
♥ 1065
♦ 9
♣ AJ10632

	11	
7		10
	12	

Bidding			
W	N	E	S
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥*	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* Heart feature rather than a heart suit which South has denied holding.

Lead KD dropping East's QD followed by a spade switch to 9S and 10S.

To set up your clubs you play a third round. East wins and exits with a spade. West following with 5S and you win. You play off all your clubs discarding 3 x diamonds and a heart from dummy, West discarding 2 x diamonds, 2 x hearts and 3S. East discards 1 x heart and 1 x spade.

Elimination and Throw-in Plays:

Dir: East
Vul: None

♠ J9
♥ AQ7
♦ J87642
♣ K4

March 30, 2015

♠ 543
♥ 9832
♦ AK1053
♣ 8

West	North	East
	30	
South		East

♠ Q10872
♥ KJ4
♦ Q
♣ Q975

	11	
7		10
	12	

♠ AK6
♥ 1065
♦ 9
♣ AJ10632

	♠	♦	♥	♣	N
N	3	1	1	1	3
S	3	1	-	-	2
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

<i>Bidding</i>			
W	N	E	S
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥*	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* Heart feature rather than a heart suit which South has denied holding.

Lead KD dropping East's QD followed by a spade switch to 9S and 10S.

The end position is as above. West has played MUD in spades showing 3 x spades so East probably had 5 x spades to begin with. East has 2 x spades left because she discarded one. By playing the QD at trick one, East almost certainly had a singleton diamond only. You have only lost one trick and you know that you can exit with a spade to East quite safely forcing her to lead a heart around to the AQ tenace and giving you your ninth trick.

Elimination and Throw-in Plays:

Dir: South
Vul: None

April 17, 2015 (Kiama)

♠ AK	<table border="1"> <tr><td colspan="2">NORTH</td></tr> <tr><td>WEST</td><td>11</td><td>EAST</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2">SOUTH</td></tr> </table>	NORTH		WEST	11	EAST	SOUTH		♠ 9 7 6
NORTH									
WEST		11	EAST						
SOUTH									
♥ J 9 7 3	♥ J 10 9 5 4 3 2								
♦ AKQ 7	♣ 10 6 4								
♣ K 3 2									

Lead KH

<i>Bidding</i>			
W	N	E	S
			Pass
2♦#	2♠	Pass	Pass
2NT*	3♥	4♦	4♥
5♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

Multi

* 20-22

You can count 7 x diamond tricks, 2 x spades and 1 x spade ruff in hand for 10 tricks. You could lead towards the KC and if the AC sits under the KC you will have your 11th trick and go away satisfied not realising that you could have guaranteed your contract especially since North's strong bidding might indicate she holds the AC. *How?*

Elimination and Throw-in Plays:

Dir: South
Vul: None

♠ QJ10542
♥ AK854
♦ --
♣ 97

♠ AK
♥ J973
♦ AKQ7
♣ K32

West North East
11

♠ 976
♥ --
♦ J1095432
♣ 1064

♠ 83
♥ Q1062
♦ 86
♣ AQJ85

10		1
20		
	9	

	♠	♦	♥	♣	N
N	1	-	3	2	-
S	1	-	4	2	-
E	-	5	-	-	1
W	-	5	-	-	1

Bidding			
W	N	E	S
			Pass
2♦	2♠	Pass	Pass
2NT	3♥	4♦	4♥
5♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

The AC does, in fact, reside with South so simply leading to the KC will work (on this occasion).

To guarantee your contract you need to throw North in and force her to lead a club around to your KC or give you a ruff and slough. You do this by ruffing 4 x hearts in the dummy as you draw trumps in two rounds, cash the AS and KS and exit with the 9S discarding a club. North is marked with a lot of distribution given she has bid over your 20-22NT and South is unlikely to have a third spade. **If** she does and **if** the third spade is higher than the 9S she will still have to lead a club when you discard.

Squeeze Plays:

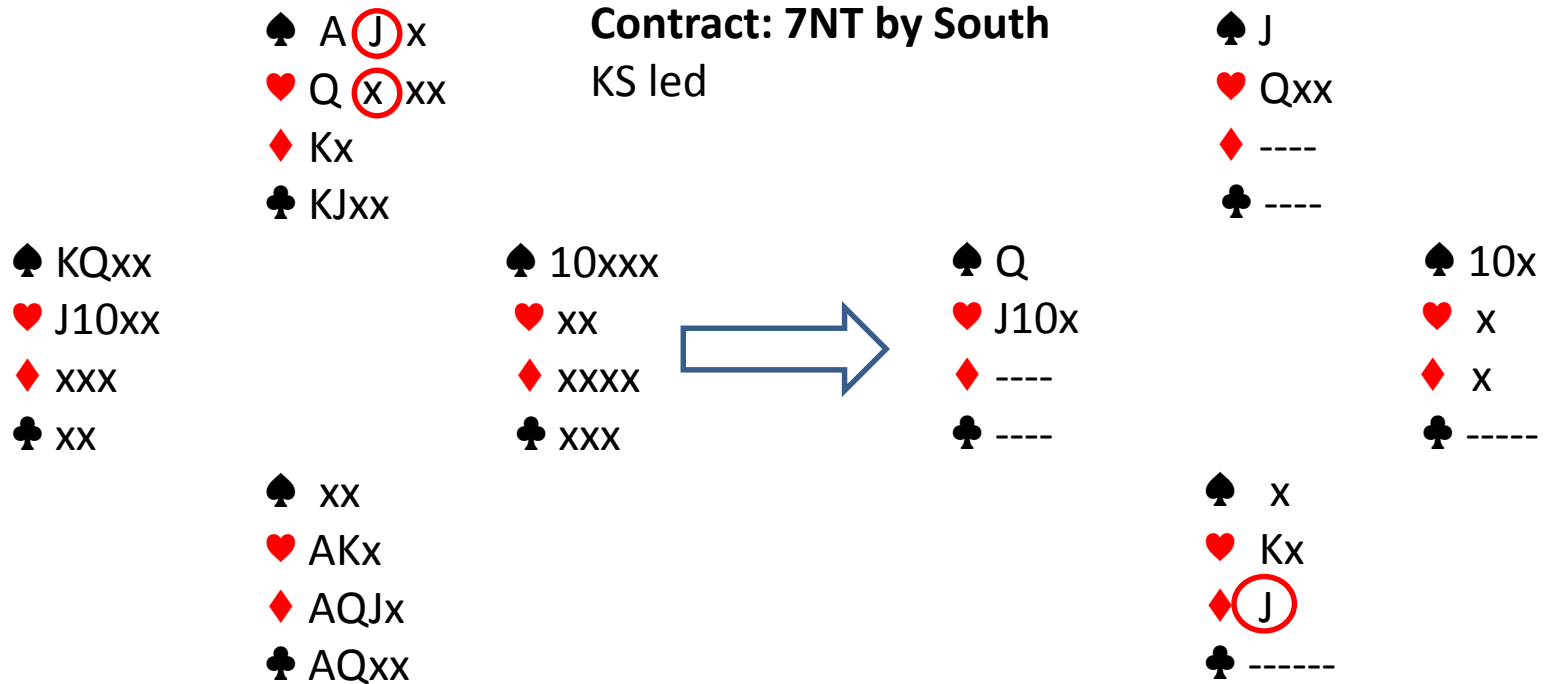
There are several types of squeezes which can be exerted on one or both opponents.

They have a number of common features:

- The defender (or defenders) is being squeezed because she cannot maintain control of two (or more) suits.
- There must be no idle cards in the defender's hand that is undergoing the squeeze. This requires declarer to "rectify the count" or lose all tricks bar the one* that the squeeze is aimed to secure.
- There must be at least two menace cards, one accompanied by a link card, and the position of these is important in relation to the defender who is being squeezed and the hand in which the squeeze card is played.

* There are rare squeezes that can secure two tricks but these and other more exotic types will not be discussed here.

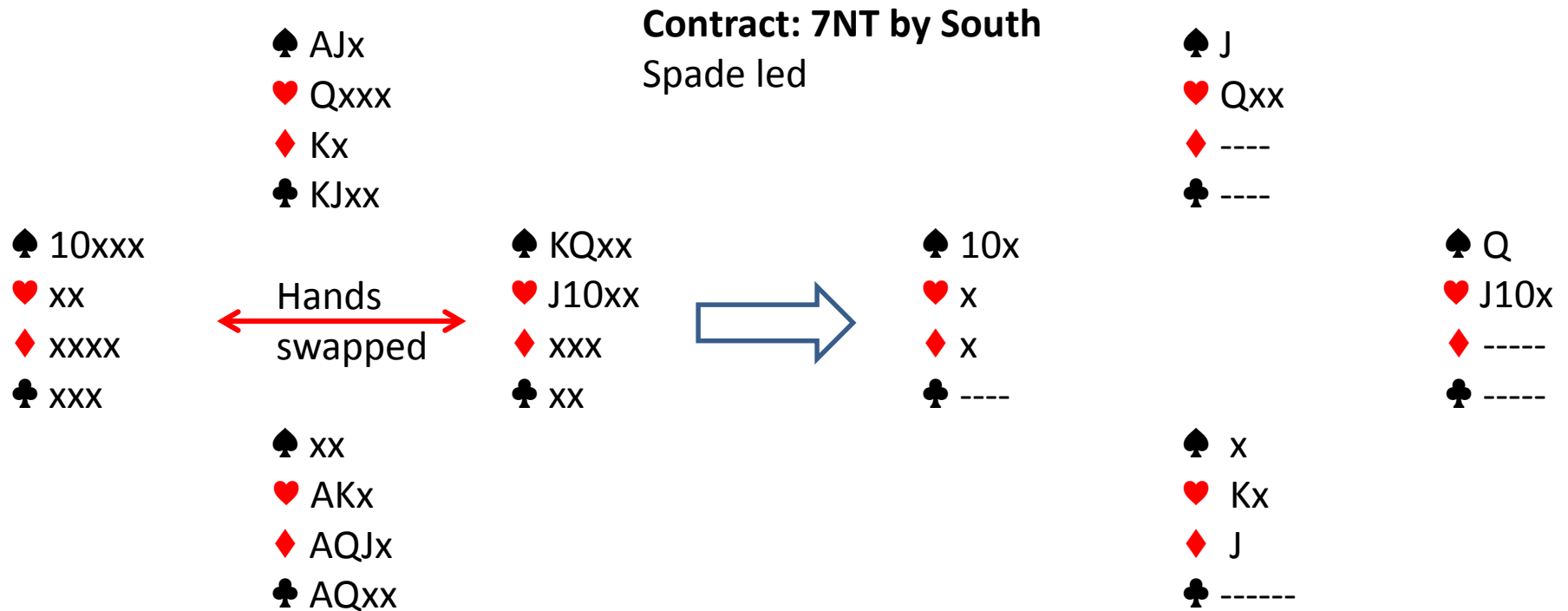
Simple Squeezes:



West can be squeezed. The menace cards are both in dummy, viz JS and the fourth heart with the QH as the link. There is no need to rectify the count (lose all tricks but the one sought) since the contract requires all thirteen tricks.

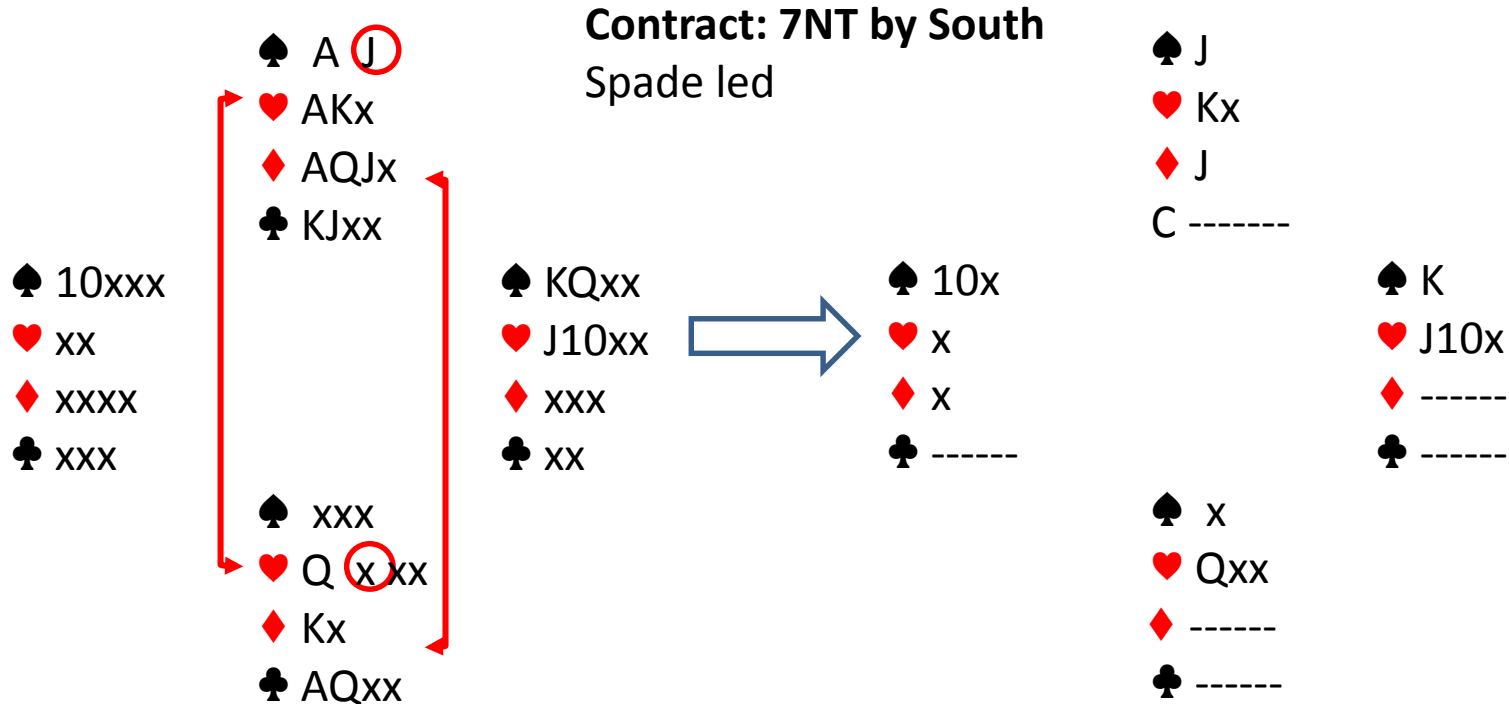
Win the AS and play off AH, 4 x clubs and 3 x diamonds, discarding a spade from dummy. Now play JD, the squeeze card. West must relinquish either a heart guard or the QS.

Simple Squeezes:



The menace cards are both in dummy, viz JS and the fourth heart with the QH as the link. Dummy which has both the menace cards must play before East. East cannot be squeezed. For a simple squeeze to be effective at least one of the menace cards must be in the hand following the defender who is being squeezed.

Compound (Simple) Squeeze:



The heart and diamond suits have now been switched. The menace cards are now split between declarer and dummy's hands. East is now squeezed when the JD is played from dummy.

Double Squeezes:

	♠ AKx	
	♥ xxx	
	♦ Kxx	
	♣ Kxxx	
♠ Q10xx		♠ Jxx
♥ xx		♥ QJ10x
♦ xxx		♦ xxx
♣ J10xx		♣ xxx
	♠ xxx	
	♥ AKxx	
	♦ AQJx	
	♣ AQ	

Contract: 6NT by South
Diamond led

Declarer can see 11 tricks off the top with 12 if hearts break 3-3. She wins the diamond in hand and ducks a heart. This actually prepares the way for a double squeeze. East wins and plays another diamond which declarer wins with the KD. She now plays off AC, QC, AS and KC discarding a spade and then returns to the two remaining top diamonds.

Double Squeezes:

Contract: 6NT by South
Diamond led

♠ Q10x
♥ x
♦ ----
♣ J

♠ K (x)
♥ xx
♦ ---
♣ (x)

♠ Jx
♥ QJx
♦ ---
♣ ---

♠ (x)
♥ AK (x)
♦ J
♣ ---

The end position is shown above. Declarer plays her last diamond, West and dummy discarding a heart and East is forced to discard a spade leaving control of that suit to West. Declarer now cashes her two top hearts and West must either unguard spades or clubs.

Double squeezes rely on both defenders trying to guard a common suit while guarding another suit of their own. Again, the menaces and links have to be in the right places for the double squeeze to work.