

Basic Declarer Play

The Loser-on-Loser And
Other Declarer Techniques

Trumping Losers

- We play in a trump contract because doing so allows us to ruff tricks that might otherwise be lost.
- But there are times when good declarer play requires us to refuse to ruff, and discard a loser instead.
- Doing this is a relatively common declarer play called a “loser-on-loser play.”
- I will show you several different ways this play can be used to gain a trick or save a contract that might otherwise go down.

Loser-On-Loser Example 1

♠ Q 9 6
♥ 8 7 5 4
♦ Q 7 5
♣ A K 7

♠ 4 2
♥ A K 9 6 3 2
♦ A 4
♣ Q 4 3

- You are playing 4 hearts.
- West leads the ace and king of spades, followed by a third spade, ruffed by east with the ♥ 10.
- Count winners and losers.
- What will happen if you over-ruff east?

Loser-On-Loser Example 2

♠ A 10 3
♥ 9 4
♦ Q J 10 9
♣ 8 6 5

♠ K Q J 6 5
♥ Q 7 3
♦ A K
♣ A 9 4

- East opens the bidding with 2 ♥.
- With 19 points, you make a takeout double, partner bids 3 ♦.
- You bid 3 ♠ and partner raises you to 4 ♠.
- West leads the ♥ 8, east takes the ace and king, continues hearts, which west ruffs with the ♠ 8.
- Do you overruff?

Loser-On-Loser Example 3

♠ K 6 3 2
♥ Q 7 2
♦ A Q 3
♣ 5 4 2

♠ A Q 7 5 4
♥ 8 3
♦ K J 4 2
♣ A 6

- You (south) open the bidding with 1♠, west overcalls 2♥, and partner cue bids 3♥.
- You push on to a tenuous 4♠.
- East leads the ace, king and a third heart, ruffed by east with the ♠9.
- Do you overruff?

Loser-On-Loser Example 4

♠ 8 7 4 3
♥ 9 6 4
♦ 2
♣ 7 6 4 3 2

♠ A K 6 5 2
♥ A 3
♦ A K Q 4
♣ Q J

- With 23 points, you open 2♣.
- Partner bids 2♦ and you show your suit with 2♠.
- Partner bids 4♠, showing no desire to go further.
- West leads the ♣A and continues with the ♣5 to east's king. East continues clubs.
- What do you do?

Loser-On-Loser Example 5

♠ K 4 3
♥ 7 3
♦ 8 7 6 4 3 2
♣ 6 2

♠ A Q J 10 8
♥ A K 6 5 2
♦ A
♣ A 5

- With 22 points, you open 2♣.
- Partner bids 2♦ and you show your suit with 2♠.
- Partner bids 3♠, showing, at least, a little value.
- You bid 4nt and partner shows 1 key card. You bid 6♠.
- West leads the ♣K

Loser-On-Loser Example 6

♠ A K 8
♥ Q J 10 9
♦ 8 7 6
♣ A J 5

- You (south) open the bidding with a very borderline weak 2♠. Partner aggressively bids 4♠.
- West leads the ♥A and switches to the ♠5.

♠ Q J 10 9 7 4
♥ 3
♦ A 5 2
♣ 6 4 2

Not a Loser-On-Loser Example 7

♠ Q J 5 4 2

♥ A 2

♦ K 4 3

♣ K 10 9

South West North East

1 ♠ pass 2nt pass

3 ♥ pass 4 ♣ pass

6 ♠

♠ A K 9 8 7

♥ 8

♦ A J 8 2

♣ A J 8

An end play can often eliminate the need to take a finesse.

Not a Loser-On-Loser Example 8

♠ A K 2
♥ 7 5 4
♦ 8 7 5 3 2
♣ 5 2

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	pass	2 ♠	pass
4 ♠	All Pass		

Opening Lead ♥ Q.

Using declarer's ruffing power effectively.

♠ Q J 10 9 7 5
♥ A K
♦ Q J
♣ A J 8

Not a Loser-On-Loser Example 9

♠ K 10 9
 ♥ 8 7 4
 ♦ A 6 5 3
 ♣ A 7 2

South	West	North	East
----	----	-----	1 ♥
1 ♠	pass	2 ♥	pass
4 ♠	All Pass		

♠ A Q J 7 3
 ♥ A Q 6 3
 ♦ 4
 ♣ 9 5 4

Opening Lead ♥ 2.

This technique is called a dummy reversal.

Final Thoughts

- Three declarer techniques we have examined:
 - Loser on loser play
 - Ruffing in dummy
 - The dummy reversal
- The dummy reversal requires adequate high trump in your hand and in dummy.
- To be a strong declarer, you must be alert to recognize when these conditions arise.