

Don't Squeeze Yourself

One problem players often face is that cashing winning tricks in one hand makes for difficult discards from the other hand. If entries are not a problem, you can often wait to cash good tricks while attacking other suits.

In the following hand from a recent evening game, West was declarer in 3NT on this auction:

1 NT (12-14) by West
 2D (forcing Stayman by East)
 2S by West
 3NT by East

North did not like his choices but selected the Queen of clubs, a fortuitous choice for declarer. Declarer won with the King and assumed a finesse against north for the jack would work, but that could wait. First she wanted to set up another trick before the defenders found diamonds. She played the 10 H, which won. Then the A H, then the 9 hearts to the Jack.

But, now cashing the K of hearts is a problem Declarer can't afford to throw a diamond, but throwing a spade could mean throwing away a potential trick from her hand—she would squeeze herself. So, declarer left the good K of Hearts alone for a while to try her luck with the spade suit.

Declarer's next play was a spade to the J, which held.

Now she played the 10 clubs, which was covered, making the 9 good and as well as the 7 and the 5 when the 8 clubs fell under the 9. Declarer now threw two diamonds on the 4th club and the K of hearts.

Then the A of spades, and a spade to the west hand. Spades broke 3-3. A nice series of lucky breaks! The defenders did get one diamond trick in the end.

	10 8 3 Q 8 5 3 A K 2 Q J 8	
K J 4 2 A 10 9 J 9 8 K 10 3		A 9 7 K J 4 2 Q 10 A 9 7 5
	Q 6 5 7 6 8 7 5 4 3 6 4 2	