

## Cross Ruff and Dummy Reversal

**Cross Ruff:** Ruff losers in both declarer's hand and in dummy:

- **Make extra tricks by scoring each trump separately.** For example, with 4 trump in each hand, you can score as many as 8 trump tricks in total instead of 4.
- **You should consider a cross ruff when all of the following are present:**
  - Declarer is short in one suit.
  - Dummy is short in a different suit.
  - Both hands have high trumps (to prevent over-ruffs towards the end of the hand).
  - Both hands have enough trump (usually 5-3 or better).
  - There is no solid or semi-solid side suit. (Set up & use the solid side suit instead.)

**Dummy Reversal:** Ruff only in the hand with longer trump. Pull trump in hand with shorter trump.

- You normally ruff in the hand with the shorter trump. It is usually bad for declarer to ruff in the hand with the longer trump. But once in a while, it makes sense to ruff on the long side. Since this is the reverse of the normal case, it is called a dummy "reversal".
- **You should consider a dummy reversal when all of the following are present:**
  - Losers in the long trump hand cannot be ruffed or discarded.
  - A short suit in the long trump hand opposite length in this suit on the other side.
  - Enough trump on the short side to pull the opponent trump (3+ trump with 2 honors).
  - Enough entries on the short trump side: 1 per ruff + 1 more to pull opponent trumps.

**Proper technique:**

- **Cash side suit winners before starting to ruff and/or use side suit winners for early entries to the other side.** If you leave side suit winners until the end, you will find that the opponents discard wisely and then ruff your high cards in these side suits.
- **Count cards in the suits you are ruffing. Ruff high if opponents are likely to over-ruff.** You can often score all your trump by ruffing low at first and higher as you proceed. But if 10 or 11 cards in a suit are gone, you will likely need to ruff high.
- **For cross ruff & dummy reversal, count winners instead of losers.** Count side suit winners first, then count how many ruffs you will need. This helps you decide whether to ruff high. (If you need to score all of your trump, don't ruff high on an early ruff. If you have enough tricks by ruffing high, don't put your contract in jeopardy by ruffing low.)

**Defense Against Cross Ruff & Dummy Reversal:**

- **Lead a trump at every opportunity.** Every trump you lead costs the declaring side a trick, making them use two trumps on the one trick.
- **Listen to clues from the bidding.** Example: 1S-4S by the opponents. The 4S bidder is usually a weak distributional hand with long spades. These are often cross ruff hands. Lead a trump on opening lead.
- **Look for clues in the dummy.** Example: Dummy has a short suit AND dummy is long in a suit where you also are long. Declarer will be short in this suit. If you get in, lead a trump.

**Cross ruff example:**

|         |          |         |
|---------|----------|---------|
|         | S: 6     |         |
|         | H: KJ8   |         |
|         | D: 8653  |         |
| S: K532 | C: Q7532 | S: JT87 |
| H: 62   |          | H: 943  |
| D: AQT2 |          | D: J4   |
| C: 986  | S: AQ94  | C: KJT4 |
|         | H: AQT75 |         |
|         | D: K97   |         |
|         | C: A     |         |

Contract: 4H by South. Opening lead: 9C by West. If South pulls trump, South will lose 3 spades & 3 diamonds for down 3. Meanwhile, South can score 2 Aces and 8 trump tricks by ruffing 3 spades in dummy and 3 clubs in hand. The AQ of trump will be tricks 9 & 10, making the contract.

**Another cross ruff example:**

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
|          | S: AT654 |          |
|          | H: T8542 |          |
|          | D: K     |          |
| S: 9     | C: 85    | S: 32    |
| H: AKJ63 |          | H: Q7    |
| D: T954  |          | D: AQJ2  |
| C: JT9   | S: KQJ87 | C: Q6432 |
|          | H: 9     |          |
|          | D: 8763  |          |
|          | C: AK7   |          |

Contract: 4S by South. Opening lead: 9S. South has 6 losers: 1H+4D+1C, but 3D & 1C can be ruffed in dummy, making 5S, as long as 4 trump remain in dummy. West has done well to lead a trump. If East does not lead another trump when East wins AD, South makes 11 tricks. If South pulls the last trump rather than cross ruffing, South gives away the overtrick.

**Dummy reversal example:**

|         |           |           |
|---------|-----------|-----------|
|         | S: KQJ    |           |
|         | H: 964    |           |
|         | D: AK4    |           |
| S: T85  | C: Q972   | S: 9      |
| H: AKJT |           | H: Q3     |
| D: T75  |           | D: J863   |
| C: T86  | S: A76432 | C: AKJ543 |
|         | H: 8752   |           |
|         | D: Q92    |           |
|         | C:        |           |

Contract: 4S by South. Opening lead: 5S. If South pulls trump, South has 9 tricks (6S+3D) with little hope for any others. South can ruff 4 clubs in hand to give 7S+3D=10 tricks. Clubs split 4-5 most often. But South should ruff the 4th club with the Ace in case the split is 3-6. South must get to dummy 4 times to lead clubs. This can be done with KS (trick 1), QS, AD & KD. The last spade remaining in dummy will be the high trump, for trick 10. South should cash the QD early. If not, West will pitch a diamond on the last club and will then ruff the QD.