



By: Don Rogers

Dealing with dummy's long side suit

A long suit in dummy is always a threat to provide declarer with extra tricks at NT, and the opportunity to throw away losers in other suits at suit play. When dummy comes down and you see a 5 or longer card suit (even a bad one) you should immediately evaluate the situation. There are several cases.

- 1. Declarer has plenty of side suit entries to set up the long suit.

In this case it is necessary to cash out the defenses' side suit winners before declarer can discard his losers. Defense will not be able to prevent establishing the suit, so there is no reason to hold up any winners in dummy's long suit.

- 2. Declarer has limited entries to dummy.

In this case attack the entry to dummy. For example, you are on lead at trick 2 against NT with the following situation:

Dummy  
S-xx H-A xx D-xx C-KQJxx

You  
S-xxx H-x xx D-xxx C-xxx

Lead a heart and attempt to make declarer use the A of Hearts before he wants to. When declarer leads clubs, be sure to give partner count so he will know how long to hold up if he has the Ace (with an even number, play high low; with an odd number play from the bottom up). Your partner must pay attention!

- 3. Declarer has no outside entries to dummy.

In this case it is essential for the partner not having the control to give partner count. Example:

Dummy  
KQJ42

West	East
Axx	963

Declarer  
xx

Declarer leads a small card. West must play low on the first trick allow partner to show count. East plays the three on trick 1, so West knows he has an odd number (one or three, since West can see the 2 in the dummy). Now West knows that he can safely take his Ace on trick 2, and declarer will be blocked. (Note that if East has a singleton, it doesn't matter when West takes the Ace because declarer has four cards and can always set up the suit.)

But, if the situation is:

	Dummy	
	KQJxx	
West		East
Axx		96

Declarer  
xxx

Now East plays the 9 on the first trick, and West knows East has an even number in the suit, giving declarer three cards. Now West must hold up his Ace until the third round to prevent declarer from making 4 tricks.

**Exception:** If the contract is NT, and you have a set up suit, of course you take your ace at first opportunity and run your suit to beat the contract!