

Hands from the Corwen Trophy – 30th to 31st May 2015

Double squeezes are rare but beautiful. Here are a couple of examples from the Corwen Trophy

Dir S	K 10 8 3	
Love all	K 10 9 5	
	A K Q 5	
	9	
Q 9 5 4		J 6 2
8 7 6 3		Q J 2
7		J 8 3 2
A 7 5 3		Q 6 4
	A 7	
	A 4	
	10 9 6 4	
	K J 10 8 2	

I opened 1NT as South which I believe to be the best opening on this sort of hand at pairs or teams. North used Stayman and bid 3NT after the 2♦ response.

The best lead is a heart and declarer's best chance is probably to win the King in dummy to preserve sufficient entries in hand to establish and cash the club suit. This leads to 10 tricks which would have scored 44%.

At my table, West led the 3♣ and East made the understandable error of covering dummy's 9♣ with the Queen. This allowed me to win the K♣ and continue with the J♣ to clear the suit. When West won the A♣, she switched to a low spade (not best) and I won the J♠ with the Ace and tested the diamonds. When West showed out, I cashed the other top diamonds and the K♠ before returning to hand with the A♥. This was the position with 4 cards left:

	10	
	K 10	
	5	
	none	
Q 9		6
8 7		Q J
none		J
none		none
	none	
	4	
	10	
	8 2	

I cashed the 8♣ discarding the 5♦ from dummy. West discarded a heart and East a spade. Now, when the last club was cashed West had to keep the Q♠ and East had to keep the J♦ so dummy made the last two tricks with the Ace and 10 of hearts.

Here is a hand from Session 3.

Dir W	K Q J 8 5 4 3		
EW Vul	Q 9		
	K 10		
	Q 3		
A 10 9		7	
K 5 3 2		J 8 4	
9 7 6		A J 8 4 2	
8 7 6		J 10 5 2	
	6 2		
	A 10 7 6		
	Q 5 3		
	A K 9 4		

Jan opened 1♠ as North and I responded 2♣. Jan rebid 2♠ and, in our system, we play 2NT now as forcing for one round. This would be the best bid allowing the partnership to discover whether 4♠ or 3NT is the best game. In practice, I bid 3NT as it was pairs and I had a good heart holding.

West led the 2♥ - again, not the best lead. A diamond works very much better – passive leads are often best against 3NT when you don't hold a 5 card suit. Anyway, I guessed wrong by playing the 9♥ at trick one and had to take East's J♥ with my Ace. I then knocked out the A♠. West won the third round and switched to the 7♦ (the dreaded MUD lead). I played the 10♦ from dummy and it looked as if I was destined for a poor score if East wins the Ace and the defence cash their K♥ because I am safe for 11 tricks in a spade contract. But East covered the 10♦ with the J♦ and now I could see my way to 12 tricks with a classic automatic double squeeze.

I won the Q♦ and crossed to dummy with the Q♣ and started cashing my spades. When there was just one spade left, the position was:

	3		
	Q		
	K		
	3		
none		none	
K 5		none	
none		A	
8 7		J 10 5	
	none		
	6		
	none		
	A K 9		

On the last spade I discarded the 6♥ and because I knew East still held the A♦ and West had the K♥ one of them would have been squeezed out of the club control. 12 tricks and a 99% score.

I had some fun with the trump suit on this deal also from the 3rd session:

Dir E	10 6 3	
Both Vul	10	
	A K Q 8 7	
	Q 10 9 5	
Q		K J 9 4
K 8 7 6 3 2		Q 5 4
J 6		10 9 2
A 7 3 2		K J 6
	A 8 7 5 2	
	A J 9	
	5 4 3	
	8 4	

West opened 3rd in hand with a weak 2♥ and Jan bid 3♦. East supported to 3♥ and I joined in with 3♠ which became the final contract. West led the 6♥ and I won the Q♥ with the Ace and returned the J♥, ruffing out West's K♥. The contract is simple if the trumps break but to guard against West holding a singleton 9♠ or to tempt a misdefence, I led the 10♠ from dummy. Can you blame East for covering with the J♠? I won the A♠ and played the 2♠ to dummy's 6 and East's 9. East now switched to the 6♣ and the defence played 3 rounds of the suit – I ruffed the last with the 8♠ (showing off a bit) and continued with the 7♠ to East's K♠. When East now exited with a diamond to dummy's Q♦. I was now able to cash a second top diamond and then the Q♣. If East ruffs, I can overruff and if he refuses to ruff I discard my last diamond and then can just play winning diamonds through East eventually overruffing his 4♠ with my 5♠.

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