

# BRIDGE BITES

from The American Contract Bridge League

## SIDE-SUITS FIRST

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In our first bridge lesson we are taught to draw the defenders' trumps early in the play, lest they start ruffing our winners. We then spend the rest of our lives discovering (sometimes painfully) that there are exceptions to this rule.

	♠ J74 ♥ A9765 ♦ 92 ♣ AKJ	
♠ Q532 ♥ K832 ♦ Q4 ♣ QT2	North West      East Declarer	♠ AKT986 ♥ Q4 ♦ KT753 ♣
	♠ ♥ JT ♦ AJ86 ♣ 9876543	

### E-W Vulnerable

South	West	North	East
		1♥	1♠
2♣	2♠	3♣	4♠
5♣	Dbl	All Pass	

With extreme distribution around the table (or at least in the S-E corner), it's not unusual for the bidding to keep on going until someone finally says "Enough already, I double you!" Here, West questions South's ability to make 11 tricks in Clubs.

After ruffing the opening Spade lead, one (faulty) plan would be to ruff a couple of Diamonds, but that would set up a natural trump trick for the defense (two, as it happens, because the suit splits 3-0). The winning plan is to set up the Hearts, and some trumps must be kept in reserve in order to provide Dummy entries later in the play. It's OK to play a trump to the Ace at Trick 2, and then the play continues: Spade ruff; ♥J losing to East's Queen; Diamond shift won by the Ace; ♥T is run around; Club to Dummy; ♥A is cashed (pitching a Diamond); Heart ruff; Club back to the board. Now another Diamond is pitched on the long Heart and Declarer has her 11 tricks (7 trumps, 3 Hearts and the ♦A). Not a difficult hand for those who didn't use up Dummy's trumps before tackling Hearts.

**Anyone for 4♠?** Yes, that's another contract where it doesn't pay to draw trumps immediately. In this case it is the Diamonds which must be established early, and Declarer goes down if he ruffs the opening Club lead and then draws three rounds of trumps. Instead the play goes: Club ruff; ♠A; Diamond to the Queen; Heart to the Queen; lose a Diamond. Now Declarer is in control and loses just two red Aces and a Diamond overruff.

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