

# 47. 2024 – The Cross-Ruff

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Dealer N NS Vul

Here is a tough Hand:

	<b>NORTH</b>	
	3	
	A753	
	1097642	
	K5	
<b>WEST</b>		<b>EAST</b>
AKJ96		Q10875
Q8642		-
-		AQ53
AJ8		Q1062
	<b>SOUTH</b>	
	42	
	KJ109	
	KJ8	
	9743	

Bidding so far

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	North	East	South	West
	P	1S	P	3D (1)
	P	3H (2)	P	4NT (3)
	P	5D (4)	P	7S (5)

- (1) Splinter – Agrees Spades, 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round control in Diamonds
- (2) Splinter – 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round control in Hearts
- (3) RCKB
- (4) 1 or 4 controls (obviously 1 control)
- (5) Relying on Partner to have a few more Points for the opening bid, or a shapely Hand

## **The Play**

West leads S2 (in my view, the best Lead – the aim is to minimise a Cross-Ruff)

Dummy goes down

You see 7S is optimistic, but easy if the Club Finesse works (50:50 chance)

Is there a better way?

Firstly, observe the Spades – NS have the lowest 3 – 2, 3 & 4. EW have the top 10 Spades, so cannot be over-ruffed

So, do you go for the 50:50 Club Finesse or try the Cross-ruff?

If you tried the Finesse, you are down 1

## **Cross-Ruff**

Win Spade lead in Dummy, draw last Trump staying in Dummy. Play DA, throwing a Club. Ruff a Diamond. Ruff a Heart. Ruff a Diamond (noting DK falls, so DQ is best). Ruff a Heart. 7 Tricks made

Play DQ, throwing CJ. Club to CA (noting CK falls). Ruff a Heart. Play CQ and C10 throwing last 2 Hearts. Last Spade in Dummy is best. 6 More Tricks = 13

## **MORAL OF THE STORY**

Making 7D relies on CK Doubleton or Singleton, well under 50%

So, in the end, the Club Finesse is best, relying on South to have CK

The point of this Hand is to show there are multiple ways to try to make a Hand. Here the simplest (Club Finesse) fails, but has the highest chance

Can you make 7D if you don't draw the last Trump? Alas, no, as communication entries are insufficient

**Ian Morison**

Friday 5 December 2024