

www.vubridge.com

This section is on ruffing high in dummy and in hand to avoid being over-ruffed.

Avoiding over-ruffs (SA version)

Date: 14/06/2014

Dealer: North

[Play this hand online!](#)

Contract: 4H

By: South

Board #: 1

Vulnerable: None

North
 ♠ A7532
 ♥ K53
 ♦ K7
 ♣ 972

West
 ♠ Q6
 ♥ 98
 ♦ QT864
 ♣ K653



East
 ♠ KJT84
 ♥ 642
 ♦ J9
 ♣ QJT

South
 ♠ 9
 ♥ AQJT7
 ♦ A532
 ♣ A84

This set of deals is all about playing in suit contracts where you need to ruff losers in the dummy (maybe in the closed hand too). In many of these examples there is the risk of an over-ruff by the opponents so you need to know when you have to ruff with a high trump to prevent that from happening.

In Hand 1 you just need to count your tricks carefully.

West	North	East	South
-	P	P	1♥
P	1♠	P	2♦
P	3♥	P	4♥
P	P	P	

Lead: ♥ 9

You reach 4♥ as South after partner gives you *jump preference* in the auction. It may be worthwhile having a look at this bidding as a brief diversion.

After 1♥ – 1♠ – 2♦ a bid of 2♥ by responder (North in this case) would be a *sign-off* on a poor hand, attempting to end the auction. 3♥ is *invitational* (showing about 11 points or so) and is clearly *non-forcing*. North was fully entitled to upgrade the ♦K since you had bid the suit, by the way. With a minimum hand you would have Passed 3♥ but with a robust opening bid you were fully entitled to have a dart at game.

Now to the play. West has a quite horrible choice of opening leads (you have bid Diamonds, don't forget) so decides to plump for a trump. You have then to pause while you **Count** and **Plan**. In terms of winners there are obviously nine "on top" (one Spade, five Hearts, two Diamonds and a Club) so one extra needs to be found.

Ruffing Spades in hand is futile (*don't ruff in the long trump hand*) but a Diamond ruff is easy enough on table, in the short trump hand. So, you start by **not** drawing trumps and by playing the ♦K, the ♦A and playing a low Diamond. West plays a very cunning ♦Q on this and you...?

Now, this is a trap, cunningly set by West with his *false-card* in Diamonds. If you were to ruff this low, East would over-ruff with his ♥6 and would return a trump, preventing any Diamond ruffs on table. Ouch! You can afford to ruff this Diamond with the ♥K (you know trumps are not 5-0 after the opening trick) and now you have enough for the contract.

True, had you been able to make a trick with the ♥5 you could have also scored another Diamond ruff with the ♥K and made an overtrick. *Big deal*. That would have been the right play in 5♥ but not in 4♥. In most forms of bridge the rewards for making overtricks are so small that they are not worth bothering with until the contract is as safe as Fort Knox.

Here, you can subsequently draw trumps and take ten easy tricks, happily conceding the last


three. 4♥ making on the nose will do very nicely, thank-you.



www.vubridge.com

This section is on ruffing high in dummy and in hand to avoid being over-ruffed.

Avoiding over-ruffs (SA version)	Contract: 4S
Date: 14/06/2014	By: South
Dealer: East	Board #: 2
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: N / S

North ♠ 982 ♥ AJ ♦ QT832 ♣ 975		East ♠ 74 ♥ Q85 ♦ KJ7654 ♣ 82	
West ♠ 65 ♥ T964 ♦ A9 ♣ AKQT3		South ♠ AKQJT3 ♥ K732 ♦ ♣ J64	

Hand 2 is a classic example of where aggressive bidding has to be matched with meticulous card-play. Carelessness would cost you the contract.

West	North	East	South
-	-	P	1♠
2♣	2♠	P	4♠
P	P	P	

Lead: ♣ A

After overbidding the South hand a little you arrive in 4♠ and West cashes the three top Clubs. East throws a Heart on the last of the Clubs, leaving himself with only two left; this is something that you need to take heed of in the play.

At trick three West naturally tries his luck with the ♦A – after all, that would give him the first four tricks off the reel. You ruff that, though, and take stock.

You can only **Count** eight ricks (six Spades and two Hearts) so **Plan** to ruff two losing Hearts in dummy (in the *short trump hand*, note) to make the total rise to ten. Planning to ruff Diamonds in the closed hand is just plain silly. You won't increase the number of trump tricks available to you by that method. *Don't ruff in the long trump hand*. Unless, of course, the opponents force you to do so.

With that in mind you can cash the ♥A, the ♥K and ruff a Heart on table. Care here must be taken to ruff your two baby Hearts successively with dummy's ♠8 and ♠9. Ruffing with the ♠2 would be poor play and would be punished here as East would over-ruff with the lowly ♠4.

From the days of whist comes an appropriate aphorism:

"Don't send a boy on a man's errand".

You can afford to ruff the losing Hearts with "high" trumps so should certainly do so.

Dotting the *is* and crossing the *ts*... you can ruff one Heart with the ♠8, cross to hand with the ♠2 to the ♠10 and ruff the last Heart with the ♠9. Now you only have winning trumps left in the closed hand and the contract is yours.


If you bid 'em up, you have to play 'em well...



www.vubridge.com

This section is on ruffing high in dummy and in hand to avoid being over-ruffed.

Avoiding over-ruffs (SA version)	Contract: 4S
Date: 14/06/2014	By: South
Dealer: South	Board #: 3
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: E / W

<p>North</p> <p>♠ 972</p> <p>♥ AJ</p> <p>♦ QT832</p> <p>♣ 975</p>			
<p>West</p> <p>♠ 85</p> <p>♥ T964</p> <p>♦ A9</p> <p>♣ AKQT3</p>		<p>East</p> <p>♠ 64</p> <p>♥ Q85</p> <p>♦ KJ7654</p> <p>♣ 82</p>	
<p>South</p> <p>♠ AKQJT3</p> <p>♥ K732</p> <p>♦</p> <p>♣ J64</p>			

One of the tactics that we use here at VuBridge is to create hands just subtly different from the previous one.

Here is a classic case where we have altered Hand 2 by a small amount. How much does this alter your play in 4♠?

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
2♣	2♠	P	4♠
P	P	P	

Lead: ♣ A

This deal is a near-identical twin to Hand 2. After overbidding the South hand a little you arrive in 4♠ and West cashes the three top Clubs. East throws a Heart on the last of the Clubs, leaving himself with only two left; this is something that you need to take heed of in the play.

At trick three West tries his luck with the ♦A. You ruff that, though, and take stock. You can only **Count** eight tricks (six Spades and two Hearts) so must **Plan** to ruff two losing Hearts in dummy (in the *short trump hand*, note) to make the total rise to ten.

With that in mind you can cash the ♥A, the ♥K and ruff a Heart on table. Now, without the protection afforded by the ♠9 8 (as was available in Hand 2) you have to decide what card to use to ruff this low Heart. The choice is the ♠9, the ♠7 or the ♠2.

Ruffing with the ♠2 is silly (*Don't send a boy on a man's errand*) but ruffing with the ♠9 is unnecessary and wasteful on this trick. You should try the ♠7, winning whenever East has to follow suit (you don't *know* he is out of Hearts, remember) and whenever West has the ♠8.

When that holds you can return to hand with a trump and ruff the next Heart with the ♠9. After that you are home and dry in 4♠.



www.vubridge.com

This section is on ruffing high in dummy and in hand to avoid being over-ruffed.

Avoiding over-ruffs (SA version)

Date: 14/06/2014

Dealer: West

[Play this hand online!](#)

Contract: 4H

By: South

Board #: 4

Vulnerable: All

West	North	East	South
P	P	P	1♥
P	2♥	P	4♥
P	P	P	

Lead: ♠ Q

You arrive in 4♥ and West leads the ♠Q, meaning that you can see that dummy's ♠K is toast. You try the effect of ducking the first two Spade leads (nothing is any better) and ruffing the third round.

With a certain Diamond loser and only eight obvious tricks available (five Hearts, one Diamond and two Clubs) the problem is disposing of the two "long" Clubs in your hand.

Well, that's easy enough, they need to be ruffed on table, in the *short trump hand*. That will increase the winner count to ten (seven Hearts, one Diamond and two Clubs).

So.. cash the ♠A K and ruff a Club with the ♥8. Ruffing the third Club with dummy's ♥3 would be akin to sending a five-year old to the supermarket.

Don't send a boy on a man's errand!

Once the ♥8 has won the trick (as it must, of course) you can return to hand with a trump, ruff the last Club with the ♥A, re-enter your hand with the ♦A and claim enough tricks for your contract.

North

♠ K82

♥ A83

♦ 75432

♣ 63

West

♠ QJT9

♥ 72

♦ Q6

♣ QT942



East

♠ A643

♥ 654

♦ KT98

♣ J8

South

♠ 75

♥ KQJT9

♦ AJ

♣ AK75

Hand 4 continues the pattern. Here, in a reasonable game contract, you have to decide exactly how to get rid of your excess losers.



www.vubridge.com

This section is on ruffing high in dummy and in hand to avoid being over-ruffed.

Avoiding over-ruffs (SA version)	Contract: 4H
Date: 14/06/2014	By: South
Dealer: North	Board #: 5
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: N / S

West	North	East	South
-	P	P	1♥
P	2♥	P	4♥
P	P	P	

Lead: ♠ Q

This hand is a clone of Hand 4, of course, except for one subtle change of card.

You arrive in 4♥ and West leads the ♠Q, laying waste to dummy's ♠K. You try the effect of ducking the first two Spade leads (nothing is any better) and ruffing the third round.

With a certain Diamond loser and only eight obvious tricks available (five Hearts, one Diamond and two Clubs) the problem is disposing of the two "long" Clubs in your hand.

Well, that's easy enough, they need to be ruffed on table, in the *short trump hand*. That will increase the winner count to ten (*seven* Hearts, one Diamond and two Clubs).

So.. cash the ♣A K and ruff a Club - but with which trump? Ruffing the third Club with dummy's ♥3 is just silly. True, East may be following suit on this trick (you don't *know* he has no more Clubs left) but it is still careless play.

Don't send a boy on a man's errand!

The best play is to try ruffing the third Club with the ♥7. This works whenever East has a Club left and has to follow suit and also when East is out of Clubs but has no ♥8.

Here, the ♥7 holds so you can return to hand to ruff the last Club with the ♥A, come to hand with the ♦A and claim your contract with high trumps.

North ♠ K82 ♥ A73 ♦ 75432 ♣ 63		East ♠ A643 ♥ 654 ♦ KT98 ♣ J8	
West ♠ QJT9 ♥ 82 ♦ Q6 ♣ QT942		South ♠ 75 ♥ KQJT9 ♦ AJ ♣ AK75	

Another case of a deal that is very nearly the same as the previous one.

Is this a clone of the previous deal or does a small alteration make a big difference to your line of play?



www.vubridge.com

This section is on ruffing high in dummy and in hand to avoid being over-ruffed.

Avoiding over-ruffs (SA version)	Contract: 4S
Date: 14/06/2014	By: South
Dealer: East	Board #: 6
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: E / W

West	North	East	South
-	-	P	1♠
P	2♣	P	2♦
P	2NT	P	4♠
P	P	P	

Lead: ♥ J


You reach a sensible contract of 4♠ and West starts off with the ♥J, hoping to promote some tricks there.

A **count** of winners and losers shows that you are a trick short – you have five Spades, one Heart, two Diamonds and a Club for a total of nine. You can, however, ruff a Diamond or two on the table (in the *short trump hand*) to increase the number of tricks you might make (and decrease your losers).

So, win the ♥A, perform, and set about ruffing your losers. ♦A K and Diamond ruff on table – *but with what?* If you ruff low, with the ♠5, you risk your contract. It is possible that East may be able to over-ruff cheaply (with the ♠6, say) and return a trump.

It is this last play – a trump return – that is devastating as it leaves you with too many losers. Best is to ruff your first losing Diamond *high* (with the ♠A) as that all but guarantees you ten tricks (five Spades, one Heart, two Diamonds, one Club and a ruff on table).

Having done the deed it is easy enough to maneuver to ruff the last Diamond on table as well – on some days that would generate an overtrick. Not today, however. You end up losing two Spades (that's the ♠K and an over-ruff) and a Club. No matter – that's all you lose.

North		East	
♠ A5		♠ K62	
♥ Q543		♥ K762	
♦ 94		♦ T8	
♣ AJ753		♣ KT84	
West			
♠ 73			
♥ JT98			
♦ QJ752			
♣ Q9			
South			
♠ QJT984			
♥ A			
♦ AK63			
♣ 62			

Here you reach a good game contract and have to decide how to eradicate your losers.

However, you should do your chores first - by counting winners and losers and knowing exactly how many losers you have to get rid of.