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This series is all about the crossruff (with a warning about when NOT to do it!)

VB#7 The Crossruff 2 SA	Contract: 4S
Date: 14/06/2014	By: South
Dealer: North	Board #: 1
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: None

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


Lead: ♥ A

You (South) play in 4♠ after both you and your partner bid aggressively. West cashes two top Hearts and tries his luck with the ♥Q.

Now what? As ever you should **count your tricks** – you have five Spades and two Clubs so you need three ruffs in the dummy. To pave the way for that you must concede a Diamond and the best time to do that is just after cashing the ♣A.

Pulling a round of trumps is wrong – if you do that, East will gain the lead with a Diamond and play a second round and there will be insufficient trumps in the dummy. After conceding a Diamond you should win the trump return, cash the ♠K and crossruff your way to ten tricks.

Note that a 4-0 trump break is actually *good* news on this hand. If West had been able to lead a trump at trick two and East had been able to lead a second round when on lead with a Diamond you would have run out of trumps in dummy.

<p>North</p> <p>♠ KJ96</p> <p>♥ JT8</p> <p>♦ 2</p> <p>♣ KT865</p>			
West		East	
♠ AKQ64		♠ 8432	
♥ KJ964		♥ 932	
♦ 742		♦ A7	
		♣ QJ93	
<p>South</p> <p>♠ AQT75</p> <p>♥ 75</p> <p>♦ QT853</p> <p>♣ A</p>			

This series of six deals continues the theme of the *crossruff*. This play is when you make your trumps separately by ruffing your losers in both hands – dummy and the closed hand.

Remember, the crucial feature of the crossruff is that you do not draw trumps – you use as many of your trumps as possible to ruff losers. If you use this play when you shouldn't (when you should be drawing trumps) you will end up with egg on your face.

Hand 1: A little overbidding never did anybody any harm. Well, perhaps, but your card-play skills have got to be up to the task of making the resulting contract.



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VB#7 The Crossruff 2 SA

Date: 14/06/2014

Dealer: East

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Contract: 7S

By: South

Board #: 2

Vulnerable: N / S

North
 ♠ KQT7
 ♥ AKJ3
 ♦ Q
 ♣ A962

West
 ♠ 5432
 ♥ T7
 ♦ KJ852
 ♣ J8



East
 ♠
 ♥ Q9652
 ♦ T74
 ♣ QT754

South
 ♠ AJ986
 ♥ 84
 ♦ A963
 ♣ K3

The next two hands are played in slams. This makes the bidding awkward to understand but not to worry – it's the play that matters.

Here, your partner gets excited by your opening bid (over-excited more like) and bids like a madman. Can you save him from his excesses?

West	North	East	South
-	-	P	1♠
P	4NT	P	5♥
P	7♠	P	P
P			

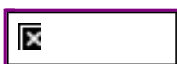
Lead: ♠ 2

North punts a grand slam in thoroughly uncouth fashion and West leads an approved trump. (It is often right to lead trumps against grand slams).

Recovering from the shock of the 4-0 trump break, you (South) can see five trumps and five top tricks in the outside suits. Three ruffs in the dummy will get the total up to thirteen.

Any problems? Well, as with Hands from the previous series, it is necessary to *cash the top tricks in the outside suits* immediately. If you play off the ♦A, ruff a Diamond and play three rounds of Hearts to return to hand West will throw a Club away. Oops! One off.

However, if you adhere to the rule of *cashing the outside winners first before embarking on a crossruff* you will succeed. To this end you must take the ♣A K and the ♥A K and then ruff everything in sight.



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VB#7 The Crossruff 2 SA	Contract: 6S
Date: 14/06/2014	By: South
Dealer: South	Board #: 3
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: E / W

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	P
P	2♣	P	2♠
P	3♣	P	3♦
P	3♠	P	4♠
P	6♠	P	P
P			

Lead: ♠ 2

Another ambitious slam, another trump lead, another crossruff.

Again, you (declarer) must **count the tricks** on the sight of dummy – here there are five trumps, three Hearts and two Aces, so two ruffs in the dummy will do.

However, if you are going to ruff Clubs in hand for entries, West will take the opportunity to jettison his Hearts. To prevent this, you have to play off the three top Heart winners first. Again, *before starting a crossruff, cash the outside winners first.*

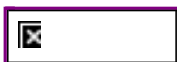
West tries some psychological pressure by dropping the ♥J on the second round of Hearts, trying to persuade you that he started with only two Hearts. Giving that a scornful look you cash the third Heart (*you can't fool ME!*) and prepare for the crossruff.

After West follows to three rounds of Hearts and the two minor suit Aces the hand is over – just ruff everything in sight and concede the last trick.

West	North	East
♠ 65432	♠ A87	♠ 9752
♥ J64	♥ AKQ	♥ KT87
♦ J953	♦ A	♦ KQ953
♣ 7	♣ AJ8642	
	South	
	♠ KQJT9	
	♥ T83	
	♦ Q642	
	♣ T	

More overbidding from partner (aided and abetted by you, it has to be said).

Still, it's results that count in this game.



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VB#7 The Crossruff 2 SA

Date: 14/06/2014

Dealer: West

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Contract: 4S

By: East

Board #: 4

Vulnerable: All

North		South	
♠ 832		♠ 4	
♥ 942		♥ AKQ63	
♦ A7		♦ KJ964	
♣ QJ943		♣ 72	

West		East
♠ KJ96		♠ AQT75
♥ JT8		♥ 75
♦ 2		♦ QT853
♣ KT865		♣ A

Here we switch you into a defender's chair.

The opponents bid a game and it's up to you to see if you can defeat it.

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

Lead: ♥ A

East (your right-hand opponent) reaches 4♠ after you have entered the auction with 2♥. You lead the ♥A and contemplate a shapely dummy. How should you defend?

Well, you must cash two rounds of Hearts to start with, to see how the land lies. When partner follows upwards he must have started with three cards in the suit (with only two he would have played high-low to tell you to continue with Hearts). So what do you do at trick three?

You might continue with Hearts, forcing declarer to ruff (in many cases, that's your best defense as it weakens declarer's trump holding). You might switch to a trump. Playing a Club or a Diamond seems to be pointless. Why?

Well, there's rarely any good reason to lead dummy's side-suit. Any tricks you may have there can hardly run away (how could declarer throw any losing Clubs away?) There's also little point in leading a Diamond – all you will do is clear the path for Diamond ruffs on table.

Your best defense is to switch to a Spade, removing one of dummy's trumps. If declarer is unable to run of the Club suit then his only alternative play – ruffing Diamond losers on table – will be compromised.

As it happens, this attack is a body blow to declarer. He wins on table and leads a Diamond but partner steps up with his ♦A and applies the knock-out blow by leading a second round of trumps. The first Spade leaves declarer groggy – the second round leaves him flat on the canvas. Unable to ruff all of his losers on table East has to concede defeat.

Yes, this is Hand 1 again, rotated 90°, with a small modification.



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VB#7 The Crossruff 2 SA

Date: 14/06/2014

Dealer: North


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Contract: 4S

By: South

Board #: 5

Vulnerable: N / S

		North			
		♠ KJT			
		♥ 8542			
		♦ A863			
		♣ K4			
West	♠ 4		East		
♥ AKJT7				♠ 97632	
♦ J92				♥ Q63	
♣ JT97				♦ QT5	
				♣ Q2	
		South			
		♠ AQ85			
		♥ 9			
		♦ K74			
		♣ A8653			

Here you reach a delicate contract and get to view an unexpected dummy.

Still, there is a play for your contract – can you find it?

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

Lead: ♥ A

Here you reach 4♠ and are blissfully unaware of any problems until dummy is displayed, underweight by a trump.

Partner's Double of 1♥ is supposed to show four Spades - and you'd expect partner to confirm that when he raises 3♠ to 4♠. In passing, though, it's worth noting that North has a difficult, almost impossible, bid over 1♥. 2♦ would overstate Diamonds (you'd have every right to expect a five-card suit) and Pass looks to be feeble.

Still, let's play to make the contract first and argue about the bidding second. West leads a top Heart and switches astutely to a trump. How can you make ten tricks here? Well, possession of the high Spade honors makes this hand not difficult at all. You cash the ♦A K, the ♣A K and simply crossruff five trumps. In all, you make **six** trump tricks and two Ace-King combinations. In the ending East makes his boss trumps but that is all.

A couple of points are worth making here. The title of this deal is "*Moysian Fit*", a term that may be new to you. This is by way of tribute to the late Alphonse "Sonny" Moyse, an editor of *Bridge World*, who wrote extensive articles on the subject of four-three fits.

Note that no other game contract has a prayer of making on this deal. 3NT is off the entire Heart suit; 5♣ and 5♦ are quite hopeless.



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VB#7 The Crossruff 2 SA

Date: 14/06/2014

Dealer: East

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Contract: 4S

By: South

Board #: 6

Vulnerable: E / W

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

Lead: ♣ K

This amazing deal shows just what can be achieved with a crossruff.

North's bidding stands up to no sort of scrutiny – the initial take-out Double of 1♦ is fine but the jump to 4♣ is preposterous with three empty suits. Still, it's results that count...

West leads the ♣K and as South you can see a lot of losers (at least two trumps, two Clubs and a host of red cards to boot). Nonetheless, a crossruff brings home the bacon.

Take the ♣A, the ♥A, a Heart ruff, the ♦A and then an orgy of crossruffing takes the first nine tricks with the ♠A to come. West is left with two Club winners and East with three trump winners but, amusingly, these five winners coalesce in the last three tricks. Somehow, East-West may not see the funny side of that...

An astonishing deal, really. Even an initial trump lead doesn't beat 4♣.

North
♠ A542
♥ A872
♦
♣ A7542

West
♠ K
♥ Q943
♦ KT842
♣ KQJ



East
♠ QT98
♥ KJ65
♦ Q963
♣ 9

South
♠ J763
♥ T
♦ AJ75
♣ T863

Here your partner, flushed with success, makes an outrageous overbid. No matter, with you in charge it hardly matters (at least – that's how he reasons it...!)

The problem with this deal is that you'll start to believe that just about anything is possible. Anything at all.