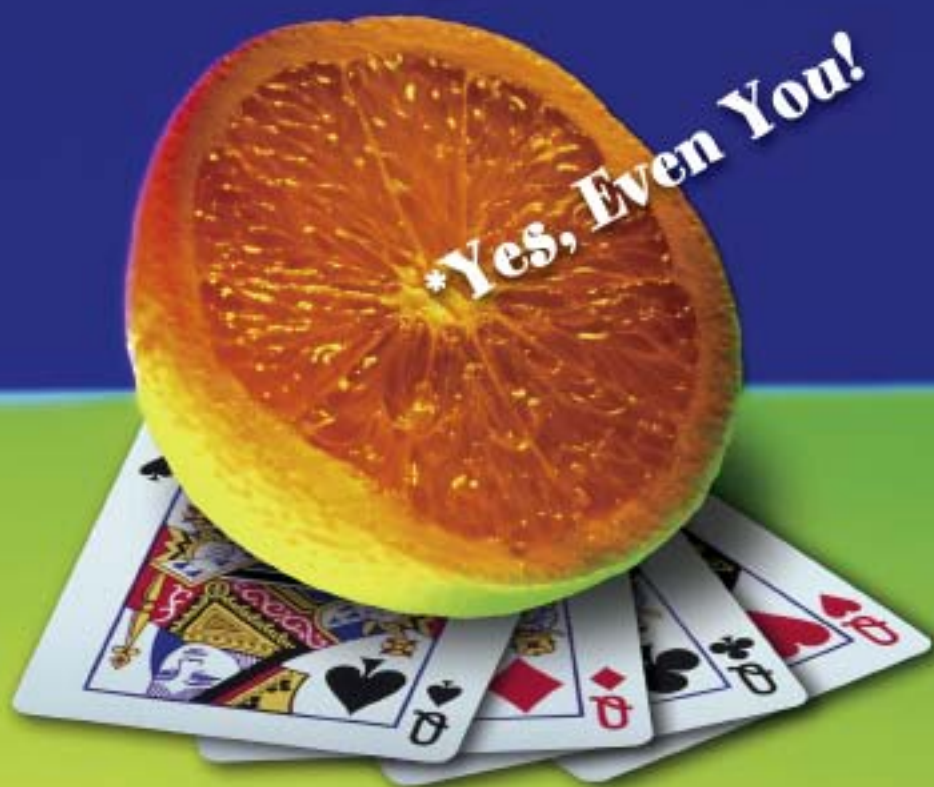


Bridge Squeezes FOR Everyone*



**Yes, Even You!*

David Bird

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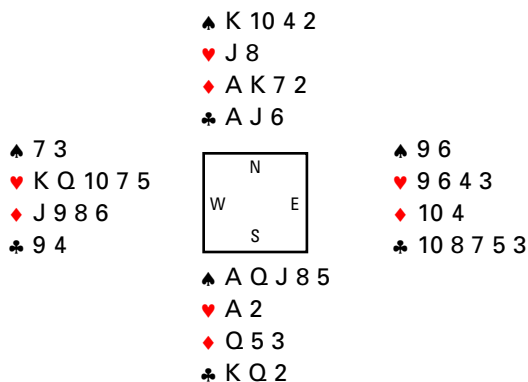
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Bridge
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Introduction

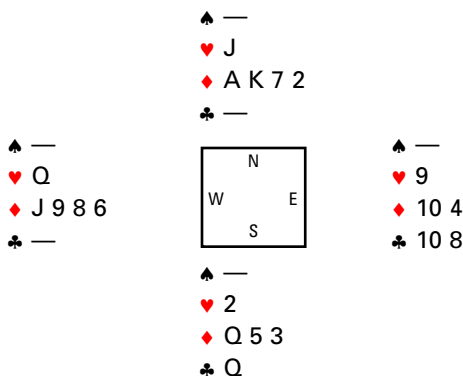
There is nothing at all complicated about most squeeze deals. A defender holds the sole guard in two suits and is forced to discard one of his guards when you play your winners in the other suits. Here is an example of the technique at its most basic:



You reach a grand slam in spades and West leads the ♥K. How would you play the contract?

There are twelve tricks on top and all will be well if the diamond suit divides 3-3. Another chance is that West holds four or more diamonds along with his queen of hearts. In this case he will be unable to retain both red-suit guards when you cash your winners in the black suits. Can you visualize the end position?

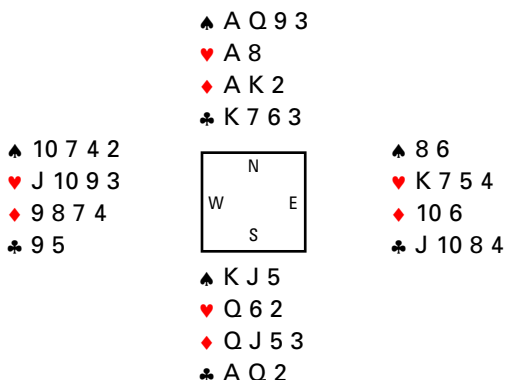
This will be the layout as West starts to feel uncomfortable:



All of West's cards are 'busy'. They are guarding the threats that lie over him, in the dummy. The ♥J is threatening to score a trick and West's ♥Q guards against this. Similarly all of West's diamonds are needed to guard against the threat posed by dummy's fourth diamond. When you play the ♣Q West is in big trouble. He has to release one of his guards and you will score your thirteenth trick in whichever suit he decides to throw.

Did you need to make a note of every card that was thrown? Not at all! You needed to watch out only for one card — the queen of hearts. If that had not appeared by the time you had played your last club, you would throw the ♥J from dummy and hope that the diamonds were good.

Now try a squeeze for yourself. You must identify two suits that are guarded by only one defender, then work out how you can squeeze him.

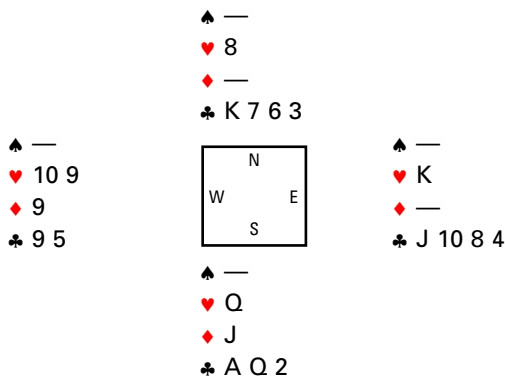


This time you are in 7NT and West leads the ♥J. Since only a madman would lead from K-J-10 against a grand slam, you place the ♥K with East and rise with dummy's ace. You have twelve tricks on top and a 3-3 club break will give you an easy thirteenth trick. If the clubs don't break 3-3, can you foresee a squeeze that might rescue you?

There is no potential for extra tricks in spades or diamonds. A squeeze will be possible only if the same defender holds the ♥K and four or more clubs. Since you place the ♥K with East, he will be your intended victim. You cash

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four rounds of spades, throwing the ♥6 from your hand, then start on the diamond suit. This position will arise:



You lead the ♦J, throwing dummy’s ♥8. East has to throw one of his guards (he is ‘squeezed in hearts and clubs’) and you make the grand slam. Once again you needed to watch for only one card — this time the ♥K. If the defenders kept that card you would play for four club tricks at the end. There was no need at all to keep track of any club discards.

The two deals we have just seen are examples of the simple squeeze. This term refers to an ending where one defender holds the sole guard in two suits and is forced to discard one of them. It is by far the most common type of squeeze and — as we have just seen — not at all difficult to play.

In the next few chapters we will look closely at the elements of a squeeze and at some preparatory moves that may be necessary before a squeeze can operate. If you’re already familiar with this basic stuff, you have license to skip over this part. But please rejoin us later as we explore in turn the many weird and wonderful forms of the squeeze. It will be an exciting journey, like walking round a zoo! By the time you have passed through the exit gate you will have an excellent chance of recognizing these magnificent creatures, next time you sit down to play.

Did you always think squeezes were too difficult?

Or perhaps you know the basics but now you want to learn about more complex and advanced squeeze positions? If you fit either of these categories, or even if you just want to improve your understanding of an important aspect of declarer play, this book is for you. While squeezes *can* be extremely complex, the basic principles of squeeze play are not. Using the same straightforward, conversational style with recaps and quizzes that characterized the *Bridge Technique* series, this book will make squeeze play accessible to many readers who have been afraid to attempt to study it.



DAVID BIRD is the author or coauthor of more than fifty books, ranging from technical (the *Bridge Technique* series) to humorous (*Saints & Sinners*). He is perhaps best known for his St. Titus Abbey stories, which appear regularly in bridge magazines around the world. He lives near Southampton, England.

