

BRIDGE TECHNIQUE SERIES

SQUEEZES MADE SIMPLE



David Bird • Marc Smith

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Most Squeezes are Easy!

What is a squeeze? It's an end position that can arise when one defender holds the sole guard on two of your suits. By leading a winner in another suit, you force him to release one of his guards, thereby giving you an extra trick. Although the play has acquired an 'expert' aura, the great majority of squeezes are quite straightforward and well within the grasp of the average club player.

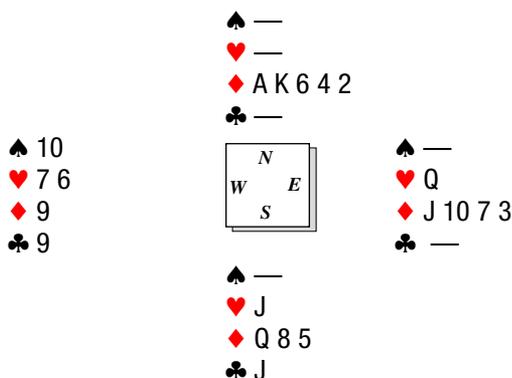
On most squeeze hands you don't need to read the cards well, nor even watch particularly carefully which cards are thrown. This is an example of the type of deal we mean:

<p>♠ 10 7 5 2 ♥ 9 7 6 5 ♦ 9 ♣ 10 9 8 3</p>	<p>♠ A Q 4 ♥ A K 4 ♦ A K 6 4 2 ♣ Q 5</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">N</p> <p style="margin: 0;">W E</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">S</p> </div> <p>♠ K J 6 ♥ J 8 3 ♦ Q 8 5 ♣ A K J 4</p>	<p>♠ 9 8 3 ♥ Q 10 2 ♦ J 10 7 3 ♣ 7 6 2</p>
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You reach 7NT and West leads the ♣10. Anyone familiar with squeezes will assess the prospects as 'I will make the grand if diamonds

break 3-2 or the same defender holds the queen of hearts and a diamond guard.'

How does the play go? You win the club lead with the queen and cash three spades and two hearts. You then run your remaining club winners, arriving at this ending:



You lead the ♣J, throwing a diamond from dummy, and East has to release his guard in one of the red suits. He is 'squeezed in the red suits'. If he throws the ♥Q, you will make your ♥J. If he throws a diamond, dummy's fourth diamond will be good.

As you see, no reading of the cards was required. As for following the defenders' discards, you needed only to keep an eye out for the ♥Q. If the defenders chose to retain that card, your only option would be to try to cash the diamond suit.

The play we have just seen is known as a simple squeeze. It arises when a defender guards two suits and is forced to throw one of his stoppers. Later in the book we will see some other forms of squeeze.

How can you spot when a squeeze is possible? You must look for two suits that might be guarded by one defender. When you cash your winners in the other two suits, he will have to throw one of his guards. Let's try the idea on one more deal: