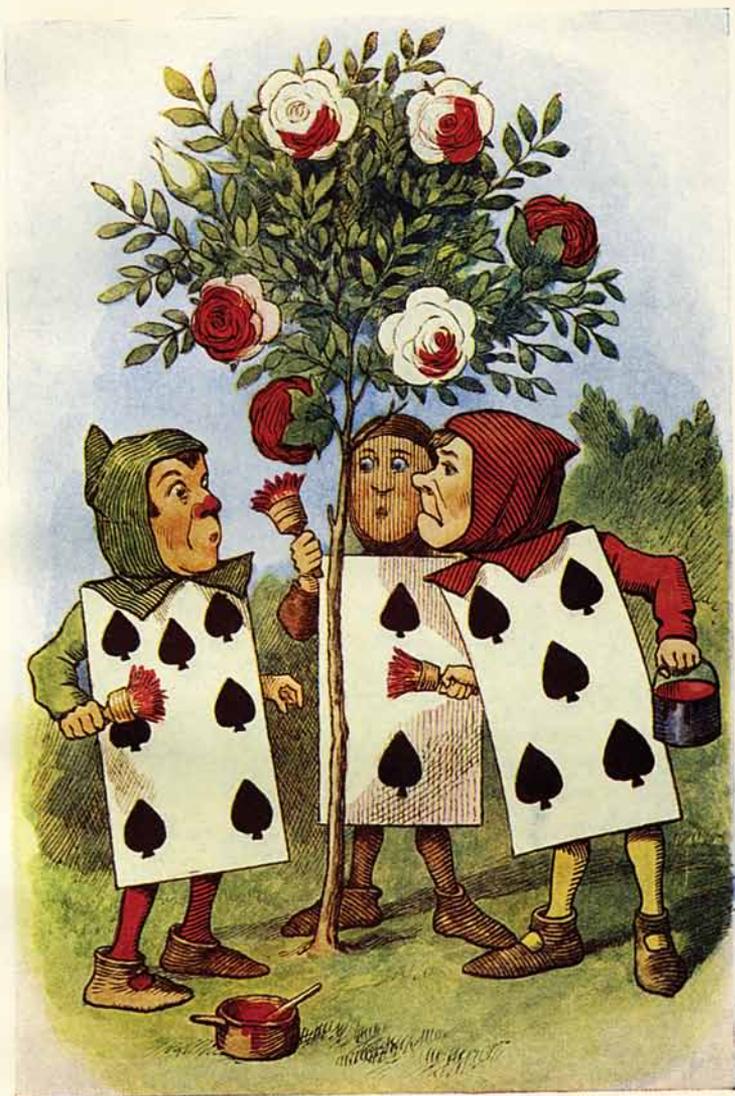


Clever Plays

IN THE

Trump Suit



DAVID BIRD

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Dedication

To William Bailey, whose wonderful Deep Finesse software has saved me (and fellow bridge writers around the world) countless hundreds of hours of hard labor. Many thanks!

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Introduction

This book pays homage to the power of the trump suit. Imagine how dull bridge would be if every contract was played at notrump! We will look at subjects such as trump timing — should you draw all the defenders' trumps straight away, some of their trumps, or perhaps perform some other vital task first? We will study situations where you need to unblock in the trump suit or to throw a defender on lead with a trump. We will see how to make maximum use of the entries provided by the trump suit, also how to perform a trump safety play or a trump avoidance play. Two other important topics are how to make your contract against a bad trump break and how you can survive a forcing attack on the long-trump holding.

Further chapters will explain how you can play contracts with fewer than eight trumps at your disposal, also how to conjure extra tricks from the trump suit. Every couple of chapters or so, there is a nine-problem quiz section. By tackling these play problems, you can convince yourself that you have mastered the associated techniques and will be able to put them into action next time you play.

Once again, I am indebted to my long-time friend and fellow writer, Tim Bourke, for creating some of the most instructive deals in this book. My warm thanks go to him.

Chapter 1: Timing the Play of the Trump Suit

There are many reasons why you might choose not to draw the defenders' trumps immediately. Some of these are well known: you need to take ruffs in the dummy; you have to take a quick discard or establish a discard; you will require dummy's trumps as entries to establish a side suit there. In this chapter we will assume you are familiar with such basic plays and look a little deeper into the subject. In particular, we will look at some deals where you can improve your chances by drawing some of the defenders' trumps but not all.

LEAVING ONE TRUMP IN DUMMY

It is often necessary to leave one trump in dummy, to act as ruffing protection in a side suit. This may mean that you cannot draw all the trumps until you have established one of your side suits. Look at this deal:

♠ 10 2	♠ K 8 4	♠ J 9 6			
♥ K Q J 9 4	♥ 6 5	♥ 10 7			
♦ Q 10 9 4	♦ A 7 5 3	♦ K 8 6			
♣ 7 3	♣ K Q 9 4	♣ A 8 6 5 2			
	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	
N					
W E					
S					
	♠ A Q 7 5 3				
	♥ A 8 3 2				
	♦ J 2				
	♣ J 10				

West	North	East	South
	1♦	pass	1♠
pass	1NT	pass	2♣
pass	2♠	pass	4♠
all pass			

South uses a checkback 2♣ to uncover the 5-3 spade fit. How will you play the spade game when West leads the ♥K?

You win with the ♥A and see that you cannot draw all the trumps before setting up the clubs. If you did, you would have no protection in the heart suit. Suppose instead that you play the ♣J at Trick 2. Noting his partner's count signal of the ♣7, East will duck the first round of clubs and win the second round. A third round of clubs will then promote a trump trick for the defenders, beating the contract. (Discarding a diamond from your hand would not help you. West would ruff and play hearts, promoting East's ♠J96.)

To give yourself a better chance, you should draw two rounds of trumps with the king and ace before playing clubs. A third club will not then achieve a trump promotion because West holds only two trumps. East can cross to the ♥J and score an overruff on the third round of hearts, yes, but the remaining tricks will be yours. You can discard a heart and a diamond on dummy's good clubs.

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TRICKS WITH TRUMPS

The strength and power of a trump suit can cut both ways — it can be a source of control and extra tricks for declarer, but it can also benefit the defenders.

Working through this book, you will learn:

- Whether to draw *all* the defenders' trumps straight away, or just some of their trumps, and to recognize when you need to perform some other vital task first.
- How to make your contract against a bad trump break.
- How to play a seven-card trump fit.
- How to survive a forcing attack on the long trump holding.
- When you need to unblock in the trump suit.
- How and when to put a defender on lead with a trump.
- How to use the trump suit for entries.
- How to perform a trump safety play.
- How to execute a trump avoidance play.

And much more.



DAVID BIRD (Southampton, UK) is the author of more than 100 books on bridge. His most recent are *Defensive Signaling* and the ABTA award-winning *Planning the Play of a Bridge Hand* (with Barbara Seagram).



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