

Dummy Reversal

Background: Let's assume you, as Declarer, are playing in a suit contract in which your Trump holding is **AKQXX**, with Dummy holding **XXX**. With the further assumption that you decide to draw Trumps, and with a normal anticipated 3-2 split of the outstanding Trump cards, you draw three rounds of Trump, ultimately taking five (5) Trump tricks, three as you draw the Opponent's Trump, and two additional trump tricks at a later time during the play of the hand.

Alternatively, let's assume that **before** drawing the Opponent's outstanding 5-pieces of Trump, you, twice, use Dummy's small Trump cards to trump one of the side suits in which the Dummy is short. Now you have made seven (7) Trump tricks, having started with only five. **Note:** Trumping in Declarer's hand, the one with the longer Trump holding, does not increase the number of Trump tricks originally held.

Dummy Reversal: Typical Declarer play, as shown above, involves ruffing Declarer's losers using the Dummy's short Trump cards, preserving the longer Trump cards in Declarer's hand for control. Typically, the Partner who first names the Trump suit becomes the Declarer and is likely to be the one with the longer Trump holding. When this technique is reversed; i.e., when Declarer uses Trump cards from his/her hand to ruff and retains the Trumps in Dummy's hand to draw the Opponents' remaining Trumps and for control of the hand, this is called a "**Dummy Reversal**." The purpose of using a "**Dummy Reversal**" is to produce more tricks than the normal play would otherwise yield. Declarer play thus becomes a "**Dummy Reversal**" *only* if doing so yields more tricks than the normal technique would have achieved. In effect, Dummy becomes the master hand; i.e., the hand which will be used to draw the enemy's Trump after Declarer has gotten his/her ruffs.

In effect, when one employs a "**Dummy Reversal**," one converts the long Trump hand into the short Trump hand. In order for this to be accomplished, two things must be capable of being achieved: (1) one needs be able to ruff enough in the long hand to make it the short hand, and (2) Dummy needs sufficient number of high Trump cards to effectively draw Trump after one takes the needed ruffs in Declarer's hand.

Conditions Which Facilitate "Dummy Reversals"

There are several circumstances which make possible a "**Dummy Reversal**," i.e., ultimately allowing for an increase in the number of tricks taken by Declarer as opposed to the normal technique of trumping in the Dummy, the hand with the fewer number of Trump cards..

- (1) When the Dummy holds features such as a long side suit, one worthy of promotion, the Declarer may find a better strategy to rethink the play of the hand from the Dummy's perspective.
- (2) When there are entries to Dummy outside of the Trump suit.
- (3) When holding a large number of winning Trumps; Declarer may find it advantageous to ruff with the Partnership's longer Trump holding until the opposite hand (Dummy) is holding more Trumps, assuming that Dummy holds at least two honors with which to draw the final outstanding Trumps held by the Opponents.
- (4) When there is shortness (singleton or void) in Declarer's hand (with corresponding length in the same suit in the Dummy).
- (5) When there are loser(s) in Declarer's hand that cannot be ruffed or discarded on a side suit.

Examples: AKJ
 Axxx
 xxx
 Axx

QTxxx
 x
 AKx
 Jxxx

South is in a **4S** contract and receives a Trump lead. The lead is a Trump which Declarer wins with Dummy's **HA**. There are five Trump tricks, three Aces and King of Diamonds, for a total of nine (9) sure tricks, one short of the stated contract. The solution is to ruff Hearts in Declarer's (South's) hand. South plays **HA** at trick 1, ruffs a Heart, enters the Dummy with **CA**, ruffs a Heart, enters the Dummy with **DA** and ruffs a third Heart. In this way, Declarer took three ruffs in his/her hand, and still has two Trumps in the Dummy with which to take care of the Opponents' Trumps. Declarer now takes twelve (12) tricks, making his/her contract with three overtricks.



You are in a **4H** contract. The lead is the **DJ**. After taking the first trick in with your **DA** you play the **S9** from Dummy. The Opponent's then play a Club which you take with Dummy's Ace. You trump two more Spades, return to the Dummy in order to draw the Opponent's last trump and you wind up making twelve tricks, losing only one Spade trick.

♠ AQJ
♥ 875
♦ 7532
♣ QJ8
Dummy
West East
Declarer
♠ KT953
♥ Q432
♦
♣ AK75

You and Partner stumble into **4♠** and West leads **♦A**. You can count five Spade tricks and four Clubs. That's 9, where's the 10th?

The answer is to trump several Diamonds in Declarer's Hand - a "**Dummy Reversal.**"

