



Lesson 49 Teacher's Notes

Card Play with a Trump Suit: The Crossruff

Aims

- To develop card play with a trump suit – another type of hand where you postpone drawing trump
- To explain the essential features of crossruff technique
- To emphasise that crossruffing is difficult, and should be adopted only when there is no alternative

Content

- 1) Revise the reasons for **drawing trump**: to prevent opponents from ruffing our winners
Revise Making a Plan at a Suit Contract:
 - 1 Count your losers
 - 2 If there are too many losers look for ways of disposing of them
Check whether you need to take care of your losers before drawing trump –
If they are **immediate** taking care of them is urgent: can you afford to draw trump first?
 - 3 If there are not too many losers count your tricks – make sure there are enough.
 - 4 If possible, draw trump and play your Work Suit.
If you need to make winners from the trump suit itself, postpone drawing trump.Remind the class that **taking ruffs in the longer trump hand does not increase your winners**
Normally it leads to **losing trump control** when an opponent has more trump than you.
Which is usually a Very Bad Thing.
- 2) Introduce the Crossruff, where plain suits are ruffed alternately in declarer's hand and dummy.
The aim is to make all your trump separately.
Which means you deliberately give up trump control, leaving opponents to make the last tricks by trumping each others' winners.
It is the best play when you have **lots of trump, a short suit in each hand, and no source of tricks** outside the trump suit. (If there is a side suit you can establish, prefer that, it is easier!)
But there is often a risk that an opponent will **overruff** unless your trump cards are very powerful.
He may then damage your chances by playing a round of trump you cannot afford
If you can draw trump before taking your ruffs it is safer to do so
- 3) Emphasise the importance of **trump quality**.
If you have all the top trump, from ace down, opponents cannot overruff.
This is known as a **high crossruff**
When you need to make all your trump separately **take ruffs with small trump early** while opponents are still following suit
- 4) Illustrate how the high crossruff allows opponents to discard from other suits
The crossruff deliberately gives up trump control – so you must **cash your side suit winners before embarking on your crossruff**.
- 5) A true crossruff is quite rare: it needs shortages in both hands and very good trump.
Much more common is the type of hand where draw two rounds of trump before trying to make the rest of your trump separately. This is known as a **partial crossruff**
- 6) Emphasise the danger of the overruff. When taking ruffs always ruff with the highest trump you can afford. The defence should seize any opportunity to overruff and lead trump
- 7) Emphasise the planning required for a crossruff.
You must **count winners** as well as losers.
You need to get from hand to hand - you have to **check your entries**.
Try to run through the play in your mind before you start.
That way you may avoid some of the pitfalls.
Do not embark on a crossruff if there is any alternative line that would succeed!