

Dummy

♠ K85  
♥ AK42  
♦ 763  
♣ K98

LHO

♠\_7532  
♥ 73  
♦ QJ1085  
♣ J6

RHO

♠1096  
♥QJ86  
♦A2  
♣Q1054

You

♠ AQJ  
♥ 1095  
♦ K94  
♣ A732

You are playing with one of your favorite BBO partners when you encounter this deal. You become declarer at 3N. LHO leads a diamond, RHO plays the A and returns another. You can only count 8 sure tricks, and apparently need to conjure up a 9<sup>th</sup> trick out of thin air.

Since you are a declarer play magician, this is no problem. You win the K and throw RHO in with a diamond. "Some expert", he snorts, "letting us win 4 diamonds. Heck, a beginner could do that." He cashes his diamonds and then leads a spade.

However, you have the last laugh. At the end of the hand, you have managed to take 9 tricks. How did you do it? Because some of you may still be apprentice magicians, I am showing you all 4 hands.

Send your answers to me: [billpuzzles@bridgesights.com](mailto:billpuzzles@bridgesights.com)

P.S. This is not a made up hand. It actually occurred during a BBO session, and I played it as presented.

## The Answer

Win the spade in dummy, cash the K of clubs, and lead a spade to your hand. With 5 tricks remaining, this is what everyone has:

Dummy

♠ 8  
♥ AK4  
♦  
♣ 8

LHO

♠ 75  
♥ 73  
♦  
♣ J

RHO

♠  
♥ QJ8  
♦  
♣ Q10

You

♠ A  
♥ 109  
♦  
♣ A7

When you play the A of spades, RHO has no safe discard. If he discards a heart, you will take 3 hearts and a club. If he discards a club, you will take 2 clubs and 2 hearts.

This is known as a “squeeze”. You squeeze out an extra trick by forcing one of your opponents to discard an apparent winner.

Squeeze positions come up very frequently. You have probably, at least inadvertently, squeezed your opponents when you were declarer. The basic technique is to cash all your winners, and hope the opponents are forced to throw off a card that makes one of your lower cards good.

The main trick to pulling off a squeeze is to lose the number of tricks you intend to lose early in the hand. In this case, I wanted to take 9 tricks, so I let LHO take four tricks right away. The terminology used for this technique is known as “rectifying the count”. If you don't rectify the count, then your opponents will have extra low cards they can throw off and will not be squeezed.

I suggest, the next time you are playing a hand where you will probably lose the last trick, you attempt a squeeze by cashing all your winners and see if you generate an extra trick when one of the opponents discards a winner.