

Forcing Defence by James Jacoby

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Ana Roth9/6/2015

NORTH 12-8-84			
♠ Q J 9 8			
♥ A J 9 7			
♦ J 7			
♣ Q J 10			
WEST			EAST
♠ A 4 3 2			♠ 7
♥ 5 4			♥ 8 6 3 2
♦ A K 9 4 3 2			♦ Q 8 5
♣ 6			♣ 9 7 4 3 2
SOUTH			
♠ K 10 6 5			
♥ K Q 10			
♦ 10 6			
♣ A K 8 5			
Vulnerable: East-West			
Dealer: South			
West	North	East	South
	1 NT		1 NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♣
Pass	4♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			
Opening lead: ♦K			

When you have some length in the opponent's trump, a good strategy is to force the declarer to trump. Eventually he may have shorter trump length than you do. Although this defence is usually obvious it can even be right in circumstances not so readily apparent.

West passed over South's 1NT opening bid. He thought his six-card diamond suit would be good to lead against no-trump, and he did not wish to risk a vulnerable overcall with a suit that was far from being solid. Against four spades, he led the king and ace of diamonds. East showed three cards by playing the five and then the eight. Since West knew that his partner could not have any other high cards, he continued with a third round of the suit. Note the devastating effect of this defence.

South could trump in either his hand or the dummy. In either case, West would hold off winning the first and second spades led. Because South cannot play a third spade without losing control of the hand (West would win the ace and force declarer to ruff with his last trump), declarer would now be compelled to play on the side suits. In time West would ruff either a club or heart with a small spade to set the contract.

Remember this defensive tactic. When the declarer is playing a suit contract and has no outside losers, try forcing him to trump. A sluff and a ruff won't help him if his side-suit cards are all high, and he may lose control of the trump suit.