

Long Suit Establishment

By Marjorie Michelin

michelinonbridge@aol.com



When playing in a No-Trump contract or a suit contract, we try to establish our long suit for extra tricks. When in a suit contract, a side long suit can be used to get rid of losers. When establishing the side long suit, we look at the entries or communication between the two hands in order to set up that side suit. We must be careful to coordinate setting up the side suit with drawing trump.

Example 1:

Hearts are trump and you have a few minor suit losers to get rid of.

Your spade suit looks like this:

Dummy
♠A7642

You
♠K3

If the spades divide 3-3 or 4-2 and you have enough entries, you can establish the spade suit by playing the King and then the Ace and ruff spades until the 4th or 5th is established for a pitch.

Example 2:

| | | |
|-------|----------|---------|
| | ♠J97 | |
| | ♥AK632 | |
| | ♦1097 | |
| | ♣Q5 | |
| ♠854 | | ♠6 |
| ♥Q10 | | ♥J974 |
| ♦KQJ5 | | ♦863 |
| ♣A762 | | ♣K10983 |
| | ♠AKQ1032 | |
| | ♥85 | |
| | ♦A42 | |
| | ♣J4 | |

Both: Vulnerable

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | 1♠ |
| 2♥ | 2♠ | 4♠ | P |
| P | P | | |

In this example, the contract is 4♠.

On the lead of the ♦K, Declarer has 2 diamond losers and 2 club losers. His plan is to set up the heart suit to pitch at least 1 loser.

Hearts may break 3-3 but more likely 4-2, so you need enough entries to establish the suit. If you are careful, you will make this contract.

Win the ♦A. Pull 1 round of trump high in your hand preserving the J and 9 for entries.

Now play the ♥A and ♥K and ruff a heart HIGH. Lead a low spade to the 9. Ruff another heart HIGH. Return to Dummy with the ♠J and pitch a diamond or a club on the established heart. It's so easy if you plan your entries wisely.

Example 3:

♠1097
♥J106
♦98
♣AK986

♠AKQ
♥A542
♦A543
♣74

Contract: 3NT by South

Lead: ♠5

Counting winners in this hand you have:

3 sure spades
2 sure clubs
1 sure diamond
1 sure heart

You are going to have to develop the club suit but there are no entries to the long club suit. How should you play the hand?

You should win the spade lead and play a small club toward the Dummy, AND DUCK A CLUB, meaning play a small club. They will win the trick, however when you win their return, you now play a club to your Ace and King and hope the clubs break 3-3. ♣

[View Marjorie's Online Class](#)