

CHANGING HORSES IN MID STREAM

You have the following hand and find yourself in a slam contract, 6♠.

	North		
	♠K1085		
	♥KJ9		
	♦J108		
	♣A107		
West		East	
♣K			
	South		
	♠AQ643		
	♥AQ1084		
	♦-----		
	♣854		
West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	5♣	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

North has a perfect limit raise which sets the trump suit. Your hand increases significantly because of the golden void in diamonds and the second 5-card quality suit. You cue bid a control in hearts and your partner shows his club control. You bid what you hope you can make.

West leads the ♣K and you make your plan. Spades and hearts look solid. This looks, at first glance, to be a hand for a “dummy reversal.” This is where you trump losers in your hand and use the dummy’s shorter trump suit to pull trump. If trumps break at least 3-1 you can take three trips to the dummy and lead the diamonds to your trump. That means you have 4 spade tricks, 5 heart tricks, 3 diamond ruffs and the ace of clubs; seven in all.

You win the first club in the dummy and ruff a diamond. Now you lead the ♠A and find that East discards a diamond on your first spade. That means the trump are 4-0 and you must abandon your dummy reversal plan. East is void in spades and you are void in diamonds. There is a good chance that West will be void in hearts. You can’t use the heart suit as transportation to the dummy while West still has trump left. You must extract all of his trump before you use the hearts. That means when you get back to the board by finessing the ♠8 and leading another diamond, you must trump it in your hand with the ♠Q. This allows you to go back to the board, finessing the ♠10 and play the ♠K, taking out West last trump. Now, with West voided in trump, you can run the good hearts and make 6 spades.

Sometimes, your planning hits a dead end and you must change those plans in the middle of the hand. It's like changing those horses in the middle of the stream.

This is the complete board:

11		N North		W N E S			
D		♠ K1085		P	3♠	P	1♠
		♥ KJ9		P	5♣	P	4♥
		♦ J108		P	P	P	6♠
		♣ A107					
W West				E East			
♠ J972				♠			
♥				♥ 76532			
♦ K9643				♦ AQ752			
♣ KQJ9				♣ 632			
		S South					
		♠ AQ643					
		♥ AQ1084					
		♦					
		♣ 854					
				6♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0			

If you would like to see the whole hand played out, click on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/lr34ksr> . Or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick.