Beware of Your Trump Tricks

by Jean Besse

JEAN BESSE, the amiable Swiss star who has been one of Europe's best players throughout the post war era, was the clear winner of the second **BOLS** *Bridge Tips Competition in 1975.*

Bobby Fischer once said: "You have found a very good move. Fine! This is the time to think again: there probably exists a better one."

Bobby, of course, was talking about chess. His advice, however, applies also to bridge – and especially to the situation where a defender sees an opportunity to make an easy trump trick. Surprisingly often, it will pay him to look for better things.

Players soon learn that by not overruffing the queen with K-10-2 behind declarer's A-Q-J-9-8-7 they can ensure two tricks. The following, however, is less obvious:

Board 12
West Deals
N-S Vul

	♠ Q 2 ♥ 8 6 ♦ K J 9 5 ♣ Q 10 9 7 6	
♠ A 9 ♥ Q 3 2 ♦ Q 4 3 2 ♣ A K 5 4	N W E S	♠ K 8 3 ♥ 9 7 ♦ A 10 7 6 ♣ J 8 3 2
	♠ J 10 7 6 5 4 ♥ A K J 10 5 4 ♦ 8 ♣ —	

The contract is four spades. South ruffs the opening club lead and sets out to establish his side suit: he takes two top hearts and ruffs a heart in dummy with the queen of spades.

If East yields to the temptation of overruffing with the king, South loses only one other trick and makes his contract.

But if East refuses to over ruff, the declarer is bound to lose three trump tricks no matter how hard he tries. With a diamond loser in addition, he is defeated.

BOLS tip: Beware of your trump tricks. When you see a chance of an easy over ruff, don't be in too much of a hurry to take it. You may gain still more tricks by holding back.