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By Dave Green

Inc.

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King Features Syndicate,

by

Conceptis Puzzles, Dist.

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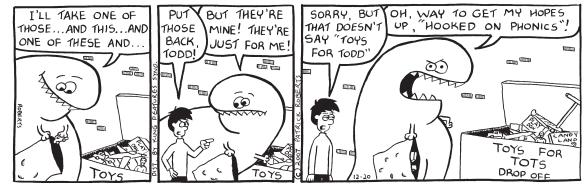
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Tod the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Cryptoquip

UTYNPXPCMLDL



Pass	Pass	1	٠	6 🖤
Opening	lead —	- jack	of	diamonds.

Requiem for a Small Slam

You sometimes have to close your eyes and bid a slam with no guarantee of making it, because there's no good way of finding out what you need to know. In most of these cases, the slam is bid simply because you feel vou're a favorite to succeed. Consider this deal where South had to decide what to do after East opened one diamond. He felt certain he'd lose a diamond trick, so the question was whether he'd also lose a club trick.

South reasoned that if his partner held the jack of clubs, the slam would be laydown, and also that if the North hand contained any four or more clubs, the odds would strongly favor not losing a club trick. Furthermore, if North had a singleton or doubleton club, the seven of clubs could probably be ruffed in dummy. Accordingly, South leaped directly to six hearts. He naturally was disappointed to find partner with the one holding -- three small clubs -- that made the slam a shaky proposition. The outcome seemed to depend entirely on a 3-3 club division, a 36 percent chance that was not about to materialize, but he found a way to make the slam anyway.

After East won the first diamond trick, he played the ace of spades, ruffed by South. Declarer then cashed the ace of trumps before playing the A-K-Q of clubs. When East showed out but was unable to ruff, it was then a simple matter to trump the club seven with dummy's remaining heart and so bring home the slam.

It might seem that South took a very big chance when he failed to draw the only missing trump before playing his three top clubs, but his approach was well-reasoned. He was sure to succeed if the missing clubs were divided 3-3, but he would also get home safely if the clubs broke 4-2 or worse and the defender with the long clubs had the missing trump. If one of the high clubs did get ruffed, the contract was doomed regardless of how South played.



Crossword

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