

Declarer Play – Entries

SFOB Novice talk. Thursday 12 January 2017

Presented by Joan Butts. Based on Audrey Grant's latest book:
"Entries: Five Steps to Overcome Entry Problems"

What is an Entry

An entry is a card or cards that will allow you to win a trick in one hand rather than the other. In some hands, declarer has all the entries necessary to make the contract. At other times, declarer must create the entries needed.

An Entry could be better described as a (L)Entry. The entry is two cards:

- (1) the high card, which we think of as the Entry, and equally important
- (2) the lower-ranking Link card to get to this higher-ranking entry.

An entry is usually a high card, but can be any card as low as a three, as long as there is a lower-ranking link card, the two in this case, in the other hand. The link is usually a low card, but can be any card as high as a king, as long as there is the higher-ranking entry, the ace, in the opposite hand.

The Importance of (L)Entries

An understanding of entries and link cards is key to improving declarer play. Sure tricks are only sure if there are entries and link cards to reach them.

Developing Extra Tricks

Extra tricks can be developed, or losers eliminated, in five ways:

- **Promotion:** If you have the K-Q-J of a suit, you can promote two tricks through the force of high cards after the A is driven out.
- **Length:** Keep playing a suit until the lower-ranking cards are winners
- **Finesse:** Lead toward a card you hope will take a trick
- **Trumping in the Dummy:** Usually an extra trick is developed when you trump a loser in the dummy.
- **Discarding Losers:** Extra tricks in the dummy can be used to discard losers from your hand.

Five Steps to Overcome Entry Problems

1. Recognise a low card as an entry by keeping a lower-ranking link card.

Dummy: ♥ 95

Declarer: ♥ AKQJ102

2. Recognise a high card as a link card by using a higher card as an entry.

Dummy: ♥ AQJ

Declarer: ♥ K

3. When taking sure tricks and promoting tricks, play the high card from the short side first.

Dummy: ♥ AK2

Declarer: ♥ Q5

4. Keep an entry with the suit being developed

Dummy: ♠ KQJ10

♥ A3

Declarer: ♠ 86

♥ K42

5. Take the losses early to preserve entries.

Dummy: ♥ A7654

Declarer: ♥ 832

Sometimes you'll need to **create** an entry to a particular hand, and at other times you need to **preserve** an entry to one of the hands. Entry considerations are especially critical in no trump contracts when the trick source is the weak hand. Declarer must make sure that at least one entry remains in the weak hand until the long suit is ready to run.

Ready for some exercises?

Try these:

(1) Recognising Entries. How many entries to dummy are there here?

Dummy:	(1)	AQ7	(2)	AK3	(3)	104	(4)	K109	(5)	KQJ
Declarer:		K92		5		AKQJ6		AQJ32		A

Answer	
--------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------

(2) Creating Entries. How would you create an entry to dummy in each of these?

Dummy:	(1)	KQ6	(2)	K8	(3)	Q74	(4)	QJ10	(5)	9754
Declarer:		742		93		A82		854		AK32

Answer	
--------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------

(3) Preserving Entries: How would you play each of the following suits to avoid needing entries in other suits to take all of your tricks?

Dummy:	(1)	K5	(2)	K8754	(3)	AK74	(4)	A7632	(5)	AKJ10
Declarer:		AQJ6		A93		QJ2		854		Q

Answer	
--------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------

(4) Establishing the Number of Entries Needed. How many entries to dummy are needed in other suits to try the finesse(s) in each of the following side suits?

Dummy:	(1)	85	(2)	863	(3)	652	(4)	963	(5)	A63
Declarer:		AQ4		AQJ		KQ3		AQ10		Q54

Answer	
--------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------