

Declarer Play – Managing Entries

(from a UK website, <http://howtoplaybridge.co.uk/declarer-play-managing-entries/>)

Declarer plays not only their own hand but also the dummy hand. Before starting play it is vital to identify which cards will allow you to make entries into each of the hands, so you can lead from the appropriate hand in a suit when needed.

Imagine dummy holds the following cards in Spades: ♠ A Q 10. You hold in Spades: ♠ K J 9

You should win three tricks in this suit. However, a quick glance at this hand should tell you that there are various ways to play the cards. Whichever way you play will win three tricks. But different permutations of play will leave you making the next lead from different hands. This is where we need to stop and plan. Which hand do we think we will want to be leading from in future rounds?

Here are a couple of scenarios to think about:

- a) You have decided that you want to win the lead in Dummy. If you decide that later you will want to win the lead back in your own hand, you would look to **retain entry possibilities in hand**. You would lead the ♠ A from dummy and follow with ♠ 9 from hand. This leaves you two possible entries back to your own hand from dummy (♠ Q from Dummy to ♠ K in hand, and ♠ 10 in Dummy to ♠ J in hand).. Because of the split of the cards, we also have one opportunity to return the lead with an entry in dummy (♠ J in hand to ♠ Q in Dummy).
- b) You have decided you want to win the lead in Dummy, but you also want to retain the opportunity of further entries to Dummy. In this case you would win with Dummy's ♠ 10 (playing ♠ 9 from hand). You now have two possible entries back to Dummy (♠ J from hand to ♠ Q in Dummy and ♠ K in hand to ♠ A in Dummy), with the opportunity of 1 entry to your own hand if needed (♠ Q from hand to ♠ K in Dummy).

Can you work out what would happen if you played ♠ A from Dummy and then ♠ J from hand?

You would have only one entry to each hand, destroying the opportunity of making 2 entries to either hand, if needed.

(from Alfred Sheinwold's Five Weeks to Winning Bridge)

South's contract is in Notrump, and the lead is in the South hand.

(1) North	(2) North	(3) North
♠ J 10 2	♠ A 10 2	♠ A Q 10
♥ 4 3 2	♥ 4 3 2	♥ 4 3 2
South	South	South
♠ A K Q	♠ K Q J	♠ K J 2
♥ A J 10	♥ A J 10	♥ A J 10

Declarer wants to lead ♥ twice from the Dummy to take two finesses. How does she get to Dummy in order to lead ♥? If South must rely on the ♠ suit, she will be sadly disappointed in Diagram 1.

In Diagram 2, South can overtake one of her ♠ honors with Dummy's ♠ A. Better, but not enough unless very lucky.

In Diagram 3, South has a very flexible ♠ suit, like that at the top of this page.

In all cases, South wins exactly tree ♠ tricks. The only difference lies in the number of entries to the Dummy.

Planning entries gets easier with practice; let's go through the exercise from Pat Harrington on the reverse side of this page.

Kevin O'Brien's NVBA I/N Lecture, Nov 7, 2013

♠ K J 4
♥ A 3
♦ J 6 5 3 2
♣ A 6 5



♠ A Q 5
♥ K Q J 10 8 2
♦ K
♣ K 8 3
6 ♥ by South
Lead: ♠ 10

N-S have eleven winners, 3 Spades, 6 Hearts, and 2 Clubs. There are two losers -- one fast loser in ♦ and one slow loser in ♣.

Where is the 12th trick? How do you eliminate the slow ♣ loser?

If ♦ split 4-3 in the E-W hands, Dummy's fifth ♦ will be the 12th trick.

BUT you must plan carefully to establish and cash the fifth ♦. You need to lead ♦s four times, losing the first and ruffing the last three, to set up the fifth ♦. Three of those ♦ leads must come from Dummy, and you of course must lead the fifth ♦ from Dummy. So you need to reach Dummy four times to lead ♦s.

In addition, you need ♥s to break 3-2 in the E-W hands -- but you must play this way to have any chance to make your contract. **If there is only one way the cards can lie to make your contract, you must assume the cards lie that way.**

Now plan the play. What are the Dummy entries? ♥ A, ♠ K, ♠ J, and ♣ A. Plan to lead the first ♦ from your hand.

Trick 1: win ♠ A in hand. **This is the only way** to preserve the ♠ K and J as later entries to Dummy.

Trick 2: lead ♦ K from hand. **Do Not Play Trumps Yet!** You need that ♥ A as a Dummy entry to lead ♦.

Trick 3: win defenders' ♠ or ♣ or ♥ return in Dummy (if it's a ♦ they are easing your work, ruff it in your hand).

Trick 4: ♦ 3 from Dummy, ruff low in hand. East and West both follow.

Trick 5: ♥ 8 from hand to ♥ A in Dummy. East and West both follow.

Trick 6: ♦ 5 from Dummy, ruff in hand. East and West both follow. One more ruff and the last ♦ will be a winner.

Trick 7: ♥ K from hand, East and West both follow. One trump remains out.

Trick 8: ♥ Q from hand, trumps are drawn.

Trick 9: ♠ Q from hand, win ♠ K in Dummy. This preserves ♠ J as a later Dummy entry.

Trick 10: ♦ 6 from Dummy, ruff in hand. All seven E-W ♦ have now been played.

Trick 11: ♠ 5 or ♣ 3 from hand (whichever was not played at Trick 3), win in Dummy.

Trick 12: ♦ J from Dummy, discard the low ♣ from hand.

Trick 13: low ♣ from Dummy; your last ♣ wins.

Dummy's four entries were used at Tricks 3, 5, 9, and 11. Trumps were drawn at Tricks 5, 7, and 8.

Here are the E-W hands:

West	East
♠ 10 9 8 7	♠ 6 3 2
♥ 6 4	♥ 9 7 5
♦ A 8 4	♦ Q 10 9 7
♣ Q 10 7 2	♣ J 9 4

Hand from Pat Harrington's article in October 2012 ACBL Bulletin; also on the Internet at her Web site, <http://path2bridge.com/resources/2012+October+Managing+Entries.pdf>