

LESSON 5

Watching Out for Entries



General Concepts



General Introduction

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Sample Deals

GENERAL CONCEPTS

Play of the Hand

Entries

- Sure entries
- Creating an entry

Preserving entries when playing a suit

- High card from the short side
- Ducking

Using entries to get extra tricks

- Promoting high cards
- Developing long suits
- Finessing
- Ruffing losers in the dummy
- Discarding losers

Guidelines for Defense

Second hand low

When not to play second hand low

- Covering honors
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Bidding

The Stayman convention

- Responding to Stayman
- Using Stayman with 10 or more points
- Using Stayman with 8 or 9 points

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

“An entry is like a taxi — you use it to get from one place to another. In playing bridge, entries are an important consideration when it comes to the fourth step of your PLAN, *Now put it all together.*”

“When you are developing extra tricks or eliminating extra losers, it’s often important to be able to get from declarer’s hand to the dummy with ease. An entry enables you to do that. You might think of an entry as a high card, which it often is. But an entry can also be a low card.”

GROUP ACTIVITIES

EXERCISE ONE: Recognizing Entries

Introduction

“The North hand is the dummy. Take the spade suit and put the following cards on the table:

N — A 8 3

S — 7 4 2

“You can get to the dummy by playing a small spade from declarer’s hand over to the ace. Now take away all of the spades in declarer’s hand:

N — A 8 3

S — —

“The ace in dummy is no longer an entry, because there isn’t a small spade in declarer’s hand. Not only must there be a winner in the dummy, but there must also be a smaller card in declarer’s hand to lead to the winner. Give declarer the ♠2:

N — A 8 3

S — 2

“The ♠2 is the link to dummy. Let’s look at a different arrangement of cards:

N — Q 8 3

S — A K 2

“How could you get to the dummy in the spade suit? (Play the ♠2 and win the trick with the queen.) You might have to look carefully to identify an entry. Let’s look at this layout of the spade suit:

N — 9 2

S — A K Q J 10 4

“Is there an entry to the dummy? (The ♠9 is an entry because the opponents don’t have a card higher than the nine, and there is a smaller card, the ♠4, in declarer’s hand.) Often there may be more than one entry within a given suit. Take the ♠A and put it in the dummy:

N — A 9 2

S — K Q J 10 4

“How would you play these cards, so that you have two entries in the dummy? (If you play the ♠4 and the ♠A on the same trick, there’s only one entry to the dummy. You have to make sure that, if the ♠A is first used as an entry, you play the ♠10 from declarer’s hand, so that there is still a card in declarer’s hand smaller than the ♠9.)

N — K Q 3 “Sometimes you can have all of the high cards in a suit and still not
S — A have an entry in that suit. Set out this arrangement:

“There isn’t a small card in declarer’s hand to provide the link to dummy, so there isn’t an entry in this suit. Sometimes, in order to have an entry, you have to play a high card on top of a high card. Set up this example:

N — A Q 10 “Experiment to see if you can get three entries to the dummy. (Play
S — K J 9 the ♠9 to dummy’s ♠10, then the ♠J to dummy’s ♠Q and, finally,
overtake the ♠K with dummy’s ♠A.) How many entries do you have
to declarer’s hand? (Two. Play the ♠10 to the ♠J and then overtake
the ♠Q with the ♠K.)”

Instructions

“How many entries to the dummy are there in each of the examples in Exercise One?”

DUMMY:	1) A Q 7	2) A K 3	3) 10 4	4) K 10 9	5) K Q J
DECLARER:	K 9 2	5	A K Q J 3	A Q J 3 2	A
	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>

Follow-up

Discuss the exercise.

“You can see in the third and fourth examples that an entry doesn’t have to be a face card. As long as you have a card smaller than the winner in the other hand, you have an entry.”

Conclusion

“A sure entry is a winner on one side of the table combined with a smaller card on the other side of the table.”

EXERCISE TWO: Creating Entries**Introduction**

“When there isn’t a sure entry to the dummy, it may be possible to create one by promoting a card into a winner, establishing a winner through length, using the finesse or ruffing a card in a suit contract. Whether or not you are successful could depend on several factors. If you have to give up the lead to promote an entry, it could depend on what happens when the opponents get the lead. If you’re trying to establish an entry through length, it’ll depend on the division of the opponents’ cards. If you’re trying to get an entry by using the finesse, it’ll depend on the favorable location of the missing card.

“Take the heart suit and let’s look at some examples:

N — K Q

A — 8 4

“There isn’t an immediate entry to the dummy, but you can promote one by playing a small heart to dummy’s ♥Q (or ♥K). If the opponents don’t take their ace, you have an entry immediately. If they do win the trick with the ♥A, you have an entry the next time hearts are played.

“Now let’s look at this example:

N — 8 6 4 2

S — A K 5 3

“It doesn’t look as if there is any possibility for an entry, and yet you can establish an entry through the length of the suit if the opponents’ cards are divided nicely. Randomly divide the rest of the hearts between the opponents.

“Assuming they divide 3–2, once you play the ace and king and give up a heart trick, you have only the ♥8 left in dummy and the ♥3 (or ♥5) in declarer’s hand. The ♥8 is now an entry since the opponents have no hearts left.

“Now let’s see how we can use a finesse to provide an entry:

N — K 5 3

S — 7 6 2

“Randomly deal the rest of the hearts to the opponents and turn them up. The ♥K is potentially an entry, depending on which opponent has the ♥A. If your right-hand opponent has the ace, then you are out of luck. If your left-hand opponent has it, the ♥K will provide an entry to the dummy if you lead toward it.”

Instructions

“How could you try to create an entry to the dummy in each of the suits in Exercise Two?”

DUMMY:	1) K Q 6	2) K 8	3) Q 7 4	4) Q J 10	5) 9 7 5 4
DECLARER:	7 4 2	9 3	A 8 2	8 5 4	A K 3 2

<u>Drive out the A</u>	<u>Lead to the K</u>	<u>Lead to the Q</u>	<u>Drive out the A & K</u>	<u>Give up 1 trick</u>
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Follow-up

Discuss the exercise.

Conclusion

“Don’t be discouraged if you need an entry and don’t see one immediately. With a little work and patience, you can often create an entry using the same techniques we have talked about right from the first lesson: by promotion, establishment through length, a finesse or by ruffing.”

EXERCISE THREE: Preserving Entries**Introduction**

“Entries are important to the play of the hand. The entries within a suit can be preserved for when they are needed by using some of the guidelines we looked at earlier, (e.g., *winning the trick with the high card from the short side and taking your losses early*).

“Put out the following cards in the diamond suit:

N — Q 3

“What card would you win the first trick with in order to make the best use of your entries? (The ♦ Q. Now the ♦ 3 provides the link over to the three winners in declarer’s hand.)

S — A K J 2

“Starting with the high card from the short side is old hat to you by now. Let’s look at another example where the maxim *take your losses early* will help put you in the right place at the right time.

N — A K 8 6 3

“Suppose there is no other entry to the dummy but the high cards, the ♦ A and ♦ K. There are five missing cards, and you can expect that they will be divided 3–2. Randomly deal the rest of the diamonds, dividing them 3–2 between the opponents. Look what happens if you play the ace, king and a small diamond. You win two tricks and have established two winners in the dummy, but there isn’t an entry to get to them. They are stranded.

S — 5 4 2

N — A K 8 6 3

“Now put the cards out again. (You might have to repeat them.) This time lose the first trick to the opponents. Assuming that you get the lead back again, the rest of the diamond tricks are yours, and you have a way to get to them. This is called ducking. By ducking, you make the best use of the high cards within the suit. You had to lose a trick and, by doing it early, you gave yourself a way to get to the two winners you were working to establish.”

S — 5 4 2

Instructions

“Suppose there aren’t any entries in other suits. How would you play each of the layouts in Exercise Three in order to take all of the tricks to which you are entitled?”

DUMMY: 1) K 5 2) K 8 7 5 4 3) A K 7 4 4) A 7 6 3 2 5) A K J 10

DECLARER: A Q J 6 A 9 3 Q J 2 8 5 4 Q

	duck	Q or	duck	overtake
	trick	J first	twice	Q
<u>K first</u>	<u>trick</u>	<u>J first</u>	<u>twice</u>	<u>Q</u>

Follow-up

Discuss the exercise.

Conclusion

“Three ways of preserving an entry within a suit are: playing the high card from the short side first, taking your losses early by ducking tricks to the opponents and overtaking an honor with a higher honor.”

EXERCISE FOUR: Estimating the Number of Entries Needed

Introduction

“To take a finesse, declarer needs an entry — or several entries, depending on how many times the finesse has to be taken.

“Lay out the following cards in the club suit:

N — A Q J
S — 8 6 3

“Randomly deal the remaining clubs to the opponents. Declarer plans to lead a small club from declarer’s hand toward the ace, queen and jack in the dummy. If the right-hand opponent has the ♣K, the finesse loses and declarer still gets the two tricks declarer was entitled to in the first place. If the left-hand opponent has the ♣K, the finesse will succeed. Look at the opponents’ cards and see whether or not the finesse is going to work.

“Let’s suppose that the left-hand opponent has the ♣K. (If LHO doesn’t have the ♣K, put it in that hand.) When declarer leads a small club toward dummy, if the opponent plays the ♣K, declarer’s problems are over. But, as we will see shortly, the best idea for the opponent is to play low — *second hand low*. Dummy wins the first trick with the ♣J (or ♣Q). Now it’s necessary to get back to declarer’s hand to play toward the ace–queen combination again. Two entries to declarer’s hand are required to take all three tricks in this suit.

“Let’s look at another example:

N — A 6 3
S — Q 5 4

“This time you’re going to finesse from the dummy toward declarer’s hand, playing toward the card you hope will take a trick — the ♣Q. How many entries are required this time to take the finesse? (One.) Would you have to depend on another suit? (No.) Why not? (There’s an entry to the dummy within the suit itself, the ♣A.)”

Instructions

“How many entries would you need to the dummy in other suits in order to try to finesse(s) in each of the side suits in Exercise Four?”

DUMMY:	1) 8 5	2) 8 6 3	3) 6 5 2	4) 9 6 3	5) A 6 3
DECLARER:	A Q 4	A Q J	K Q 3	A Q 10	Q 5 4
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> (use A)

Follow-up

Discuss the exercise.

Conclusion

“If you’re going to take a finesse, you need an entry to the hand opposite the card which you hope will win a trick (and toward which you are planning to lead). If you’re going to repeat the finesse, you’ll need more than one entry.”

EXERCISE FIVE: Second Hand Low**Introduction**

“One of the guidelines that is very helpful to the defenders is *second hand low*. If you are the second hand to play to a trick and the opponents lead a low card toward a high card in the dummy, you should generally play low. This makes sense for two reasons. First of all, if the declarer plays a low card and you play a high card, your card is capturing nothing more than a low card. High cards are best used to capture the opponents’ high cards. The other reason is that your partner has a chance to play in fourth position. It’s a big advantage to be able to play last.

“The details of playing *second hand low* will be discussed in the *Defense* course. For now, let’s look at a simple example. Lay out the following cards in the heart suit:

	DUMMY	
	♥K Q 5	
YOU	■	PARTNER
♥A J 9		♥
	DECLARER	
	♥6	

“Declarer leads the ♥6 and you can see the ♥K and ♥Q in the dummy. What should you play? How about the ♥J? If you play the jack, dummy will play the king or queen and win the trick. If you play the ♥9, dummy still will need to play the king or queen to win the trick. So, the first thing to notice is that it’s not necessary to play the jack. What if you play the ♥A? It will win the trick, but the declarer will have set up two quick tricks, the king and queen.

“If you play low, the ♥9, dummy takes the trick with the ♥Q. Before the ♥K is a winner, however, declarer has to get back to the declarer’s hand and lead toward the dummy again. Declarer may not have an entry to do this. By playing the ace, you take declarer’s problem away. Instead, play *second hand low*. Don’t be worried about not taking your ace on the first trick. Of course, if declarer does have an entry back to the hand in order to lead toward the ♥K, you should take the ♥A the second time. No point in carrying a good thing too far! At least you made declarer use up one of the entries to declarer’s hand.

“There’s another guideline that seems to conflict with *second hand low* and that’s *cover an honor with an honor*. This is sometimes stated as *aces are made to take kings* or *kings are made to take queens*.

“Look at this example:

	DUMMY	
	♥ A 6 3	
YOU	■	PARTNER
♥ K J 10		♥
	DECLARER	
	♥ Q	

“When declarer leads the queen, you can see what will happen if you blindly follow the guideline *second hand low*. Declarer will win the trick with the queen, (playing a small card from the dummy), and still will have the ♥ A left in dummy as a second trick.

“Instead, *cover* the queen with the king. This forces declarer to play the ace to win the trick. Now declarer gets only one trick, since your ♥ J and ♥ 10 are promoted to winners.

“The idea behind *covering an honor with an honor* is that you get two high cards from declarer, the queen and ace in the above example, by expending only one card of your own. However, you should cover only if you might be able to promote some winners for your side.

“Let’s change the layout by exchanging dummy’s small cards with yours.

	DUMMY	
	♥ A J 10	
YOU	■	PARTNER
♥ K 6 3		♥
	DECLARER	
	♥ Q	

“It doesn’t do any good to cover the ♥ Q with the ♥ K, since the only winners you’ll be promoting belong to declarer. Instead, follow the guideline *second hand low*. Perhaps declarer will decide not to finesse, or maybe the queen is singleton and declarer can’t repeat the finesse.

“What if you’re not sure which side has the missing high cards? Replace dummy’s ♥ J and ♥ 10 with the ♥ 4 and ♥ 2.

	DUMMY	
	♥ A 4 2	
YOU	■	PARTNER
♥ K 6 3		♥
	DECLARER	
	♥ Q	

“Now you should be covering if partner has the ♥ J and ♥ 10, but not if declarer has those cards. Since you can’t see the missing cards, you should

generally cover if there is the possibility of promoting a trick in partner's hand. In this example, you might cover if this were a side suit. If it's declarer's trump suit, declarer probably has the ♥J and ♥10, in which case you should play low."

Instructions

"Which card do you play in each of the examples in Exercise Five when declarer leads the indicated card toward the dummy?"

1) DUMMY Q 4 3	2) DUMMY A Q 10	3) DUMMY K Q 5	4) DUMMY A 6 3
YOU A 6 5	YOU K J 3	YOU A J 9	YOU K 10 9
DECLARER 2	DECLARER 5	DECLARER 6	DECLARER Q
<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>K</u>

Follow-up

Discuss the exercise. In the last example, you may need to show how covering with the king will promote the 10, even if declarer has the jack.

Conclusion

"As the saying goes, 'When in Rome, do as the Romans do.' If you are second to play and declarer has played a low card, it's generally a good idea to play a low card. If declarer plays a high card, play a higher card if you can, covering an honor with an honor."

EXERCISE SIX: Using the Stayman Convention

Introduction

“When your partner opens the bidding 1NT, you are the captain. You decide the level at which you’re going to play the final contract and whether you’ll play in notrump or a suit. If you’re planning to play at the game level, your priority is to try to play in a major suit if you have a Golden Fit — eight cards in the combined hands. We’re going to see how the Stayman convention helps you do this.

“Since a 1NT opening bid shows a narrow point range, 15 to 17 HCP and a balanced hand, responder usually has enough information to make a final decision about the contract. For example, with 10 or more points, responder knows the partnership belongs in a game contract. With a six-card or longer major suit in addition, responder knows there is a Golden Fit and can bid 4♥ or 4♠. With 10 or more points and a five-card major suit, responder bids 3♥ or 3♠, telling opener to bid 4♥ or 4♠ with three-card or longer support, otherwise to bid 3NT.

“What if responder has only four cards in a major suit? Now responder needs to know if opener also has four cards in the same major suit.

“Everyone take one of the suits and construct the following hand in the middle of the table:

♠ K 7 6 4
♥ A J 7 3
♦ 6 2
♣ K 8 3

“How many points does responder have? (11 HCPs.) At what level does the partnership belong? (Game.) What strain does the partnership belong in? (Spades, if partner has four of them; hearts, if partner has four them; otherwise, notrump.)

“Responder needs to know whether or not opener has a four-card major. To find this information out, a famous bridge player named Sam Stayman publicized a convention to do the job. A *convention* is an artificial bid that has a special meaning upon which the partnership has agreed. The takeout double is an example of a conventional bid that you have already seen in practice. It asks partner to bid a suit other than the one bid by the opponents.

“The Stayman convention uses a response of 2♣ to an opening bid of 1NT to ask opener to bid a four-card or longer major suit when holding one. Once the partnership has agreed to use the Stayman convention, it can no longer use the same bid, 2♣, to have a natural meaning. That is one of the disadvantages of using a convention. As we will see, the merits of this convention more than make up for the loss of the natural 2♣ response.

“On this hand, responder would bid 2♣. If opener showed a four-card heart suit, what would responder bid next? (4♥.) If opener showed a four-card spade suit, what would responder bid? (4♠.) If opener doesn’t have four cards in either major, what would responder bid? (3NT.)

“Responder uses the Stayman convention only when interested in a game contract.

“With 10 or more points, responder knows the partnership belongs in game. The Stayman convention is used whenever responder is interested in finding out if opener has a four-card major. If responder doesn’t care whether or not opener has a four-card major, responder doesn’t use the Stayman convention. Instead, responder would make a natural bid: 3NT with no interest in a major suit; 4♥ or 4♠ with a six-card suit; or 3♥ or 3♠ with a five-card suit.

“When responder has 8 or 9 points, the situation is a little different. In this case, the Stayman convention is used whenever responder is interested in finding a major-suit fit — whether responder has four cards in a major suit or five or six or more. Let’s change responder’s hand slightly and see why.

“Replace the ♥A with the ♠2.

♠ K 7 6 4 2
♥ J 7 3
♦ 6 2
♣ K 8 3

“Now responder only has 8 points — 7 HCPs plus 1 for the five-card suit. There won’t be enough strength for game if opener has a minimum hand of only 15 points ($15+8=23$), but should be enough for game if opener has a maximum ($17+8=25$). Responder wants to invite opener to game and, at the same time, find out whether or not there is a Golden Fit in spades.

“Up to this point, the only invitational response to 1NT we have used is 2NT. We have avoided the complication of looking for a major-suit fit at the same time. The reason is that we can’t use 2♠, since that’s a signoff bid, and we can’t use 3♠, since that’s a forcing bid. Stayman to the rescue! We start off bidding 2♣, telling opener we are interested in a major suit. We’ll see how the bidding goes from there after we’ve looked at how opener responds.

“One more thing, if responder has 0 to 7 points and knows the partnership belongs in partscore, there’s no room to use the Stayman convention without getting the partnership too high. Responder just signs off in 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠ with a five-card or longer suit — not 2♣, since that’s the Stayman convention. Otherwise, responder passes even with four cards in a major.

“Let’s take a look at the types of hands on which you might use the Stayman convention.”

Instructions

“Your partner opens the bidding 1NT. What do you respond with each of the hands in Exercise Six?”

1) ♠ A J 7 3
♥ K 10 8 6
♦ 10 5 2
♣ Q 8

2♣

2) ♠ A 5
♥ J 10 7 3
♦ A Q J 6
♣ 9 6 3

2♣

3) ♠ 10 5
♥ J 3
♦ A 8 4
♣ K Q 10 8 6 3

3NT

4) ♠ Q 9 8 5
♥ K 2
♦ K 10 8 4
♣ 9 8 4

2♣

5) ♠ 4 2
♥ Q J 9 7 3
♦ A 8 4
♣ J 10 5

2♣

6) ♠ K 8 6 3
♥ 10 9 6 4
♦ 10 5
♣ 8 7 5

Pass

Follow-up

This exercise can be discussed with the whole class. It could go something like this:

“In the first hand, are you interested in a major suit? (Yes, either hearts or spades.) Do you have enough points to consider a game? (Yes. There’re 10 points, so the combined total would be 25 even if opener has only 15 points.) What bid asks the 1NT bidder to bid a four-card or longer major? (2♣.)

“On the second hand, at what level does the partnership belong? (Game. Responder has 12 HCPs.) Is responder interested in opener holding a four-card major? (Yes, hearts.) What does responder bid? (2♣.)

“On hand three, does the partnership belong in game? (Yes. Responder has 10 HCPs plus 2 points for the six-card club suit.) Is responder interested in a major suit? (No.) What does responder bid? (3NT.)

“On hand four, how many points does responder have? (8.) Is responder interested in game? (Yes. If opener has a maximum, there’ll be $17+8=25$ points.) Is responder interested in a major suit? (Yes, spades.) What does responder bid? (2♣.)

“On the fifth hand, responder has 9 points, counting a point for the five-card heart suit. Why can’t responder bid 2♥? (It’s a signoff bid, and responder wants to make an invitational bid.) Why can’t responder bid 3♥? (It’s a forcing bid, and responder doesn’t have enough strength to force the partnership to game.) What would responder bid? (2♣.)

“On the last hand, is responder interested in a major suit? (Yes.) Why can’t responder use the Stayman convention? (Only 3 points. Using Stayman would get the partnership too high.) What would responder do? (Pass.)”

Conclusion

“The Stayman convention is used by the responder after an opening 1NT bid, when responder is interested in game and wants to know whether the hand should play in a major suit or notrump.”

EXERCISE SEVEN: Responding to Stayman

Introduction

“When partner responds 2♣, opener recognizes this as the Stayman convention, asking whether or not there is a four-card major suit in opener’s hand. What does opener do? If there is a four-card or longer major suit, opener names it by bidding 2♥ or 2♠.

“If there isn’t a four-card major suit, opener makes the artificial response of 2♦. This response doesn’t say anything about diamonds; it is merely a conventional response saying, ‘I don’t have a four-card major, partner.’ As we’ll see in a moment, responder will use this information to place the contract. Opener doesn’t worry about being left to play in 2♦. First, let’s practice responding to 2♣.”

Instructions

“You open the bidding 1NT and your partner responds 2♣, the Stayman convention. What do you rebid with each of the hands in Exercise Seven?”

1) ♠ K 9
♥ A Q 8 3
♦ J 9 4
♣ K Q J 2

2♥

2) ♠ 9 7 4 2
♥ A K 3
♦ A J 8
♣ K Q 5

2♠

3) ♠ A J 9
♥ A K 7
♦ J 7
♣ K 10 9 8 2

2♦

Follow-up

“Let’s see how easy it is to respond to the Stayman 2♣ convention. In the first hand, you have a four-card heart suit. What would you rebid? (2♥.)

“On the second hand, you have four spades. What would you rebid? (2♠.) Remember, partner isn’t asking how strong your suit is, only whether or not you have four of them.

“On the last hand, you don’t have a four-card major suit. What do you rebid? (2♦.) Your response has nothing to do with diamonds, as you can see.”

The students may be curious to know what they would do with both four-card major suits. You should recommend that they respond 2♥, bidding up the line as when responding at the one level.

Conclusion

“When responder bids 2♣ after you have opened 1NT, it’s the Stayman convention. Your rebid is straightforward. If you have a four-card or longer major suit, bid it. Otherwise bid 2♦.”

EXERCISE EIGHT: Responder's Rebid after Using Stayman**Introduction**

“If responder has 10 or more points and uses the Stayman convention, responder's rebids are very straightforward after hearing opener's second bid. If opener bids the major suit in which responder is interested, responder can jump directly to 4♥ or 4♠. Otherwise, responder jumps to 3NT.”

Unless the class is quite advanced, it will be too confusing to explain how opener, with both majors, would correct 3NT to four of the other major. This is mentioned briefly in the text, however, and interested students could be referred there.

“With 8 or 9 points and an interest in a specific four-card major, responder invites to game by raising to 3♥ or 3♠ if opener bids the appropriate major suit. Otherwise, responder rebids 2NT, inviting opener to game in notrump.

“If responder has 8 or 9 points and a five-card or longer major suit, the situation is a little different. Let's look at the hand we laid out earlier. (It may still be on the table.)

♠ K 7 6 4 2
 ♥ J 7 3
 ♦ 6 2
 ♣ K 8 3

“If you respond 2♣ and partner bids 2♠, you know there's a Golden Fit, and you can invite to game by raising to 3♠. If opener rebids 2♦ or 2♥, there might still be a Golden Fit, since you need only three-card support from opener. You'd bid 2♠.

“How does opener know you are showing an invitational hand with five or more spades? If you were weak, 0 to 7 points, you'd have signed off directly by responding 2♠ rather than 2♣. If you had 10 or more points and five or more spades, you would have responded 3♠ or 4♠. So, by bidding 2♣ first, you're showing an invitational hand of 8 or 9 points with a spade suit.

“Let's see how all of this works with one final exercise, before we start playing some deals.”

Instructions

“Your partner opens 1NT, and you respond 2♣, the Stayman convention. Opener rebids 2♥. What do you rebid with each of the hands in Exercise Eight?”

1) ♠ K 9 7 3
♥ A J 7 4
♦ 8 4
♣ A 5 4

4♥

2) ♠ A K 5 3
♥ 10 9 3
♦ J 10 8 6
♣ Q J

3NT

3) ♠ Q 10
♥ Q J 3 2
♦ K 10 6 4
♣ 9 6 2

3♥

4) ♠ A Q 7 4
♥ J 2
♦ 10 6 3
♣ Q 9 8 6

2NT

5) ♠ K J 10 7 3
♥ 3
♦ A 9 8 5
♣ 10 7 5

2♠

6) ♠ K Q 7 6 3
♥ J 10 9 4
♦ A 10 5
♣ 5

4♥

Follow-up

“On the first hand, you have enough information now to place the contract. You have 12 HCPs, so there’s enough combined strength for game. Partner has four hearts and so do you — so there is a Golden Fit. What do you bid? (4♥.)

“On hand number two, at what level does the partnership belong? (Game. Responder has 11 HCPs.) Have you found a Golden Fit? (No.) What do you bid? (3NT.)

“On the third hand, have you found a Golden Fit? (Yes.) Does the partnership belong in game? (Maybe. If opener has a maximum.) How do you invite opener to game? (3♥.) With a maximum, opener will accept the invitation and bid 4♥. With a minimum, opener will pass, and the partnership will rest in partscore, 3♥.

“How many points do you have on the fourth hand? (9.) Have you found a Golden Fit in spades? (No.) What do you rebid? (2NT, inviting opener to carry on to game with a maximum, otherwise to pass.)

“On the fifth hand, how many points do you have? (9 points — 8 HCPs plus 1 for the fifth spade.) Why didn’t you bid 3♠ right away? (Not strong enough to force to game.) Could there be a Golden Fit in spades? (Yes. Opener could have three-card support.) How do you show an invitational hand with five or more spades? (2♠.)

“On the last hand, have you found a Golden Fit? (Yes.) Does the partnership belong in game? (Yes.) What do you bid? (4♥.)”

Conclusion

“Responder can use the Stayman convention to get information from the opener about the major suits. After responder has this information, responder either places the contract in game or asks opener to further define the strength of the hand by inviting opener to game.”

SAMPLE DEALS

EXERCISE NINE: Using Entries for a Finesse

Introduction

“This hand is going to give you a chance to put the Stayman convention to work and to make use of what we have discussed about entries. The defenders also will have an opportunity to shine by playing second hand low. It may not defeat the contract, but it will make things more difficult for the declarer.”

Instructions

“Turn up all of the cards on the first pre-dealt hand. Put the hands dummy style at the edge of the table in front of each player.”

(E-Z Deal Cards: #5, Deal 1)

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

The Bidding

“With a balanced hand and 17 HCP, what does North open the bidding? (1NT.)

“East passes. South has 10 points. Does the partnership belong in game or partscore? (Game.) Does South know if there is a Golden Fit in a major suit? (No.) How can South find out? (Use the Stayman convention, 2♣.)

“West passes. With a four-card spade suit, what rebid does North make? (2♠.)

“East passes. Now that South has found a Golden Fit, what level and strain does the partnership belong in? (Game in spades.) What bid does South make? (4♠.)

“What would the contract be? (4♠.) Who would be the declarer? (North.)”

The Play

“Which player makes the opening lead? (East.) What would the opening lead be? (♦Q.)”

This is the first hand of the night, so you can go over the four steps of the PLAN. The students may forget from one week to the next.

“Let’s go over declarer’s PLAN:

1. *Pause to consider your objective*
2. *Look at your winners and losers*
3. *Analyze your alternatives*
4. *Now put it all together*

“How many losers can declarer afford? (Three.) How many losers does declarer have? (Four: two diamonds and two spades — assuming the spades break 3–2.)

“How can declarer avoid losing two tricks? (Lead toward the ♠K and ♠Q.) Which suit provides entries to the dummy? (Hearts.) When declarer leads the first spade from dummy, which card should West play? (♠9.) Why? (Second hand low — don’t make things too easy for declarer.)”

Follow-up

Have the students bid and play the deal.

Conclusion

“You had a choice of playing a king and queen combination in two ways. You could have played the king to promote the queen into a winner, but this wasn’t enough. You could afford only one loser in the suit, so you had to use the principle of the finesse and lead toward the king and queen. Having decided that, the next task was to watch your entries. Two entries to the dummy were necessary to do the job.”

EXERCISE TEN: Watching Entries while Promoting Winners**Introduction**

“Again, in the bidding, we’ll see the magic of the Stayman convention. The focus of this lesson is on entries. In the last hand, we saw that they are important when declarer plans to take a finesse. In this hand, you’ll see that entries also are important when you are promoting a suit.

“There are two guidelines you can apply to this hand. First of all, when promoting a long suit, try to win the first trick with the high card from the short side. Secondly, try to keep an entry in the same hand as the long suit you are trying to establish.”

Instructions

“Turn up all of the cards on the second pre-dealt hand. Put the hands dummy style at the edge of the table in front of each player.”

(E-Z Deal Card: #5, Deal 2)

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

The Bidding

“With a balanced hand of 16 HCP, what bid does East make to open the bidding? (1NT.)

“South passes. West has 9 points. Does West know whether the partnership belongs in game or partscore? (No.) Is West interested in finding a Golden Fit in a major suit? (Yes.) What does West respond? (2♣.)

“North passes. How does East tell partner that there isn’t a four-card major suit? (2♦.)

“South passes. Since opener doesn’t have a four-card major suit, what does West rebid to invite opener to bid game? (2NT.)

“North passes. Does East have enough to accept West’s invitation to bid on to game? (No.) What would the contract be? (2NT.) Who would be the declarer? (East.)”

The Play

In the first exercise, the four steps of the PLAN were reviewed more formally. This time, questions can be asked that lead students to a decision about how to play.

“Which player makes the opening lead? (South.) What would the opening lead be? (♥Q.)

“Declarer starts by making a PLAN. Which suit offers the best potential for developing extra tricks? (Spades.) How does declarer plan to play the suit? (High cards from the short side first — ♠Q and ♠10.) What could North do to make life difficult for declarer? (Refuse to win the first and second spade tricks.) In which hand, should declarer win the first trick? (Declarer’s.) Why? (To keep the ♥A as an entry to dummy.)

“If declarer were to play a club from either hand, which card should the first defender play? (A low club.) Why? (Second hand low.)”

You may want to show how the defenders get three club tricks by playing second hand low and only two club tricks if they play second hand high.

Follow-up

Have the students bid and play the deal.

Conclusion

“Entries and promotion worked hand in hand. You had to make a decision after the opening lead. If you won the first trick with the ♥A, you took an entry away from the long spade suit in the dummy. You had to win the first trick with the ♥K in your hand, where you won’t need an entry later. After getting through that hurdle, the next step was to play the ♠Q, the high card from the short side.”

EXERCISE ELEVEN: Entries when Developing a Long Suit**Introduction**

It might be worthwhile to remind the students that the Stayman convention applies only after opening notrump bids. If your partner bids 2♣ in response to an opening bid of one in a suit, it means that partner has clubs.

“Entries are necessary to get extra tricks through promotion and the finesse. In this deal, declarer needs to establish a long suit. Entries are especially important. You probably know how frustrating it is to see winners on the other side of the table and not be able to get to them. I’ve certainly had that experience.

“In this deal, there aren’t any entries in the dummy other than in the suit declarer hopes to establish. That means declarer has to make the best use of entries within that suit. It’s time to see the ducking play in action.”

Instructions

“Turn up all of the cards on the third pre-dealt hand. Put the hands dummy style at the edge of the table in front of each player.”

(E-Z Deal Cards: #5, Deal 3)

Dealer: South	♠ J 9 6 2				
	♥ 10 4				
	♦ 7 3				
	♣ A K 8 6 3				
♠ 8 4 3 ♥ K J 5 ♦ Q 10 8 6 5 ♣ J 9	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ Q 10 7 5 ♥ Q 9 8 2 ♦ J 9 ♣ Q 10 5
N					
W E					
S					
	♠ A K				
	♥ A 7 6 3				
	♦ A K 4 2				
	♣ 7 4 2				

The Bidding

“With a balanced 18 points, what is South’s opening bid? (1♦.)

“West passes. Holding 9 points, does North know if the partnership belongs in game or partscore? (No.) Is North interested in finding a Golden Fit in a major suit? (Yes.) What does North respond? (1♠.)

“East passes. What does South rebid? (2NT.)

“West passes. What should North rebid (3NT.)

“What would the contract be? (3NT.) Who would be the declarer? (South.)”

The Play

“Which player makes the opening lead? (West.) What would the opening lead be? (♦6.)

“Declarer starts by making a PLAN. Which suit does declarer plan to establish to make the contract? (Clubs.) What will declarer have to hope for? (The missing clubs are divided 3–2.) How is declarer going to ensure that there is an entry to dummy’s established winners? (Duck the first or second club trick.)”

Follow-up

Have the students bid and play the deal.

Conclusion

“The ducking play, or taking your losses early, can be useful to put you in the right place at the right time.”

The Play

“Which player makes the opening lead? (North.) What would the opening lead be? (♣Q.)

“Declarer starts by making a PLAN. How many losers can declarer afford? (Three.) How many losers does declarer have? (Four.) How does declarer plan to eliminate the extra loser? (Discard a club loser on dummy’s ♠Q.)

“Does declarer have an immediate entry to dummy? (No.) How does declarer plan to get to dummy? (Drive out the ♦A.) Can declarer start by drawing trumps? (No.) Why not? (The opponents will win and lead a second club, driving out West’s other high club. Then it will be too late to discard the loser.)”

Follow-up

Have the students bid and play the deal.

Conclusion

“If declarer needs an entry and doesn’t have one, declarer may have to create one. This may mean giving up the lead to the opponents, as it did in this hand. The hand was a race. Declarer couldn’t give the lead up to the opponents too many times, because they were trying to get a club winner. That meant that drawing trumps had to go on hold until the club loser was discarded.”

