

Combining Your Chances

Declarer's Strategy

How a Declarer Generates Extra Tricks

- I'm sure you know that declarer generates extra tricks by promotion, finesses, ruffs in the hand with the fewest trump and setting up long suits (length).
- Of course ruffing tricks are only good when there is a trump suit.
- However, finesses, promotion and length are techniques that can be used in no trump and trump contracts.

How a Declarer Generates Extra Tricks

- As a declarer, you are often presented with more than one of these techniques in a given hand.
- To be a fully competent declarer, you sometimes have to choose from among more than one of these techniques. Which one is most likely to succeed?
- Often you will be able to combine two techniques, or in some cases try them both, hoping that one of them will work.

Here are Some Simple Examples of Combining

- Consider this suit.

K
Q
9
7
4
2

J

Assume you had this suit and had adequate entries to both hands. You would lead the jack and let it ride. If it holds, you would go to dummy with another suit and play the king. When the defense takes the ace, you will have generated 2 tricks from that holding, but if you count and find the suit splits 3-3, you get 5 tricks altogether. Combining length and promotion.

Combining a Finesse With Promotion

- Consider this suit.

Dummy	A	You will finesse, of course, but you see that even if the finesse loses, you will still have promoted 3 tricks.
	Q	
	J	
	10	
		If the finesse wins, you must have a plan to return to your hand so you can repeat the finesse.
	4	
	3	
	2	

Combining a Finesse With Promotion

- Consider this suit.

	K	
Dummy	J	
	10	
	5	
Q 9 7	3	A 8 2
	6	
	4	

You'll have to be a bit lucky to make this one work.

You must find the queen in the right position... and have the suit split 3-3.

Combining a Finesse or a Drop

Dummy

♠ K J 4
♥ A 3
♦ 7 4 3
♣ A K J 9 4

6 ♥
♦ K

♠ A 5
♥ K Q J 10 9 5
♦ A 5
♣ 10 5 3

If you have two finesses, missing a queen and if either finesse loses, your contract is down, try to drop the queen of the longest suit. If that fails, try the finesse in the other.

Finesse or Drop #2

Dummy

♠ 9 6 2
♥ A J 5 2
♦ J 10 9 4
♣ Q 4

5 ♣
♠ A

♠ 10 3
♥ K 4
♦ A K 2
♣ A K J 10 5 3

If you have two finesses, missing a queen and if either finesse loses, your contract is down, try to drop the queen of the longest suit. If that fails, try the finesse in the other.

Finesse or Drop #3

Dummy

♠ 9 6 2
♥ A K J 2
♦ J 10 4
♣ Q 10 6

3 nt
♠ 4

♠ A 7
♥ 8 6 4
♦ A K 9 6 5
♣ A K 7

If you have two finesses, missing a queen and if either finesse loses, your contract is down, try to drop the queen of the longest suit. If that fails, try the finesse in the other.

Another Issue is Choosing Between Two Techniques

- If declarer has to choose between the following two techniques.

	♦		♣	
	A		A	
Dummy	K		Q	
	Q			
	7			
	♦		♣	
	9	36%	5	50%
	4		2	
	3			

Combining Two Techniques

♠ 8 6 4
♥ Q 10 3
♦ A K 4 3
♣ J 9 2

♠ A Q
♥ A K 9 6 5 2
♦ 7 5 2
♣ 5 3

The defense opens with the Ace, King, Queen of clubs. You ruff the third round.

You play the ace king of hearts, pulling all the enemy's trump. Count your tricks. You have 6 hearts, two diamonds, and a spade, for nine tricks How can you get your 10th trick?

Two Finesses: Which One First?

♠ 9 6 5 4
♥ 8 4 2
♦ A K 2
♣ 7 5 3

The defense opens with the queen of clubs. You count your tricks, 5 diamonds, two clubs and a heart. Eight tricks. Where is the ninth?

3nt
♣Q

♠ K 10
♥ A Q 5 3
♦ Q J 10 5 4
♣ A K

Which One First? - 2

♠ K Q 6 3
♥ A Q 2
♦ A Q
♣ A K 7 5

South opens 3 ♠ and north, with a monster hand, bids 6 ♠.

You have 11 tricks and 3 chances for the 12th.

How can you combine your chances?

6 ♠
♠ 5

♠ A J 10 9 7 4 2
♥ 7 4
♦ 4
♣ 4 3 2

Which One First? - 3

♠ 6 3
♥ Q 8 6
♦ A K J 3
♣ 7 5 4 2

How can you combine your chances? South has 8 tricks and 2 chances to make the 9th. How should she play it?

3nt
♠ 5

♠ A K
♥ A 9 7 3
♦ Q 8 7 5
♣ A Q 8

A More Complex Combine Chances

♠ K 3
♥ A K Q 6
♦ J 8 6 3
♣ J 10 4

3 nt
♠ 5

♠ Q J
♥ 9 7 5
♦ A K 10 7
♣ A K 8 2

After the king of spades loses to the ace, a spade return puts South in hand, with 8 top tricks. South's 9th trick can come from the hearts (3-3 split), a diamond finesse, (finesse the 10) or finesse the jack of clubs. If any finesse loses, the contract is down.

How can south combine his chances to the best advantage?.