

Learning Points – Planning Not Deep Finesse Defines the Outcome

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Defense Level: Intermediate

East Deals
Both Vul
MPs

♠ J2
♥ QJ42
♦ KJ5
♣ AQJ8

Mike
♠ Q5
♥ 8765
♦ A73
♣ 9753

N
W 26 E
S

Steve
♠ 8763
♥ A93
♦ Q962
♣ K2

♠ AK1094
♥ K10
♦ 1084
♣ 1064

NS 3♠, 3N
S 3♠; N 4♠

East	South	West	North
Pass	Pass	Pass	1N
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3N	All Pass	
East leads ♦2			

Tuesday Club Game, September 14, 2010 Mr. Bob Veverka, Director.
Cincinnati Bridge Association Bridge Center, 2860 Cooper Road,
Cincinnati, OH 45241 (513) 631-8070 . Mike Purcell is my
partner. We play Precision.

Defenders need to take their tricks before declarer can count the hand. Here a passive approach might help declarer get the hand right. Declarer should plan well to avoid too many finesses.

The Bidding

South makes a standard game force offering a choice between spades and NT. North knows South has 5 ♠s, not 6. This sequence will happen at most or all tables.

The Play

Partner's ♦A wins the 4th best ♦2. Partner returns the ♦3 and declarer finesses. You are in with the ♦Q, what do you play next? You choose the 3rd ♦ hoping for a 3rd ♦ trick. (Partner plays low from even current cards remaining). Your plan seems to be succeeding.

Declarer finesses ♠s, partner winning the ♠Q. Partner wisely returns the ♣9 and you have just created 6 tricks for the defense: 1♠, 1♥, 3♦, and 1♣. NS down 2 for -200 is 7.5 of 8 Match Points.

Pair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
MPs	2		0	7.5	4.5	4.5	1	4.5	4.5	7.5	
Score	-90		-630	200	100	100	-140	100	10	200	

Post Mortem

Declarer fell victim to a common mishap ... do you see it? From declarer's perspective there are 15 HCP outstanding. By counting the ♥, ♦, & ♣ HCP, declarer would have found East held 9 of them and West 4. Since we play precision, East's pass says he does not have 11 HCP. Since the ♠Q must be with West, the only way to make 3N is to cash ♠s from the top. Foul you say! Yes, indeed... declarer cannot afford to count the side suits! With the ♥, ♦, & ♣ HCP counted, the defenders have 5 tricks and the contract is set.

Indeed a different strategy is necessary – count your tricks! With 1♣, 1♦ and 3♥ tricks available, 4♠ tricks will make the game. With a finesse for the ♠Q and a ♣K available but the timing to take only 1, cash the ♠AK because the ♠Q might fall doubleton, then finesse for the ♣K if still necessary. Notice that if a finesse fails you are down. Better you avoid losing twice if both finesses are wrong.

Learning Points

1. When defender's have you booked and you have a finesse for a King and a finesse for a Queen, all else equal cash the AK in the suit missing the Q and finesse the K. You will succeed whenever the Q is offside. Everything else is just guesswork!
2. Do not take unnecessary finesses – why add risk to a contract you can make with good strategy and planning?

Keywords: Too many finesses, Percentage play with 2 finesses -for a K and for a Q, Count winners