



THE
POCKET
GUIDE TO
DECLARER PLAY
AT BRIDGE

BARBARA SEAGRAM • DAVID BIRD



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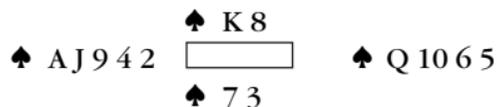
CONTENTS

1. THE SIMPLE FINESSE	4	15. KEEPING TRUMP CONTROL	38
2. RUFFING LOSERS	6	16. ELIMINATION PLAY	40
3. ESTABLISHING A LONG SUIT	9	17. THE HOLD-UP IN A SUIT CONTRACT	43
4. DISCARDING LOSERS	12	18. THE THROW-IN AT NOTRUMP	45
5. THE HOLD-UP PLAY AT NOTRUMP	15	19. THE DUMMY REVERSAL	47
6. OTHER TYPES OF FINESSE	18	20. COMBINING TWO CHANCES	49
7. SAFETY PLAYS WITHIN ONE SUIT	20	21. KEEPING THE DANGER HAND OFF LEAD	51
8. PLANNING A NOTRUMP CONTRACT	22	22. PLAYING A CONTRACT SAFELY	54
9. PLANNING A SUIT CONTRACT	25	23. COUNTING THE DEFENDERS' SHAPE	57
10. FINESSING INTO THE SAFE HAND	28	24. COUNTING THE DEFENDERS' POINTS	59
11. PLAYING A CROSSRUFF	30	25. COMPARING TWO LINES OF PLAY	62
12. CREATING EXTRA ENTRIES	32		
13. AVOIDING A RUFF	34		
14. CHOOSING WHICH SUIT TO PLAY	36		

I. THE SIMPLE FINESSE

LEADING TOWARDS AN HONOR

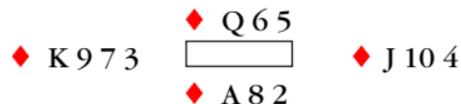
The simplest form of finesse merely involves leading towards an honor:



You lead the ♠3 towards dummy's ♠K. You will then score a spade trick, whether or not West rises with the ♠A on the first round.



Here you lead towards the ♥Q. West plays low and dummy's ♥Q wins, giving you a second trick in the suit.



This position is similar. You lead towards the ♦Q. Once again you're lucky. West holds the ♦K and you score a second diamond trick. As you see, finessing requires some good luck!



Sometimes you need to repeat a finesse. Here you lead towards the ♣K, making one trick. You return to your hand in a different suit and lead towards the ♣Q. You score two club tricks. If East held the ♣A, you would not be so lucky. You would score only one club trick.

LEADING AN HONOR TO FINESSE

When you hold several neighboring honors, you can attempt a different sort of finesse:

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

You are certain to score two spade tricks, even if you lose a trick to the ♠K. Hoping to score three spade tricks, you lead the ♠Q from your hand. If West plays low, you play low from dummy. You can then repeat the move, leading the ♠J. If West covers with the ♠K at any stage, you will win with dummy's ♠A.

The situation would be the same if dummy held ♠AJ8 and you held ♠Q104. Again you would lead the ♠Q on the first round.

To decide whether your suit is strong enough to lead an honor, imagine whether you would be pleased if your honor was covered.

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

Here you do not hold enough neighboring honors. If you lead the ♥Q and it is covered by the ♥K and dummy's ♥A, you will lose a trick to East's ♥10. Your only chance of four tricks is to lead low to the ♥J and then play the ♥A, hoping that West has a doubleton king.

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

Seeking three diamond tricks, you should play the ♦A and lead twice towards the ♦QJ. If instead you make the mistake of leading the ♦Q, you will score three tricks only when the suit breaks 3-3.

TAKE MORE TRICKS WHEN YOU PLAY THE HAND!

Once dummy comes down, it's up to you – and this book can be your reference guide to what you need to know if you want to take more tricks when you are declarer. It contains a handy pocket summary of about two dozen basic concepts in declarer play. In a concise but readable manner, it summarizes most of the material presented in *25 Ways to Take More Tricks as Declarer* by the same author team.



BARBARA SEAGRAM (Toronto, Canada) is one of North America's leading bridge teachers. Her *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know* (with Marc Smith) is the bestselling bridge book of the last fifty years.



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