

# The Third Workshop Series:

## Defensive Techniques

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<http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/Workshops/2013.WS-Series3-DefensiveTechniques.pdf>

### Types of Contracts:

1. Notrump
2. Suit

### 0. All Contracts:

- Study Dummy when it first comes down
  - Plan ahead of time what you are going to play if declarer leads small to any suit on the board or leads an intermediate or an honour card.
  - Also plan your play if declarer plays a card off of the dummy
  - Example:  
You have Kxxx and dummy has Axx  
You will outlast the finesse, do not cover  
Any honour you promote in partners hand will fall
- Small Defensive Footprint
  - Watch your safe exit cards
    - Do not take exit cards from partner if you have an exit he doesn't.
  - Don't Open up too many suits for declarer
    - Open one up and stick to it.
    - Declarer can often save a trick if opponents play a suit for him.
  - Lead suits you can continue
  - Do not find queens for declarer
    - often the opponent who discards a suit does not have the queen or honour
    - If you can discard to match partner on first discard.
    - Do not lead suits that declarer can finesse either way.
    - Do not cover an honour with the queen when only one of the ace and king are in dummy.
  - Giving declarer a finesse he can take himself is a last resort exit card.
- Develop winners before declarer develops his.
- Develop defensive side suit.
- Play suits from correct side.

- Take partner off end play.
- What you should lead late in the play may differ from early in the play.
- Do not lead suits that partner can play for himself.
  - Is it a suit that partner can cash or does he need it led to him?
- Careful with holdups. You may be squeezed out of the card if you do not take it at first opportunity and it may confuse partner who is counting points.

## 1. Notrump Contracts:

- Developing Long Suits
- Watch entries
  - If you can lead your suit one more time to set it up but you have no entries and partner will have no more of the suit, try to lead partner's suit because you cannot get in to cash your set-up winners.
- Be careful with discards
  - Echo partner
    - Match partner's discards in size and suit.
  - Discards can tell whether you or your partner are protecting an honour in the suit.
  - Often if one opponent discards a suit and not the other assuming the missing queen is not with the one discarding the suit.
  - Discarding your long suit may tell declarer you do not expect to get in again or you are protecting a side suit honour.
  - Watch Declarer's entries to dummy and, of course, his hand.
    - Hold-up to deny entry.
    - Example 1
 

Dummy has ♣KQJ1098 with no side entries and you have A54

      - Partner plays the 2, showing an odd number when do you take your ace?
        - Third round if you suspect partner may have one and you can afford and first round if partner has three.
      - Partner plays the 7, showing an even number, when do you take your ace?
        - Second Round.

- Example 2  
Dummy, your RHO, has AQJ765 and you have K32.  
Hold-up once.
- Example 3  
Dummy has KQ1093 and you have A42.  
Hold-up once because declarer will take the successful finesse of partner's jack if he loses the king the first time.
- Example 4  
Dummy has KQ1093 and you have AJ2.  
There is no need to hold-up.

## 2. Suit Contracts:

Leading into dummy's weakness if dummy is RHO especially if that suit is your weakness too.

Don't signal with too high a card

Unblock

Partner leads the King and you have A3. Overtake and lead the 3 back.

Force or tap the declarer

- keep side suit entries as much as possible
- ruff in the defensive short trump hand
- don't ruff in the defensive long hand and gain control of the hand
  - The Lead
    - With length or shortness (assuming partner has length) in trump
      - do not lead trump
    - As always, do not lead any of declarer's or dummy's suits.
      - you may help him set it up.
      - You may be telling him he has a bad split.
- try to establish a long suit for the defense to tap the declarer
  - finish running when declarer is out of trump.

