

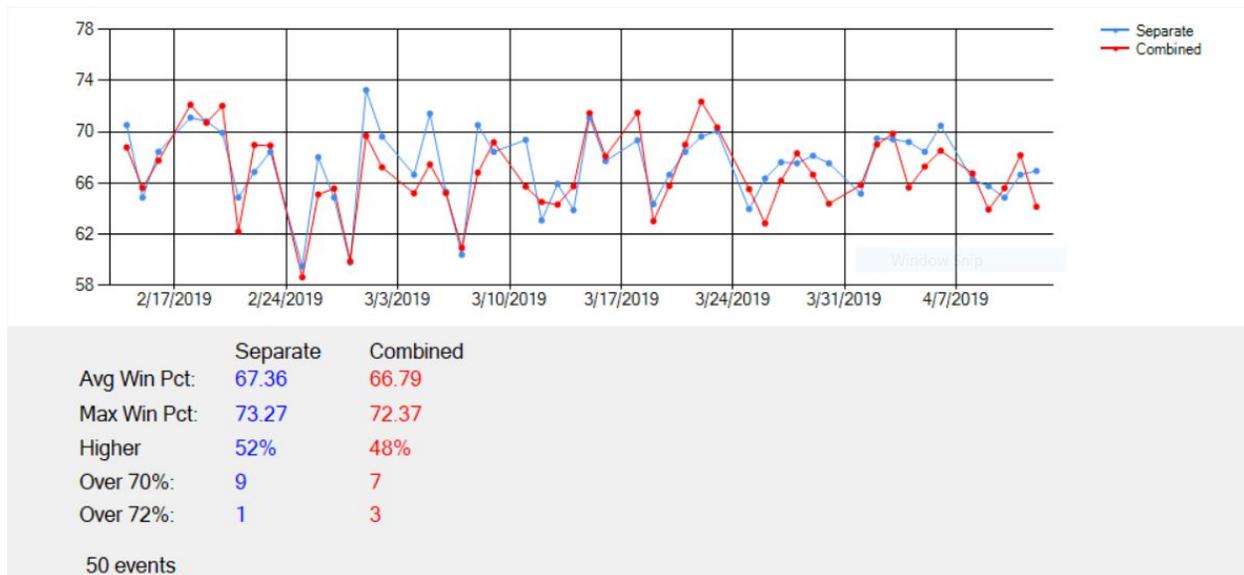
Matchpointing Across Sections

When all sections of an event are matchpointed individually, a given result in one section might earn a score very different from that earned by the same result in another section. Matchpointing across sections (MAS) eliminates this issue, thus producing a score that more accurately reflects a pair's performance. Nevertheless, two objections have been raised to the procedure. My purpose here is to examine whether these objections are supported by the data.

Objection 1: Big games (>72%) are less likely.

The argument is that a big game requires a lot of luck and one way to get lucky is to be in a section where your results score better than they would in the other sections. By eliminating this element of luck, MAS reduces the chances of a big game.

I examined 50 consecutive events at Boca Raton DBC running from 2/14/2019 to 4/12/2019. Each event was matchpointed both ways and the results analyzed to see whether big games were less likely when sections were combined. Here's what was found:



The graph shows the percentage earned by the overall winners. The results from matchpointing separately are in blue; results from combining sections are in red. It appears that the overall winner's percentage doesn't depend significantly on which method is used. In fact, in this set of 50 events, there were 3 games greater than 72% when sections were combined as opposed to only one when sections were scored separately.

Objection 2: MAS favors the stronger players

The argument is that MAS reduces the chances of a C pair winning more masterpoints by earning awards from a higher strat. That is, the bigger masterpoint awards are more likely to go to the A pairs.

I examined 88 consecutive events at Boca Raton DBC running from 1/1/2019 to 4/12/2019. Each event was matchpointed both ways and the results analyzed to see how many masterpoints were earned by each strat. If the objection were valid, we would expect to see the C strat earn fewer masterpoints when sections were combined. Here are the results:

	Separate	Combined
A	2,111.97 (50%)	2,108.34 (50%)
B	1,149.60 (27%)	1,154.23 (27%)
C	962.61 (23%)	973.20 (23%)
Total	4,224.18 (100%)	4,235.77 (100%)

The table shows the number of masterpoints earned by each strat over the course of the 88 events. Clearly the matchpointing method doesn't make much difference.

Does It Make a Difference?

If these objections aren't valid, the question arises as to whether MAS makes any difference at all. The answer is sometimes it does and sometimes it doesn't.

The event on 4/8/19 is an example where it makes a large difference:

190408.aca Separate	MPs Sep	Pct of MPs Sep	Code Sep	190408.aca Combined	MPs Com	Pct of MPs Com	Code Com
A	23.39	47%		A	28.53	54%	
B	12.44	25%		B	8.09	15%	
C	14.46	29%		C	16.42	31%	
Total	50.29			Total	53.04		
Carol Penn - Martin Saiman	66.28	6.00	OB	Gila Guttmann - Larry Lazarow	66.76	6.00	OA
Gila Guttmann - Larry Lazarow	65.18	4.50	OA	Shiv K Arora - Lydia Popish	65.92	4.50	OA
Rhoda Prager - Linda Wynston	64.58	3.38	OA	Joan Kowal - Jessica Shapiro	62.06	3.83	OC
Joan Kowal - Jessica Shapiro	59.78	2.87	OC	Caroline Warner - Robert Freid	65.06	3.38	OA
Shiv K Arora - Lydia Popish	62.80	2.53	OA	Sylvia Cohen - Bill Braverman	60.76	2.87	OC
Sylvia Cohen - Bill Braverman	58.89	2.15	OC	Joanne Weingold - Jack Weingold	64.62	2.53	OA
Caroline Warner - Robert Freid	62.35	1.90	OA	Carol Penn - Martin Saiman	58.85	2.15	OB
Eleanor Weiss - Bobbi Weiss	58.46	1.62	OB	Susan Miller - Sondra Schubiner	63.51	1.90	OA
Elaine Katzman - Joe Degaetano	59.57	1.46	SA	Ken Ronson - Denis Eagle	58.36	1.62	OC
Joanne Weingold - Jack Weingold	60.76	1.42	OA	Elaine Katzman - Joe Degaetano	56.06	1.46	SA
Sally Strul - Carolyn Sessler	59.23	1.39	SA	Joan Vigdor - Marlyn West	62.49	1.42	OA
Carolyn Robins - Sandy Busel	55.65	1.23	OC	Rhoda Prager - Linda Wynston	62.19	1.39	SA
Neil Evangelista - Dick Wilson	53.61	1.02	SA	Sally Strul - Carolyn Sessler	54.16	1.39	SA

The actual winners would have finished 7th under combined scoring, their percentage dropping from 66% to 59%. Many other places would also have changed.

On the other hand, in the event on 1/3/2019 the first 4 places would be the same under either method:

190103.aca Separate	MPs Sep	Pct of MPs Sep	Code Sep	190103.aca Combined	MPs Com	Pct of MPs Com	Code Com
A	24.39	39%		A	26.36	41%	
B	16.21	26%		B	17.62	27%	
C	21.34	34%		C	20.11	31%	
Total	61.94			Total	64.09		
Peggy Robinson - Ann Panzer	69.57	6.00	OA	Peggy Robinson - Ann Panzer	66.29	6.00	OA
Hanna Hirsch - Paul Hirsch	65.10	5.36	OB	Hanna Hirsch - Paul Hirsch	64.02	5.36	OB
Lewis Richardson - Joe Degaetano	65.65	4.50	OA	Lewis Richardson - Joe Degaetano	65.38	4.50	OA
Michael Wolff - Gary Croland	64.88	4.02	OC	Michael Wolff - Gary Croland	63.97	4.02	OC
Susan Cohen - Barry Fox	60.71	3.02	OC	Sondra Schubiner - Gail Bell	64.39	3.38	OA
Leonard Rosenbaum - Bert Berkwich	60.54	2.26	OB	Leonard Rosenbaum - Bert Berkwich	60.37	3.02	OB
Sondra Schubiner - Gail Bell	63.10	1.90	OA	Carole Silverstein - Bruce Silverstein	59.72	2.30	OC
Charles Wexler - Donna Weitzman	59.94	1.72	OC	Charles Wexler - Donna Weitzman	59.42	1.72	OC
Nancy Koffler - A Koffler	62.50	1.53	SA	Nancy Koffler - A Koffler	62.02	1.53	SA
Janice Barrett - Maurice Bresgi	58.63	1.53	SC	Janice Barrett - Maurice Bresgi	58.14	1.53	SC
Marlene Solender - Larry Mann	59.52	1.46	SA	Marlene Solender - Larry Mann	58.17	1.46	SA
Ellen Kozlove - Judith Gushner	56.92	1.31	SA	Susan Cohen - Barry Fox	57.28	1.46	SC
Carole Silverstein - Bruce Silverstein	59.52	1.29	OC	Ellen Kozlove - Judith Gushner	55.92	1.31	SA
Rosalyn Pincus - Betty Besser	53.99	1.07	SC	Christine Converse - Paul Frank	59.00	1.27	OB
Carolyn Sessler - Myra Kolton	59.63	1.07	SA	Eleanor Weiss - Lana Putter	51.65	1.07	SB

I haven't attempted to discover whether there are any parameters that would allow one to predict whether the choice of method makes a difference.

Conclusion

Since both the amount of data and the analysis are limited, I'm reluctant to draw any sweeping conclusions. It seems likely to me, however, that MAS results in the pairs who played better getting more masterpoints. The objections that have been raised are not supported by the data.

Don Smolen

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