## **Second-Hand Tips**

## Second Hand Low, and (usually) Cover and Honor with an Honor.

In general, when you play second to a trick, do not play a high card in an attempt to win the trick. Play your lowest card and leave it up to partner who plays fourth to the trick.

1.The most basic illustration of why 2<sup>nd</sup>-hand low is crucial:

If declarer leads low from dummy, follow LOW with the four. But, if the JACK is led from dummy, cover with the KING.

If declarer leads low from his hand, follow LOW with the four. But, if the QUEEN is led from declarer, cover with the KING.

No matter which hand declarer leads from, proper defense nets 3 tricks.

$$2^{nd}\ Hand\ Tips - \underline{http://www.larryco.com} - Pg.\ 1\ of\ 3 - Larry\ Cohen$$

2. Q83	K104 □ 975 <u>2</u>	AJ6	South leads the two. West should play the three. After declarer plays from dummy, East will have the opportunity to win the trick as cheaply as possible.
3. J85	K3 <u>2</u> □ Q1076	A94	If North leads the two, East should play the four. East would like to save his ace to capture North's king.
4. Q7654	AK109 □ <u>J</u> 3	82	It would be pointless for West to cover South's jack. He can see that it can't promote a trick.
5. A1076	KJ8 □ 3 <u>2</u>	Q954	When South leads low, West should play 2 <sup>nd</sup> hand low (smoothly, of course) to give declarer a guess.
6. Q954	3 <u>2</u> □ KJ8	A1076	When North leads low, East should play 2 <sup>nd</sup> hand low (smoothly, of course) to give declarer a guess.

 $\underline{SPLITTING\ HONORS}$ : When you have touching honors in  $2^{nd}$  seat, it is usually correct to play one of them.

7.

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<u>COVERING AN HONOR</u>: Cover any "unsupported" honor. "Unsupported" means that the honor led does not also have the card immediately lower.

8.

9.

the king, then East will get a second trick with his Q-9 behind North's 10. Note that a trick would be lost if East covered the jack with his queen.



10.

54	<u>J</u> 102 □ A763	KQ98	This time, East should cover the jack. If you have two honors higher than the one led, you should usually cover or "split" your honors.
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11.

K54	A32		If South leads the queen, West doesn't know if it is
		1076	"supported" or not. He should assume it is (who would
	<u>Q</u> J98		lead the queen from queen-empty?)

## **SUMMARY:**

When in doubt, play 2<sup>nd</sup>-hand low (and smoothly). Covering an honor or splitting honors are exceptions (and can be complicated).

