

# Welcome

**We're here to talk about better ways  
to potentially play card  
combinations**

# There are many axioms to follow in Bridge play,

2<sup>nd</sup> Hand Low; 3<sup>rd</sup> Hand High Enough; Cover Honors;  
Hold-up Plays; Don't Discard Tricks; Sequence Leads;  
Lead Through Strength / Around to Weakness;  
Play the Card you're Known to Hold; Return Partner's suit

but unless you're making a plan and thinking as  
you go you'll be missing opportunities both in  
the deal at large and in the current suit.

I'll be focusing on the current suit tactics today.

# Basics of Play:

|          |                            |          |
|----------|----------------------------|----------|
|          | 3 <u>2</u>                 |          |
| <u>4</u> | NT Contract<br>Std Signals | <u>9</u> |
|          | A Q J T                    |          |

When West leads this suit, the Queen is a must or else you give away the location of your other honors!

Bridge would be a lot easier and less fun  
if there weren't exceptions!

|          |                            |          |
|----------|----------------------------|----------|
|          | 8 5 <u>2</u>               |          |
| <u>3</u> | NT Contract<br>Std Signals | <u>J</u> |
|          | K Q                        |          |

Coax them into believing you hold a double stopper  
to deter West from stomping down that Ace once in!

Declarer can occasionally persuade the opponents to continue or halt a suit by giving a high or low signal themselves, just as if we were the partner of the leader.

|                  |  |            |
|------------------|--|------------|
|                  | T 6 <u>2</u>   |            |
| <u>A</u> K J 7 4 | NT Contract<br>4 <sup>th</sup> Best Leads<br>Std Signals | 9 <u>5</u> |
|                  | Q 8 3  |            |

The best way to lure West into thinking East holds the Queen and they should continue the suit is to play the 8.

Following with the only card below the 5 means it discouraged.

What card at trick 1 is best to attempt to maximize the number of tricks in this suit?

|          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
|          | J 6 2  |   |
| <u>4</u> | NT Contract<br>4 <sup>th</sup> Best Leads<br>Std Signals | ? |
|          | A K 9  |   |

Even if J is covered West may lead suit again not knowing the location of the 9 whereas if declarer begins by playing low from dummy the only reason to do so would be with the T or 9 or AK tight. Allow intermediaries to pull their weight! Same remains true if Jack were the Ten.

What if you happened to be without side suit entries to this source of tricks in dummy?

|   |                            |   |
|---|----------------------------|---|
|   | A K Q 2                    |   |
| ? | NT Contract<br>Std Signals | ? |
|   | T 9                        |   |

Lead 9 as with Jx+ Lefty may be asleep at the switch or otherwise choose not to cover.

Should the opponents lead through this dummy will you be awake? Why put up the J?

|          |                            |   |
|----------|----------------------------|---|
|          | J T 2                      |   |
| <u>6</u> | NT Contract<br>Std Signals | ? |
|          | A                          |   |

Promote the Ten to a winner  
when the defender's honors are split.



# Are you still thinking? What now?

|          |                            |          |
|----------|----------------------------|----------|
|          | A 4 <u>2</u>               |          |
| <u>3</u> | NT Contract<br>Std Signals | <u>T</u> |
|          | Q J                        |          |

Duck to the Jack, advertising the Queen as Lefty may not be able to determine your count, while play of Queen instead should allow Lefty to lead the King looking to smother.

# Key Points

- Declare should generally win the Higher of touching honors from HHx+ in the closed hand to conceal the lower honor.
- Declare should generally win the Lower of bare touching honors (HH or HHH) in the closed hand to advertise the Higher honor in hope it also appears from a longer suit.
- When leading from touching honors in the closed hand, if you want Lefty to cover play the Top and if not play the Second best.
- From Dummy the highest of Touching honors between your two hands is most likely to coax a cover even though the Defender should generally try to wait to cover the second of your equals.
- When deviating from the norm, the best plays are consistent with the knowledge your opponent already possesses.

- 1) As Declarer, how would you play each card combination?
- 2) What if you don't need every trick to ensure the contract?  
Safety Plays – who can tell everyone what these are?

Assume ample entries to either hand and logic them through.

Dummy

Declarer

|           |  |         |
|-----------|--|---------|
| A K Q x x | <b>5:</b> Any 3-3 Break will suffice<br><b>4:</b> Duck once to add 4-2 Breaks          | x x     |
| A K 8 x x | <b>5:</b> Play for drop of doubleton Q<br><b>4:</b> Play Ace then toward Jack (4-1's)  | J 9 x   |
| A Q x x x | <b>5:</b> Finesse hoping for Kx onside<br><b>4:</b> Cash A and return to lead toward Q | x x x x |
| A J T x x | Run Queen as if it were singleton.<br>May need to overtake 9 if entry issues 4-1.      | Q 9     |

- 1) As Declarer, how would you play each card combination?
- 2) Would anything ever change your mind?

Assume ample entries to either hand and logic them through.

Dummy
Declarer

|                  |   |                |
|------------------|---|----------------|
| <b>A Q J x</b>   | Lead low toward Jack, return to use Ten<br>This adds making 4 on Kingtons & Kx                  | <b>T x x</b>   |
| <b>K 9 x x</b>   | Lead J and if LHO ducks smoothly win K<br>and finesse T on way back.                            | <b>A J T x</b> |
| <b>A K J x x</b> | High to Ace, return and finesse J now<br>Accounting for Q stiff offside or Q-3 <sup>rd</sup> on | <b>x x</b>     |
| <b>A K J T x</b> | Q-4 <sup>th</sup> is 4 times as likely as a stiff Q<br>so finesse twice instead                 | <b>x x</b>     |

|                |                                       |                |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| <u>K</u> Q T 2 | Auction: 1m-1M; 2M-etc.<br>Trump Suit | A 8 6 <u>3</u> |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|

The opponents hold J9754 and if suit breaks 3-2 (68%), there's no problem, so how to you play if 4-1(28%)?

Start by leading low toward the King (hand with 2 honors) and if both ops follow low then Play Ace and back toward Q.

This picks up J-4<sup>th</sup> in South. Can we succeed against J-4<sup>th</sup> in North?

Only if the singleton 9 or J are in South can we pick up all 4.

**Where am I going with this?**

|                |                                       |                |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
|                | 7                                     |                |
| <u>K</u> Q T 2 | Auction: 1m-1M; 2M-etc.<br>Trump Suit | A 8 6 <u>3</u> |
|                | J 9 5 4                               |                |

## Lucky us!

By receiving the 9 from South, Declarer can now finesse North to pick up the 4 there and can even guard against South holding J9 or 95 or 94 by carefully playing K now.

Sadly we fail. South has Falsecarded and the 4-1 split we had previously been prepared to combat is now winning a trick.

**Should we have known better? No**, barring auction or hesitation. We were simply given an option to go wrong by South and took it.

# Potential Benefits of False-Carding When Used by the Defense

Alter Declarer's decision making with respect to:

- 1) Offering a Wrong Line of Play
- 2) Honor Location
- 3) Suit Distribution
- 4) Create a Shift

|                |                                       |          |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|----------|
|                | T 9 3                                 |          |
| A <u>Q</u> 8 2 | Auction: 1m-1M; 2M-etc.<br>Trump Suit | <u>4</u> |
|                | <u>5</u>                              |          |

Declarer wins the opening lead in hand and starts on trumps.

What's the interesting Scenario? Is there anything you can do?

If we play low, Declarer may just play the Ace.

Question: Should Declarer return to hand to lead low toward Ace?

No, Declarer can't pick up  $K\frac{9}{10}$  x opposite  $\frac{9}{10}$  and therefore calls for A when playing for this holding, but will use J if picturing T9 & K53!



# Mandatory Falsecards

|            |                |       |
|------------|----------------|-------|
|            | A <u>J</u> 7 3 |       |
| K <u>4</u> | NT             | T 9 5 |
|            | Q 8 6 <u>2</u> |       |

What card  
should East  
Play & why?

Failure to find the mandatory play makes Declarer try the Ace!

Declarer might now envision this situation:

|              |                |     |
|--------------|----------------|-----|
|              | A <u>J</u> 7 3 |     |
| K 5 <u>4</u> | NT             | T 9 |
|              | Q 8 6 <u>2</u> |     |

Here South  
would need  
to return and  
lead the Q.

# Mandatory Falsecards

|          |                  |         |
|----------|------------------|---------|
|          | A <u>J</u> 3     |         |
| <u>4</u> | NT               | K T 8 5 |
|          | Q 9 7 6 <u>2</u> |         |

What card  
should East  
Play & why?

Failure to find the mandatory play makes Declarer try the Ace!

Declarer might now envision this situation:

|              |                |     |
|--------------|----------------|-----|
|              | A <u>J</u> 7 3 |     |
| K 5 <u>4</u> | NT             | T 8 |
|              | Q 8 6 <u>2</u> |     |

Here South  
would need  
to return and  
lead the Q.

# Mandatory Falsecards

|         |                |   |
|---------|----------------|---|
|         | <u>K</u> Q T 3 |   |
| J 9 7 4 | NT             | 5 |
|         | A 8 6 <u>2</u> |   |

What card  
should West  
Play & why?

Help yourself and induce Declarer to finesse the other way.

Declarer might now envision this situation:

|          |                |         |
|----------|----------------|---------|
|          | <u>K</u> Q T 3 |         |
| <u>9</u> | NT             | J 7 5 4 |
|          | A 8 6 <u>2</u> |         |

Here South  
would need  
to finesse  
through East.

# Subterfuge can occur on many holdings, but often on QT & J9

|     |  |       |
|-----|--|-------|
|     | K 4  |       |
| Q T | Vs NT or with Suit as Trump<br>Declarer leads low toward K | 8 5 2 |
|     | A J 9 7 6 <u>3</u>   |       |

|     |   |         |
|-----|---|---------|
| Q   | In this scenario Declarer<br>would want to finesse the 9. | T 8 5 2 |
| Q T | Are you worried about it<br>looking like this instead?    | J 9     |
| Q T | Or this? Admittedly A9<br>would be tragic.                | A 8     |

While Defenders have to consider  
if their Falsecards might be  
detrimental to partner, Declarer  
has no such need for conscience.

# Potential Benefits of False-Carding When Used by the Declarer

Alter the Defense's ability to determine:

- 1) Overall Shape
- 2) Honor Location
- 3) Suit Attitude
- 4) Suit Length

Declarer may also induce the continuation of a suit when they can hide the card above the 3<sup>rd</sup> hand high enough play:

|                |  |                |
|----------------|--|----------------|
|                | 8 2  |                |
| K J 7 <u>4</u> | NT Contract<br>4 <sup>th</sup> Best Leads<br>Std Signals | <u>9</u> 5 4 3 |
|                | A Q T  |                |

When you find yourself weak in another suit and hold the card above the 3<sup>rd</sup> hand play, one way to lure West into thinking East holds Ten is to win with the Queen and then when later losing a trick to West it will be substantially harder for West to avoid leading this suit again.

# Your Opponents are trying to be detectives, so be careful!

|                |   |            |
|----------------|---|------------|
|                | Q 8 7 <u>2</u>  |            |
| A <u>K</u> T 4 | Declaring a Suit Contract<br>West leads side suit K<br>Standard Carding | <u>6</u> 5 |
|                | J 9 3   |            |

What should Declare Play and Why? What do we fear?

We fear a ruff with East likely echoing encouragement.

East would not have played the 6 from J653 nor could we hold J9 tight as again the 6 from 653 is non-sensical.



# Your Opponents are trying to be detectives, so be careful!

|          |   |          |
|----------|---|----------|
|          | K 7 5 <u>2</u>  |          |
| <u>4</u> | In Suit Contract<br>and East overcalled this suit<br>Standard Carding | <u>Q</u> |
|          | J T 9   |          |

What do we know and what do we fear?

Lead is a singleton and you fear East can work this out.

If you play the jack under East's queen in an effort to convince him that *you* hold the singleton, he will reason that his partner would not have led the three from 10-9-3.

If you play the nine, a similar inference will arise. But if you drop the 10, East will have to allow for the possibility that West has led from J-9-3.



- 1) What cards should East follow & Play?
- 2) What card should South Play & why?

|                |  |       |
|----------------|--|-------|
|                | 9 8 <u>2</u>   |       |
| J 7 6 <u>4</u> | NT Contract<br>4 <sup>th</sup> Best Leads<br>Std Signals | A K 5 |
|                | Q T 3  |       |

- 1) East should conceal the K to next lead low giving a guess!
- 2) Declarer should preempt the guess by dropping the Ten!!

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | <p>♠ A T x x</p> <p>♥ Q x</p> <p>♦ K x x</p> <p>♣ K T 9 x</p>                                     |  |
| <p>♠</p> <p>♥ Expect Honor-6<sup>th</sup></p> <p>♦ Sequence</p> <p>♣</p> | <p><b>W      N      E      S</b></p> <p>2H      X      3H      6S</p> <p>AP</p> <p>Lead of DQ</p> | <p>♠</p> <p>♥ ~4 of them</p> <p>♦ Suit Preference</p> <p>♣</p> |
| <p>What do we expect<br/>from the opponents?</p>                         | <p>♠ K Q J 9 x x x</p> <p>♥ x</p> <p>♦ A x</p> <p>♣ A x x</p>                                     | <p>Do we have a legitimate<br/>shot to make? What Line?</p>    |

Would seem we'll fail unless we can do what?

Though East may be signaling for a Heart, they're not exactly expecting the Lead to hold ... what if it does?

**Disclaimer:** Can you take these actions with impunity? Are these techniques impervious? **NO!**

The opposition could always guess right or worse not pay attention to your guile and there are times you may fool your partner. Occasionally this might cost your side a trick.

Generally these however exist as trophy opportunities and rarely are they overly costly to your side's score if they go awry.

The big question is could it cost your team partnership trust? Only you can answer that for yourselves.

In IMPs you risk giving overtricks to attempt to set the contract; in MPs giving over tricks can lose you as much as setting the contract could gain you so it depends upon how much you believe in what you might accomplish by deviating from what's obvious to play.



A Quick  
Story  
Before  
We Play