

## THINKING AT TRICK ONE

AK87  
32  
AQJ10  
J42

J32  
AJ109876  
K2  
3

65  
KQ5  
43  
AKQ765

W	N	E	S	
				Q1094
				4
3H	DbI	4H	All pass	98765 1098

Opening Lead: S Ace

North leads S Ace. South plays the S 10. What should North think? Normally, when third hand plays high-low and dummy has a doubleton, this shows that third hand has a doubleton and can overruff the dummy.

**BUT** West opened 3H. If South has a doubleton Spade, then West opened 3H with a FIVE card Spade suit on the side. Since his opening bid of 3H denies ownership of even a FOUR card Spade suit on the side, then South cannot have a doubleton Spade. Thus, he is signalling that he owns the S Queen.

North can see three tricks: 2 in Spades and 1 in Diamonds. He frantically needs to get South on lead to lead a Diamond before Declarer throws away all his losing Diamonds on dummy's long Club suit.

At trick # 2, North must lead a small Spade to partner's Spade Queen and South will now lead a Diamond. He knows to lead a Diamond because when one is part way through the hand and does not know what to lead: "When dummy's on your right, you lead to weakest suit in sight." North will now collect TWO Diamond tricks for down one.

9876  
765  
2  
J10987

AK54  
AJ43  
J  
AKQ4

32  
KQ1098  
A765  
32

S	W	N	E	
				QJ10
				2
3D	DbI	P	4H	KQ109843
P	4NT	P	5S*	65
P	7H			

\*5S by E shows two key cards, if you are playing Key Card Blackwood.  
East's bid ALSO promises the Q of Spades. Fabulous news for West.  
This hand proves the need to use Key Card Blackwood.

**BIDDING:** Why did East bid 4H and not 3H? West doubled wanting to hear East's best suit but also her point range. East was forced to bid and would have bid 3H with 0-8 points (best suit at cheapest level when responding to a Double). See hand below for when East would have bid 3H.

543

5432

543

543

Her hand is better than this. She has 10 points (total points/points including distribution) so she must jump to 4H. West revalues to 24 points (singleton Diamond is worth 3 points because West is to become dummy) and so she pushes on to slam.

North leads D 2. East wins it. Counting losers at trick one (you can take 1 1/2-2 mins at start of every hand to do this), declarer finds that he has 3 Diamond losers. Three too many.

One Diamond can be discarded on dummy's long C suit but that means that two Diamonds have to be ruffed in dummy.

Declarer ruffs a D in dummy with H Jack (because N most likely has a singleton D from the auction). He gets back to his hand with a trump and ruffs another D with H Ace in dummy. Back to his hand with a trump. Now draw the remaining trump and say the rest are mine, stating that you are discarding a Diamond on the high Club in dummy.

## IF YOU FAIL TO PLAN, YOU PLAN TO FAIL

				954	
				Q82	
				J94	
				QJ72	
2					1087
104					J953
AKQ1072					65
K965					A1043
<b>S</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	AKQJ63	
				AK76	
1S	2D	2S	P	83	
4S				8	

West leads D Ace. Declarer pauses to think and plan.

Declarer counts no S losers, one H loser, 2 D losers and 1 C loser. one too many. It sure is tempting to pull all the trumps right away but what if the Spades do not divide 3-3, which statistically is unlikely. Missing an even number, they should divide badly (4-2) missing an odd number, they divide favourably MOST of the time.

Declarer should ruff the third round of Diamonds and play Ace and King of trumps, leaving the S 9 in the dummy for now.

Now he plays the Heart Ace, King and Queen, ending in his hand. He prays all the while that the person that holds the extra Spade also holds four cards in the Heart suit and thus cannot overruff the dummy. His planning is rewarded. He ruffs the fourth Heart in dummy and draws trump, conceding only two Diamonds and one Club, making his contract.

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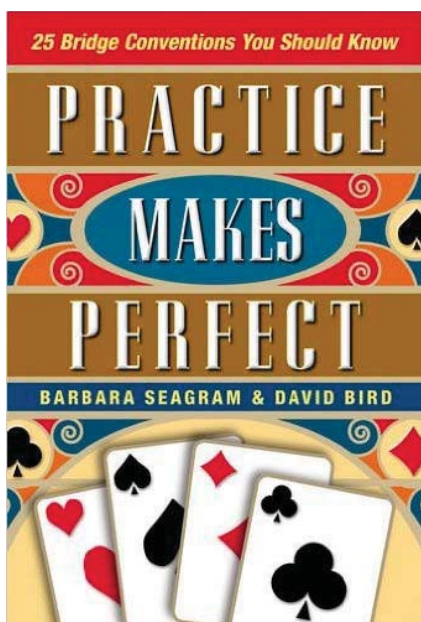
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## COVER AN HONOUR WITH AN HONOUR? OR NOT?

If your partner leads a suit, then you are said to be **THIRD HAND**, because you are **THIRD** to play to that trick.

When dummy or declarer leads a suit, then you are either **SECOND** or **FOURTH** to play to the trick.

When you are **FOURTH** to play to a trick, that means you can already see what the three other players have played so it is usually pretty simple for you to know what to do on this trick. When you are second, it is not simple at all.

You are second hand when declarer leads a card toward dummy which is on your left or

You are second hand when declarer leads a card from dummy towards his hand and dummy is on your right.

Note that the terms "second hand low" and "third hand high" do not apply to declarer who is in the unique position of being able to see his hands and his partner's. Thus he judges accordingly.

Today we will deal with what to do when dummy leads an honour and dummy is on your right.

All of you have heard the two expressions: "second hand low" and "Always cover an honour with an honour." These are catchy phrases and easy to remember because you have heard them a few times

*BUT they are truly not enough if you are to be a good bridge player.*

**Plough on!**

**When dummy is on your right, always cover an honour with an honour if there is only one honour in that suit in dummy.**

**You are doing this in order to hopefully PROMOTE an extra trick for your side...maybe a 10 or a 9 in your hand or in partner's.**

**DUMMY**  
**Q 5 2 (Q is led)**

**10 9 8 3 (YOU) K 6 4**

**DECLARER**  
**A J 7**

**You must cover with the K. Ultimately your partner will score one trick (or two tricks in NT) because you covered.**

**DUMMY**  
**Q 2 (Q is led)**

**6 5 3 (YOU) K 10 9**

**DECLARER**  
**A J 8 7 4**

**You must cover with the K. You MUST cover when Q is led. If not, declarer will get 5 tricks with this suit. If you cover, declarer will win the Ace and the J but your 10 will now be a high card.**

**DUMMY**  
**Q 2 (Q is led)**

**9 7 6 3 (YOU) K 5 4**

**DECLARER**  
**A J 10 8**

**You must cover with the K. You MUST cover when Q is led. If not, declarer will get 4 tricks with this suit. If you cover, declarer will win the Ace and the J and 10 but your partner's 9 will now be a high card.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Partner's length in the suit being led is relevant.**

e.g. Suppose declarer has sworn to have 6 hearts on the following hand:

**DUMMY**  
J54(J is led)

??? (YOU) Q 3 2

**DECLARER**  
???

Now you will know that partner (west) must have a singleton heart since South has advertised 6 cards in heart suit. Partner's singleton heart just may be a singleton honour. Do not cover! (This tends to apply in the case of trump suits.)

Let's look at a whole new hand:

J2  
KQ74  
KQ85  
A75

K	Q6
J102	9863
J1043	97
QJ1062	K9843

A10987543  
A5  
A62  
---

South gets to 7 Spades  
on this hand (don't ask how! North never supported her)  
If dummy leads J spades and East covers, then south will make the contract.

When you know that declarer has gazillions of that suit (you would know from the bidding & it would often be trumps) , don't cover an honour with an honour.

**DUMMY**  
J54(J is led)

K976

(YOU) Q 3 2

**DECLARER**  
A108

This time this suit is hearts and no-one has bid hearts. Spades are trumps so this is a non-trump suit. If East covers the J, then declarer will take one trick only. If East does not cover the J, then declarer will lose one trick to the king. He will then return to the dummy and repeat the finesse, finessing your Q. Thus, Declarer gets two tricks if East does not cover the original lead of the Jack.

SO, most of the time, (unless in a trump suit if you know declarer has heaps of cards in the suit), when dummy is on your right, always cover an honour with an honour.

UNLESS (don't groan) dummy has more than one honour. If dummy has more than one honour, cover the **last** honour.

**DUMMY**  
QJ9  
63  
AK753  
Q85

10874  
QJ10754  
4  
103

(YOU)  
K65  
K82  
QJ10  
J942

**DECLARER**  
A32  
A9  
9862  
AK76

3NT by north

1NT by south

West leads Q hearts. Declarer is nervous about losing the lead so tests diamonds and clubs to see if one of these suits will behave and split nicely!

No such luck. West fails to follow to 2nd round of Diamonds and 3rd round of Clubs. Declarer ends in dummy. Declarer leads Q Spades from dummy.

If East covers, then South wins with Ace Spades and leads 2 of spades towards dummy. When West follows, declarer inserts the 9 spades. Now she has 9 tricks.

If East does not cover the Q Spades, but DOES cover the J, (THE LAST HONOUR IN DUMMY), then declarer can only take 8 tricks. Down 1. Unhappy day!

**PS. If you have a doubleton king, cover the first honour. When you get older, you will understand!**

***Another scenario:***

**DUMMY**  
**Q J 10 9 (Q is led)**

**K 8 7 2 (YOU)**

**DECLARER**  
**A 5**

**If you cover with the K, declarer will score 4 tricks (assuming No trumps, or assuming trumps have all gone). If you save your K, declarer will be forced to play her ace on the 2nd round of the suit and now she can only score 2 or 3 tricks in the suit, depending on if she has entries to dummy.**