

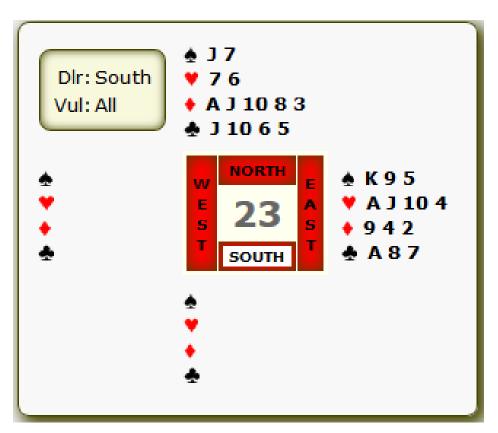
Defensive Tips for Intermediates Part II



Mental Modelling the Concealed Hands – revisited

In Part 1 we discussed the need to mental model declarer's and partner's hands to defend to best effect.

Here is another example from last Friday's play which illustrates the rewards (apart from exercising the brain) of trying to build a picture of those invisible hands.

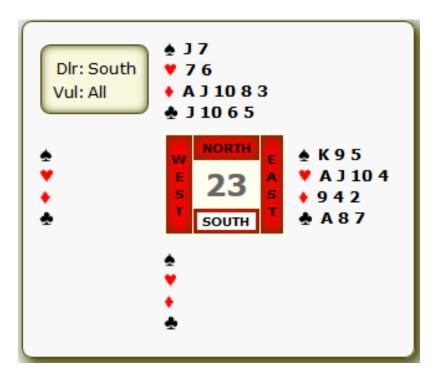


Bidding:

<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
2S*	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	3H	Passe	d out

* = Weak (6-10HCPs) and six card suit

Mental Modelling the Concealed Hand contd



You are North and lead the J♠ covered by the K♠ and partner wins the A♠, then plays the Q♠, declarer playing 10♠. Partner now plays a small spade which declarer trumps with the 8♥. You discard a small diamond. Declarer draws two rounds of trumps ending in dummy, partner following, and then the K♣ from hand and the A♣ from dummy.

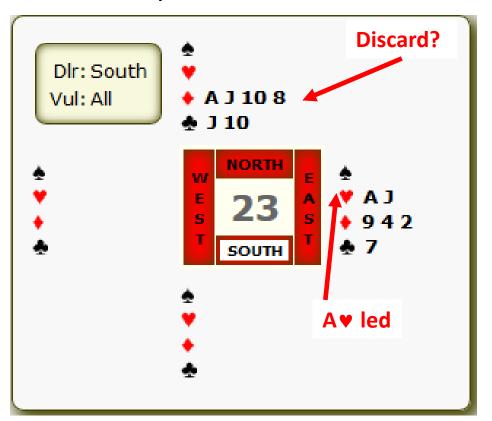
Partner drops the Q \clubsuit on the 2nd round of clubs and declarer, who is busy mental modelling the defensive hands, now knows you have the A \spadesuit , since partner has already shown up with 8 HCPs and cannot hold any other honour card for her bid except the Q \spadesuit or J \spadesuit .

Declarer now leads the A♥ from dummy. Partner discards a spade.

What do you discard?

Mental Modelling the Concealed Hand contd

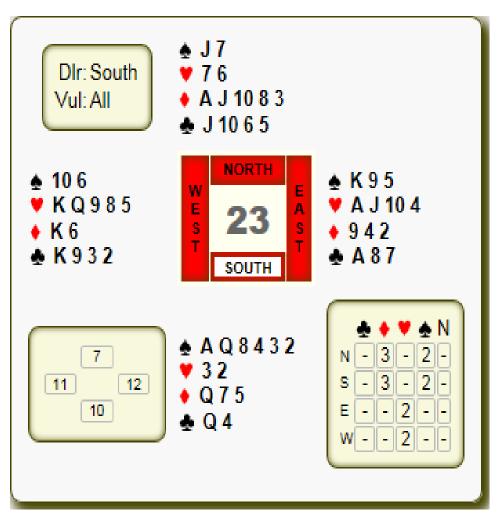
This is the position:



You now know that partner cannot hold the K ◆ . You must discard another diamond or else, if you discard the 10♣, declarer can throw you in with the J♣ and you will be forced to cash the A ◆ or lead a diamond around to her K ◆ .

If you retain both clubs, on winning the 10♣, you can exit with the J♣, forcing declarer to trump in dummy and fall back on the A♦ being in partner's hand, where it clearly is not! Declarer will only make 8 tricks and will go one down.

Mental Modelling the Concealed Hand contd



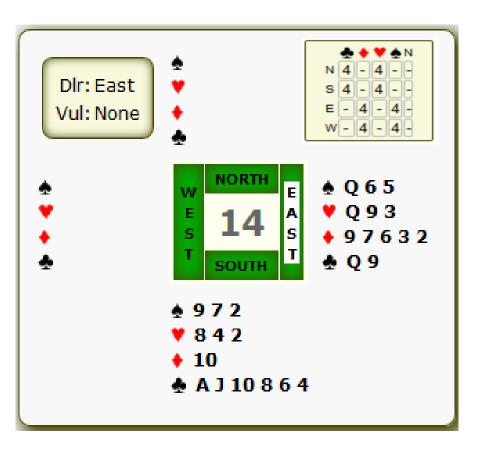
Here is the full set of hands:

	Board No 23 Both Vul Dealer South										
	Deal: Fri131017										
NS	EW	Bid	Ву	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-		
1	3	3♥	W	∳J	8	100		9	7		
2	5	4♥	W	♦J	10		620		16		
3	7	4♥	W	∳J	9	100		9	7		
4	10	4♥	W	∳J	8	200		16			
5	2	3♥	W	∳J	9		140	4	12		
6	4	3♥	Ε	♣ 4	9		140	4	12		
7	6	2♠	S	♣ 9	10	170		14	2		
8	8	2♠	S	♣ 2	9	140		12	4		
10	1	3♥	W	∳ J	9		140	4	12		

Note that in 5/7 cases declarer made 9 or more tricks.

Signalling revisited

In Part 1, we also discussed the value of signals to aid communication between the two defenders. These signals could be to give count, encouragement or discouragement to partner's lead or suit preference (McKenney). As part of a recap, let's look at this further example involving signalling.



Bidding:

Partner leads K♥, declarer plays low from dummy.

You are playing low to encourage or, occasionally, McKenney signals (in limited situations such as cash-up or suit preference when a ruff is possible).

What card do you play?

Signalling contd

Declarer's 2C opening bid indicates that she has 9 tricks in hand.

The Q65 of spades in the dummy probably ensures an extra trick as well as an entry. Therefore, you must discourage partner from trying to cash the A♥ because it will set up the Q♥ in dummy as another trick which might not even have been possible if partner has 6 x hearts and declarer only one.

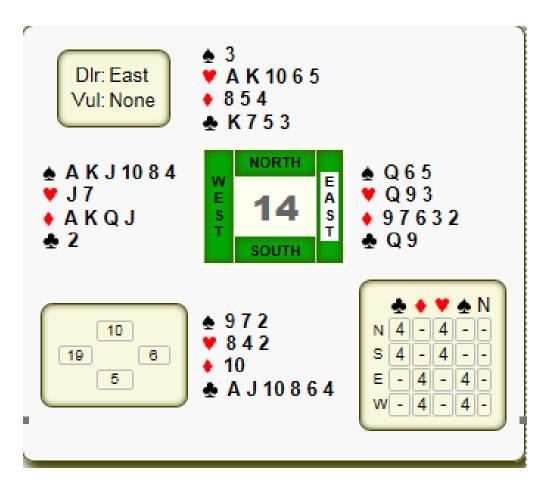
You play the 8♥ to discourage a heart continuation.

Partner may read this either as discouraging hearts or a suit preference signal for a diamond.

As long as partner switches your A* should make a trick at some stage.

Signalling contd

Here is the full deal. The defence can hold declarer to 10 tricks as long as the $Q \checkmark$ is not set-up initially by partner playing a second round of hearts and then not switching to a club. In reality, with the $Q \clubsuit$ in dummy and the $A \clubsuit$ likely to be in declarer's hand, partner is very unlikely to lead a club away from his $K \clubsuit$.



You will note that if partner switches to a diamond, declarer can not unblock the diamond suit and get to the fifth diamond in dummy without you being able to ruff.

Signalling contd

Board No 14 None Vul Dealer East									
-									
NS	EW	Bid	By	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-
1	6	4 ♠	W	♥ A	11		450	4	10
2	8	4 ♠	W	♥ A	11		450	4	10
4	3	4 ♠	W	♥ A	11		450	4	10
5	5	4 ♠	W	♥ K	10		420	12	2
6	7	4 ♠	W	♥ A	11		450	4	10
7	9	4 ♠	W	♥ K	10		420	12	2
8	2	4 ♠	W	♥ A	11		450	4	10
9	4	4 ♠	W	♥ A	10		420	12	2

In the actual play, 4S was bid on every single occasion and the A♥ or K♥ led on every single occasion. However, declarer made 11 tricks rather than 10 tricks on 5/8 occasions.

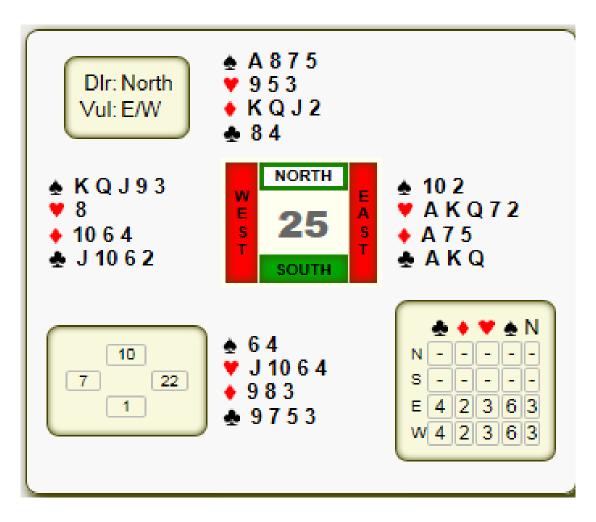
Other Defensive Tactics:

These include, among others:

- ➤ hold ups
- > preserving communications
- > directional bidding during the auction
- > forcing defences
- defender in second-hand playing high
- sacrificing honour cards (normally Kings) to destroy communications
- >uppercuts and trump promotions
- ➤ false carding

The Rule of 11 discussed under NT leads previously can also be used to decide what card to play when partner leads a fourth highest card.

Hold Ups



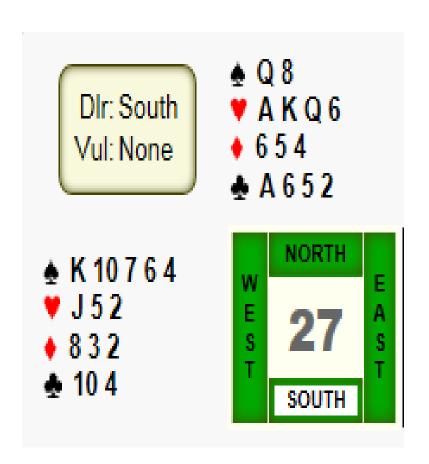
You lead your 7♣, partner plays the 4♣ and declarer wins with K♣. Declarer now leads the 10♠.

This board was discussed under giving count but as far as North is concerned she needs to hold up on taking the A until she is sure that declarer (East) cannot get to dummy.

North should hold up winning the $A \spadesuit$ until the second round and hold declarer to nine tricks by then switching to the $K \spadesuit$. *Incidentally, how should declarer have played the hand to make 10 tricks on a club lead even with a hold up of the* $A \spadesuit$?

Preserving Communications

Sometimes, primarily in NT contracts, there is a need for the defence to preserve communications.



Bidding:

South West North East1D Pass 1H Pass1NT Pass 3NT

Lead: 6♠

Declarer plays 8♠, your partner wins A♠, declarer playing 2♠.
Partner returns 5♠, declarer playing 9♠.

How do you continue?

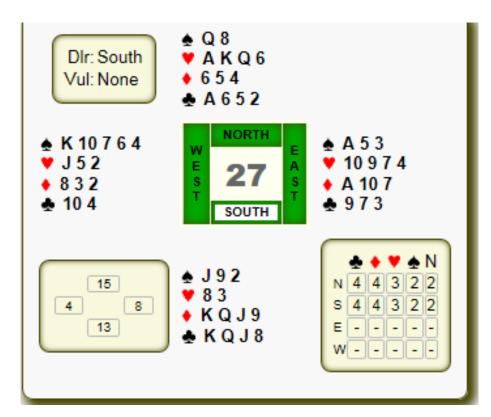
Preserving Communications contd

Partner is likely to hold at least 3 x spades since declarer did not rebid 1S. If partner has 4 x spades he should win A♠ and return a low spade which you can win with your K♠ which MIGHT clear the oppositions' spades. However, it is unlikely declarer would have bid 1NT with a small doubleton spade and at least 8 cards in the minor suits.

Partner's return of the 5♠ is another indication that both he and declarer have three spades each because the 3♠ is missing from play and if you win the return with the K♠, declarer can win the third round with the J♠ and you will not win any more tricks in spades since you have no entries.

A much more likely effective defence on your part is to play an encouraging signal of $10 \spadesuit$ when the $5 \spadesuit$ is returned allowing dummy's $Q \spadesuit$ to win and preserve an entry to your hand when partner next gets in.

Preserving Communications contd

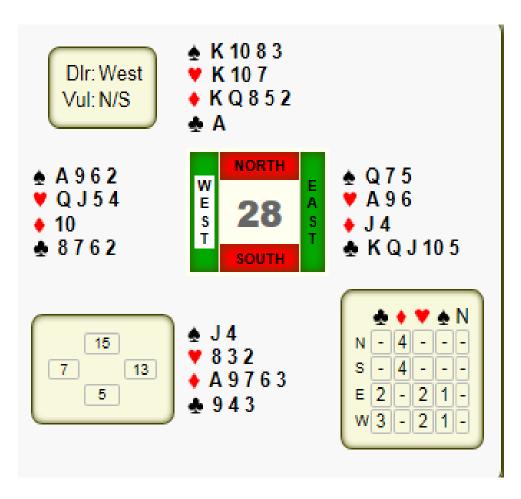


Board No 27 None Vul Dealer South										
	•									
NS	EW	Bid	Ву	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-	
1	2	3♣	S	∳ 4	10	130		5	9	
2	4	4♥	N	∳ Α	9		50	2	12	
3	6	3NT	S	∳ 6	9	400		8	6	
4	8	3NT	S	∳ 6	10	430		12	2	
6	3	3NT	N	♥ 9	7		100		14	
7	5	3♠	S	 10	10	130		5	9	
8	7	3NT	N	♥ 5	10	430		12	2	
9	9	3NT	S	♠ 6	10	430		12	2	

Partner gets in with the A ◆ before declarer can make nine tricks and returns the 3 ♠ for you to win another three spade tricks. Note that 3NT was played on 5 occasions and made on every occasion that a spade was led. West did not hold off winning the K ♠ to preserve communications.

Forcing Defences

Forcing defences arise when you have a long suit or a suit fit with partner as well as (usually) at least four trumps in the opponents' suit. By continuing to play your own suit when you get in you will reduce declarer's trump length and, hopefully, gain trump control.



Bidding:

W N E S
Pass 1D Dbl 3D(weak)
3H Passed out.

Lead: K ◆ , followed by diamond continuation which South won with A ◆ , declarer discards a spade. South continued with a spade.

Forcing Defences contd

This is an example of a **forcing play**.

Declarer only has 4 x hearts and cannot afford to trump the second diamond round in hand or else he will be reduced to the same or less number of hearts as one of the defenders, since no side suit is established.

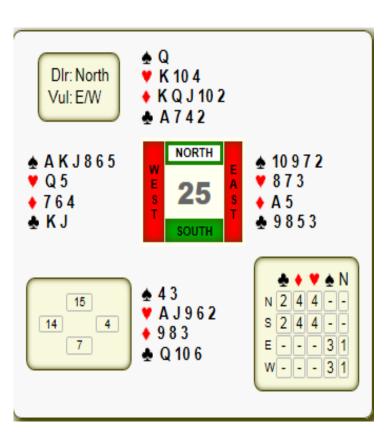
Declarer threw a spade so that the shorter trump hand in dummy could take the force if diamonds were continued.

This helped to minimise the number of tricks down on the hand.

Sacrificing honour cards to destroy communications

The following hand was an attempt by West to cut North's access to the long diamond suit in dummy. It was a comedy of errors as real play often is, but

demonstrates the point.



Bidding:

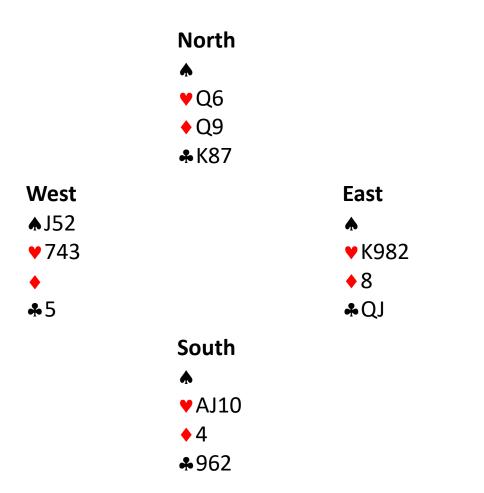
Ν W **1**S 1D Pass 1H 4H! Passed out

Lead: A♠ followed by K♠ in an effort to reduce trump length and potential entries to dummy's diamonds

Declarer ruffed, played K♥ and finessed to West's Q♥.

Playing East for the A♦, West now led K♣ to take out what might be the remaining entry to dummy. Declarer won and unfortunately for him assumed Fast had the I and finessed the 10♣. Down one.

Sacrificing honour cards to destroy communications contd



You may remember the hand in 2S by West that we discussed at the very beginning where North playing second-hand was required to play high. These were the cards remaining in the end-game.

You have taken out dummy's A ◆ entry and declarer now leads the J ♣ to set the Q ♣ up as her eighth trick if she can get to it.

Partner wins and plays the Q
ightharpoonup in case declarer has a rag remaining but declarer ruffs and leads a heart towards table. North must play the <math>Q
ightharpoonup or else South (you) is end-played and forced either to concede a trick to the Q
ightharpoonup or the K
ightharpoonup .

Second Hand High

Normally, the defender playing second-hand plays low but there are exceptions such as this and, of course, when declarer leads a higher card as part of a finesse.

For example:

<u>You</u>

K95

<u>Declarer</u> <u>Dummy</u>

Leads J AQ6

Do you play the K or do you duck?

The guideline for defenders on whether to cover in a finesse situation like this is cover when there is a chance you will promote a trick from a lower card in your hand or your partner's hand.

➤ In this case you would normally cover unless the bidding indicates that declarer has nine or more cards between her hand and dummy. If so, no point in covering because you have nothing to promote!

➤ When your honour card has plenty of rags to support it, it is seldom right to cover. In the following example, your K cannot be caught and it is unlikely you would be promoting a trick in your partner's hand and you would be sacrificing a likely trick of your own.

<u>You</u>

K953

Declarer Dummy
Leads Q A108

This situation is more difficult.

You have no idea how many cards declarer has in the suit, nor who has the Q. However you have the 9 which is in jeopardy. If you play the K, declarer may place you for the Q as well (that is you have split your honours) if she does not have it and mis-guess next time.

<u>You</u>

K95

<u>Declarer</u> <u>Dummy</u> Leads 10 AJ82

There is another finessing situation where you have the K and know that declarer has the Q and J when taking a finesse.

For example,

Declarer

Dummy

QJ3

<u>You</u>

K74

Declarer leads the Q. You should cover in case you can promote your partner's 10 BUT do not cover the Q, cover the J if that is led. Why?

Declarer may have the following and if Q, K and A are gone can still finesse your partner for the 10.

<u>Declarer</u>	<u>Dummy</u>
A98 -> 98	QJ3 -> J3

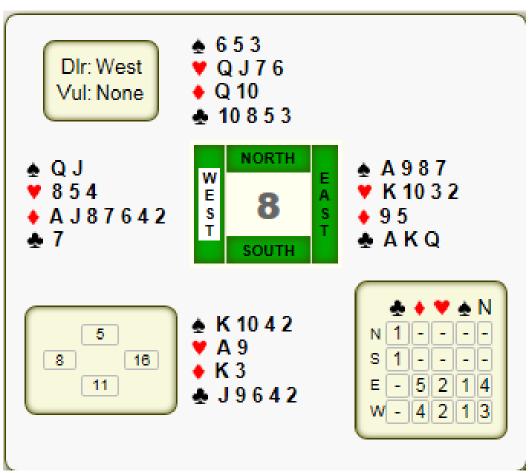
You K74 -> 74

The exception to this rule is when you have K doubleton only.

Hence, there are some situations where declarer is finessing when it is better to play high second-hand and others where it isn't. Try to think about what you are going to do before the finesse is attempted so you can play smoothly without pausing.

Sometimes second-hand plays high to disrupt communications.

Preserving Communications – 2nd Hand High



This was a hand played recently at NBC where East was in 3NT after West opened 3D. South led a spade and the J won but now there was no entry in dummy outside the diamond suit. East played a club to hand and led the 5. West played the K♦.

Now East was in a quandary whether South had KQ and a rag diamond and had split her honours or something else. East did make 11 tricks but what should be East's logic in determining the right line?

Preserving Communications – 2nd Hand High contd

South's play of the K♠, knowing that East had no other entry to dummy was right on and an excellent effort to disrupt declarer's communications with dummy.

If South had had KQ and another diamond she should duck.

Declarer can then make A ◆ and J ◆ but that's it. Declarer's only hope in running the diamond suit is that diamonds break 2-2 and his only hope is to duck the first diamond round irrespective of what card South plays.

There is actually no other distribution that the defenders might have that enables declarer to access the long diamond suit in dummy.

Trump Promotions

The defender on the right of declarer is sometimes able to promote an extra trump trick for their partner. One such mechanism is called an "uppercut".

North **♠**6542 **¥**4 **♦** QJ1042 **♣**AJ9 West **East ♠**AJ97 **♠** KQ83 **V** 10853 **♥**J2 ♦ K753 ♦ A6 **♣**Q **♣**107542 South **♠**10 **♥**AKQ976 **♦**98 **♣**K863

E/W Vul; S Dealer

Bidding:

S W N E 1H Pass 1S Pass 2H Passed Out

Lead: 3 ♦

Trump Promotions

West leads a diamond to East's A ♦ and East returns a diamond to West's K ♦.

Realising that her partner would not be setting up 3 x diamond tricks in dummy without reason, West returns a diamond in the hope that East can trump it.

What does East play on the third round of diamonds?

If East trumps low, then South overtrumps with the 6♥ and draws trumps for the loss of 1 x trump trick. Declarer will only lose 1 x spade, 1 x heart and 2 x diamonds making nine tricks.

East should trump with the J♥ and if declarer overtrumps, West will now make 2 x trump tricks. Trumping high like this albeit with a shortage of trumps, in the hope of promoting trump tricks for partner is called an "uppercut".

Trump promotions don't work if declarer has idle cards to discard and on this occasion declarer should discard the 10♠ loser on the J♥, exchanging an extra trump loser for a spade loser.

The correct defence is for East to try the K \spadesuit after winning the A \spadesuit . If partner peters (starts a high-low signal) then East can expect that her partner has 4 x spades (not two) and can then return a diamond. Now when the third diamond is played and East uppercuts with the J \blacktriangledown , South has no idle card to throw away and will be held to eight tricks.

This need to remove any idle cards from declarer before initiating the trump promotion is a general requirement for defensive trump promotions.

Trump Promotions contd

Another type of defensive trump promotion is as follows:

```
North
♣J642
                                    E/W Vul: E Dealer
432
◆ 1042
                                    Bidding:
♣AJ9
                                    E S
                                               W
                                                      N
                                    Pass 1H
                                               Pass
                                                     1S
                East
                ♠AQ83
                                    2D
                                         3H, Passed Out
                V
                                    Lead: 5♠
                ◆QJ9653
                $87
```

East wins the A♠, declarer dropping 10♠ and switches to Q♦, declarer covers, West wins A♦ and returns a diamond, declarer plays low in dummy, East winning with 9♦ and declarer dropping the 8♦.

What should East lead?

Trump Promotions contd

North

♣J642

432

♦ 1042

♣AJ9

West

♠ K975

V1085

♦ A7

♣10542

East

♠AQ83

♥J

♦ QJ9653

\$87

South is marked with only 1 x spade based on West's 5 A lead. It looks like declarer has 6 x hearts (as indicated by the bidding), 2 x diamonds and therefore 4 x clubs all of which may be tricks, especially based on the jump bid. Hence declarer has no more idle cards (losers) to jettison and the only hope for a further trick for the defence is via a trump promotion.

South

♠10

♥AKQ976

♦ K8

♣KQ63

East should lead the J ◆. Declarer has no option but to ruff. If declarer ruffs high then the 10 ♥ is promoted in West's hand. If declarer ruffs low West can over-ruff. Instead of making 10 tricks declarer makes only 9.

False Carding

To me, **false carding** should be reserved only for occasions when it will make no difference to partner if she is misled since the defence is always at some disadvantage to declarer who can see her combined holding in its entirety and, therefore, the defence needs to deploy plays and signals that keep useful dialogue going as much as possible.

For example, if partner leads a suit for which you have touching honours, play the lower one to help indicate that you have a higher touching one, since playing the higher honour denies the lower one and misleads (false cards) partner.

False carding such as leading a fifth or sixth highest card from a suit or leading the lower of touching honours rather than the higher can be done with impunity if partner is known to have nothing of value, that is, you have all or nearly all the outstanding points in the hand. This is an opportunity to try to fool declarer.

And to finish with a rare directional bid....

Lightner Double

This is a defensive tool that seldom is used. However, it is relevant to the hand below played at NBC on Friday, July 21.

The Lightner Double is a double that comes "out-of-the-blue" from the defender who is not on lead when a slam has been bid. It asks for an unusual lead, normally the first side suit bid by dummy.





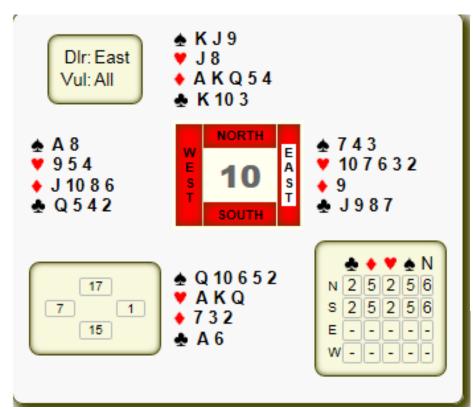
Picture yourself holding this bunch of cobblers where the bidding goes:

Pass, 1S, Pass, 2D, Pass, 3NT, Pass, 4C (Gerber), Pass, 4S, Pass, 6S, wake up! *Your bid?*

You decide to gamble on the fact that your partner has the A ◆ or a quick entry in trumps and can give you a diamond ruff. Supported by your impressive 1HCP, you double! Partner dutifully leads a diamond and then a second one when she gets in with the A ♠. You ruff and a seemingly rock solid contract goes down. Such are the vagaries of bridge.

Lightner Double contd

Here is the full set of hands. You will not be surprised that 6/7 declarers actually made 12 tricks in their spade contract. The declarer who made 11 tricks had a diamond lead but was only in 4S. No contracts were doubled. West of Pair 2 came closest to beating the contract by leading J ◆ , a natural lead from a broken sequence (if diamonds were not mentioned by North), but when West won the A ♠ , unfortunately, a diamond was not continued.



	Board No 10 Both Vul Dealer East										
Deal: Friday21Aug2017											
NS	EW	Bid	Ву	Ld	Tks	+Sc	-Sc	+	-		
1	6	6♠	S	∳ Α	12	1430		10	2		
2	1	4♠	S	♣ 5	12	680		4	8		
3	3	6♠	S	♣ 2	12	1430		10	2		
4	5	4♠	S	♥ 5	12	680		4	8		
5	7	4♠	S	♦ 6	11	650			12		
6	2	6♠	S	♦J	12	1430		10	2		
7	4	4♠	S	♣ 6	12	680		4	8		

Enjoy your defence. After all, you will be doing it twice as often as being declarer, and it is better than being dummy, isn't it? Happy Bridging.

