U3A Improvers Bridge

Lesson 14 Signals and Discards

It is sometimes possible to indicate to partner whether or not you like his lead and hence whether or not he should continue the suit.

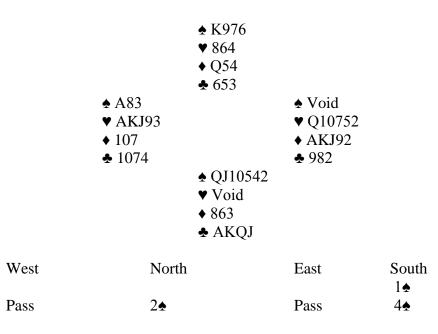
Against 3NT partner leads K ♠, you hold J 9 2. Knowing partner has the Q you want him to continue so you play an unnecessarily high card – here 9 ♠ - to ENCOURAGE, but if you held 9 6 2 you would play 2♠ to DISCOURAGE, perhaps saving partner from leading Q♠ into declarer's AJ.

Against 4♠ partner leads A♥, you hold J 9. You know partner has K so you play J then the 9, thinking you have Q partner will continue the suit but now you can trump the third round. With J 9 2 you would play 2

The rule therefore is: HIGH = LIKE; LOW = DON'T LIKE

You can also sometimes show partner what suit you would like him to switch to by applying the same rule to your discards.

East/West Vulnerable. Dealer South



West leads A♥, East encourages with 10 but South trumps and leads a spade, West wins A. What next, clearly a ♣ or a ♦, but which? When partner discards 9♦ on spade West knows he must lead a ♦. If East held ♦AKJ32 (i.e. no high card to encourage) he would play ♣2 to discourage a ♣ and hence again point to a ♦ lead.