

# Defensive Plays & Some Defence Signaling

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### **When does defending Start?**

Sometime during the bidding (most of the time in fourth seat)

You can bid an interfering bid as a lead indicator  
if you believe partner will be on opening lead

### **Opening Leads**

Refer to Peter Goddards notes

Also remember,

if bidding is 1NT-3NT or 1NT-2C-2D-3NT; Lead a Major  
and **DON'T** lead a singleton trump (gives away information to declarer)

**Unless** declarer has shown a 2 suited hand, i.e 1S-2H-3D-4S  
cuts down on ruffing ability (but better if you have 2 or 3 trumps)

### **Defense Signals**

Attitude (Ace) & Count (King)

Ace lead. Do you like this suit? High spot card YES, Low spot card No

King lead. How many cards to you hold? High spot even, low spot odd  
(if 4, play 2nd highest)

the 'Peter' (UK) or 'Echo' (USA)

on declarers' lead, high/low shows doubleton

low/high shows three or more

McKenney discards (also known as Lavinihal discards) 1st discard

NOT trump suit or suit being played

High spot means higher suit, low spot means lower suit

High/low (or Simple Simon)

Low first discard, partner lead back suit

High discard, Don't lead suit

(some people play this in reverse)

### **Active or Passive defense**

Changing suits (passive) most likely gives declarer a cheap trick, attack the same suit forcing declarer to ruff and then they have to open their weak suit, not you

### **Should you cover an honour (on first play)**

my opinion, only if you are able to promote one of your lower cards i.e. you hold KJxx over their Q, or KT9x

### **The rule of Eleven**

Is good for defenders (as well as declarer)  
deduct the spot card lead from eleven, that is how many higher cards are spread between the hands.  
Count how many in dummy, in your hand, the balance is shared between your partner and declarer

### **Unblocking Honours**

if you have a doubleton in partner's lead suit  
Play the honour, even if it's your K over their Q

### **Destroying declarer's communications**

Hold up your winners 1st time suit played,  
declarer is hoping you play high early, so they can get back to run their length

### **Dislodging an entry**

if declarer has only one (or 2) entries to dummy,  
play a high card to dislodge it early, blocking declarer to get to dummy and run winners

### **Cashing your tricks**

take your tricks where you can BUT be aware of promoting declarer's cards in that suit

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### **Defending Deceptively**

when defending and have QJxx, play the Q first declarer will think that the J is with your partner

### **Maintain communications with partner**

keep as least 1 (or 2) of partners' suit to lead back but be aware of non played suits, they might be declarers weakness

### **Familiarity with Opponents' Systems**

By understanding their system you can defend far better (so ask before the first lead)  
Not understanding gives them an edge

### **Accurate Counting**

Get into the habit of remembering played cards

### **Intelligent Leads (a treble ordeal)**

choosing the right suit, the right card, at the right time bidding and previous cards played OR not played directs your choice

### **Killing Dummy'**

removing declarers entries into dummy early

**Problem No 1**

Bidding, North 1NT, South 4H  
Opening lead JS

North S KQ32

H J96

D T5

C AKQ8

A hand played at an  
International match  
between France and Belgium

East S T9873

H A8

D A83

C J92

Declarer wins in their hand with the AS, then plays  
3 winning C's, dumping singleton C and Jx D's  
from their hand

Declarer leads a xH from dummy, what do you do?

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**Solution to Problem No 1**

Bidding, North 1NT, South 4H

Opening lead JS

North S KQ32	
H J96	
D T5	
C AKQ8	
West S J	East S T9873
H K5	H A8
D Q7642	D A83
C T7543	C J92
South S A64	
H QT7432	
D KJ7	
C 6	

JS must be a singleton, with you having the TS

East needs to duck the first H lead and West wins KH,

West **has** to play a D back to East AD, then East plays a S for the ruff.

Giving 3 tricks E/W, with the potential to pick up a side suit trick

How it played out, both Easts put the AH up and lead a S back, with West playing the KH and the AD, only 3 tricks could be made by E/W, giving declarer 10 tricks and the contract.

**Problem No 2**

Bidding: E pass, S pass, W pass, N 1D  
E 1S, S 2H, W 2S, all pass

Opening lead QD

North S A964

H A93

D AT82

C 83

West S Q52

H J7

D J62

C A9764

QD lead played through to KD East  
East plays 2 S's lead,  
N ducking once, winning 2nd trump  
What do you lead now?

**Solution to Problem No 2**

Bidding; E pass, S pass, W pass, N 1D

E 1S, S 2H, W 2S, all pass

Opening lead QD

North S A964	
H A93	
D AT82	
C 83	
West S Q52	East S KJ87
H J7	H Q86
D J62	D K43
C A9764	C QT5
South S T3	
H KT542	
D Q97	
C KJ2	

QD lead played through to KD East

East plays 2 S's lead, N ducking once, winning 2nd trump

AD was played next (promoting W's JD)

Then AH followed by a xH

But if the AH was played first, then the xH, South would lead back a xD to N's TD, (if JD is not put up), then the other D, forcing declarer to ruff, reducing E's S holding

But it didn't happen, allowing E to get into W's hand and playing the JD, dumping a loser from E's hand

The contract went off by 2, but it should have been 3



**Problem No 3**

Bidding: S 1H, W pass, N 2C, E 2D

S 4H, All pass

Opening lead TD

North S 82

H 74

D 843

C KQJ752

East S KJ2

H 93

D AKQ95

C A65

W's TD won by E, and plays KD, S playing the JD

What now?

**Solution to Problem No 3**

Bidding: S 1H, W pass, N 2C, E 2D

S 4H, All pass

Opening lead TD

North S 82	
H 74	
D 843	
C KQJ752	
West S Q9654	East S KJ3
H T82	H 93
D T62	D AKQ95
C T8	C A64
South S AT7	
H AKQJ65	
D J7	
C 93	

Here, you have to play another D, even knowing declarer will ruff.

Declarer plays 2 rounds of trumps, then 9C

What do you do? **Duck the lead** twice

You have 3 C's, six in dummy, partner played the TC

either a singleton or top of a doubleton

declarer has two or three

You have to hold up the AC till declarer shows out

breaking communication with dummy and unable

to run dummies C's

Contract down 1

(if AC played on first lead, they get an overtrick)

**Problem No 4**

Bidding: N 2D, E pass, S 3H, W pass  
N 4H, all pass

Opening lead TS

North S 95

H KT4

D KQJ964

C 82

West S JT643

H 32

D A32

C KJ7

TS lead, won by AS in south

two rounds of trumps by declarer, then a xS  
to E's KS,

E plays the AC then the QC, that now?

Here you over take and play the KC, then the JC  
declarer following

E/W have 3 tricks, what in the world now?

### Solution to Problem No 4

Bidding; N 2D, E pass, S 3H, W pass

N 4H, all pass

Opening lead TS

North S 95

H KT8

D KQJ964

C 82

West S JT64

H 43

D A32

C KJ75

East S KQ8

H 92

D T875

C AQT4

South S A732

H AQJ765

D void

C 986

TS lead, won by AS in south

two rounds of trumps by declarer, then a xS  
to E's KS,

E plays the AC then the QC, that now?

Here you over take and play the KC, then the JC  
declarer following, but ruffing in dummy

E/W have 3 tricks and declarer is stuck

A singleton H and all those D's in dummy

Declarer will have to run the gauntlet and play  
the KD letting it run, dumping a loser on it  
hoping E has the AD, but alas, one off

**It's important, when W gets the lead NOT to lead the AD**

if they do, declarer will ruff, get into dummy and run the D's

# Problem No 5

bidding; E 1H, S 2D, W 3H, N pass

E 4H, all pass

opening lead 7S

North S A632

H 643

D 84

C AT72

West S T84

H K975

D 43

C KQT3

N won AS, now what to play?

Why didn't S lead a D?

### Solution to Problem No 5

bidding; E 1H, S 2D, W 3H, N pass

E 4H, all pass

opening lead 7S

North S A632

H 843

D 852

C A72

West S T84

H K975

D 43

C KQ93

East S KJ5

H AQJT6

D KJ

C JT5

South S Q97

H 2

D AQT976

C 864

N won AS, now what to play?

Why didn't S lead a D?

Simple South does not have either the AK or KQ  
most likely they have the AQ

Does North now lead a D, NO, they must play the AC  
in case declarer has a singleton, then the \*8D  
showing top of nothing

South's AD goes on the KD or the QD on the JD  
declarer down 1

MOST players lead the AD and the contract makes