

§59. Opening Leads against No-trumps.

Notes on the basic principles to be taught in this section.

- This chapter is all about the principles of opening leads against No-trumps. The basic rule is to lead the tops of sequences and near-sequences, fourth-highest from suits with honours, the second-highest from rubbishy suits.
- Some work on opening leads against No-trumps has been done in §26. This just pushes it a little further
- The Auction Slips have the opening lead in the bottom right-hand corner. Teachers may wish to cut this off, allowing players to make their own opening leads and play accordingly, or they may wish to conceal this by folding, getting players to consider an opening lead before checking the slip to see what it should have been.

Three hands need setting up. Two are full deals (Hands 1 and 2), one is a collection of suits to examine for opening lead purposes.

Hands 1a & 1b are simple deals where North plays in 3NT. Hand 1a is Hand 1 in the student notes, rotated 90°. Hand 1b is Hand 1a with East-West swapping the ♠Q with the ♠6.

This deal illustrates the “race” principle (again). Looking only at the North-South cards, it appears that 3NT is secure with one Spade, three Hearts, four Diamonds and two Clubs. That’s an overtrick. However, a Spade lead from East defeats it as the defenders establish four Spades and a Diamond before declarer can get going.

Note that applying the hold-up on a Spade lead makes no odds (although it’s the right play) as the ♦A lies in the hand with the long Spades.

Note also that East leads the ♠5 (the fourth-highest) The rationale for this has not yet been discussed. §62 explains the *Rule of Eleven*.

Hand 1b is a simple illustration of why you don’t lead fourth-highest when your suit is headed by a three-card run. Get students to effect the change *in situ*. The ♠K lead beats 3NT, a low Spade would allow declarer a cheap trick with dummy’s ♠8.

Hand 2 is a deal where East plays in 3NT. It is Hand 2 in the student notes.

This deal illustrates just why we lead second-highest from tripe. East plays 3NT after 1NT – 3NT and South may as well lead a Spade. However, the ♠4 may confuse North, who may win the ♠A and return the suit, playing for South to hold ♠K 9 x x x and a red-suit Ace.

By leading the ♠7, South is showing no interest in the suit. North can read this (it’s interesting to discuss just how as the Rule of Eleven is unknown territory as yet, but it is possible). With Spades a dry well, North may as well switch to the ♣Q, with gratifying results.

“Hand” 3 is a collection of discrete suits that form Examples 1-13 in the student notes.

The purpose of this collection is simply to discuss what card to lead at trick one from which holding, so that each suit can be examined in turn.

Spades form Examples 1-3 in the student notes;

Hearts form Examples 4-6 in the student notes;

Diamonds form Examples 7-9 in the student notes;

Clubs form Examples 10-13 in the student notes.

Example 14 in the student notes is not part of this deal.

Examples 15-26 do not appear in prepared hands; discussion on these has to be done from the student notes.

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|---|---|---------|---|---|---|---------|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Hand 1a</p> <p>North plays in 3NT; ♠5 lead.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ A 7 3 ♥ Q J 3 ♦ K 3 ♣ K 8 7 5 2</p> <p>♠ Q 4 ♥ 9 6 5 4 2 ♦ 7 4 ♣ Q J 9 4</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ K J 6 5 2 ♥ 10 8 ♦ A 8 6 2 ♣ 6 3</p> <p>♠ 10 9 8 ♥ A K 7 ♦ Q J 10 9 5 ♣ A 10</p> </div> </div> | N | W E | S | <p style="text-align: center;">Hand 1b</p> <p>North plays in 3NT; ♠K lead.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ A 7 3 ♥ Q J 3 ♦ K 3 ♣ K 8 7 5 2</p> <p>♠ 6 4 ♥ 9 6 5 4 2 ♦ 7 4 ♣ Q J 9 4</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ K Q J 5 2 ♥ 10 8 ♦ A 8 6 2 ♣ 6 3</p> <p>♠ 10 9 8 ♥ A K 7 ♦ Q J 10 9 5 ♣ A 10</p> </div> </div> | N | W E | S |
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| <p style="text-align: center;">Hand 2</p> <p>East plays in 3NT; ♠7 lead.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ A 8 6 ♥ 7 4 3 ♦ 8 6 ♣ Q J 10 9 4</p> <p>♠ Q J 10 ♥ K Q 8 ♦ K Q 10 4 ♣ 7 6 5</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ K 3 2 ♥ A 10 9 5 ♦ A 9 5 2 ♣ K 3</p> <p>♠ 9 7 5 4 ♥ J 6 2 ♦ J 7 3 ♣ A 8 2</p> </div> </div> | N | W E | S | <p style="text-align: center;">“Hand” 3</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ Q J 10 6 ♥ J 10 8 ♦ 9 8 7 6 ♣ 8 6</p> <p>♠ 9 7 5 3 ♥ None ♦ A J 5 4 2 ♣ 10 7 4 2</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>♠ A K 8 4 2 ♥ K 7 5 4 ♦ None ♣ A K J 5</p> <p>♠ None ♥ A Q 9 6 3 2 ♦ K Q 10 3 ♣ Q 9 3</p> </div> </div> | N | W E | S |
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§59. Example hands 1 to 4.

Hand 1 Love all, dealer North

♠ A J 10 6
♥ A 4 2
♦ Q J 9
♣ J 8 6

♠ 9 7 4 2
♥ Q J 10 8
♦ 4 3
♣ A 5 2

| | |
|---|---|
| N | |
| W | E |
| | S |

♠ 8 5
♥ 7 5 3
♦ A K 7 6 2
♣ 9 7 3

♠ K Q 3
♥ K 9 6
♦ 10 8 5
♣ K Q 10 4

| | | | |
|--------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 3NT |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |
| 3NT by North | | Opening lead: ♦6 | |

We start with a simple deal. North-South reach an excellent 3NT contract, but the gods of bridge are unkind on the actual layout. East selects the fourth-highest-of-his-longest and-strongest” (to wit, the ♦6) to lead, resisting the temptation to lead a Diamond honour. North wins the first trick cheaply with the ♦9 but his joy is short-lived. He must knock out the ♣A to set up some Club tricks. West, on gaining the lead, leads a Diamond back (it being normal to “return partner’s suit”). East now has four Diamond tricks to cash and 3NT is defeated. Note that North might cash four Spade tricks before attacking Clubs. East must, of course, hold on to his long Diamonds and not discard any; he has other rubbish to chuck.

Hand 2 North-South game, dealer East

♠ 5 2
♥ Q 5 4
♦ A 9 4 2
♣ 9 7 5 2

♠ 10 9 6
♥ 8 6 3
♦ K Q 7
♣ A K J 3

| | |
|---|---|
| N | |
| W | E |
| | S |

♠ A J 8 3
♥ A K 2
♦ 10 8 6
♣ Q 10 4

♠ K Q 7 4
♥ J 10 9 7
♦ J 5 3
♣ 8 6

| | | | |
|-------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 3NT | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 3NT by East | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 3NT by East | | Opening lead: ♥J | |

East-West bid rapidly to 3NT and appear to have plenty of values. What do you lead as South? Your best suit is Spades, but they are broken; best is to lead a sequence if you have been dealt one. A low Spade lead makes East’s task a simple one, a Heart lead makes declarer’s task much more difficult. East can see two Hearts and four Clubs “on top”, so has to do something with the Spades and knock out the ♦A. However, he is behind in the race. By the time he sets up a couple of Spade winners (by taking two unsuccessful finesses) the defenders can set up two Spades, two Hearts and the ♦A for five winners. It is an unlucky hand for East-West in that both Spade honours are offside.

Hand 3 East-West game, dealer South

♠ A 8 3
♥ K 6 4
♦ A J 6 2
♣ J 7 2

♠ Q 10 7 6
♥ J 9
♦ 10 8 5
♣ A 10 4 3

| | |
|---|---|
| N | |
| W | E |
| | S |

♠ J 9 5 2
♥ Q 8 7 3 2
♦ K Q 4
♣ 8

♠ K 4
♥ A 10 5
♦ 9 7 3
♣ K Q 9 6 5

| | | | |
|--------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | 1NT |
| 3NT by South | | Opening lead: ♠6 | |

North-South reach 3NT after an unrevealing bidding sequence and West has to lead. Some might lead a Club as it’s West’s best suit but that’s poor tactics for a number of reasons. One is that Clubs could easily be declarer’s (or dummy’s) long suit – as is the case here – another is that it best to lead from a Queen or a King and keep a side-suit Ace back as an entry. Also, it is generally better tactics to lead a major-suit rather than a minor-suit. Here, a low Club lead hands the contract to South on a silver platter as declarer would set up Clubs to make two Spades, two Hearts, one Diamond and four Clubs. After a Spade lead, the unfortunate 4-1 Club break means that South can’t quite come to the requisite nine tricks.

Hand 4 Game all, dealer West

♠ J 9 5
♥ 9 7 5 4
♦ A 10 4
♣ J 8 4

♠ A 8 7 2
♥ K 3 2
♦ Q 8 6
♣ A 7 5

| | |
|---|---|
| N | |
| W | E |
| | S |

♠ K Q 4
♥ Q J 10
♦ 9 5
♣ K Q 10 9 2

♠ 10 6 3
♥ A 8 6
♦ K J 7 3 2
♣ 6 3

| | | | |
|-------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |
| 3NT by West | | Opening lead: ♥7 | |

This deal illustrates the principle that you should lead the second-highest card from a suit in which you have no interest. Against 3NT, North has to lead something, so tries his longest suit. In order not to get his partner flogging a dead horse, and playing Hearts at every opportunity, North leads the ♥7 to say that his suit is a poor one and that South should only continue with it if it suits him. Here, South can recognise that the ♥7 cannot be fourth highest (there aren’t three Hearts higher than the ♥7 that North can hold) so he wins the ♥A and, abandoning the suit as a lost cause, and switches to something more promising. That would be a low Diamond, and North-South can take the next five tricks for two down.

§59. Example hands 5 to 8.

Hand 5 North-South game, dealer North

♠ K Q 10 6
♥ A K J 9
♦ K 4 2
♣ 9 4

| | | |
|-----------|---|--------------|
| ♠ 8 7 3 | N | ♠ A J 9 |
| ♥ 8 6 | W | ♥ Q 10 5 3 2 |
| ♦ Q J 7 6 | E | ♦ 10 9 8 |
| ♣ K J 7 5 | S | ♣ 6 3 |

♠ 5 4 2
♥ 7 4
♦ A 5 3
♣ A Q 10 8 2

| | | | |
|--------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | 1♥ | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3NT |
| 3NT by North | | Opening lead: ♦10 | |

North-South reach 3NT after North has opened 1♥. Had the bidding been 1NT – 3NT East would have fished out a low Heart as the opening lead without much thought – after a 1♥ opening bid that strategy proves nugatory. With Hearts out of the reckoning, East should go passive and lead a Diamond, more to avoid opening up anything than to set up tricks. As it happens, a Diamond lead is a killer. The cards lie horribly for North and an attack on Diamonds wrecks the entries to dummy. After the ♦10 lead to North's ♦K and a losing Club finesse, a further Diamond lead from West, removing the ♦A, isolates the Club suit and leaves 3NT in tatters. A Heart lead, though, into the ♥A K J would allow the contract through.

Hand 6 East-West game, dealer East

♠ 10 9 6 2
♥ Q 6 2
♦ J 10 9 7 4
♣ 7

| | | |
|-----------|---|--------------|
| ♠ Q 7 4 | N | ♠ A K 8 |
| ♥ K J 8 | W | ♥ 4 3 |
| ♦ Q 8 6 2 | E | ♦ A K 5 |
| ♣ 9 6 5 | S | ♣ K Q 10 8 3 |

♠ J 5 3
♥ A 10 9 7 6
♦ 3
♣ A J 4 2

| | | | |
|-------------|-------|------------------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 1NT | Pass | 1♣ | 1♥ |
| 3NT by West | Pass | 3NT | All Pass |
| 3NT by West | | Opening lead: ♥2 | |

West plays in game after East's 1♣ opening bid has been overcalled by 1♥. North should lead a Heart against 3NT, of course, as it is normal practice to lead partner's suit. Which card, though? Long ago (at the time when dinosaurs roamed the Earth) it was fashionable to lead "top of partner's suit". The reason why that was abandoned should become apparent on this deal – should North lead the ♥Q, West would have two Heart tricks and nine in all (three Spades, two Hearts, three Diamonds and one Club). After a low Heart lead to the ♥A and a Heart return, 3NT has no price. Even if West should play the ♥K at trick two and block the suit, he still doesn't have nine tricks; East-West can set up enough winners to beat him.

Hand 7 Game all, dealer South

♠ 5 4 2
♥ 9 5 2
♦ K 10 3
♣ Q 9 6 4

| | | |
|------------|---|-------------|
| ♠ 10 9 | N | ♠ Q J 8 7 3 |
| ♥ 8 7 4 3 | W | ♥ A 6 |
| ♦ J 8 4 | E | ♦ Q 7 5 2 |
| ♣ 10 7 5 3 | S | ♣ A 2 |

♠ A K 6
♥ K Q J 10
♦ A 9 6
♣ K J 8

| | | | |
|--------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | 2NT |
| 3NT by South | | Opening lead: ♠10 | |

West's prospects of taking any tricks against 3NT with that heap of junk look bleak – if his side is to defeat the contract then it has to be East that does the damage. After all, West's contribution to the defence is likely to be minimal with a solitary Jack. In cases like this it is a waste of time leading your own "suit" – life is too short for West to expect to develop his feeble Clubs (or Hearts). Best in these cases is to play for your partner's hand – a phrase that means lead the suit you suspect partner may have length and strength in. Here, the short-suit lead of the ♠10 scores a goal as East can develop the Spade suit and gain the lead with his two Aces as South attempts to set up some tricks in Hearts and Clubs.

Hand 8 Love all, dealer West

♠ 8 2
♥ K 5 4
♦ 10 9 7 6 4 2
♣ J 5

| | | |
|-----------|---|--------------|
| ♠ 7 6 3 | N | ♠ K 10 9 |
| ♥ A Q 6 2 | W | ♥ 9 3 |
| ♦ Q 8 5 | E | ♦ A K J |
| ♣ K 8 2 | S | ♣ A 10 9 7 4 |

♠ A Q J 5 4
♥ J 10 8 7
♦ 3
♣ Q 6 3

| | | | |
|-------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | Pass | 1♣ | 1♠ |
| Dble | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 3NT by East | | Opening lead: ♠Q | |

East plays in 3NT after South sticks in a 1♠ overcall. South should lead a Spade, but which card? The fourth-highest Spade would be disastrous. East would win the ♠9 and could keep North off lead by crossing to dummy with the ♦Q and playing a Club to the ♠9. South could take the ♣Q but that would be that – East would take the ♥A on a Heart switch and cash enough winners for his contract (one Spade, one Heart, three Diamonds and four Clubs). The right lead is the ♠Q. If East takes that, he doesn't have enough winners – if he ducks a Club, a Spade return sees him down. If he ducks the ♠Q, the ♥J switch at trick two is fatal. Play it through and see.

§59. Opening Leads against No-trumps.

By the end of this chapter you should understand the following terms:

Fourth-highest leads: The “rule” that says you lead the fourth-highest card from a broken suit against No-trump contracts.

Second-highest leads: When choosing to lead from a poor suit, lead the second-highest card.

Robson’s Rule: “Lead Low for Like and High for Hate”. Summarises the above two rules.

The basic, time-honoured principle is to lead your longest suit against No-trumps. Hand 1 shows why:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------|-------------|-------------|
| Hand 1. | | ♠ Q 4 | |
| East plays in 3NT. | | ♥ 9 6 5 4 2 | |
| South leads the ♠5. | | ♦ 7 4 | |
| | | ♣ Q J 9 4 | |
| ♠ 10 9 8 | Dummy | N | Declarer |
| ♥ A K 7 | | | |
| ♦ Q J 10 9 5 | S | | ♥ Q J 3 |
| ♣ A 10 | | | ♦ K 3 |
| | | | ♣ K 8 7 5 2 |
| | | | ♠ K J 6 5 2 |
| | | | ♥ 10 8 |
| | | | ♦ A 8 6 2 |
| | | | ♣ 6 3 |

From declarer’s perspective in 3NT, there are three Heart tricks, a Spade trick, four Diamond tricks and two Club tricks. This adds up to ten tricks. What could go wrong?

In actual fact, 3NT is doomed to defeat. Declarer’s plan is to knock out the ♦A as soon as possible to set up four tricks in his partnership’s longest and strongest suit. However, what’s sauce for the goose....

South leads a Spade (the ♠5 for choice, as the general rule is to lead *fourth-highest-of-your-longest-and-strongest*) and North-South get their suit going before East-West get their Diamonds established. As we have noted on many occasions...

Many No-trump contracts are races between declarer and the defence, each side trying to set up a long suit.

Essentially, North-South win the race here because they get to go first.

An exception to the “rule” about leading the fourth-highest-of-your-longest-and-strongest comes when the suit you choose to lead is a poor one. (A poor suit is defined as one without any honour cards in it). Another exception, of course, is when your suit is headed by a three-card honour sequence when you would lead the top card. (The King from K Q J, and so forth).

Sometimes, that’s all you get dealt, sometimes your best suit is bid by the opponents (and hence makes a poor choice of opening lead). To tell partner that you have a feeble suit, you should abandon the *fourth-highest* rule and, instead, lead your *second-highest* card. So, as an example, from a suit such as ♥8 6 5 3 you should lead the ♥6 and not the ♥3.

Let’s look at an example deal with East playing in 3NT after the uninformative bidding of 1NT – 3NT:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------|--------------|------------|
| Hand 2. | | ♠ A 8 6 | |
| East plays in 3NT. | | ♥ 7 4 3 | |
| South leads the ♠7. | | ♦ 8 6 | |
| | | ♣ Q J 10 9 4 | |
| ♠ Q J 10 | Dummy | N | Declarer |
| ♥ K Q 8 | | | |
| ♦ K Q 10 4 | S | | ♥ A 10 9 5 |
| ♣ 7 6 5 | | | ♦ A 9 5 2 |
| | | | ♣ K 3 |
| | | | ♠ 9 7 5 4 |
| | | | ♥ J 6 2 |
| | | | ♦ J 7 3 |
| | | | ♣ A 8 2 |

South has an uninspiring hand to lead from but has to lead *something*. If he were to lead the ♠4 then North might well win that with the ♠A and return a Spade, hoping to set the suit up. (South could well have, say, ♠K 9 7 4 3 and a red Ace when that would be the killing defence). On this layout, though, a Spade continuation at trick two would give declarer a cakewalk for his contract.

If South were to lead the ♠7 (second-highest from a poor suit) then North has an easy time. Knowing that South has poor Spades (the sight of his own hand and the dummy makes it clear to North that the ♠7 cannot be the fourth-highest – can you see **why?**), North can grab the ♠A at trick one and switch to the ♣Q, crushing declarer's ♣K. Two down.

What is the general principle here?

One of the ways defenders co-operate in defeating No-trump contracts is to keep playing their suit to set it up. Sometimes, however, the opening lead has not hit the right spot and switching suits is the right defensive play. One way that this might become obvious to one of the defenders is with the choice of card led by partner. If you can recognise that your partner has led neither an honour card nor a fourth-highest card, then he is telling you that he isn't too fussed about you returning his suit.

The method that we adopt to clarify our intentions on opening lead is that we tend to lead low cards (actually fourth-highest) from suits that we want partner to play back to us and high(ish) cards from poor suits that we are indifferent to. One way of remembering this is *Robson's Rule*:

"Lead Low for Like and High for Hate"

The table below gives some examples of leads against No-trumps.

| | | |
|--------|--------------------------|--|
| Ex 1. | ♠ <u>Q</u> J 10 6 | Lead the ♠Q. This is the top-of-a-sequence; an easy, safe and desirable lead. |
| Ex 2. | ♠ A K 8 <u>4</u> 2 | Lead the ♠4. This counts as a broken suit, so you should lead the fourth-highest card. |
| Ex 3. | ♠ 9 <u>7</u> 5 3 | Lead the ♠7. This is a poor suit, so lead the second-highest card to tell partner you have nothing here. |
| Ex 4. | ♥ A Q 9 <u>6</u> 3 2 | Lead the ♥6. This is a broken suit, so lead the fourth-highest card. |
| Ex 5. | ♥ K 7 5 <u>4</u> | Lead the ♥4. From such a weak suit lead the fourth-highest card. |
| Ex 6. | ♥ <u>J</u> 10 8 | Lead the ♥J. Leading from a three-card suit is not that common, but it happens often enough. This combination counts as a sequence, so lead the top card. |
| Ex 7. | ♦ A J 5 <u>4</u> 2 | Lead the ♦4. This counts as a broken suit, so you should lead the fourth-highest card. |
| Ex 8. | ♦ <u>K</u> Q 10 3 | Lead the ♦K. From near sequences (K Q 10, Q J 9 and so on) lead the top card. |
| Ex 9. | ♦ 9 <u>8</u> 7 6 | Lead the ♦8. Yes, this is a sequence, but it is also a poor suit. Best to lead the ♦8 to tell partner you are being obliged to lead second-highest from muck. |
| Ex 10. | ♣ <u>A</u> K J 5 | Lead the ♣A. From the A K J it is best to start off with a high card, just to look at the dummy. If declarer has ♣Q x x you may be able to switch and pick up the ♣Q later. |
| Ex 11. | ♣ 10 <u>7</u> 4 <u>2</u> | Lead the ♣2 or the ♣7 according to taste. Is the Ten an honour card? Some think so and would lead the ♣2. Some think not and would lead the ♣7. A matter of <i>style</i> . |
| Ex 12. | ♣ Q 9 <u>3</u> | Lead the ♣3. Once again, leading a three-card suit is unusual, but it does happen. If you feel like leading this suit you should choose the lowest card. |
| Ex 13. | ♣ <u>8</u> 6 | Lead the ♣8. Why lead a doubleton? Well, there may be tactical reasons (perhaps partner has bid Clubs). Whenever you lead a doubleton, lead the higher card. |
| Ex 14. | ♠ A <u>J</u> 10 8 5 | Lead the ♠J. This is from an <i>interior sequence</i> . Partner will know you don't have the ♠Q, but he won't know whether you have the ♠K or the ♠A until later in the piece. |

Exceptions to the general rule.

Having now established a general rule that you should lead your longest and strongest suits against 3NT there are many occasions where you might break that rule.

These include situations where the bidding has told you to do otherwise (partner may have bid a suit, for example) as well as cases where there may be a choice between two equal length suits. These are best shown by example.

Section 1.

The bidding has proceeded 1NT – 3NT by the opponents.

What do you (South) lead from the following?

| <p>Ex 15.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ K J 9 5 ♥ Q J 10 8 ♦ 7 6 3 ♣ 9 3</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">3NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♥Q. Although Spades is your strongest suit on this hand it is usually better to lead from a sequence, if you are lucky enough to have been dealt one. A Heart lead from such a sequence cannot open up a frozen suit; a Spade lead might. The ♠5 isn't a bad mistake but it might lose a <i>tempo</i>.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | <p>Ex 16.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ Q 10 7 6 ♥ J 9 ♦ 10 8 5 ♣ A 9 4 3</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">3NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♠6. You might consider the ♣3 instead – it wouldn't be a bad error. However, it is often better to lead suits headed by Queens or Kings than by Aces. With a bit of luck, North will have something useful in Spades, the suit will become set up and the ♣A will be an <i>entry</i> to your hand to cash the Spades.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |
|--|-------|---------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|--|--|-----|------|-----|------|------|------|---|---|---------|---|------|-------|------|-------|--|--|-----|------|-----|------|------|------|
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Ex 17.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ J 8 5 ♥ 10 9 8 7 ♦ J 5 ♣ Q 6 3 2</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">3NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♥10. It is usually right to lead from a sequence when you have been dealt one. Such a lead is both <i>passive</i> and <i>attacking</i>. Also, your Clubs are so feeble it would take a miracle to set them up, let alone get back on lead to cash them. Anyway, it is better to lead majors than minors against 1NT – 3NT.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | <p>Ex 18.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ 9 7 2 ♥ 7 5 ♦ 9 6 3 ♣ 9 8 7 6 2</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">3NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♠7. Leading Clubs is a waste of time. Even if you set them up you won't get on lead to cash them. Best is to <i>play for partner's hand</i> and hope he has a long suit of his own. In doubt, lead Spades... This hoary piece of advice is based on the fact that opponents frequently bid Spades if they have them.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Ex 19.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ 10 9 8 ♥ 10 7 2 ♦ J 8 6 2 ♣ Q 7 3</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">3NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♠10. Little point in leading the ♦2 (or a Heart or a Club); you are not taking many tricks with this junk. By leading a Spade, you may, though, set up tricks in North's hand, and that is your only hope of beating 3NT. When in doubt, lead a Spade. It may not be the wisdom of Solomon, but it is a straw in the wind.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | <p>Ex 20.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ 4 3 2 ♥ 9 8 6 ♦ Q 10 3 ♣ 10 8 6 2</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">3NT</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td><td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♥8. Again, leading Clubs is just a waste of time. You could lead a Spade, but the problem is that the ♠3 lead will confuse North – he is sure to think that the Spade is a fourth-highest lead and will continue the suit whether that's the right defence or not. Better to lead the ♥8 so partner knows you have rubbish.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Section 2.

In this section the bidding plays an important part in telling you what to lead (or what **not** to lead).

Again, you are South on lead to 3NT. What do you select, having studied the auction?

| <p>Ex 21.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ 10 3 ♥ J 9 7 6 ♦ 8 4 ♣ Q J 10 9 7</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1♦</td><td>1♠</td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♠10. It may look normal to lead the ♣Q but it is clearly written in the good book, "<i>Thou shalt always lead thy partner's suit</i>". North has stuck his neck out by overcalling 1♠, perhaps on a good suit and little else purely to attract the lead. Don't let him down! With a doubleton Spade lead the higher card.</p> | N | | | E | W | | | | | S | | | West | North | East | South | 1♦ | 1♠ | 1NT | Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | <p>Ex 22.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ J 10 ♥ Q 9 6 3 ♦ 10 9 8 7 6 ♣ 8 5</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1♠</td><td>2♣</td><td>2♥</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>2♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♠8. A similar idea to Example 21. Without partner's guiding light of a bid you would probably have led a Diamond, but you cannot ignore an overcall, especially one at the two-level. In civilised circles, such a bid shows a decent, usually six-card, suit. Again, holding a doubleton, lead the higher card.</p> | N | | | E | W | | | | | S | | | West | North | East | South | 1♠ | 2♣ | 2♥ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |
|---|-------|------|-------|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|------|-------|------|-------|----|----|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|------|------|--|--|--|---|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|------|-------|------|-------|----|----|----|------|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|------|------|
| N | | | E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1♠ | 2♣ | 2♥ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| <p>Ex 23.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ 10 9 6 2 ♥ 7 ♦ J 10 9 7 4 ♣ Q 5 3</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1♠</td><td>2♣</td><td>2♥</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>2♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♣3. You must lead your partner's suit, especially when you have a back-up card like a Queen. Some players have been told to lead "the highest of partner's suit" and would select the ♣Q. This is quite wrong. From three (or four) cards headed by an honour you should lead your lowest card.</p> | N | | | E | W | | | | | S | | | West | North | East | South | 1♠ | 2♣ | 2♥ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | <p>Ex 24.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ A J 9 ♥ Q 10 5 3 2 ♦ 10 9 8 ♣ 6 3</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♥</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>2♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♦10. Under normal circumstances you would lead a Heart against 3NT. However, on this occasion declarer has bid them. It is generally losing strategy to lead the opponents' suits as you won't be able to set the small cards up. Best here is to find a <i>passive</i> lead, and the ♦10 fits the bill nicely.</p> | N | | | E | W | | | | | S | | | West | North | East | South | | | 1♥ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |
|---|-------|------|-------|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|------|-------|------|-------|----|----|----|------|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|------|------|---|---|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|------|-------|------|-------|--|--|----|------|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|------|------|
| N | | | E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1♠ | 2♣ | 2♥ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1♥ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| <p>Ex 25.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ J 9 7 4 ♥ 8 6 4 ♦ K 9 ♣ A 10 5 3</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♥6. The opposition have bid both of your suits. As in Example 24, there is little point in leading the suits the opponents have bid, so a black card on this hand is a no-no. Best is to find a <i>passive lead</i> and on this hand that means leading a Heart. The ♥6 (second-highest from rubbish) is best here.</p> | N | | | E | W | | | | | S | | | West | North | East | South | | | 1♣ | Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | | <p>Ex 26.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ K 10 8 4 ♥ J 10 ♦ K 9 7 6 ♣ Q 6 4</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♦</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♣</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>2♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Lead the ♥J. The hand on your left (dummy) has a lot of Spades and East (declarer) has bid Diamonds and Clubs. Best here is to lead the <i>unbid</i> suit – Hearts in this case. Perhaps partner has the suit well held, perhaps this is just a good passive lead. Diamonds and Clubs are real no-nos.</p> | N | | | E | W | | | | | S | | | West | North | East | South | | | 1♦ | Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |
|--|-------|------|-------|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|------|-------|------|-------|--|--|----|------|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|------|--|---|---|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|------|-------|------|-------|--|--|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|------|------|
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| | | 1♣ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1♠ | Pass | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1♦ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1♠ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

§59. Quiz on Opening Leads Against No-trumps.

In each case you are **South**, on opening lead against a No-trump contract by East.

After studying the auction decide which card you would select to lead.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| <p>Q1.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td> </td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>S</td><td> </td></tr> </table> <p>♠ Q 10 9 8 ♥ Q 7 6 4 ♦ J 9 7 ♣ K 3</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | <p>Q2.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td> </td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>S</td><td> </td></tr> </table> <p>♠ 6 5 3 ♥ 4 2 ♦ A Q J 8 4 ♣ 8 7 3</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |
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| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 1♦ | 1♥ | 2♣ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♦ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| <p>Q9.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td> </td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>S</td><td> </td></tr> </table> <p>♠ 8 7 4 ♥ J 7 6 5 ♦ A J 6 2 ♣ J 9</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>4NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>6NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | West | North | East | South | | | 2NT | Pass | 4NT | Pass | 6NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | <p>Q10*.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td> </td><td>N</td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td> </td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>S</td><td> </td></tr> </table> <p>♠ A 10 ♥ Q 9 5 3 ♦ 9 8 4 ♣ Q 9 6 2</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>1♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♥</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>2♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | West | North | East | South | | | 1♣ | Pass | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4NT | Pass | 6NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | 1♣ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Answers.

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|--|-------|---------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|--|--|-----|------|-----|------|------|------|--|------|---------|---|--|-------|---------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|-----|------|--|-----|------|------|------|
| <p>A1.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ Q 10 9 8 ♥ Q 7 6 4 ♦ J 9 7 ♣ K 3</p> <p>The ♠10. Spades are stronger than Hearts so you should choose to lead a Spade. This is the top of an <i>interior sequence</i>. Partner will know immediately that you don't hold the ♠J although he won't know that you hold the ♠Q until later in the hand.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | <p>A2.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ 6 5 3 ♥ 4 2 ♦ A Q J 8 4 ♣ 8 7 3</p> <p>The ♦Q. It is obvious to lead a Diamond; maybe less obvious to lead the ♦Q. This is the top of an <i>interior sequence</i>, however. You hope that you will dislodge the ♦K at trick one and then the suit will be yours to run if and when the defence gains the lead.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>A3.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ J 10 4 ♥ K 9 8 7 5 ♦ A 5 3 ♣ 4 2</p> <p>The ♥7. No problem leading a Heart, but you might pick the ♥9 (an interior sequence). However, this usually only applies to sequences headed by the Ten or better. With this combination the suit counts as being broken, so you lead the fourth-highest.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | <p>A4.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ Q J 9 7 5 ♥ K 5 ♦ 9 4 2 ♣ 10 8 6</p> <p>The ♠Q. With no indications to the contrary lead your long suit. It is customary to lead the top of a sequence or near-sequence. (Other similar examples include leading the King from the K Q 10 and the Jack from a suit headed by the J 10 8).</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>A5.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ 9 8 5 2 ♥ K 10 3 ♦ Q 9 5 ♣ Q 8 4</p> <p>The ♠8. You may as well lead a Spade, even though the suit poor. You choose the ♠8 (second-highest from rubbish) rather than the fourth-highest to tell partner that you aren't crazy about a Spade return and maybe a <i>switch</i> would be good.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | <p>A6.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ J 9 3 ♥ A K J 10 8 ♦ 8 6 4 ♣ 8 3</p> <p>The ♥A. You might have thought that the ♥J was the right lead. Well, with the ♥A K you can afford to lead a top Heart to have a look at the dummy. It is possible that East (declarer) holds ♥Q x x and that partner has an <i>entry</i>.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>A7.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ Q 8 7 ♥ 10 9 ♦ 8 7 5 3 ♣ 9 6 4 2</p> <p>The ♥10. Why lead a short-suit? Well, it's often right when you hold tripe as there is little point in attempting to set up your own suit(s). The only chance of defeating 3NT is if North has a long suit and can set it up, so you <i>play for partner's hand</i>.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | <p>A8.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1♦</td><td>1♥</td><td>2♣</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>2♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ J 10 9 8 2 ♥ Q 8 2 ♦ 5 4 ♣ 9 7 4</p> <p>The ♥2. Without the guiding light of partner's overcall, you would have led the ♠J; now you must lead a Heart. It used to be said that you should lead "top of partner's suit" but that myth was debunked years ago. Lead low from three to an honour.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | 1♦ | 1♥ | 2♣ | Pass | | 2♦ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1♦ | 1♥ | 2♣ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2♦ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>A9.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>4NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>6NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ 8 7 4 ♥ J 7 6 5 ♦ A J 6 2 ♣ J 9</p> <p>The ♠7. East-West have a combined 33 points (or so); partner, therefore, has a rubbish dump. Against 6NT you should give East nothing and make him do all the work. Don't risk opening up a frozen suit; <i>go passive</i>. The ♠7 is second-highest from muck.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 2NT | Pass | 4NT | Pass | 6NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | <p>A10*.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> <table style="margin-left: 20px; border: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♥</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>2♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>3NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td></tr> </table> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">♠ A 10 ♥ Q 9 5 3 ♦ 9 8 4 ♣ Q 9 6 2</p> <p>The ♦8. It's usually wrong to lead an opponent's suit. However, leading the unbid suit looks the wrong thing to do with just the ♠A 10. Better is to lead <i>through</i> the dummy than around to one of declarer's suits. A thoroughly unappetising choice.</p> | N | W E | S | West | North | East | South | | | 1♣ | Pass | | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass | | 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4NT | Pass | 6NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| West | North | East | South | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1♣ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2♣ | Pass | 2NT | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Hand Number 1.

Contract: 3NT

By: North

Bidding

| North | East | South | West |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

Lead: Well?

♦6

Hand Number 2.

Contract: 3NT

By: East

Bidding

| East | South | West | North |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

Lead: Well?

♥J

Hand Number 3.

Contract: 3NT

By: West

Bidding

| South | West | North | East |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

Lead: Well?

♠6

Hand Number 4.

Contract: 3NT

By: North

Bidding

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

Lead: Well?

♥7

Hand Number 5.

Contract: 3NT

By: North

Bidding

| North | East | South | West |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1♥ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass |
| 2NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

Lead: Well?

♦10

Hand Number 6.

Contract: 3NT

By: West

Bidding

| East | South | West | North |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♣ | 1♥ | 1NT | Pass |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Lead: Well?

♥2

Hand Number 7.

Contract: 3NT

By: South

Bidding

| South | West | North | East |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 2NT | Pass | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

Lead: Well?

♠10

Hand Number 8.

Contract: 3NT

By: North

Bidding

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| Pass | Pass | 1♣ | 1♠ |
| Dble | 2NT | 1NT | Pass |
| 3NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Lead: Well?

♠Q