

# Opening Leads and Suit Combinations

Patrick, November 2019

# THE LAWS and TEMPO

- Tempo varies
  - unexpected tempo is Unauthorised Information
- Break in tempo must be agreed at the table
  - but any restrictions / corrections are up to the TD
- We must watch for bullying

# PART 1

## The Role of Suit Combinations

# A PRIORI PLAYS

- Why you care
- Complications, such as
  - the Danger Hand,
  - Vacant Spaces,
  - HCP count,
  - entry availability,
  - how many tricks you want

# Eight ever, nine never ?

## TRY      A432 – KJ765

- Variant one : LHO (North) is the danger hand
- Variant two : RHO (South) opened a weak two
- Both at once?

Default is cash AK

North danger : finesse

South fewer vacant spaces : finesse

# How many tricks?

**TRY      K932 – AJ54**

- Needing four tricks
- Needing three tricks

Four tricks : lead 2 to J is best

Three tricks : cash ace, lead to K93 is best

# How do you play ?

**TRY AT3 – Q42**

- Wanting two tricks

Get the opponents to lead the suit!

# How do you play ?

**TRY      A93 – QJ2**

- **Needing three tricks**
  - but what if LHO (North) leads the suit?
    - if LHO leads the 4 ?
    - if LHO leads the 8?

Hope they have led away from the ten and try to win with the nine.



# How do you play ?

**TRY      KT3 – J42**

- **Needing two tricks**
  - but what if RHO leads the suit?
  - and what if LHO leads the suit?

You need AQ(x) onside or doubleton queen, but if RHO leads from the queen many more chances.

# PART 3

## Choice of Opening Leads

# Considerations in Leading

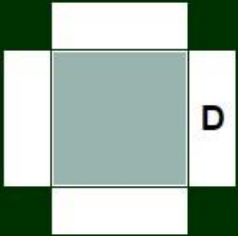
- Key considerations

- are you trying to build tricks ?
- can you afford to give away a trick ?
  
- ALWAYS have a purpose/plan in mind

# Building Tricks

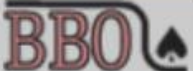
- Longest and strongest is best
  - leading from a sequence is strongest
  - leading low from one or two honours good
  - leading trumps can be setting up your tricks
- Cautions
  - often a 4-card suit is not good enough
    - in which case leading partner long suit is magic

# Example from Monday (B14)

•  Deal

N North	W	N	E	S
♠			P	P
♥		P	1♣	P
♦		P	2NT	P
♣ 3		P	P	P
W West	E East			
♠	♠ 85			
♥	♥ QJ92			
♦	♦ J865			
♣	♣ J52			
S South				
♠ 10				
♥				
♦				
♣				

3NT N      NS: 0 EW: 0



# Example from Monday (B14)

- When does leading low help ?
- When does leading low hurt ?
  
- Closest call is KT932

# What would declarer like?

- When LHO (North) leads this suit at trick one, say thank you

WITH            Q32 – J54

WITH            AT3 – J42

WITH            J32 – AQ4

WITH            AT9 – K32

WITH            K92 – Q83

- ..... there are so many, you cannot avoid them all – at least at trick one. But later ...

# SAFE LEADS

- Giving away tricks is a constant issue
- Leading from bad holdings often helps
- No lead is without some risk
  - trump lead from 432 ?
  - top from JT987 with Q in dummy ?
  - no risk comes when declarer has no choice



## PART 3

# Deductions from Opening Lead

# What the Lead tells you

- Positive aspects
  - Count
  - Honours
- Negative aspects
  - Doesn't hold various combinations
  - What their partner holds

# Example Hand 1

- The Problem
- The Solution

# Example Hand 2

W	N	E	S
2NT	P	3♣	P
3♥	P	4♥	P
P	P		

**W** West

♠ Q103  
♥ AKQ3  
♦ KQ8  
♣ KQ10

**E** East

♠ AJ2  
♥ J1076  
♦ 97  
♣ J543

# Example Hand 2

D

N North	W	N	E	S
	2NT	P	3♣	P
	3♥	P	4♥	P
	P	P		

W West

♠ Q103  
♥ AKQ3  
♦ KQ8  
♣ KQ10

♠ 5

E East

♠ AJ2  
♥ J1076  
♦ 97  
♣ J543

S South

4♥ W NS: 0 EW: 0

Rewind Previous Next Options GIB Play

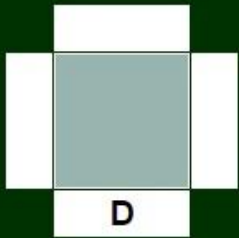
BBO

# Example Hand 2

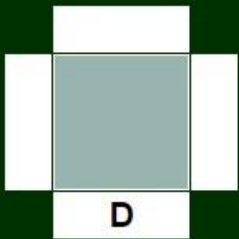
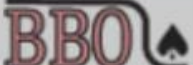
	<b>N</b> North	W	N	E	S
	♠ 5 ♥ 984 ♦ J10432 ♣ 9862	2NT 3♥ P	P P P	3♣ 4♥ P	P P P
<b>W</b> West		<b>E</b> East			
♠ Q103 ♥ AKQ3 ♦ KQ8 ♣ KQ10		♠ AJ2 ♥ J1076 ♦ 97 ♣ J543			
	<b>S</b> South				
	♠ K98764 ♥ 52 ♦ A65 ♣ A7				
					4♥ W NS: 0 EW: 0

Rewind Previous Next Options GIB Play 

# Example Hand 3

 <p>D</p>	<p><b>N</b> North</p> <p>♠</p> <p>♥</p> <p>♦</p> <p>♣</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>3♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♠</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	W	N	E	S				P	P	2♥	2♠	3♥	3♠	P	P	P
W	N	E	S															
			P															
P	2♥	2♠	3♥															
3♠	P	P	P															
<p><b>W</b> West</p> <p>♠ 9</p> <p>♥ AQ54</p> <p>♦ Q842</p> <p>♣ 8652</p>		<p><b>E</b> East</p> <p>♠ AKJ1072</p> <p>♥ 3</p> <p>♦ J6</p> <p>♣ QJ43</p>																
	<p><b>S</b> South</p> <p>♠</p> <p>♥</p> <p>♦</p> <p>♣</p>	<p>3♠ E      NS: 0 EW: 0</p>																

# Example Hand 3

 <p>D</p>	<p><b>N</b> North</p> <p>♠ 8543 ♥ K109872 ♦ A7 ♣ K</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>P</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>3♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♠</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> <td>P</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				W	N	E	S				P	P	2♥	2♠	3♥	3♠	P	P	P
W	N	E	S																		
			P																		
P	2♥	2♠	3♥																		
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	<p><b>S</b> South</p> <p>♠ Q6 ♥ J6 ♦ K10953 ♣ A1097</p>	<p>3♠ E      NS: 0 EW: 0</p>																			
<p> <input type="button" value="Rewind"/> <input type="button" value="Previous"/> <input type="button" value="Next"/> <input type="button" value="Options"/> <input type="button" value="GIB"/> <input type="button" value="Play"/> </p>																					



# PART 4

## Learning Suit Combinations

# SUIT COMBINATIONS

- There are books
- There are internet sites
  - [Brian Senior's article](#)
  - [Richard Pavlicek's anayser](#)
- There are Windows/DOS tools
  - SUITPLAY from [www.suitplay.com](http://www.suitplay.com)