

# Signals in defence



# Simple signals- Partner's lead

- Sitting in third seat, **if you can win/compete for the trick:**
- Win it!
- **When leading the second round of the suit, show count**
  - Count based on the number of cards you currently hold
  - High-Low shows an even number of cards remaining
  - Low-High shows an odd number of cards remaining
- i.e. if started with 4 cards in the suit (A x x x)
  - After winning the first round, you now have 3 remaining cards
  - In this situation you would play the low card when returning the suit
  - *NB Not MUD as middle could be mistaken as high from doubleton*

# Simple signals- Partner's lead

- Sitting in third seat, **if you cannot win the trick:**
- The first card shows **attitude for that suit**
  - High- Encourages
  - Low- Discourages (Switch suit)
  - High then low- Please play a 3<sup>rd</sup> round
  - i.e.
  - If you want a switch- play a low card
  - If you do not want a switch- play a high card
- There may be situations where it is better to show suit preference this is covered later in the presentation

# Honour card signals

- Not normal to play an honour card under a winner
- Normally arises if you have a sequence of high card

# Example 1

Dummy  
A  
K 8 6 4 3  
J played

- West leads 4 and East plays Jack under the Ace
- East must hold the 10
- South must hold the Queen
- East is telling partner it is safe to continue the suit if they hold the Queen *or* it is unsafe to cash the King

# Example 2

Dummy

8 3

A K 7 2

Q played

- West leads Ace, East plays Queen
- Either singleton **or** East hold Jack
- It is safe for West to continue with a low card- possibilities:
- East will ruff
- Entry for East to unblock suit
- Entry for East to switch suits

# Example 3

	Dummy	
	8 7	
K Q J 4 3		A 2

- West leads King
- East should play Ace then small
- In No Trumps this unblocks to allow the suit to run
- In a suit contract this may develop a ruff

# Example 4

Dummy  
♠ 8 7

K♠ lead

♠ A 5 3 2  
♦ A

- West leads K♠
- They should hold Q♠
- East should overtake
- Play the singleton A♦
- Return to West with a small spade
- West can now lead a diamond for East to ruff

# Example 5

Dummy

♦ 6 4

♣ Q 7 5

K♦ lead

♦ A 7 3 2

♣ A K J

- West leads K♦
- West holds the Q♦
- East should overtake
- Play the A♣
- Return to West with a small diamond
- West knows to leads through the Q♣

# Example 6

Dummy

♦ 6

♣ 8 6 5

K♦ lead

♦ A J 8 2

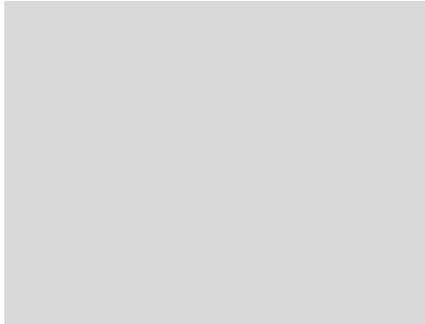
♣ Q J 10 4

- Playing in ♠
- West leads K♦
- Singleton in dummy- only winning 1 trick in this suit
- East should overtake in order to switch to clubs

# Hand 1 - contact 4♠ South, lead A♦

♠ K J 7 6  
 ♥ A K J 6 5  
 ♦ 10 3  
 ♣ 7 2

♠ 8  
 ♥ 10 9 7  
 ♦ A K 8 4 2  
 ♣ A Q 8 3



♠ 4 3  
 ♥ 4 3 2  
 ♦ Q J 9 7  
 ♣ 10 9 5 4

♠ A Q 10 9 5 2  
 ♥ Q 8  
 ♦ 6 5  
 ♣ K J 6

W	N	E	S
	1♥	P	1♠
X	2♠	P	4♠
All P			

- East should signal with Q♦
- West plays small diamond to 10 at trick 2
- East can now lead a club through declarers K♣

# Hand 2- contact 4♠ East, lead 10♣

♠ 9  
 ♥ A Q 10 7 5  
 ♦ 9 8 5 4 2  
 ♣ 6 3

♠ 10 6 4 3 2  
 ♥ K 3  
 ♦ K 7  
 ♣ A Q 5 2



♠ Q J 8 7 5  
 ♥ J 9  
 ♦ A 10 6  
 ♣ K J 4

♠ A K  
 ♥ 8 6 4 2  
 ♦ Q J 3  
 ♣ 10 9 8 7

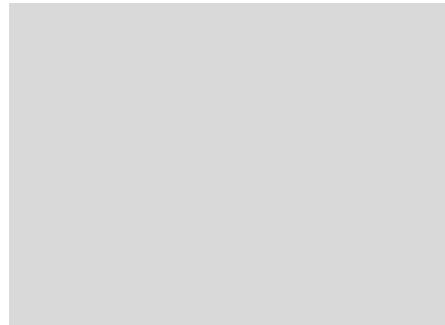
W	N	E	S
		1♠	P
4♠	All P		

- East should discourage with 3♣
- Declarer will lead trumps
- South should draw a second round of trumps allowing North to signal for heart switch at trick 4

# Hand 3- contact 4♠ North, lead 10♥

♠ AKQJ10  
 ♥ J63  
 ♦ QJ10  
 ♣ 106

♠ 2  
 ♥ AKQ875  
 ♦ A72  
 ♣ 754



♠ 87  
 ♥ 102  
 ♦ K9643  
 ♣ 9832

♠ 96543  
 ♥ 94  
 ♦ 85  
 ♣ AKQJ

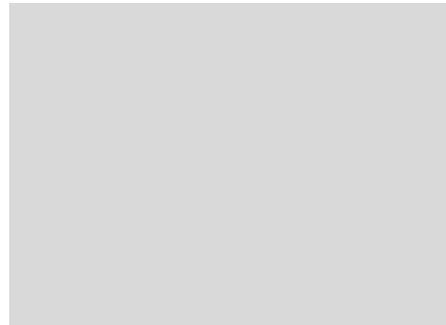
W	N	E	S
		P	P
1♥	1♠	P	3♠
P	4♠	All P	

- West wins the lead
- Note 10♥ must be a singleton or a doubleton (MUD from 3)
- *Options- partner could ruff a third heart if holds 10♠ or higher or 2 tricks in diamonds- which line to take?*
- Play A♦ - West should encourage with 9♦
- Cash a second heart and lead 7♦ (Count) at trick 4

# Hand 4- contact 3♠ West, lead K♣

♠ 7 3  
 ♥ 7 5  
 ♦ 9 7 5  
 ♣ K Q 10 9 5 3

♠ A K 10 9 2  
 ♥ A K J  
 ♦ 8 4 2  
 ♣ 6 4



♠ Q 8 6 5  
 ♥ Q 6 4 3  
 ♦ Q 6 3  
 ♣ 8 7

♠ J 4  
 ♥ 10 9 8 2  
 ♦ A K J 10  
 ♣ A J 2

W	N	E	S
1♠	P	2♠	X
3♠	All P		

- South wants a diamond switch from partner
- K♣ promises the Q♣
- Overtake trick 1 with A♣
- Play A♦
- Lead a club back to partners Q♣
- North should now play a diamond

# Advanced signals

- *General principles*
- Partners lead- normally play 'attitude' signals
  - In third seat standard signals encourage/discourage the suit lead
  - Cannot indicate which suit to switch to
- Suit preference signals
  - **If it is absolutely obvious that you cannot want the suit continuing**
  - High card asks for higher of the remaining suits
  - Low card asks for lower of the remaining suit
- Declarers lead
  - Usually give count in this suit if unable to win/compete for the trick
  - High-Low shows even count
  - Low-High shows odd count

# Advanced signals

- Suit preference at trick 1
- **If it is absolutely obvious that you cannot want the suit continuing**
- High card- asks for 'higher' of the remaining suits
- Low card- asks for 'lower' of remaining suits

# Giving partner a ruff

Dummy

♥ J 10 7 5 2

♥ A 9 8 6 4

- Partner lead 3♥ - must be singleton
- *Partner would lead High-Low from a doubleton*
- **Leading a high card to ruff asks for the higher suit to be returned as entry**
- **Leading a low card asks for the lower suit**
  
- Playing in ♠, East wins the lead with A♥
- 9♥ asks for a diamond
- 4♥ asks for a club
- 6♥ / 8♥ no preference

# Knocking out a stopper

♠ Q 10 6 5 3 2

Dummy  
♠ 7 4

- Playing in NT
- Lead 4<sup>th</sup> highest (5♠)
- Partner wins A♠ and returns 9♠, declarer plays J♠ to your Q♠
- Declarer now holds singleton K♠
- Play 10♠ asking for hearts
- Play 2♠ asking for clubs
- Play 6♠ asking for diamonds

# Partner leads a singleton or K-A

Dummy

♦ K J 10 8 3

♦ 9 7 6 5 4

- Playing against 4♠
- Partner leads 2♦
- Partner needs an entry to your hand for you to lead a ruff
- Give a suit preference signal to show your entry
- 9♦ asks for high suit- hearts
- 4♦ asks for low suit- clubs

# Attitude or Suit preference?

♠ 7  
♦ A K 6 2

♠ Q 6 2  
♦ 5

♠ A K 10 8 5  
♦ J 9 7 4

♠ J 9 4 3  
♦ Q 10 8 3

- Playing in 4 ♠, West leads A ♦
- Dummy has a singleton- should the suit be continued?
- How would declarer play the spade suit?
- What is the consequence of continuing diamonds?

# General principles

- If dummy holds three trumps or fewer, use standard 'attitude' signals
  - i.e. high/low encourages or discourages the lead suit
- If dummy hold five or more trumps give a suit preference signal
  - i.e. high/low shows preference for the 'higher' or 'lower' suit
- If dummy has 4 trumps
  - Standard encourage/discourage if they are likely to be 4-4
  - Suit preference if they are likely to be 5-4

# Attitude or suit preference?

Dummy

♠ A 7 6 3

♥ 7

♦ K Q 5 3

♣ K J 3 2

- South open 2♠
- North raises to 4♠
- West leads K♥
- Will East's signal be attitude or suit preference?

♠ 9 2

♥ A K J 8 3

♦ 8 7 4

♣ 9 6 4

# Other examples

- Suit preference by playing cards in an ‘abnormal’ order
  - e.g. West leads and East holds A K Q 7 4
  - Usual to play the lowest of the sequence ie Queen
  - If East plays Ace that is ‘abnormal’
  - Indicates an entry in the ‘higher’ remaining suit if partner gets on lead
- Suit preference by playing an ‘abnormal’ lead
  - e.g. Partnership agreement is 4<sup>th</sup> highest from a long suit
  - After a weak pre-empt (showing a 6 card suit) partner leads the 2
  - This cannot be the 4<sup>th</sup> highest of 6 cards, so is ‘abnormal’
  - The 2 should be taken to be asking for the ‘lowest’ suit when partner on lead
  - Similarly leading the 9 would be asking for the ‘highest’ suit

# Secondary signals

A K 10 9 5	Q J	8 6 3 2
	7 4	

- Secondary signals occur on the **second round** the suit is played
- Playing in a trump contract
- West leads A, East discourages with 2
- West continues with K
- East can now signal suit preference



# Secondary signals

4

A K 8

Q J 10 9 6

7 5 3 2

- Declarer (South) is drawing trumps
- Usually East would playing lowest available card
- Playing 7 then 5 shows a preference for a 'higher' suit
- Playing 2 then 3 is 'standard' and gives no preference i.e. suggests the higher suit should not be lead

# Secondary signals

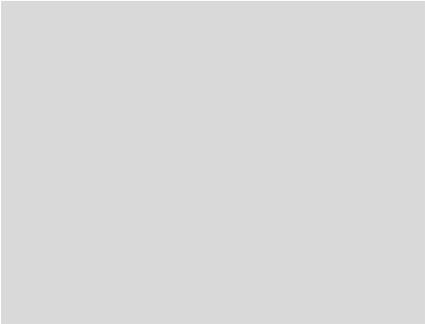
9 6 3      10 8 5 2  
7      A K Q J 4

- West leads 6- middle of three, planning to play 9 on the second round 'MUD'
- East wins J and continues Q
- When declarer ruffs the second round the 9/3 can now be used to indicate suit preference

# Hand 5- contact 4♠ North, lead 9♥

♠ K Q 10 4 3  
 ♥ K Q J 5  
 ♦ Q 10  
 ♣ A 8

♠ J  
 ♥ A 8 4 3 2  
 ♦ A 9 5 3  
 ♣ 10 9 6



♠ 9 7  
 ♥ 9  
 ♦ J 7 6 4 2  
 ♣ Q J 4 3 2

♠ A 8 6 5 2  
 ♥ 10 7 6  
 ♦ K 8  
 ♣ K 7 5

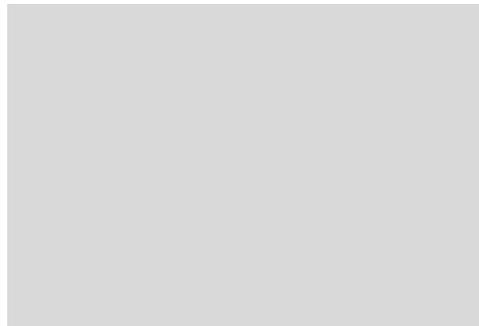
W	N	E	S
	1♠	P	3♠
P	4♠	All P	

- West wins A♥
- *Return a high heart asking for the higher of the remaining suits following the ruff*
- West plays 8♥ which is ruffed by East
- East returns 4♦ (4<sup>th</sup> highest) to partners A♦
- West lead a third heart for another ruff

# Hand 6- contact 4♠ East, lead Q♣

♠ 10 6 3  
 ♥ A J 5 4 2  
 ♦  
 ♣ A 8 4 3 2

♠ K 9  
 ♥ Q 9 7  
 ♦ A K J 8  
 ♣ K J 10 7



♠ 7 2  
 ♥ K 8 6 3  
 ♦ 9 7 6 5 3 2  
 ♣ Q

♠ A Q J 8 5 4  
 ♥ 10  
 ♦ Q 10 4  
 ♣ 9 6 5

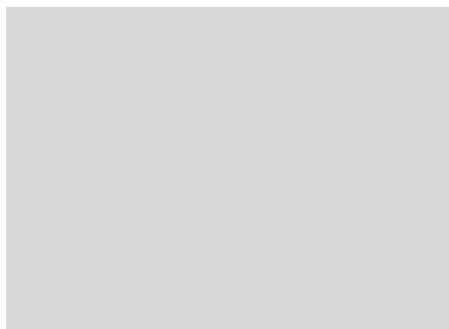
W	N	E	S
		2♠	P
4♠	All P		

- North wins A♣
- *North wants a diamond return to set up a cross ruff- low club asks for lower suit*
- North leads 2♣ for partner to ruff
- South returns 2♦ - low card asking for another ♣
- North returns 2♣- low card asking for another ♦
- South returns 9♦ indicating an entry in hearts
- North returns a low heart for a 3<sup>rd</sup> diamond ruff

# Hand 7- contact 2♥ X West, lead 2♠

♠ 2  
 ♥ K Q 8 4  
 ♦ 10 7 4 2  
 ♣ A J 10 8

♠ K Q 10  
 ♥ A 10 9 7 6 5  
 ♦ J 9 5  
 ♣ 5



♠ J 6 5 4  
 ♥ 2  
 ♦ K 8 6 3  
 ♣ K 9 7 2

♠ A 9 8 7 3  
 ♥ J 3  
 ♦ A Q  
 ♣ Q 6 4 3

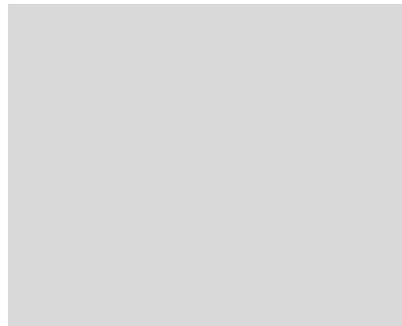
W	N	E	S
			1♠
2♥	P	P	X
All P			

- South wins A♠
- *Return a high spade asking for the higher of the remaining suits following the ruff*
- South plays 9♠ which is ruffed by North
- North returns 2♦ (4<sup>th</sup> highest)
- South leads 8♠ asking for another ♦
- North returns 4♦ (low asking for a ♣)
- South ruffs, plays 3♣ (4<sup>th</sup> highest) to A♣
- North leads another diamond for a further ruff

# Hand 8- contact 3NT South, lead Q♠

♠ 8 6 2  
 ♥ K J 10  
 ♦ Q J 9 6 5  
 ♣ K Q

♠ Q J 10 9 3  
 ♥ A 6 4  
 ♦ 8 3  
 ♣ 9 6 5



♠ A K  
 ♥ 8 7 5 2  
 ♦ 7 4 2  
 ♣ 7 4 3 2

♠ 7 5 4  
 ♥ Q 9 3  
 ♦ A K 10  
 ♣ A J 10 8

W	N	E	S
			1NT
P	3NT	All P	

- If partner has a 3<sup>rd</sup> spade there is no issue but need to consider the possibility of East holding a doubleton
- Spade suit blocked- West needs to signal entry to partner
- East win K♠, A♠
- West should play J♠ on trick 2 to indicate entry in hearts (high card=higher suit)
- Note 9♠ asks for diamonds and 3♠ asks for clubs