

## Placing Honor Cards - I

Or how to use the defensive card play rules to help you see your partner's hand.

When we are learning the game we are given several seemingly arbitrary rules for how to card when defending. Examples of this are:

- Lead fourth best
- When leading an honor you promise the honor underneath (or shortness)
- When following to a suit play the bottom of your touching honors
- When you have a doubleton lead high
- Second hand low
- Cover an honor with an honor
- Third hand high
- Never underlead an ace (at a suit contract)

Today I want to focus on how you can use some of these "rules" in order to help aid your defense and in specific how to work out what happened on the opening lead.

Let say you are on lead against a NT contract and lead fourth best and this is what transpires

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      8543
Q9762      J
      A
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First question is what are the missing cards?

In this case the missing cards are the king and the ten.

Second question is who has them?

Let's deal with the ten. If East had it, then they would have started with the JT. From touching honors they should play the lowest one when following

and therefore should play the ten. Therefore they do not have the ten, south does.

Next let's think about the king. If East has it, then they would've started with KJ. With non-touching honors East should play the highest. So once again they do not have the king, south does.

So the original position of the suit was

	8543	
Q9762		J
	AKT	

And after the opening lead the situation is now

	854	
Q972		-
	KT	

So when defending, leading this suit again will give up a trick to declarer's ten and we shouldn't expect partner to be able to lead this suit back to us. If we win a trick in a different suit, leading this suit again seems likely to be a bad idea.