

Defensive Guidelines: When NOT to follow them

Last revised: Jan 11, 2020 S. Overholt

Guideline: 3rd hand high

- **Do Not Play 3rd hand high when it cannot create a winner for your side.**
 - Partner leads a high spot = 8; dummy has QJTxx plays Q, you have K6xx, do **not** cover

Dummy: QJT7x

Lead: 8

You: K6xx

Declarer: (A9 or A9x)

(See accompanying pbn hand file, hands #1 and #2)

- By not covering a trump lead, you can overruff the dummy later
 - Bidding is 1S – 2S – 4S (diagram showing Spades & hearts only)

Dummy: S J95 H xx dummy plays the 9

Lead: 7 trumps

You: S Q84 H 74 Play small

Declarer: S AKT63 H AKx

When declarer tries to ruff her 3rd heart in dummy with the J, you can overruff

Guideline: Cover an honour with an honour

Do not cover an honour with an honour when it has no chance of promoting a trick for your side

- Declarer has JT98, leads the J. You have Kxxx, do not cover. If declarer has AQx or AQ, your King will eventually be the high card in the suit. If partner has one of A or Q, they can win trick.
- Another one: Declarer leads the J from dummy, Decl has opened 1S.

Dummy: JTxx (or Jxxx)

You: Q53 ---> play low smoothly

Declarer: (AK9xx) has 5 Spades

Missing the Q but only 4 trumps, declarer will likely play for the drop
If you can “anticipate” the lead of the J, you will play smoothly better

Please turn over

Cover the 2nd of two touching honours (that you can see)

- Declarer has QJ9, you have Kxx. Declarer leads the Q. If you cover with the King, declarer wins the A and then finesses your partner's T on the way back. However, if you cover the 2nd honour, you hold declarer to two tricks

Guideline: 2nd hand Low

- Not when declarer is stealing a Q trick. Dummy has Qx, you have Kxx before the dummy. Declarer leads low from hand. If you play low, declarer wins the Q and has no loser in the suit
- Not if rising with a winner allows partner's suit to be set up in NT

(See accompanying pbn file, Hand #3)

Guideline: Follow with lowest of touching honours

- Not when you have a very solid sequence. Play the highest one on first lead of the suit

Dummy: xxx -- low card led from dummy

Partner: Ax

You: QJT9x --> play the Q

Declarer: Kxx

- Why waste a Q on the first trick? Because you must have a solid sequence from Q down. Now if declarer plays the K, partner will know to take her Ace, not consider ducking and know that playing another one to you is a good or at least a safe play

Encourage with a high spot

- Not if you would prefer a shift to a different suit
- Partner leads A from AKxx, and you have Q83. Book play is encourage with the 8. But you have AQT of another suit behind dummy's KJx.

(See accompanying pbn file, Hand #4)

What a game!