

BARRIER REEF CONGRESS

EDUCATION PROGRAM – CELEBRITY SPEAKERS

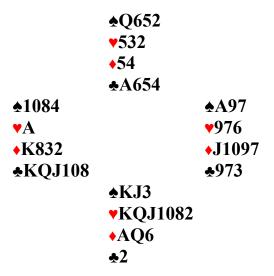
PRESENTER: David Beauchamp

TOPIC: COMMON MISTAKES – HOW TO

AVOID THEM

Sunday 12 June 2011

1. As Declarer, do not trump in the long hand, but do trump in the short hand



Your contract is **4H** and you receive the lead of the **King** of clubs. How often have I seen players win the Ace in the dummy, ruff a club in hand and play trumps?

Trumping in the hand with the long trumps (South in this example) does not add to your trick count.

All it does is reduce your trump length thus putting your contract in jeopardy. We call it "the best defence to your own contract!"

However, trumping in the hand with the short trumps does add to your trick count.

So let's ruff a diamond in the dummy. The correct play is to win the **Ace** of clubs at trick one and finesse the **Queen** of diamonds. OK, so this fails and the defence leads another club which you have to ruff in hand. You should now cash the **Ace** of diamonds and ruff a diamond in dummy (the short trump hand) before starting on the trumps. After drawing trumps you can now play spades and make your 10 tricks.

If you do ruff a club in your hand at trick two then:

- a) you will have to play the diamonds from hand; and
- b) you will have no trumps left in your hand after you have ruffed a diamond and drawn the trumps. You will go down two, but you will be able to berate partner for his overbidding!

2. <u>Defence – Do Not Establish Dummy's Winner(s)</u>

Your opening lead is the Ace of a suit and dummy hold QJ65 – please be cautious about cashing the King next because it will set up two winners (Queen and Jack) for declarer.

An Example hand:-

	QJ65	
	832	
	753	
	A54	
AK82		1074
94		J76
964		A82
Q962		KJ87
	93	
	AKQ105	
	KQJ10	
	103	

Contract: 4H (S)

We lead the Ace of spades and partner follows with the four. At this stage we must be careful not to continue this suit in the vain hope that partner has a doubleton 43 when declarer follows with a cunning nine.

Declarer can set up a winning spade in the dummy but not if we knock out that ace of clubs immediately. At trick two we must shift to a small club to beat this rather ambitious contract.

3. Covering Honours with Honours

As beginners we are all taught, when defending, to cover an honour with an honour. The reason for this is that, by doing so, we protect lower honours, either in our own hand, or, more likely, in partner's hand.

Here are a couple of examples:-

Example 1

When declarer leads the **Jack** from the dummy then we must cover with our **Queen**. Declarer will win his **Ace** but our partner will then have the **K9** sitting over declarer's **10** and he will win two tricks in the suit. Had we not covered that **Jack** with our **Queen** declarer would let the **Jack** run round for our partner to win with his **King**. Subsequently declarer would return to dummy to successfully finesse the **10** and our side would have only made one trick in the suit.

Example 2

9874 Q32 AJ105

When declarer plays the **Queen** from the dummy we must cover with the **King** to promote partner's lower honours, usually the **10**, but in this example, the **nine**. Had we not covered the **Queen** with our **King** then our side would have made no tricks at all in the suit. By covering the **Queen** with the **King** our side makes one trick, i.e. the **nine**, albeit on the fourth round of the suit.

OK, most player know all that, but **why, why, why**, do they continue to cover honours when there is absolutely no chance at all of promoting any lower honour in partner's hand?

QJ1093 752 K64 A8

When declarer plays the Queen from the dummy, what is the point of sacrificing our **King?** There are no lower honours to be promoted in partner's hand – how do we know that?

BECAUSE we can see them all in the dummy!!

Covering the **Queen** with our **King** can only be a help to declarer, and we are not supposed to be on his side. By covering the **Queen** with the **King** we allow declarer to make five tricks in the suit.

SO, here's a rule for you:-

"Cover an honour with an honour, but do NOT cover touching honours".

A few examples may help:-

Example 1

J106 K943 Q82 A75

When declarer plays the **Jack** from the dummy, we must say to ourselves

"Touching honours, do not cover"!

so we follow with the two. Declarer will probably let this run to our partner's **King**. Note that, now that the **Jack** has gone, there are no longer touching honours in the dummy so the above rule no longer applies. If and when declarer subsequently plays the **10**, this time we cover as per normal, in order to promote our partner's **nine**. Declarer only makes one trick in the suit.

Now let's look at what would have happened had we covered the **Jack** with our **Queen**. Declarer would win with the **Ace** and lead one back towards the **10**, making two tricks in the suit.

Example 2

QJ9 10432 K65 A87

When the **Queen** is played from the table, we must **NOT** cover (touching honours). If we do cover with our **King** declarer will win with the **Ace** and finesse the nine on the next trick. He will make three tricks and we will take none.

However, when we do not cover with the **Queen** with our **King** dummy's **Queen** will win the trick of course, leaving **J9** in the dummy. These are not touching honours so if declarer now plays the **Jack** we cover normally with our **King**, thus promoting partner's **10**. Only two tricks to declarer, and, more importantly, one for us.

So, the secret is out. For the rest of your bridge careers:

COVER HONOURS WITH HONOURS, BUT PLEASE, DO NOT COVER TOUCHING HONOURS.

4. Unfortunate Discarding

How many tricks have we lost by pitching the wrong card(s)?

A reasonable rule when defending is **to 'maintain parity'** with dummy's length.

Let's say dummy has

K763

K642

983

A2

Declarer is in **4S** and we are sitting over the dummy with:

2 T873 AJ72 K963

Partner leads the CQ which declarer wins with the ace in dummy and draws three rounds of trumps. We have to find two discards – not too difficult because we can spare two clubs. Many players would pitch a 'useless' heart but it is imperative that we hold on grimly to our four hearts. Declarer hand is

AQT54 AQ5 Q64 T5

Our 'useless' heart pitch presents declarer with four heart tricks for his contract, but by retaining our hearts declarer will lose three diamonds and one club for only 9 tricks.

To summarize, when we are defending a hand and partner makes a discard, we are often asked by declarer 'what are your discards?'

A fair question I suppose and we answer truthfully 'low encourage' or 'high encourage' or whatever our agreed method are, but we are always tempted to say 'TLKW' (Throw Losers Keep Winners)!

5. Poor Leads

Some of our partners can be heard wandering round the bridge scene chanting 'we lead our suits, they lead their suits'.

If we lead a doubleton, especially 9x or 10x or Jx, whether it be against a suit contract, or against a no trump contract, it is highly unlikely that it is **'our'** suit. It's certainly not the opening leader's suit, so it's two to one that the suit belongs to the opponents and that we have helped to set it up.

Yes, you may strike gold once in a while, and you can dine out on those occasions, but we suggest that the boring '4th highest from longest and strongest' is the way to go.

Defending **4H** after declarer has shown hearts and clubs, dummy has shown spades what should we lead from?:

Q83 T9763 JT86 K

Some players would lead the singleton CK but this is silly, that is declarer's second suit and we are not on his side. Guess what, we lead 'our' suit, the unbid one, i.e. diamonds, the **DJ** from this holding.

Dummy comes down with

KJ976 J Q52 T952 Declarer wins the first trick in hand with **DK** as our partner encourages. After a heart to dummy's jack declarer plays a club (his suit) to his jack and our king. We continue with the **D10** diamond and declarer has to play his own club suit and must go down.

So another golden rule for you:

If declarer has shown two suits then it is rarely, almost never, correct to lead his second suit. Leave that to him.

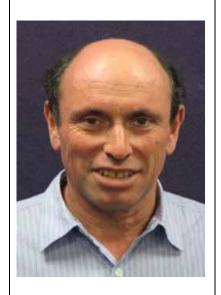
6. The pre-emptor Repeater

You open **2S** with:

AQJ643 84 3 QT53

Your LHO overcalls 3H and your partner chimes in with 3S. RHO raises his partner to 4H and it's your go. The opponents are vulnerable and you are not. Should you consider bidding the 4^{th} spade, maybe as a save, maybe to make? Our view is that if you are looking at your hand then that in itself is a mistake. Partner is aware of the vulnerability (I hope) and is the captain. If it is right to save then he will know what to do. For all you know partner may be waiting with his blood stained axe ready to double the opponent's 4H.

Again it's a case of 'Tell partner what you've got, but just once will do'.



David has been playing for close to 40 years and lives in Sydney. He is a full-time professional bridge player. His bridge partners have included Ted Chadwick, Khokan Bagchi, Matthew Thompson and Warren Lazer.

He and Ted represented Australia in the Bridge Olympiad in Rhodes in 1996.

As a professional, David has done it all – director, teacher, supervised teacher, player and mentor.

During recent times his focus has been on teaching.