

SEMINAR 4 NOTES  
OPENING LEADS  
DISCARDS AND SIGNALS



1. Against No-Trumps

It is normal to lead your long suit against a no-trump contract, preferably from a 5-card or longer suit.

Lead your 4<sup>th</sup> highest OR top of a sequence of 3 OR top of a broken sequence of 3

**Lead 4<sup>th</sup> highest** because partner will be doing calculations on it!!!

Rule of 11: Take the number of the card led from 11, the number that gives you is the remaining number of cards higher than the lead card spread between the 3 hands.

Partner leads the 5H

11 minus 5 = 6.

You hold K 10 8 in the suit

Dummy holds A Q 7 2

If dummy plays the 2 or the 7 play the 8!! It can't lose!

**Top of an honour sequence of 3:**

AKQ

KQJ

QJ10

J109

10 9 8 lowest sequence to lead from.

MUST have 3 to lead in NT contract.

**Broken honour sequence of 3:**

1. AKJ

2. KQ10

3. QJ9

What does p do on these leads?

JETTISON MISSING HONOUR!!!

If you hold Q9 – discard your Q on the A.  
Why? Partner needs to know who holds that missing honour card.  
Discard immediately so he knows to continue the suit.  
Your partner desperately needs to know where the missing one in the sequence is. If you hold it – show it!

Eg. Partner leads the K, you hold the J. You know partner must be leading from K Q 10.

Eg.

	64	
<b>KQ1072</b>		<b>J83</b>
	A95	

Jettison the J to show partner is okay to continue the suit. If you don't your partner is justified in changing suits.

If you do not hold an honour card – show count.  
High – low – even number of cards in suit.  
Low – high – odd number of cards in suit.  
Very important on a NT lead to give partner this information so he can work out whether it is worth pursuing the suit.

Eg.

	A53	
<b>KQ1086</b>		<b>742</b>
	J9	

P leads K. Dummy plays low. With no honour – play the 2. Give partner the information that you hold an odd number.

P has 5 in suit, you have said 3, dummy has 3. P now knows declarer has the J bare. Count is important.

### **Internal sequence:**

**KJ109x**

**Q109xx**

**AJ10xx**

**AQJxx**

**A1097x**

### **Second highest and MUD of rubbish:**

7s,8s,9s ... so 9 **8** 7 3 lead the 8. Follow with 9.

Unless it is an outstanding suit such that this could be 4<sup>th</sup> highest – a lead of this indicates a suit partner has no interest in developing.

If it is 4<sup>th</sup> highest, review whether top of a sequence is appropriate, or playing a lower card to be more obvious to partner it's 4<sup>th</sup> highest!

If partner has made a bid, an overcall, some lead indicator during the auction – lead that suit unless something overwhelmingly better is in your hand.

With 3 cards or more in p's suit – lead low to show an honour at the top.  
**DON'T LEAD HIGHEST** unless doubleton.

With 2 cards in the suit, play high – low

Unblock the suit for partner. Eg. **K9**

? One time it is right to lead an honour from 3 on lead from p's suit?

A. When from the auction, you suspect the stopper is held by dummy.

Lead your honour to force it out.

With 3 cards in the suit and no honour – MUD

Remember – you must play your higher card 2<sup>nd</sup> to show p the count and not suggest it is a doubleton!

## 2. LEADS AGAINST SUIT CONTRACTS

The more confident on making game the opponents sound – the more aggressive the lead.

If they have struggled into game – lead passively.

**Doubletons** – Use rarely – good doubletons to lead:

AK

or

Your partner's suit

or

Ax only if you TRULY believe your p has the K.

[but usually better to find a different lead]

If you stop leading doubletons

Spotting singletons becomes a whole lot easier!

Eg. 9, or 7, or 6 ... what is it? Singleton? Doubleton?

If your partnership doesn't lead doubletons – you know.

Aggressive leads:

### 1. Singletons

When are they a good idea?

IF YOU ARE WEAK.

When are they a bad idea?

IF YOU ARE STRONG.

If opponent's have bid the suit – unwise lead.

### 2. Leading away from an honour not in a sequence.

Eg. Kxx(x)

Aggressive and risky – but if they are confident, how else are you going to win quick tricks?

NEVER LEAD AWAY FROM AN ACE on opening lead in a suit contract.

9 out of 10 – you give opponents a trick!

PASSIVE LEADS:

### 1. Top of a sequence of 2 eg. KQ QJ

With AKxx

Try A for Attitude

K for Count

## **2. Leading trumps**

Holding of xx or xxx (or Ax provided you are not about to wreck p's chance of a trump trick!)

Leading singleton trumps only cause grief. Don't do it!

## **3. Leading small cards from unsupported Q.**

Eg. Qxx

Low risk lead. If p holds A or K it is not in vain.

Below – poor leads but sometimes ....

4. **2<sup>nd</sup> highest MUD or rubbish** from xXxx

5. **MUD xXx**

Both are last choice passive leads when nothing else appeals

## **Signals:**

What to play on partner's lead card?

Reverse attitude.

2 to 5 LOW I LIKE

6 to 9 HIGH I HATE

ACE is for ATTITUDE

KING is for COUNT

Eg. P leads K. If you cannot see the A assume p has it.

P is asking you for COUNT

You hold 9 8 3 in the suit

Play the 3.

Tell p odd number held in suit.

Eg. P leads A from AK

P is asking you for ATTITUDE

You hold 8 2 in the suit

Play the 2 - tell p to continue suit.

If you hold 4 2 in the suit

Play the 2 – give clear attitude.

Don't give p the chance to go wrong ... they will!!

You should be carding on every new suit that is led.

P should be watching!!

**Discards** – the first time you discard on a suit.

REVERSE ATTITUDE

2-5 – I am interested in the lower ranked suit. Low I like

6-9 – I am interested higher ranked remaining suit. High I hate

Only signal if you have to. If partner can work it out, don't help the opponent's by showing them what to do!!

Discard from top of three high cards.

It wakes partner up!!

If you hold KQJ93 in a suit, and partner leads a card which the opponent takes with the A – play the K!!! Tell p – I hold the Q and J!!

Suit Preference:

Try to show your partner where to go for honey!

If you are sending partner a card to ruff – don't just pick any old card at random!!

Tell your partner how to re-enter your hand for another ruff!

Eg.

	J742	
	KQJ4	
	86	
	QJ4	
6		K105
A7		8532
AK932		J4
98752		K1063I
	AQ963	
	1096	
	Q1075	
	A	

Auction: S – 1S N - 3S All pass

W leads AD – asking for attitude - watch p's card.

P plays 4 – encouraging.

Play A – p plays J – you can see p wanted you to continue. Which D do you now send???

You need to tell p the way back to your hand, so you can send another ruff.

## **LAVINTHAL**

2-5 = send the lower of the other 2 non-trump suits

6-9 = send the higher of the other 2 non-trump suits.

Here – play the 9D – p, Hs is the way back.

There is an additional Lavinthal handout if you would like more information on this system. It can also be used for discards.