

MORRINSVILLE BRIDGE CLUB - CARD PLAY 101

A series of elementary card play tuition sessions at Morrinsville

Defence: Signals

How to indicate to partner what you have in your hand (*Legal Table-Talk*)



Contents:

- Page 2: Notes to be handed out (and talked about) at the start of the session (red numbers refer to the board which demonstrates this point)
- Pages 3-5 Travellers to go with the boards (a set of 9).
Place these on top of the board with the bottom folded up so only the bidding can be seen.
Play the hand then open up the travellers and discuss the comments there
- Pages 6-8 Hand records with expanded comments to be handed out at the end

CARD PLAY 101 – DEFENCE: SIGNALS

When leading or playing to partner's low card lead you have no choice; there is but ONE correct card. But in other situations, for expert players any way:

“Every insignificant card carries a message”

Whether it be:

Attitude (should the same suit be led again?), or
Suit Preference (which other suit should be led?) or
Count (a clue to how many cards held in that suit)

A good start is to become familiar with:

Attitude Signals

When partner has led (whether the opening lead or later) and you don't need to play high to win or promote a trick play a **low** card to **encourage** and a **high** card to **discourage**

Low Like – High Hate

This method is called “reverse attitude” because it is the exact opposite to the traditional “standard attitude” method which is still preferred by some. Most (including NZB) favour reverse attitude.

There are also some who favour “Odds or Evens” which has no merit whatsoever. Avoid that.

When to “encourage”?

In broad terms when you want to tell partner:

“From what I can see it looks like it is best if you continue leading this suit”

Often (but not always) this may be simplified to:

“I have high card(s) which extend the sequence I expect you to have.”

Some specific examples:

Partner leads Ace (normally promising the King)

Encourage if you have the Queen ⑦

Also (*suit contract only*) Encourage if you have two small cards (as you can trump the third one) ①

Partner leads King (promising the Queen)

Encourage if you have the Ace or the Jack. ③ ⑥

Otherwise discourage ②

But if dummy's Jack will fall under partner's KQ, also encourage if you have the Ten. ④

Signal in a similar same way when partner leads a low card and dummy wins the trick. ⑨

How high is “high”?

Don't try to assign a number to that.

“**LOW**” is the *lowest card you hold*.

“**HIGH**” is the *highest card you can afford to part with*.

Also, if you have an **honour sequence** play your **top** honour on partner's lead. ③ ⑧

*This is **NOT** a signal.* It is saying to partner: “**this is what I have; YOU work out what to do next**”

Always make the “most positive” signal you can. Consequently any “high” signal denies holding the next higher card in rank.

Signals are NOT a substitute for thinking.

Declarer's action and dummy's cards are more reliable than any signal from partner. ③ ⑥

You may need to improvise, for example: You might want a different suit led *even though you have good card(s) in the suit originally led*. ⑤

Or (in NT only) encourage with a lot of small cards in partner's led suit, as the suit will be set up sooner than partner would be expecting.. ⑨

Board 1 Dealer N Vul none

N	E	S	W
1NT	p	3♥	p
4♥	all pass		

"Low like; High hate"

West leads an Ace. East plays ♦3 on ♦A or ♣9 on ♣A to say like or dislike respectively.

That tells West not to lead a second club but switch to (or continue) diamonds.

East will trump the third diamond to beat the contract.

1		♠ A983 ♥ KJ5 ♦ Q108 ♣ Q108	Dir: N Vul: None
♠ 1072 ♥ 92 ♦ AK64 ♣ AK64	♠ J64 ♥ 876 ♦ 53 ♣ J9753	♠ KQ5 ♥ AQ1043 ♦ J972 ♣ 2	♣♦♥♠NT N - 3 3 2 3 S - 3 3 2 3 E 1 - - - - W 1 - - - -
12			
14	2		
12			

Board 2 Dealer E Vul NS

E	S	W	N
1NT	p	3NT	all pass

High card to discourage

On ♥K lead North discourages with ♥7.

South must lead a different suit (any one will do!) next time.

Another heart lead by South would gift declarer her ninth trick with ♥J.

2		♠ QJ94 ♥ 73 ♦ 964 ♣ QJ94	Dir: E Vul: N-S
♠ A87 ♥ 982 ♦ Q872 ♣ AK7	♠ K63 ♥ AJ5 ♦ KJ105 ♣ 863	♠ 1052 ♥ KQ1064 ♦ A3 ♣ 1052	♣♦♥♠NT N - - 1 - - S - - 1 - - E 1 2 - 1 2 W - 2 - - 2
6			
13	12		
9			

Board 3 Dealer S Vul EW

S	W	N	E
1♥	X	2♥	all pass

With a sequence play top honour on partner's lead

West leads ♠A East plays ♠J so West knows declarer has ♠Q which will be set up if another spade is led.

West should lead ♦K and East can win ♦A later and lead ♠10 through South's ♠Q to beat the contract.

3		♠ 764 ♥ J984 ♦ J102 ♣ KQ8	Dir: S Vul: E-W
♠ AK2 ♥ 105 ♦ KQ5 ♣ 97532	♠ J1095 ♥ 73 ♦ A987 ♣ J104	♠ Q83 ♥ AKQ62 ♦ 643 ♣ A6	♣♦♥♠NT N - - 1 - - S - - 1 - - E 2 2 - 2 - W 2 2 - 2 -
7			
12	6		
15			

Board 4 Dealer W Vul all

W	N	E	S
1NT	X	all pass	

Encourage with 10 when Jack is going to drop

North leads ♥K and South encourages with ♥2 holding ♥10 and seeing dummy's ♥J is about to fall on the second round.

South's ♥10 will win the third round and NS make four heart tricks along with ♦A and ♠AK.

4		♠ AK6 ♥ KQ754 ♦ A2 ♣ J102	Dir: W Vul: Both		
♠ Q108 ♥ A93 ♦ J10986 ♣ AK		♠ J97 ♥ J6 ♦ KQ4 ♣ Q9753			
17	♠ 5432				
14	♥ 1082				
9	♦ 753				
0	♣ 864				
		♣♦♥♠NT			
		N - - 1 - -			
		S - - 1 - -			
		E 3 3 - 1 -			
		W 3 3 - 1 -			

Board 5 Dealer N Vul NS

N	E	S	W
1♥	2♠	p	4♠
all pass			

Discourage when a switch is required.

North desperately wants South to lead a diamond so she can get two tricks with her ♦AQ.

So, despite having good hearts, she *discourages* a heart continuation by playing ♥9 on partner's ♥10.

5	♠ 84 ♥ AKQJ93 ♦ AQ4 ♣ 94	Dir: N Vul: N-S
♠ Q53 ♥ 85 ♦ K9 ♣ AKQJ103	♠ AKJ762 ♥ 764 ♦ 102 ♣ 85	
16	♠ 109 ♥ 102 ♦ J87653 ♣ 762	
15	8	
1		
		♣♦♥♠NT
		N - 2 3 - -
		S - 2 3 - -
		E 3 - - 3 -
		W 3 - - 3 -

Board 6 Dealer E Vul EW

E	S	W	N
1NT	all pass		

Declarer's play clarifies unclear signals

South leads ♠K and will be unsure if ♠7 is high or low. East's play gives the answer. Dummy's ♠J10 guarantees another trick for East if she takes ♠K with ♠A. Failure to do that means North must have ♠A and South should continue spades.

6		♠ A97 ♥ 753 ♦ 7532 ♣ J102	Dir: E Vul: E-W	
♠ J105 ♥ 96 ♦ KQJ9 ♣ Q964		♠ 632 ♥ J10842 ♦ A64 ♣ AK		
5	♠ KQ84			
9	♥ AKQ			
12	♦ 108			
14	♣ 8753			
		♣♦♥♠NT		
		N - - - 1 -		
		S - - - 1 -		
		E - 2 1 - -		
		W - 2 1 - -		

Board 7 Dealer S Vul all

S W N E

1♠ X 2♠ all pass

"Low like; High hate"

West leads a red Ace and East plays the 6. *Not the same!*

West can see ♥5432 so ♥6 is encouraging but she can't see ♦42 so ♦6 is discouraging.

So West should lead three rounds of hearts, East winning the third one with ♥Q.

A diamond lead from East through South's ♦Q beats 2♠.

7		♠ 109642	Dir: S
		♥ 542	Vul: Both
		♦ 975	
		♣ AQ	
♠ 75	♠ J8		
♥ AKJ3	♥ Q86		
♦ AKJ3	♦ 642		
♣ 975	♣ 108642		
		♠ AKQ3	♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ NT
		♥ 1097	N - - - 1 -
		♦ Q108	S - - - 1 -
		♣ KJ3	E 2 2 2 - -
			W 2 2 2 - -

Board 8 Dealer W Vul none

W N E S

1♠ 2♥ 3♣ p

3♠ p 4♠ all pass

With a sequence play top honour on partner's lead

On ♦A lead South plays ♦Q (top of the sequence).

North knows she can now lead a *small* diamond. South wins and returns a heart through West's ♥K giving North-South the first four tricks.

8		♠ 76	Dir: W
		♥ AQ1084	Vul: None
		♦ AK54	
		♣ 95	
♠ AKJ852	♠ Q4		
♥ K6	♥ J95		
♦ 1062	♦ 73		
♣ Q7	♣ AKJ643		
		♠ 1093	♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ NT
		♥ 732	N - 2 1 - -
		♦ QJ98	S - 2 1 - -
		♣ 1082	E 3 - - 3 1
			W 3 - - 3 1

Board 9 Dealer N Vul EW

N E **S** W

1♦ p 3NT all pass

In notrumps encourage with a lot of small cards

On ♠5 lead East encourages by playing ♠2 on dummy's ♠10.

West can deduce declarer probably started with only two spades so, on winning with ♦A, West can lead ♠A dropping South's ♠K and giving East-West four spade tricks.

9		♠ J10	Dir: N
		♥ K9	Vul: E-W
		♦ QJ10954	
		♣ A92	
♠ AQ75	♠ 98642		
♥ J105	♥ Q8642		
♦ A82	♦ 6		
♣ 1074	♣ J5		
		♠ K3	♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ NT
		♥ A73	N 2 4 - - 1
		♦ K73	S 2 5 - - 2
		♣ KQ863	E - - 3 2 -
			W - - 3 2 -

Board 1 Dealer N Vul none

N	E	S	W
1NT	p	3♥	p
4♥	all pass		

"Low like; High hate"

West leads one of her Aces. East plays ♦3 on ♦A or ♣9 on ♣A to say like or dislike respectively.

That tells West not to lead a second club but switch to (or continue) diamonds.

It is possible the ♣9 is from ♣J9 alone but West should still follow ♣A with ♦A on which the ♦3 is unmistakably low. East will trump the third diamond to beat the contract.

1		♠ A983 ♥ KJ5 ♦ Q108 ♣ Q108	Dir: N Vul: None
♠ 1072 ♥ 92 ♦ AK64 ♣ AK64		♠ J64 ♥ 876 ♦ 53 ♣ J9753	
12	♠ KQ5 ♥ AQ1043 ♦ J972 ♣ 2	♣♦♥♠NT N - 3 3 2 3 S - 3 3 2 3 E 1 - - - W 1 - - -	
14	2		
12			

Board 2 Dealer E Vul NS

E	S	W	N
1NT	p	3NT	all pass

High card to discourage

On the ♥K lead North discourages with the ♥7.

If South is allowed to hold that trick she must lead a different suit (any one will do! but a spade seems the best choice) next time.

After losing to ♦A declarer has three diamond tricks and AK in both black suits.

That is only eight tricks and another heart lead by South at any stage would gift declarer her ninth trick with ♥J.

2		♠ QJ94 ♥ 73 ♦ 964 ♣ QJ94	Dir: E Vul: N-S
♠ A87 ♥ 982 ♦ Q872 ♣ AK7		♠ K63 ♥ AJ5 ♦ KJ105 ♣ 863	
6	♠ 1052 ♥ KQ1064 ♦ A3 ♣ 1052	♣♦♥♠NT N - - 1 - - S - - 1 - - E 1 2 - 1 2 W - 2 - - 2	
13	12		
9			

Board 3 Dealer S Vul EW

S	W	N	E
1♥	X	2♥	all pass

With a sequence play top honour on partner's lead

West leads ♠A East plays ♠J from the top of her sequence. That is "informative" rather than a signal.

It lets West know South has ♠Q which will be set up if another spade is led.

West should lead ♦K and when it wins she knows partner must have ♦A (as ♦J10 is in dummy as in Board 6).

East can win her ♦A and lead ♠10 through South's ♠Q to beat 2♥.

3		♠ 764 ♥ J984 ♦ J102 ♣ KQ8	Dir: S Vul: E-W
♠ AK2 ♥ 105 ♦ KQ5 ♣ 97532		♠ J1095 ♥ 73 ♦ A987 ♣ J104	
7	♠ Q83 ♥ AKQ62 ♦ 643 ♣ A6	♣♦♥♠NT N - - 1 - - S - - 1 - - E 2 2 - 2 - W 2 2 - 2 -	
12	6		
15			

Board 4 Dealer W Vul all

W	N	E	S
1NT	X	all pass	

Encourage with 10 when Jack is going to drop

North leads ♥K and South encourages with ♥2 knowing her ♥10 will be promoted when dummy's ♥J falls on the next round when North continues with ♥Q.

If declarer wins her ♥A the first or second round South's ♥10 will win the third round.

South won't have another heart to lead but a spade lead will give North-South four heart tricks in total along with ♦A and ♠AK.

4		♠ AK6	Dir: W
		♥ KQ754	Vul: Both
		♦ A2	
		♣ J102	
♠ Q108	♠ J97		
♥ A93	♥ J6		
♦ J10986	♦ KQ4		
♣ AK	♣ Q9753		
17	♠ 5432		
14	♥ 1082		
9	♦ 753		
0	♣ 864		
		♠ ♣ ♥ ♦ NT	
		N - - 1 - -	
		S - - 1 - -	
		E 3 3 - 1 -	
		W 3 3 - 1 -	

Board 5 Dealer N Vul NS

N	E	S	W
1♥	2♠	p	4♠
all pass			

Discourage when a switch is required.

North wants South to lead a diamond to get two tricks with her ♦AQ.

So, despite having good hearts, she discourages a heart continuation by playing ♥9 on partner's ♥10.

South can see from dummy it is a diamond lead which is required.

Note if North **DID** want another heart led she would overtake partner's card and lead another heart herself.

5		♠ 84	Dir: N
		♥ AKQJ93	Vul: N-S
		♦ AQ4	
		♣ 94	
♠ Q53	♠ AKJ762		
♥ 85	♥ 764		
♦ K9	♦ 102		
♣ AKQJ103	♣ 85		
16	♠ 109		
15	♥ 102		
8	♦ J87653		
1	♣ 762		
		♠ ♣ ♥ ♦ NT	
		N - 2 3 - -	
		S - 2 3 - -	
		E 3 - - 3 -	
		W 3 - - 3 -	

Board 6 Dealer E Vul EW

E	S	W	N
1NT	all pass		

Declarer's play clarifies unclear signals

South leads ♠K and should not assume North's ♠7 is a high signal.

She should look more closely and East's play gives the answer.

Dummy's ♠J10 guarantees another trick for East if she takes ♠K with ♠A. Her failure to win the first trick means North must have ♠A.

South should continue with a small spade and take four tricks in that suit along with ♥AKQ

6		♠ A97	Dir: E
		♥ 753	Vul: E-W
		♦ 7532	
		♣ J102	
♠ J105	♠ 632		
♥ 96	♥ J10842		
♦ KQJ9	♦ A64		
♣ Q964	♣ AK		
5	♠ KQ84		
9	♥ AKQ		
12	♦ 108		
14	♣ 8753		
		♠ ♣ ♥ ♦ NT	
		N - - - 1 -	
		S - - - 1 -	
		E - 2 1 - -	
		W - 2 1 - -	

S W N E

West leads a red Ace and East plays the 6. But these are not the same!

On the other hand having started with
 ♦A West can't see ♦42 so ♦6 must be
 discouraging.

A diamond lead from East through South's \spadesuit Q beats $2\spadesuit$

Board 8	Dealer W	Vul none	
W	N	E	S
1♠	2♥	3♣	p
3♠	p	4♠	all pass

North should lead ♦A with A AND K rather than hearts (and also South knows about the hearts from the bidding).

Board 9	Dealer N		Vul EW
N	E	S	W
1 ♦	p	3NT	all pass

On ♠5 lead East encourages by playing ♠2 on dummy's ♠10.

Therefore declarer probably started with only two spades so, on winning with $\heartsuit A$, West can lead $\spadesuit A$ dropping South's $\spadesuit K$ and giving East-West four spade tricks.

Card Play 101 – Signals