

Lesson 6

Cuebids (show limit raise)

2-suited overcalls (Michael's Cuebid, Unusual No Trump)

Bidding Controls (Italian Cuebids)

Trump Suit play and defense

Cuebids

- If opponents bids a suit, it is rare to want to bid that suit yourself
- Therefore it is more useful to use “cuebids” (bids of opponent’s natural suits) to have special (artificial) meanings
- By bidding, opponents are obstructing your side from reaching your best contract. Being able to cuebid their suits gives you additional ways of describing your hands to each other!
- A cuebid of an opponent’s artificial suit bid is NOT a cuebid, it’s a natural bid
- Cuebids can have various meanings depending on the circumstances... As a rule, if partner cuebids and you do not recognize the context, assume that you should answer with your most natural descriptive bid. Do NOT pass!

Examples

Limit raise or better for partner's suit

a)	<u>West</u> 1♦ -	<u>North</u> (1♠) -	<u>East</u> 3♦ = Preemptive Jump Raise <u>2♠</u> = Limit Raise or better in ♦'s
		or	
b)	<u>West</u> 1♥ -	<u>North</u> (2♣) -	<u>East</u> 3♥ = Preemptive Jump Raise <u>3♣</u> = Limit Raise or better in ♥'s

Michael's Cuebid

- A direct cuebid of opponent's 1-level bid shows a 2-suited hand, point count may vary depending on partnership agreement

<u>North</u>		<u>East</u>		
(1♣)	-	<u>2♣</u>	=	Both Majors – at least 5-5
(1♦)	-	<u>2♦</u>	=	Both Majors – at least 5-5
(1♥)	-	<u>2♥</u>	=	5-card ♠'s + 5-cards in an unspecified minor
(1♠)	-	<u>2♠</u>	=	5-card ♥'s + 5-cards in an unspecified minor

Unusual 2NT

- Similar to Michael's
- After opps open 1 of a suit, 2NT would be a very 'unusual bid' (20-21 points?), and we have other options such as double and originate
- Thus it is normal to use it to show the 2 lower suits

A 2NT overcall of 1♣

Shows 5+ hearts and 5+ diamonds.

A 2NT overcall of 1♦

Shows 5+ hearts and 5+ clubs.

A 2NT overcall of 1♥

Shows 5+ diamonds and 5+ clubs.

A 2NT overcall of 1♠

Shows 5+ diamonds and 5+ clubs.

- Responder to 2-suited overcall usually picks the suit he likes best, at the lowest level. Up the line if he likes them both. May jump (pre-emptively) based on Law of Total Tricks
- If responder is strong, he may cuebid again (!) to show a strong hand

Cuebid as Stayman

West

INT

-

North

(2♦)

-

East

3♦

Cuebid asking for a stopper

South

1♥

3♣

West

(1♠)

(P)

North

2♣

3♠

East

(P)

Cuebid showing a stopper

South

1♣

3♣

West

(1♦)

(P)

North

1♠

3♥

East

(2♥)

Cuebid after takeout double

South

(1♦)

West

Double

North

(P)

East

2♦

- When partner makes a Takeout Double, a cuebid is the only forcing response. A jump in a new suit would be invitational, not forcing.
- The cuebid in response to the Takeout Double does not promise anything specific, but is usually a good hand (at least game-invitational), which is unsure as to what strain the partnership belongs in. The doubler is expected to bid her cheapest four-card suit.

Control-showing Cuebids (“control bids”)

- Here “cuebid” has a different meaning. It is not bidding opponent’s suits, but rather bidding “controls” in side suits once a suit has been agreed. Implies slam interest
- Once a suit has been agreed, there is little point in showing new suits, so assigning a different meaning to those bids is useful.
- May either bid first round controls (Ace, void), or 1st or 2nd round controls (Ace, Kind, Void, Singleton) “Italian Cuebids”
- Partner then cooperates and does the same
- Bid controls ‘up the line’... failure to mention a control means you don’t have it...continuing to ‘cooperate’ implies you have missing control
- Can amass much information before considering whether Blackwood is needed, while still staying below game level.
- Can use when Blackwood isn’t appropriate (2 quick losers, void, not sure if strong enough to try for slam)

A bid is control-showing if:

1. A trump suit has already been established, and
2. It is a **non-jump** bid in a **new suit** at the **4-level or higher**.

1♠ — 3♠ — 4♦

1♥ — 3♥ — 3♠

1♦ — 1♠ — 3♠ — 4♥

1♣ — 1♠ — 2♥ — 3♥ — 4♦

1♠ — 2♦ — 2NT — 4♠ — 5♣

♠ A K J 7 6 4 2
♥ A K Q
♦ 3 2
♣ 3

You open 1♠ and partner bids 3♠ (invitational).

♠ Q 10 9 3
♥ J 3 2
♦ Q 5 2
♣ A Q 5

♠ Q 10 9 3
♥ J 3 2
♦ A K 6 4
♣ 4 2

Bidding Practice

- A cuebid is a bid of opponent's suit. It can have various meanings depending on the context (and unusual 2NT means 5-5 in the lowest unbid suits)
- A control bid ("control-showing cuebid" is a non-jump bid of a side suit at the 4-level or above after a suit is agreed, showing first or second round control.

Suit Play

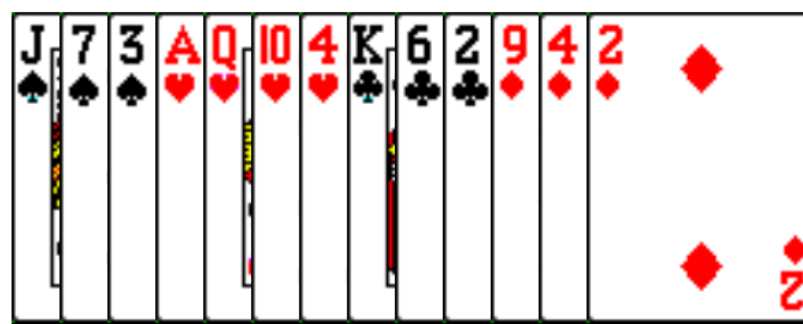
- All the principles you learned at No Trump still apply
- But of course now there is a master suit, which will control the other suits once void -> if opponents establish their suit, it's usually not a threat
- Since declaring side has more trumps than opponents, usually it is right to draw trumps (establish the trump suit) first to avoid opponents ruffing your side suit winners
- Once trumps are drawn, usually keep the remainder in reserve as controls over opponent's suit(s)

When only one trump is outstanding

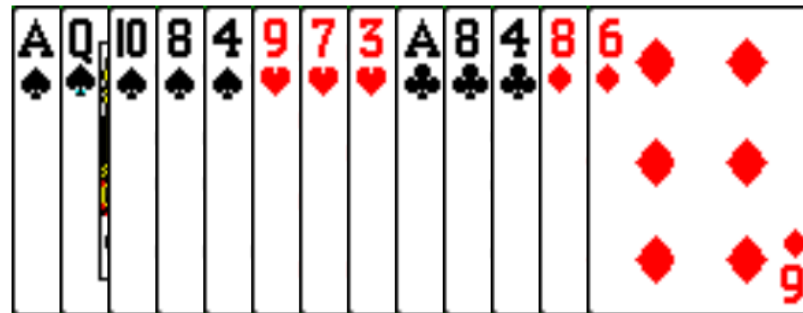
- If you can win it, it's usually right to draw it, even if you have to use 2 trumps to do so... prevent opps from getting in and doing mischief
- If the outstanding trump is high, usually best to leave it rather than using 2 trumps to draw it*
- If there are 2 outstanding trumps that are high, it is usually right to try to draw them... they may both fall on the same trick, rather than taking 2 tricks via ruffing*

When to delay drawing trumps

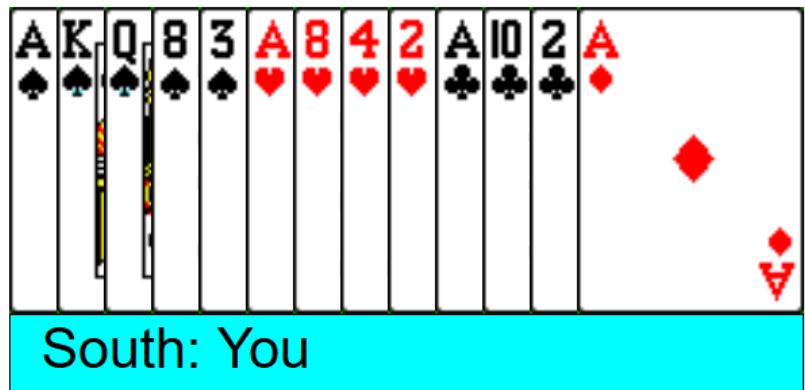
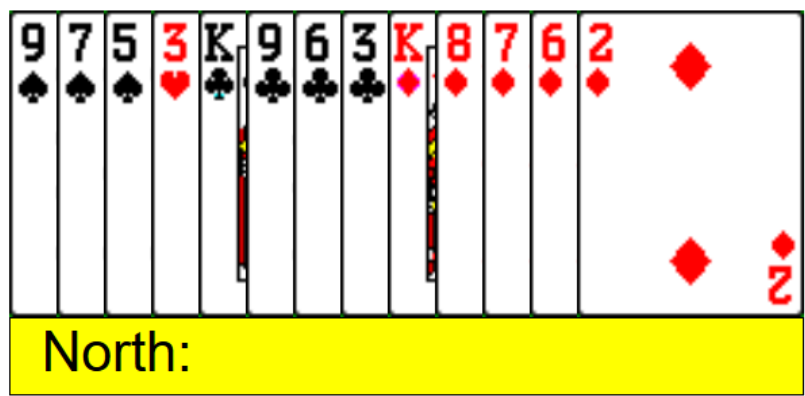
- when you need to get into the other side to take trump finesse(s)
- When you need to ruff losers in dummy (more length in hand with losers, void/singleton/doubleton in dummy)
 - **NOTE: Ruffing power is confined to Dummy!**
 - **The Declarer who takes out his own trumps immediately, under the delusion that he is making ruffing-tricks, is merely taking a few tricks early in the play with cards which he should be reserving as controls against later attacks**
- When you have immediate trump losers and need to get rid of other losers before opponents can win them (discarding on long suit in dummy)
- When trump is the only entry to dummy's long suit



North:



South: You



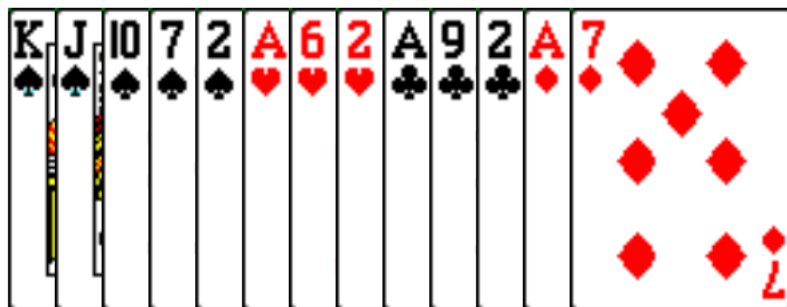
K♠	Q♠	7♠	5♠	3♠	5♥	K♣	Q♣	9♣	A♦	7♦	6♦	5♦		
													North:	



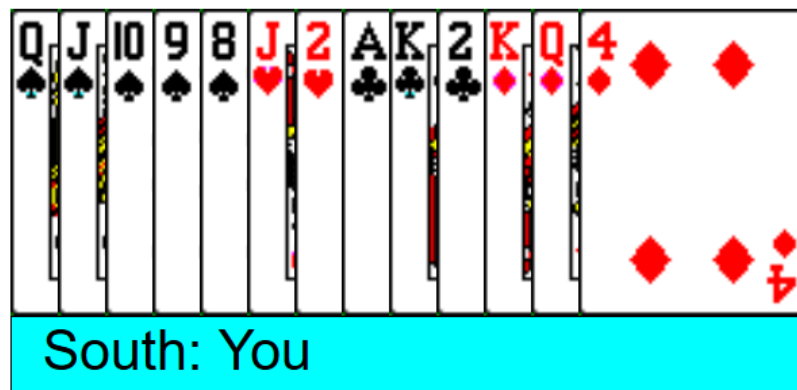
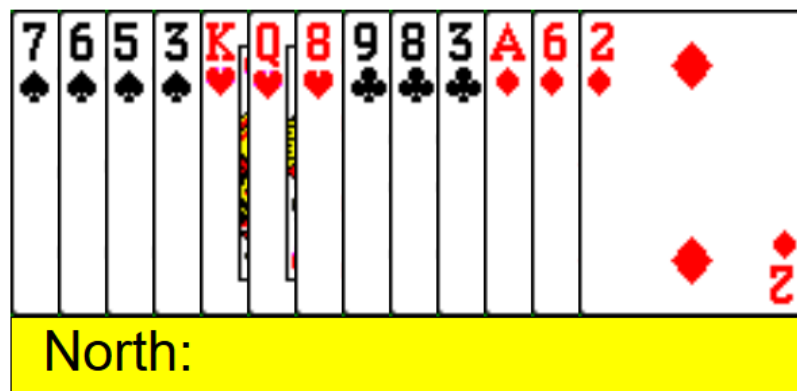
J♠	10♠	9♠	8♠	4♠	2♠	A♥	8♥	2♥	A♣	2♣	8♦	4♦		
													South: You	



North:



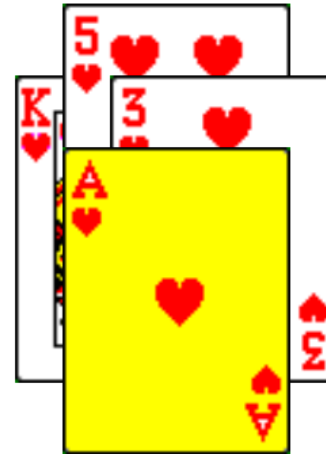
South: You



- In No Trump, tricks come from High Cards and (establishing) long suits
- In suit, tricks come mostly from high cards and ruffing in dummy
- But long side suits can be established as well
- Ruffing can help establish side suits:

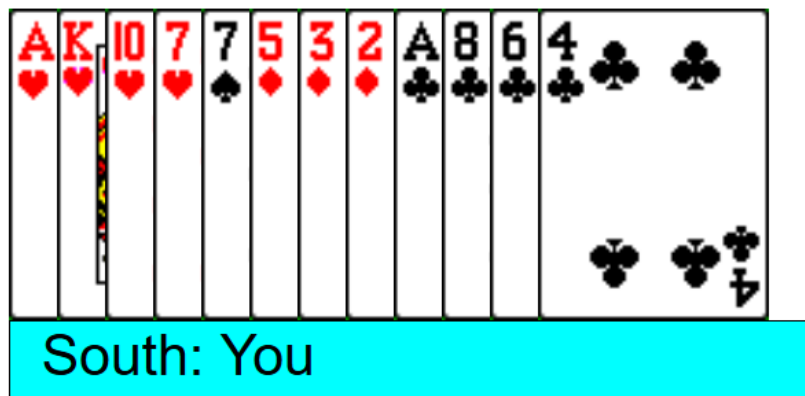


North: Dummy



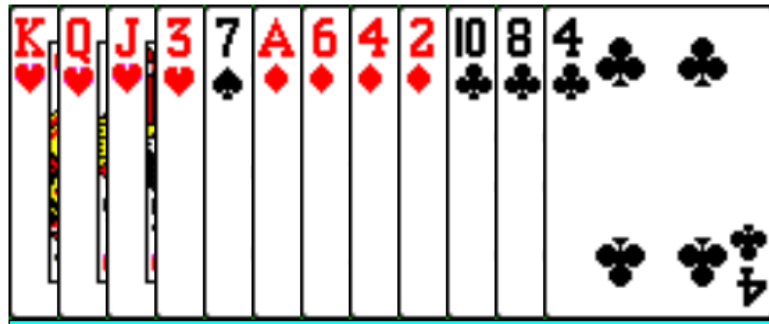
South: You

Refusing to Ruff

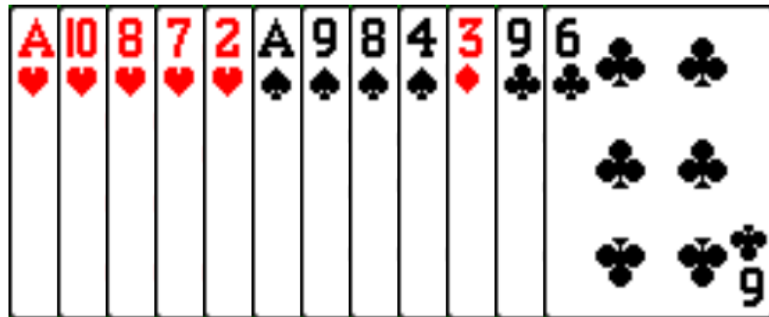
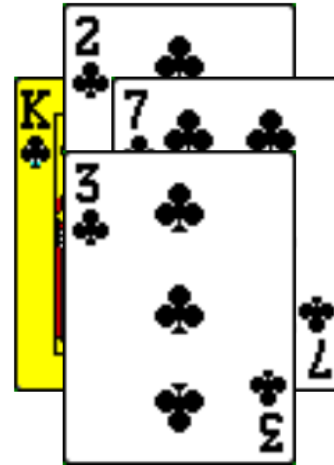


The Cross-Ruff:

refusing to lead trumps so that the trump holding in each hand can be cashed in independently by ruffing first with the one hand and then with the other



North: Dummy



South: You

More on Defense

- Defense is the hardest part of play, but vitally important
- You can increase your success by using signals/conventions in leads and play to give your partner more information about your hand
- partner may be in a better position to interpret your signal than is the Declarer, and also that even if the Declarer interprets the signal correctly, it may be of far more value to your Partner than to the Declarer

Recall against No Trump*...

The Honor Sequence Length Lead

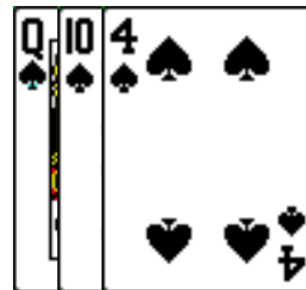
The Plain Length Lead

The Short-Suit Sequence Lead

and

The Desperation Short-Suit Lead

Recall the Rule of 11



North: Dummy



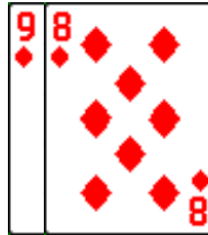
East: You

South: Declarer

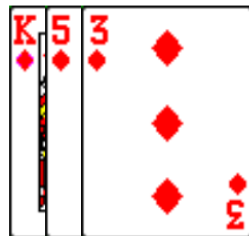
1NT South

Recall that third hand usually plays high (if it could win the trick), and lowest from touching honors

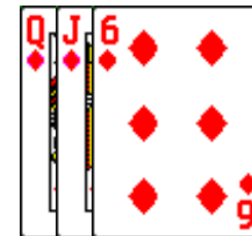
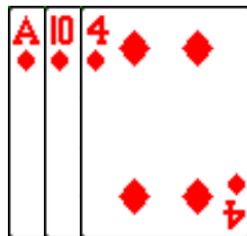
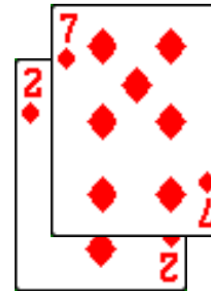
Diagram 3
Dealer: East
Vulnerable: Neither



North: Dummy



West:

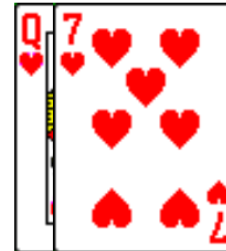


East: You

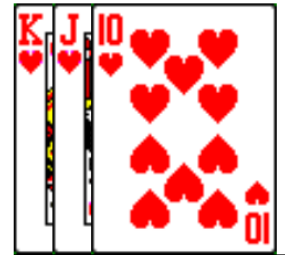
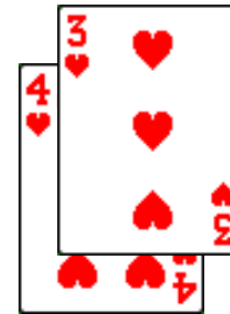
South: Declarer

3NT South

When not to play 3rd hand high



North: Dummy



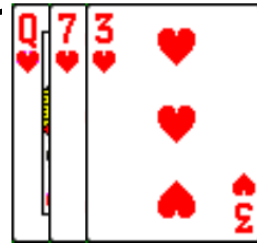
East: You

South: Declarer

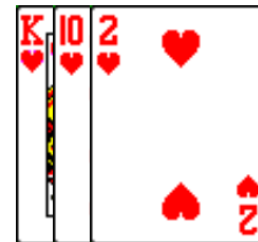
3NT South



When there is an honor in dummy that you can finesse against



North: Dummy



East: You

If your honor is *one* step above an honor in dummy, finesse if you have the *eight* or better.

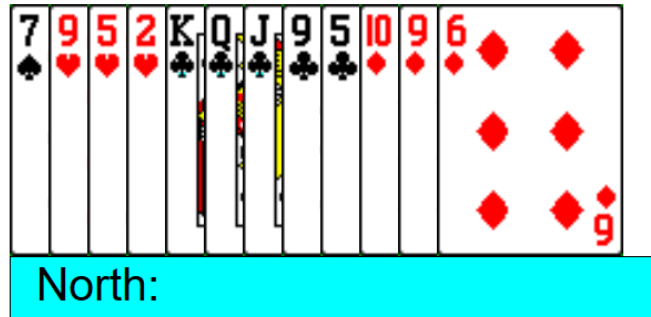
If your honor is *two* steps above an honor in dummy, finesse if you have the *nine* or better.

Else, play your highest card.

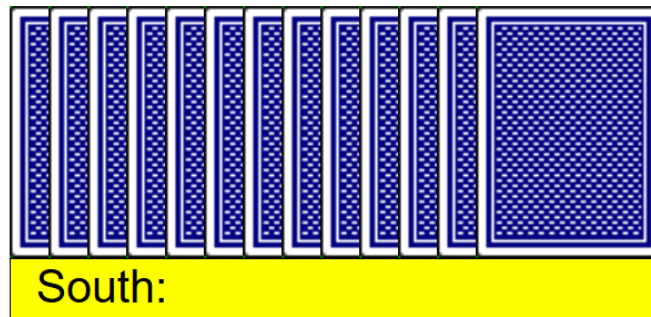
Subsequent tricks

- All these principles continue to apply
- Partner's suit should be returned whenever there is hope that the suit may become established
- When you lead back suit, play high from 2 remaining cards, low from 3 remaining cards (gives count and unblocks)*

Recall that defenders can use the hold-up to rob declarer of entries to a long suit in dummy with no outside entries

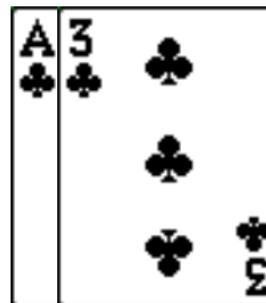


West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	3NT

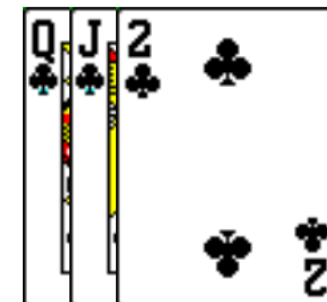


3NT South	NS 0 EW 0
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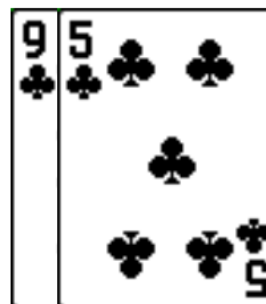
Unblocking on defense



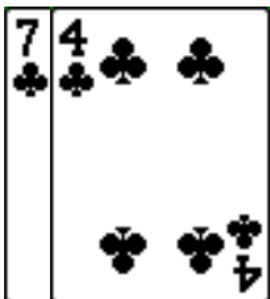
North:



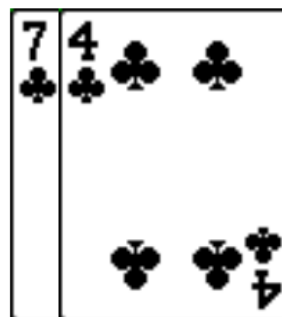
East: You



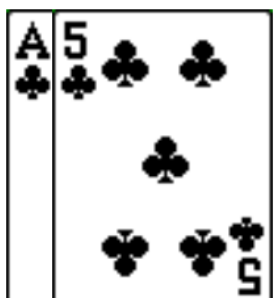
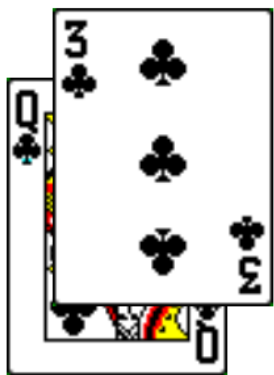
South:



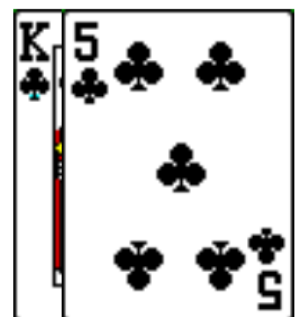
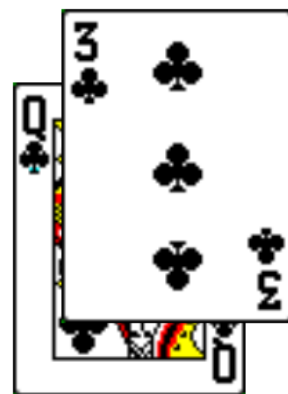
North:



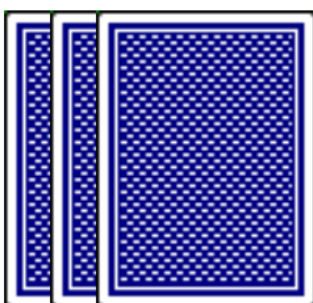
North:



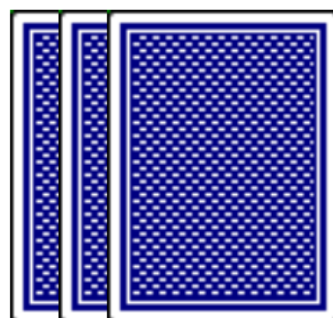
East: You



East: You



South:



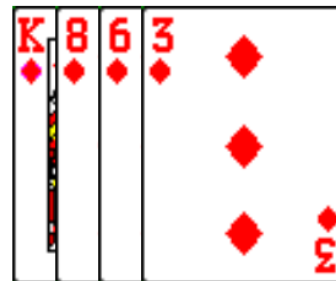
South:

Ducking or Defense

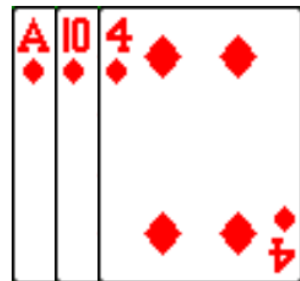
Combination H1
Dealer: West
Vulnerable: Neither



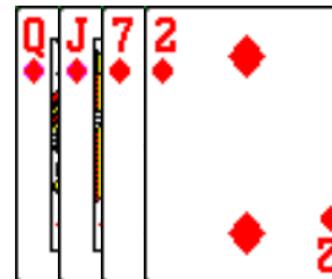
North:



West: You



East: Partner



South:

Recall that 2nd hand usually should play low



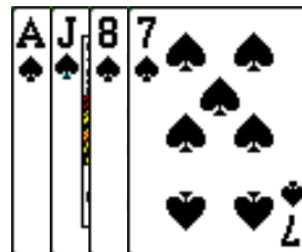
North: Dummy



West:



East:

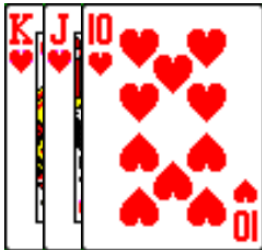


South: Declarer

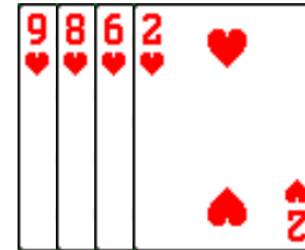
2nd hand low, but 'cover an honor with an honor'*



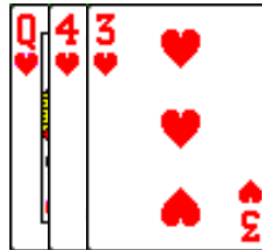
North: Dummy



West:



East:



South: Declarer

Recall it is often good to 'lead through strength' and 'lead up to weakness'

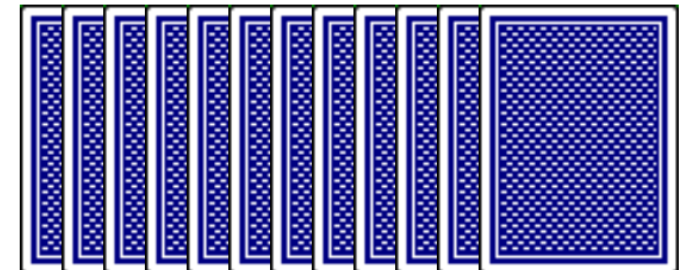
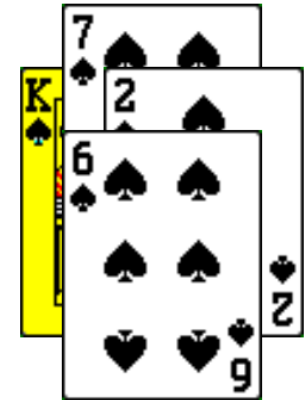
B4
Dealer: South
Vulnerable: Neither



North:



West: You

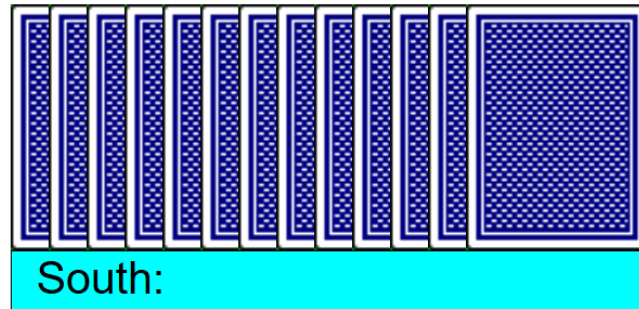
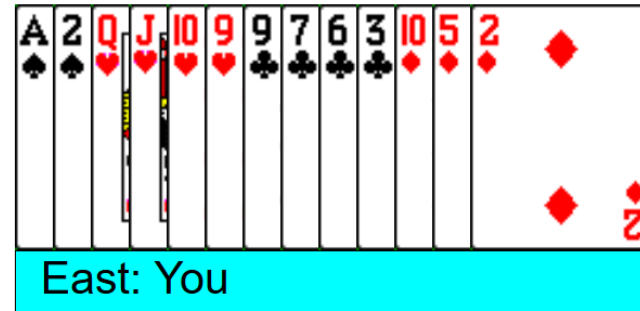


South:

Recall that it is usually best to return partner's suit.
 But sometimes switching to a different suit is best



West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	3NT



3NT South	NS 0 EW 0
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There are other reasons to shift suits...

B6
Dealer: South
Vulnerable: Neither

North:

West: You



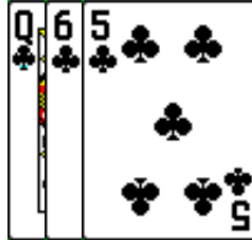
South:

Recall Leads against suit contracts

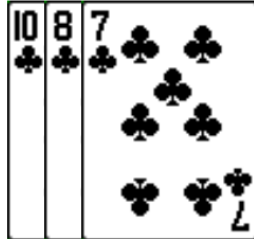
- Many aspects are the same as against No Trump, but establishing a long suit is less valuable.
- Lead from AK very nice as gives you a chance to see dummy
- Singleton lead or top of doubleton, especially in partner's suit is good (assuming you don't have a natural trump trick).
- Lead low in partner's suit if you have an honor (but do not underlead Ace)
- Top of a sequence (of 2) is good
- 4th best (but don't underlead Ace)
- Top of nothing (more common than in NT as even more important not to lead away from tenaces)
- Trump leads (discussed in previous lesson)

Declarer's ruffing power means rules from NT have to be adjusted...

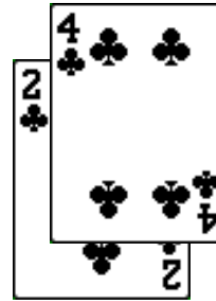
C
Dealer: South
Vulnerable: Neither



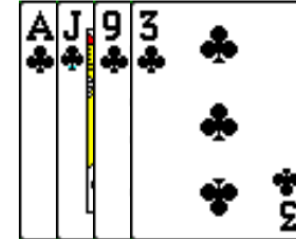
North: Dummy



West: Partner



South: Declarer



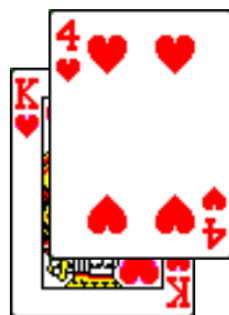
East: You

Signals are the same, but taking ruffing into account

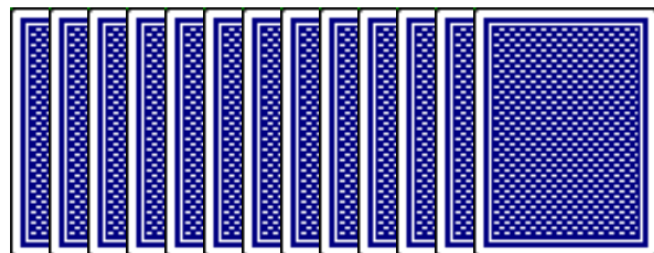


North:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	4♦



East: You



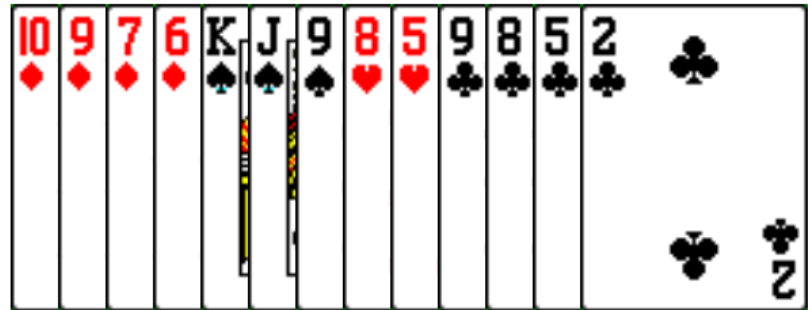
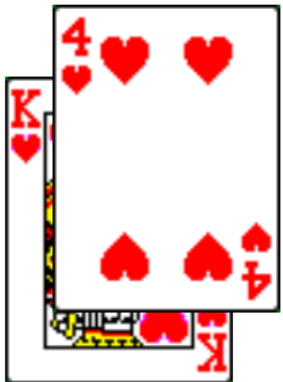
South:

4♦ South	NS 0 EW 0
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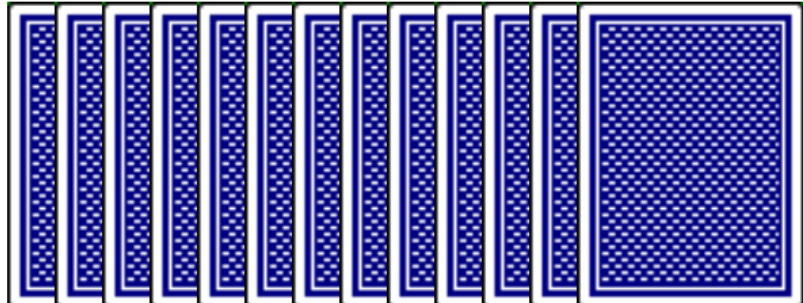


North:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	3♦



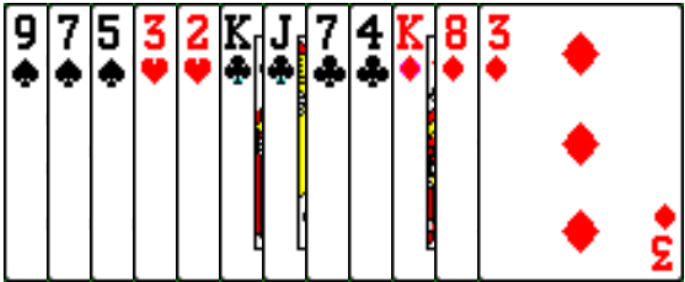
East: You



South:

3♦ South	NS 0 EW 0
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Board 7
 Dealer: South
 Vulnerable: Neither

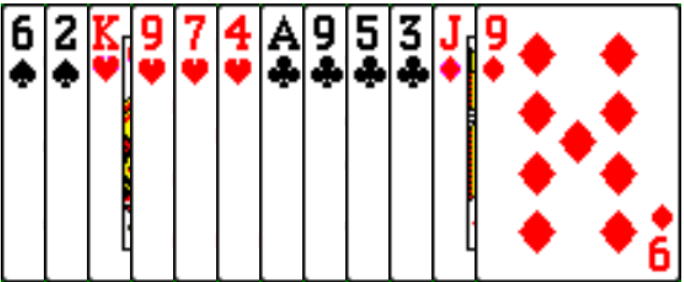
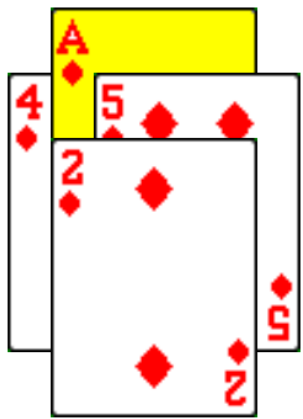


North:

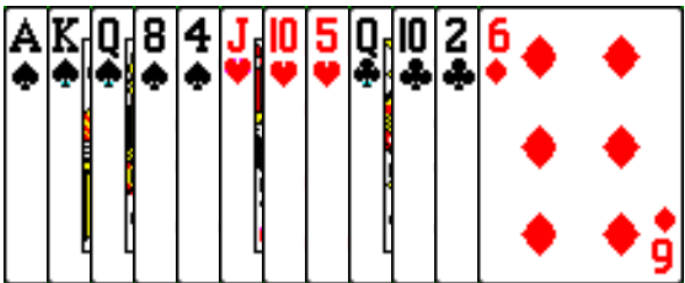
West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	4♠



West: Partner



East: You



South:

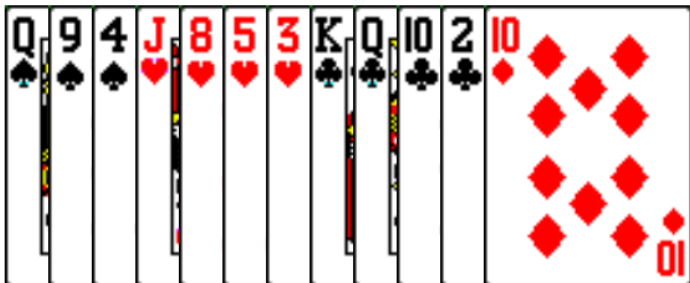
4♠ South	NS 1 EW 0
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Suit shifting in suit contracts

At no-trump contracts you are almost always obligated to return the suit opened by Partner unless

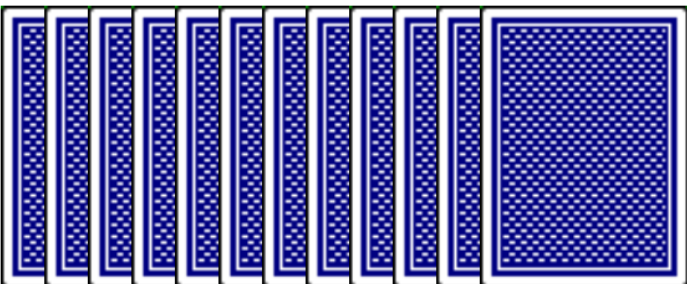
- (1) you are fairly confident that your own suit can be established more rapidly,
 - (2) it is very obvious that Partner's hand contains no entries,
 - (3) you are desirous of eliminating an entry in Dummy,
 - (4) it is clear that the whole suit is banked against you.
- Against suit contracts other considerations must be taken into account

Board 1
 Dealer: South
 Vulnerable: Neither

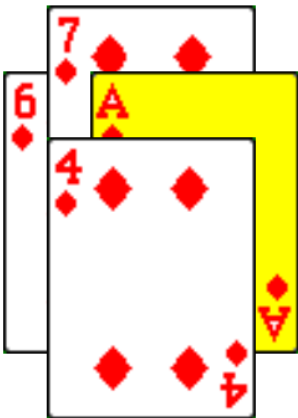


North:

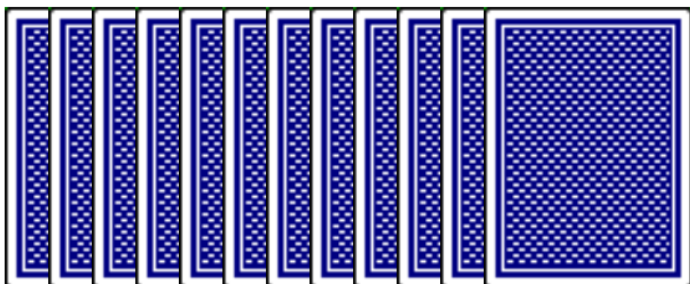
West	North	East	South
			4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	



West: Partner



East: You



South: Declarer

4♠ South	NS 0 EW 1
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Board 2
Dealer: South
Vulnerable: Neither

North:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	5♦

West: Partner



East: You

South: Declarer

5♦ South	NS 0 EW 0
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Board 3
 Dealer: South
 Vulnerable: Neither

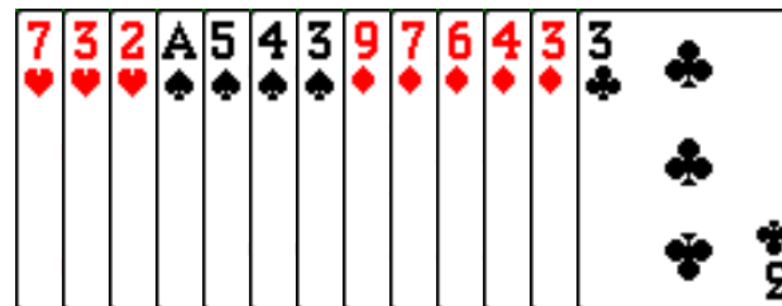


North:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	4♥



West: Partner



East: You



South: Declarer

4♥ South	NS 0 EW 0
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The Forcing Game

- Since Declarer's hand is usually the strongest, it is often good to put the lead back in his hand
- This includes by making him ruff
- In addition, if he is forced to ruff too many times he may 'lose control'
- Also defender's trumps may be promoted into winners

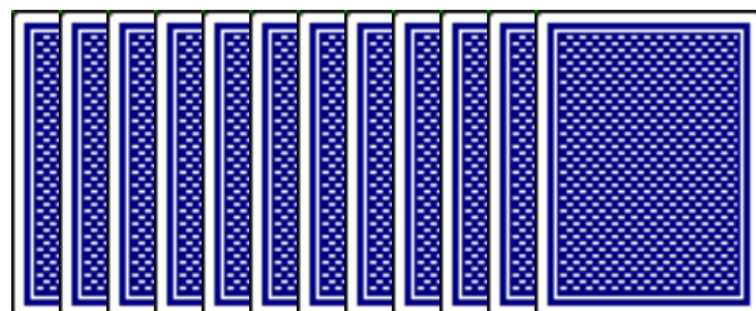
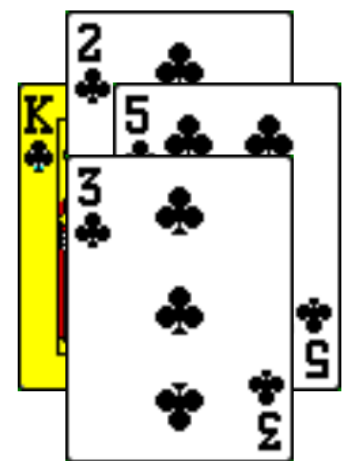
Board 1
Dealer: South
Vulnerable: Neither



North:



West: You



South: Declarer

Forcing can also promote defender's trumps

Board 3
Dealer: East
Vulnerable: Neither

North:

West	North	East	South
		1♠	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West: You



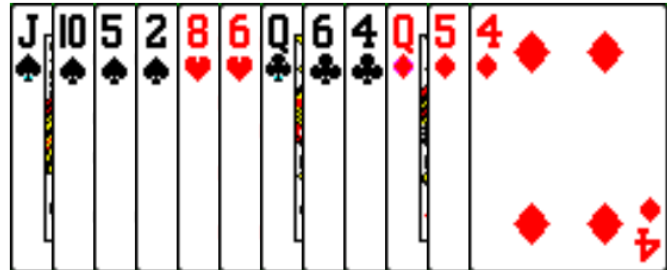
East: Partner

South:

4♥ South	NS 0 EW 0
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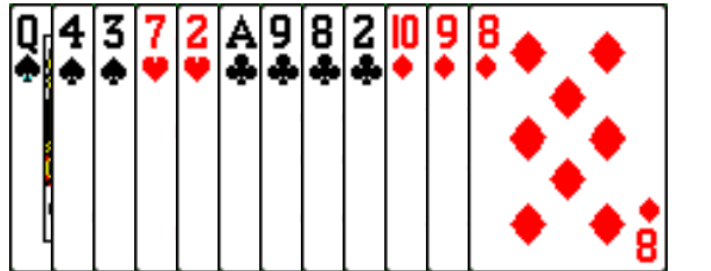
Do not 'force' if it will establish an honor in dummy

Board 4
Dealer: South
Vulnerable: Neither

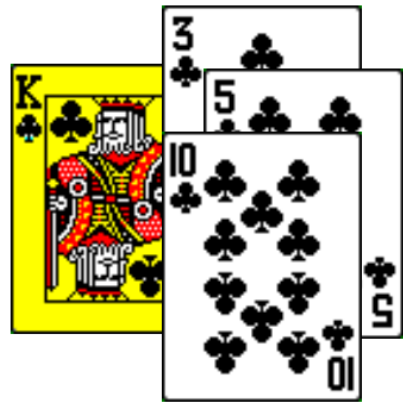


North

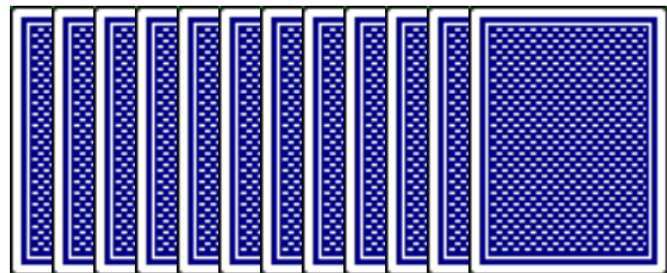
West
Pass



West



East



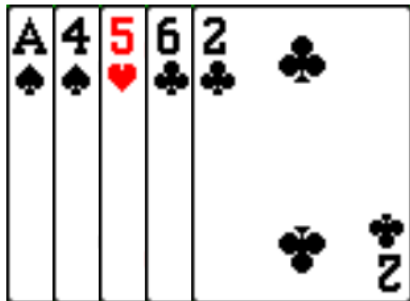
South

4♠

Do not give declarer a 'rough and slough'

- Leading a suit which declarer can ruff in hand is neutral or good
- Leading a suit which declarer can ruff in dummy is just helping him
- Leading a suit which he is out of in both hands is doing him a huge favor, as he could never have led that suit himself. He'll ruff in Dummy and throw away a loser from hand
 - *exception: force dummy to ruff in order to eliminate an entry

Board 1a
 Dealer: South
 Vulnerable: Neither

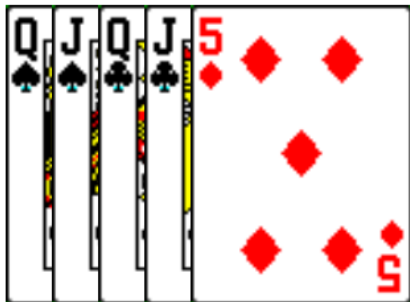


North:

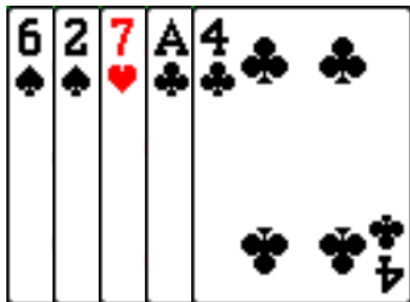


West: You

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	4♥

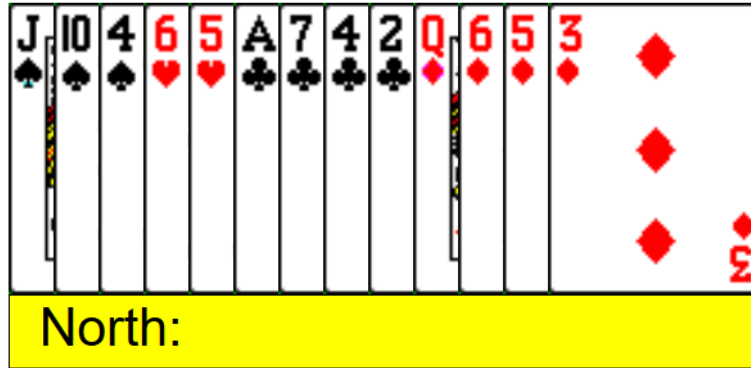


East:

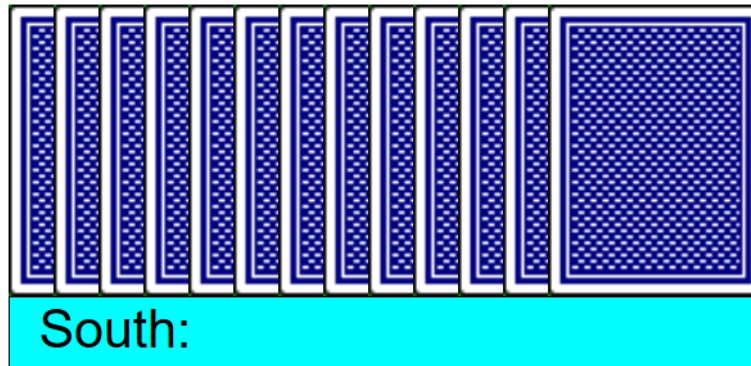


South:

Leading Trump

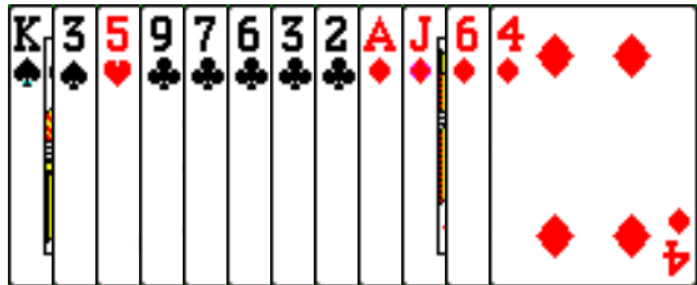


West	North	East	South
			4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	



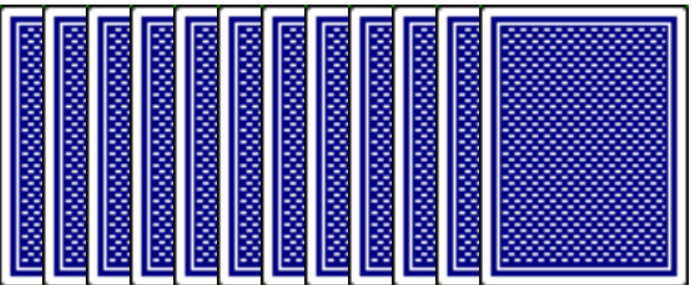
4♠ South	NS 0 EW 0
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Board 2
 Dealer: South
 Vulnerable: Neither

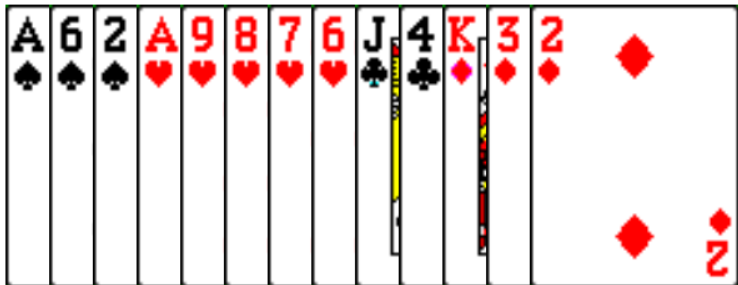


North:

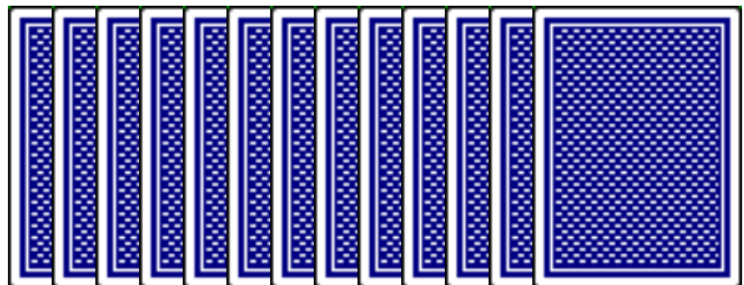
West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	4♠



West: Partner



East: You



South:

4♠ South	NS 0 EW 0
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Summary - bidding

- Opening 1 of a suit, various no trump openings, weak preemptive openings, strong (22+) openings
- Responding to these bids, including Stayman and Jacoby Transfers
- Overcalling – including 2 suited overcalls, cuebidding opponent's suit
- Takeout and negative doubles, redoubles, lead-directing doubles
- Ace-asking (Blackwood, Gerber), bidding controls, quantitative NT raise
- Balancing, light 3rd/4th seat openings, Law of Total Tricks in Competitive bidding

Summary - cardplay

- Promoting honors, establishing long suits, finesses
- Unblocking, safe/dangerous hands, ducking
- Principles of No Trump and Suit declarer play
- Opening leads, attitude and count signals

Future Topics - bidding

- None needed—consider:
- 2/1 system
- Texas Transfers
- 4th suit forcing, New Minor Forcing
- Support Doubles, Responsive Doubles
- Jacoby 2NT
- Exclusion Blackwood
- Splinters
- Inverted Minor raises
- DON'T (Disturb Opponent's No Trump)
- Help Suit Game Tries

Resources

- Bidding Drills: by Richard Pavlicek <http://www.rpbridge.net/rpbp.htm>
- Barbara Seagram's *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know* (\$3.65 used on Amazon.ca)

Future Topics - cardplay

- More advanced versions of topics already covered
- Suit preference signals
- Endplays
- Squeezes
- Counting, drawing inferences
- Coups
- Matchpoint strategy
- Psychology

Resources

- Practice! Hart House Club Tuesdays 630-930, Rosedale Glen every other Thursday 630-930, Toronto Bridge (Yonge & St. Clair, has supervised beginner games), online (BBO), arrange supervised play
- Lessons: slower paced ones at Toronto Bridge (\$), Private tutor (\$\$\$), free (ask club member)
- Software: should complete parts 1 and 2 of ACBL's Learn to Play Bridge (free) and then go to Bridgmaster 2000 (ask Director). Andrew Robson Bridge app (\$\$\$) (bidding and cardplay)
- Books: Watson's Play of the Hand (google 'hondo bridge'), Cardplay Technique or the Art of Being Lucky by Mollo (ask Director)
- Many more links on the Hart House Bridge Club webpage <http://sites.utoronto.ca/bridge/links.html>

But...

- While there are always fancy new things to learn, most hands will come down to the basics from lessons 1-2:
- -do we have enough for part-score, game, or slam?
- -do we have a major card fit, and if not, could we play in No Trump, or as a last resort, in a minor suit fit?
- -maximizing winners by promoting honors, establishing long suits, finessing. Getting rid of losers by ruffing or discarding on winners in Dummy

Thank you!

- For your attention and dedication
- You've learned a lot about the world's most sophisticated and enjoyable card game, and one of humankind's greatest Mind Games...
- Now it is up to you to keep practicing, and above all have fun! (and be nice to your partner)

