FALSE CARDS

As Declarer, you can lead defenders astray by playing "false cards"—cards that give a misleading impression.

Standard false cards include winning with the **higher** of two touching honors. (For example, LHO leads 4th best heart and RHO plays the jack. If you have both the King and the Queen, win with the King. LHO will not know whether you or RHO has the Queen.) **If you have AK in a no trump contract, win with the king, not the Ace**. (Most players know that you would hold up if the Ace is your only stopper, so winning the 1st trick with the Ace is unlikely to mislead them.) **If you have an AK against a suit contract, win with the Ace, not the King** if RHO plays an honor. LHO would not underlead an Ace and RHO would not duck with an Ace against a suit contract, so the Ace is the card you are known to hold. If you have 3 touching honors, the middle honor is usually most deceptive to win 1st trick.

When you want to encourage LHO to continue leading a suit, play the card that is closest to, but above, the card that is played by your RHO. If you have any hidden, lower spot cards, LHO may think that RHO is starting an echo (to encourage). Do not play an excessively high card or LHO will know you are false-carding. Conceal cards lower than the one led or lower than played by 3rd hand: it messes up the opponent's signals.

When you want to discourage LHO from continuing a suit, playing your lowest spot card is usually best —particularly if it is lower than the card that RHO plays. Sometimes you need to drop an honor to hope to mislead LHO. (For example, holding Qx opposite Jxx in dummy with LHO leading the Ace, drop the queen. LHO will not know whether you have Queen singleton or are false-carding with Queen doubleton. If LHO leads an Ace and you have Kx, but dummy has length and you KNOW that RHO has a singleton, go ahead and drop the King if you have somewhere else to discard your remaining loser in that suit. LHO may switch.)

Sometimes in no trump, you should win with a higher card from a tenace holding (e.g., Ace instead of Queen) if you will be taking a finesse that might lose to LHO and you cannot stand a shift. By winning with Ace, you encourage LHO to believe that RHO has the Queen and to continue that suit if your finesse loses.

Sometimes your best chance to win an extra trick is to encourage an opponent to "cover an honor with an honor." **If you want an honor covered, lead the highest honor you can. If you do not want an honor covered right away, lead the lowest of touching honors**. (For example, from J10, lead the jack if you want it covered right away. Lead the 10 if you are hoping your opponent will duck the first time.)

When you need to "steal" one trick in no trump or another contract, it is usually best to lead low through the person with the honor (toward an honor in your hand or in dummy) so that the opponent will (hopefully) play second-hand low automatically. **Occasionally you will lead a weak suit yourself (in no trump) to try to discourage the opponents from switching to it**.

If you are trying to avoid one opponent getting a ruff, you can "fake" a finesse. Play Jack (from QJxxx) toward Kxx in dummy. If LHO has Ace, s/he may duck, hoping partner has Queen. **You can also attempt to avoid a ruff by keeping one card hidden until it is too late.** (You need to discard on the 4th round of clubs with AQ8 opposite KJ102. Play Ace and then Jack. Then play 10. If RHO thinks partner has the queen, he will not ruff. Then you can get to dummy in another suit, play the King of clubs, and get your discard.

Sometimes you must create the impression of a singleton in order to get an extra trick. If, for example, you have KQxx in dummy opposite a void in your hand, lead a low card from dummy, and hope that RHO has the Ace and plays it (worried you have singleton jack). If you have AQxxx in a suit in dummy and you have Jx, and

RHO is known (from the bidding) to have the King, Play the Ace and then play a low card toward your jack, trying to look like you have a singleton.