

Regional Lesson

Common Card Play Techniques

		Tricks	Answer
A 4 3	Q 7		Lead a low card toward the queen.
Q J 6	A 7 4 2	3	Lead low toward the queen-jack.
J 6 5	A Q 10 3	4	Lead a low card, finesse the ten. If it succeeds, next finesse the queen. It is wrong to lead the jack.
A Q 6 3	J 5 4 2	4	Lead low toward the queen, and if it holds, play the ace.
A Q 6 3	J 5 4 2	3	You first play the ace.
A K 3 2	J 8	3	Lead low from dummy toward the jack.
Q 10 5	K x x	2	First play a low card from dummy, since East may rise with the ace or jack. Then finesse the ten.
K J x	x x x		Lead to the jack, followed by leading to the king.
A K 10	9 5 4		Very small chance but finesse the ten.
A 10 2	Q 7 5	2	Lead low toward the queen. If it loses to the king, lead low to your hand and finesse the ten.
A J 9	5 4 2	2	Lead low from your hand and finesse the nine. If it loses to the king or queen, next lead low from your hand and finesse the jack.
Q x x x	A 10 9 8		Repeated finesses with the ten, the nine, and the eight.
Q J 5 3	K 7 4	3	Hope for a 3-3 split, unless you can force out the ace using one of your honor cards. Best play: lead low toward the queen-jack, and repeat the finesse.
K 6 5 4	Q 7 3	3	The only chance to win three tricks in this combination is to guess which opponent holds the doubleton ace.
A Q 10 5	K 2	4	Cash the king, then finesse the ten.
A Q 10 4	K 7 3	4	Cash the ace and king, then lead toward dummy's queen-ten. If West follows with a low card, go for the drop.
A 10 9 8	K J 5 2	4	There are two ways to finesse. You should at least lead toward the ace or king to see if the stiff queen will drop before finessing.

North: J 9 2

South: Q 4 3

To make one trick, declarer finesses against the ten. Of course, the ideal is to do nothing at all until the opponents open the suit, in which case one trick is certain. But if declarer is driven to take the initiative, he should at least gain some sort of advantage. It costs nothing to lead toward the queen. The next player may hold a doubleton honor or a singleton ten or may simply misplay. All of this improves the chances, and if nothing materializes, there will still be time to finesse against the ten.

North: A J 9

South: 6 5 3

We are trying to get two tricks from this combination. The finesse against the ten must be taken first. If the nine falls to the king or queen, a second finesse develops against the other court card. The order of precedence cannot be reversed because the second finesse does not exist until the first against the ten has succeeded.

A Full Deal

Vulnerability: None. **Dealer:** West.

North

♠ Q 5 3
♥ K 9 6 5
♦ Q 6 2
♣ 8 5 3

South

♠ J 8 7
♥ A J 8 7 4 2
♦ K J T
♣ 4

The Auction

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♦	2♥
Db1	3♥	Pass	Pass
Db1	Pass	Pass	Pass

Lead 2 diamonds.

This deal occurred in the final rounds of a club championship. This is when mistakes get made. Did you ask about leads? This lead is either from a singleton (giving east 6 diamonds) or from 3 small. Would east have bid on with six diamonds headed by the Ace?

What do we know from the auction. N/S have 17 points. East west have 23 with west has (7)8-11 points [doubled a 2 level overcall] and east 12-16.

Spades are either 5-2 or 4-3. Would a passed hand west have bid 2 spades. So if we initially give west 3-2-4-4 shape. West if 4-1-3-5 and no easy opening lead sequence.

East wins the Ace and plays the K Clubs. So east didn't return a diamond, so knows partner can't ruff because of length or no hearts. West played an encouraging 2 clubs.

So to make this contract we need to avoid 3 spade losers.

North

♠ Q 5 3
 ♥ K 9 6 5
 ♦ Q 6 5
 ♣ 8 5 3

West

♠ A 9 6 2
 ♥ 10
 ♦ 9 8 2
 ♣ A J 9 7 2

East

♠ K 10 4
 ♥ Q 3
 ♦ A 7 4 3
 ♣ K Q 10 6

South

♠ J 8 7
 ♥ A J 8 7 4 2
 ♦ K J T
 ♣ 4

False Cards

		Answer
Q J 8 4 3	9 2	The queen is led. Declarer, looking for the king, will think it quite likely that West has it bare. South would probably finesse anyway, but may be tempted to play for the drop. East should mislead him by falsecarding with the nine. If declarer believes him, he will read the king as guarded and will be much more likely to finesse.
10 9 6	J 5 4	Declarer is known to have 5 cards. 4 is lead from dummy, partner plays small and declarer wins the Q. We need to play the 9 in an attempt to induce the lead of the Jack from dummy.
T 9 4	J 6 3	We are on lead knowing South has a five card suit. Partner has K or Q and a small one. We should lead the 9 hoping to induce a backwards finesse we declarer thinks partner has the T
QTx	AJ9	When declarer plays small towards dummy, play the Q.