

DEFENCE 11 – LEADING PARTNER’S SUIT

Dealer: E

Vul: Nil

	♠ K92		
	♥ J8753		
	♦ AQJ		
	♣ K4		
♠ QJ8		♠ 643	
♥ 4		♥ AQ10	
♦ K9874		♦ 653	
♣ 10952		♣ AQJ6	
	♠ A1075		
	♥ K962		
	♦ 102		
	♣ 873		

E	S	W	N
1C	P	1S (1)	2H
P	P	X	P
2NT	P (2)	P	P
P			

(1) Denies a 4 card major

(2) Knowing there is at least a 9 card heart fit, South probably should compete to 3H

What should South lead?

When you are leading partner’s suit and have 3, 4 or more to an honour, you generally should lead LOW/4TH HIGHEST. You generally should not lead the honour. There are occasional exceptions to this:

- (1) When you think you need to unblock for partner, or
- (2) You think you need to keep the lead and finesse dummy

Generally, if you lead an honour, it’s from a sequence (KQJ, KQ10 etc) or from a doubleton.

On this hand, South’s lead of the HK proved disastrous. East now has 3 stoppers in hearts. If South had led the 4th highest card, North’s J would be taken by East’s Q, but when North gets in later, they can lead a heart through the A10 to West’s HK and keep East’s heart tricks to 2.

When you plant a lone honour on the table (I call it “honour plonking”), if the opponents have a higher honour, your honour will clearly be eaten up. If you lead low, even if you finesse yourself, your honour might still get a trick later. Look at this layout:

	109876	
54		AQJ
	K32	

If you plant the K on the table, East gets 3 tricks. If you lead the 2, East does get an initial free finesse, but you later will score the K in a no trump contract (so long as partner or declarer later lead the suit not you again!) and East only gets 2 tricks.