

## DEFENCE 15 – IMPROVING DEFENSIVE SIGNALS II

♠ 84  
♥ Q86  
♦ 96  
♣ A109853

♠ Q  
♥ AK1032  
♦ KQJ1087  
♣ 6

W	N	E	S
P	P	4S	5D
P	6D	6S	X
P	P	P	

6SX by East. South leads HA, H7 from North and sees the HJ played from East's hand.  
What now?

Did you try a diamond switch? Maybe these are the hands:

	♠ -	
	♥ 975	
	♦ A5432	
	♣ QJ742	
♠ 84		♠ AKJ10976532
♥ Q86		♥ J4
♦ 96		♦ -
♣ A109853		♣ K
	♠ Q	
	♥ AK1032	
	♦ KQJ1087	
	♣ 6	

Declarer ruffs the diamond switch, draws the one outstanding trump, cashes CK, crosses to dummy's S8 and throws the losing heart on the CA.

Dealer: W  
Vul: Nil

	♠ -	
	♥ 9754	
	♦ A532	
	♣ KQJ74	
♠ 84		♠ AKJ10976532
♥ Q86		♥ J
♦ 96		♦ 4
♣ A109853		♣ 2
	♠ Q	
	♥ AK1032	
	♦ KQJ1087	
	♣ 6	

6SX by East. South leads HA, H7 from North and sees the HJ played from East's hand.  
What now?

These were the actual hands. South incautiously tried to cash HK and was ruffed. The East declarer drew the outstanding trump, crossed to the CA, threw the diamond loser on the HQ and made their contract.

**When you lead A from AK and find a protected Q in dummy (ie a queen that won't fall under the AK), your partner should give COUNT to help you judge whether your K is cashing or not.**

I prefer REVERSE COUNT (high-low for an odd number, low-high for an even number). On the lead of the A, North should play the 4 showing an even number. South can see East then either has Jxx or J in hearts. The singleton J is much more likely on the bidding and play so South should find the diamond switch and put the contract down. If declarer is clever enough to throw the HJ from HJxx, just congratulate them and move on to the next hand.

East had a very difficult hand to bid here:

You don't like 1S as you could be passed and miss 4S (partner just needs 1 spade).  
You don't like 4S as it is an underbid and you could miss a slam (give partner 2 aces and a spade).

Probably the best choice is 2C – despite the 9 count (!), your hand is probably worth 10 playing tricks.

Over a 4S pre-empt, I like to play this agreement:

1. X is takeout
2. 4NT is a 2 suited hand. If partner bids clubs back on this hand, you bid 5D showing diamonds and hearts.