

LEADS REFRESHER SESSION

By Baloney Bill

Let's start with a brief recap of the leads that I believe to be the safest and most instructive to partner, and in some cases most lethal to opposing declarer. In order of preference, usually...

- Top of sequence (3+ cards), e.g. lead the Jack if you have the J 10 9, or J 10 9 8, or J 10 9 8 7...
- Lead partner's suit, if partner has competed in the auction; which card? E.g. you hold the 7 and the 4; more examples to follow...
- Lead opponents' trump suit when they readily agree on it, e.g. 1S – P – 2S – P – 4S – P – P – P
- Top of nothing, e.g. lead the 9 if your holding in that suit is 9 5 3 2;
- Bottom of something, e.g. lead the 3 if you have a high honor (e.g. A, K or Q).
 - The two previous bullets relate to the "BOSTON" lead system (Bottom of something; top of nothing).
 - If you lead a 2, 3, or 4, you possess an A, K, and/or a Q. If you lead a 7, 8, 9 or 10, that's your highest card in that suit; if you lead a 5 or a 6, your top card in that suit is the jack (this isn't considered a BOSTON lead, but it seems to work out well for me and my partners, so consider adding it to your repertoire).
 - Another related note: If you have two touching honors, lead the higher honor, not the lower one (e.g. holding the KQ, lead the KING, NOT THE QUEEN. Holding the A and K, lead the ACE, not the king.)
- Top of sequence (2+ cards), e.g. lead the A if you have the K; lead the Q if you have the J; I like the AK example much better than the QJ example; why? _____
- Fourth from longest and strongest. I'll let you look this up, and then hopefully ignore it. Too many people choose this lead and partner has no idea how to interpret it, and even if partner interprets it correctly, it may not be nearly as helpful as any of the above leads.

OK, some practice. You are on lead with the following hands (S, H, D, C). Circle a good lead in each case.

Hand 1. Partner opens 1H, overcalled by opps' 1S – 2S – 4S. You were silent.

K 8 2 8 2 10 9 8 5 Q J 6 3

Hand 2. Opps bid a 4S contract uncontested. Your hand: 9 7 5 3 A 8 3 A J 10 5 4 2

Hand 3. Opps are playing in a 3H contract, uncontested. Your hand: A K 5 4 3 6 J 5 4 J 9 7 2

Hand 4. Contract = 3C opps, uncontested Your hand: K 8 2 8 7 5 10 9 8 5 Q 6 3

Hand 5. Contract is 6S, uncontested. Your hand: 7 4 K 4 3 2 K 7 6 3 9 7 4

Hand 6. Contract is 6H. Partner overcalled your LHO's 1H opening bid with 1S. 3 2 K 4 3 2 K 7 6 3 9 7 4

Hand 7. Contract is 3NT, uncontested. Your hand: K 10 7 5 3 8 7 6 7 5 3 7 4 2

Hand 8. Contract is 3NT, uncontested. Your hand: K 10 7 5 3 8 7 6 7 5 3 A 4 2

Hand 9. Contract is 3NT, uncontested. Your hand: A K 5 Q 10 8 6 7 5 A 9 4 2

Hand 10. Contract is 2 diamonds. Partner overcalled opp's 1D opening bid with 2C. Your hand:

J 8 5 2 Q 10 8 7 6 J 8 4 2 (no clubs)

Hand 11. Opps' contract is 7NT. Your hand: A K 10 9 8 7 4 3 2 Q 3 2 2

Hand 12. Opps' contract is 5NT. Your hand: K Q 4 10 9 7 5 3 J 7 2 Q 9