

Tidbit 6

“ Cover an honour with an honour (generally)”

Interpretation: This relates to a finessing situation where a defender plays a higher honour card (covering) when an honour card is played before her with the aim of promoting another card in that suit in her hand or in her partner’s hand to become a winner.

For example, if declarer leads the J of a suit from her hand and the AQ of the suit are in the dummy, the defender playing before dummy covers the J with the K if she has it in the hope of promoting the 10 or another card in the defenders’ hands. There are many examples of when it is right to “cover an honour with an honour” in these finesse type situations. There are also many instances when it is not. In deciding her action a defender should always try to determine whether the honour card she uses to cover has the possibility of promoting a trick for the defence or whether that honour card could eventually make a trick itself. Whatever her decision she needs to make it early rather than noticeably pausing when declarer leads her card which gives the game away. (Pausing when holding worthless cards of no potential value is unethical and is to be avoided!).

Example:

West	North 24	East
South		South

♠1076
♥7
♦KQ762
♣AQJ8

♠K54
♥10432
♦J
♣97632

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	-	2	-	-
S	-	-	2	-	-
E	3	6	-	5	3
W	3	6	-	5	6

Bidding: You are sitting South with Nil vul.

West	North	East	South
1S	2H	3D	3H
4D	4H	4S	

North finds an excellent lead of the AD and then gives you a ruff. You lead a heart which West wins with the AH and ruffs the QH in the dummy before leading the 10S. Do you cover? You should not cover because partner had only 2 x spades originally and there is no card in her hand you can promote by covering. Since you have already ruffed declarer may now go wrong and play the AS for fear of losing to the KS and succumbing to another diamond ruff. The full hand follows below. East’s bid of 3D enabled North to find the best lead of the AD whereas a direct bid of 4S might have elicited a heart lead or a trump lead from North. Against that, 6D actually makes!

Dir: West
Vul: None

♠82
♥KJ9865
♦A94
♣K10


♠1076
♥7
♦KQ762
♣AQJ8

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	-	-	2	-	-
S	-	-	2	-	-
E	3	6	-	5	3
W	3	6	-	5	6

11
13
12
4

♠K54
♥10432
♦J
♣97632

Merry Christmas!



I hope these Tidbits have been useful. They will continue in the New Year.

Exercise 1:

North(declarer) opened 1D, you (East) pre-empted 2S, South doubled and North bid 3NT. You led a spade to partner's JS and declarer's QS. Declarer leads the KH which you win with the AH and lead your KS to partner's 3S and declarer's AS. Declarer now leads the QD towards the AJ7 of diamonds in the dummy. Do you cover?

	East
	♠KT7652
	♥A2
	♦K652
	♣6
♠8	
♥98753	
♦AJ7	
♣QJT9	
	South

Exercise 2:

West ♣K85

South ♣QJT

On the same board you are now West. Declarer has lost just the AH and has won, apart from the AS and QS, 4 x heart tricks and 3 x diamond tricks and is now in dummy. The cards remaining in your hand and dummy are shown. Declarer leads the QC from dummy at Trick 11. Do you cover?

Answer to Exercise Tidbit 5:

Dir: East
Vul: N/S

♠A43
♥4
♦A1072
♣K7642

♠1096
♥62
♦K643
♣AJ83

North 18

♠K852
♥KJ53
♦QJ5
♣Q10

♠QJ7
♥AQ10987
♦98
♣95

	♣	♦	♥	♠	N
N	1	1	3	1	1
S	1	1	3	1	1
E	-	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	-	-

The end position is shown again below. Declarer plays the 9D at the 11th trick and then can easily win a further trump trick. Nine tricks are won as if by magic by means of a rather obscure play called a trump coup where declarer has to reduce the trump length in her long suit to the same number as the opponent playing before her as well as ensuring this same opponent is forced to play before her in the end game.

Positional play is so important in bridge and advanced plays rely on it. Trump coups are not a play many would be familiar with but something for you in the future, perhaps?



S----	S----
H----	H K J
D 10 7	D J
C 7	C----
S----	
H Q 9	
D 9	
C----	