



(5) QJ9 (declarer – leads the Queen)

1084

\*K75

A632

*Do not cover with the King. If you do, declarer will win with the Ace and then play towards Jack 9 and finesse the 9, making all 3 tricks. If you do not cover the Queen with the Ace then when declarer next plays, say the Jack, **now** you cover. Declarer now has to lose a trick to your partner's 10. **The general principle is that when declarer leads one of two touching honours you cover the second one and not the first.** [Note that this principle does not apply when you can see that declarer has 7 tricks on top in 3NT and if he has the Ace then ducking the Q when you can see QJ will give him 2 tricks and the contract. Now your only hope is that your partner has the Ace and covering the Queen with the King will allow you to lead partner's suit before his entry to it (the Ace) is gone. Equally, if it is beneficial for your partner to play your suit rather than you play his, you can duck the Queen – when partner wins with the Ace they should also be able to see that the only hope of beating the contract is if you have the King and they can defend accordingly].*

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(6) QJ9

764

\*K105

A632

*This time, cover with the King because unlike hand (5) it is you and not your partner who has the 10 and it will win a trick on the 3<sup>rd</sup> round*

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(7) KQ102

\*A96

J84

753

*Declarer's strategy clearly is to play towards the KQ10x and hope to guess right where the Ace and the Jack are. He will usually start by playing towards the KQ102 and play the King if you play small. If you play the Ace on either the first or second time he plays towards KQ102 he cannot go wrong. So you should play low each time. Now when you follow low on the second round, declarer does not know who has the Ace, and who the Jack, and will get it wrong 50% of the time.*

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(8) KQ102 \*A84  
J96 753

*Again, declarer's strategy clearly is to play towards the KQ102 and hope to guess right where the Ace and the Jack are. Again he will usually start by playing towards the KQ102 and play the King when your partner plays small. If you cover the King with the Ace then he will later play towards Q102 and finesse the 10, playing for your partner to have the Jack. But if you do not cover the King with then when your partner follows low on the second round, declarer again does not know who has the Ace, and who the Jack and will get it wrong 50% of the time*

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(9) AJ10983 \*Q75  
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Declarer leads a small card to the Jack and has no other entries to the AJ10983 – what do you play?

*If your partner has the King then declarer may be able to finesse the 10 next time and catch their King under the Ace – so you make one trick only if you win with your Queen. If you do not win with your Queen then again you will make one trick if your partner has the King – so you have nothing to lose by not playing your Queen. But if declarer has got **the King and 2 or 3 others?** Then you lose a trick by not winning with your Queen. But if declarer has only got **the King and 1 other** and you win with your Queen he can then overtake the King with the Ace and make the rest of the tricks i.e. 5 tricks in total. If you do **not** win with your Queen then his strategy fails as if he overtakes the King with the Ace you will still have your Queen to stop him running the long suit i.e. he will make 2 tricks instead of 5. So do not cover his honour (the Jack) with your honour. The same principle applies if declarer plays away from AJ10983 to the 7 in his hand – you should normally not capture the 7 with your Queen.]*