

# The Smith Echo

By Dorothy Hayden Truscott (USA)



*Dorothy Hayden Truscott, of New York City, was a bridge teacher, author, and mathematician. She spent most of 15 years working on a historical novel about early Manhattan under the Dutch. She was one of the greatest women players of all time. Her record in open bridge is unparalleled by any other woman: she was runner-up in the 1965 Bermuda Bowl and bronze medalist in the World Open Pairs in 1966. In the women's game she won four world titles. The author of several bridge books, her many contributions to bidding theory include splinter bids and DOPI (Blackwood responses after interference).*

The last major innovation in signaling came forty years ago when suit-preference signals were introduced. But in all that time there has been a serious gap in the signaling methods available to the defenders. My BOLS tip, a modification of a suggestion by T. R. H. Lyons of England, is an attempt to fill that gap.

Suppose West leads the spade four against 3NT, and sees this:

	<i>Dummy</i>	
	♠ 9 7	
<i>West</i>		<i>East</i>
♠ A 10 8 4 2		♠ J
	<i>Declarer</i>	
	♠ K	

Dummy plays the seven, East the jack, and declarer the king. Who has the queen? West can't tell. If he gets the lead in some other suit, should he try to cash his spades or should he wait for partner to lead the suit?

My BOLS bridge tip is this:

**BOLS TIP:** *Against notrump, defender's first spot card, unless it is essential to give count, should indicate attitude to the opening leader's suit.*

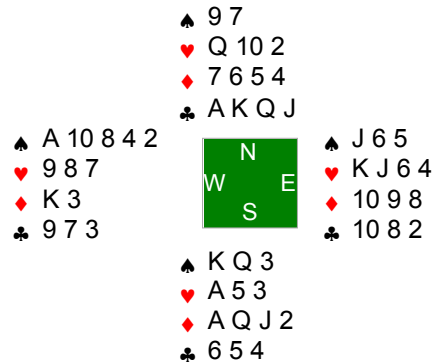
	♠ 9 7 ♥ Q 10 2 ♦ 7 6 5 4 ♣ A K Q J					
♠ A 10 8 4 2 ♥ 9 8 7 ♦ K 3 ♣ 9 7 3	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> </table>	N	W	S	E	♠ Q J 5 ♥ K J 6 4 ♦ 10 9 8 ♣ 10 8 2
N						
W						
S						
E						
	♠ K 6 3 ♥ A 5 3 ♦ A Q J 2 ♣ 6 5 4					
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>			
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	1 ♦			
Pass	3 NT	All pass	2 NT			

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West leads the spade four against 3NT and declarer wins East's jack with the king. Declarer leads a club to dummy. East should play the ten of clubs on this trick, meaning: 'I love your lead, partner. Please continue.' (Note that a count signal in clubs would hardly be of much use here.) Declarer takes a diamond finesse and when West wins the king he cashes four spade tricks for down one.

Now suppose that the East and South cards had been slightly different:

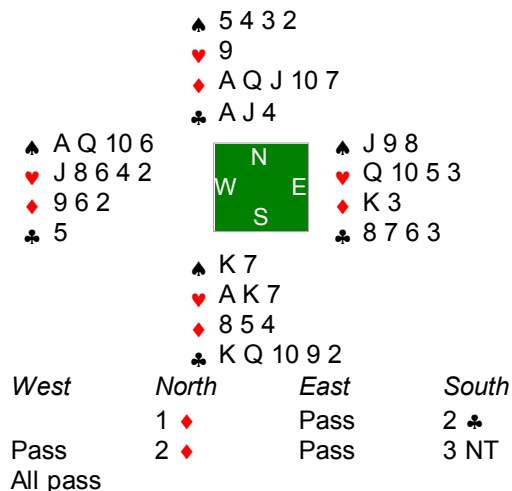


The bidding is the same and West, who has the same hand as before, makes the same opening lead and sees the same dummy. Again declarer wins the spade jack with the king and leads a club to dummy. This time, however, East can't stand a spade continuation from partner so he contributes the club two.

Declarer takes a diamond finesse, losing to the king. West now knows he can't afford to continue spades from his side of the table, and he exits with the nine of hearts. East grabs the trick, returns the spade six, and the contract fails by two tricks.

Note that in both these cases West would have been on a complete guess without the 'attitude' signal. And if he had guessed wrong, declarer would have made both games.

The opening leader should also use the same attitude signal. In the situations already given he should play the club nine at the second trick to emphasize that he wants his suit continued. But sometimes West will want to discourage his own suit:



West elects to lead the heart four against 3NT. Declarer takes East's queen with the king and tries a diamond finesse. If West wanted hearts returned he would play the diamond nine on this trick. If he were lukewarm about the matter he might play the six.

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With his actual hand, however, West is most anxious for a shift and should play the two. East wins with the king and can beat the contract with a spade shift. If he blindly continues hearts, declarer will make eleven tricks.