



Lesson 17 Teacher's Notes

Signalling in Defence

Aims

- To introduce the concept of Signalling in defence
- To clarify the situations where we can signal
- To explain the Reverse Attitude signal: Low encourages, High discourages

Content

- 1 Introduce the concept of the Defensive Signal
During play you are NOT permitted to pass partner information by talking or gesturing - only by the size of the card you play.
If you like the suit he has led you cannot tell him so by smiling or shaking his hand, but you can choose to play one card rather than another
- 2 Introduce the High-low signalling method:
When partner leads an honour card: a low card **encourages** partner *to continue the suit led*
a high card **discourages** that suit *and suggests a switch*
An **encouraging attitude signal** says “partner go on with this suit” and is made with the **lowest card**
You use it when you have a honour in partner's suit.
A **discouraging signal** says “partner, try a switch to another suit” and is made by playing your highest card you can afford. This time you have no useful cards in partner's suit
(There are other ways of signalling – ‘standard’ and ‘odd and even’ – but this is becoming the most popular and we start with it)
- 3 Emphasise that the Attitude Signal is made **only** when **partner** leads an honour card:
We cannot signal attitude when a high card is led by declarer or dummy
- 4 Explain how a card is “high” or “low” only in context.
To “read” a signal you have to “examine the pips” – i.e. look to see which small cards are on display.
Help partner out by making your signals as clear as possible – when encouraging partner to continue the suit play the lowest card you can afford.
- 5 **Emphasise the difference between leading and signalling**
When we **lead**, a low card is positive, promising one or more honour cards
and when we **signal** a low card is also positive, promising high card(s) in the suit.
- 6 Introduce the low- high signal that tells partner we may be able ruff.
When partner leads an **ace** (usually from AK) against a trump contract play low from a doubleton to **encourage** him to continue. Then we can make a trick by **ruffing** the third round
- 7 Introduce the concept of the Reverse Attitude **Discard**
When you can no longer follow suit you must play a card of another suit. This is called **discarding**.
It is another opportunity to give a signal:
if you discard a low card it says “I have something in this suit” - an **encouraging** discard
if you discard a high card it says “I have nothing in this suit” - a **discouraging** discard.