

## Opening Leads and Partners Signals – Part 1

The best opening leads are often honor card sequences. Here are some common sequences with partner signaling responses described. We use standard carding here except A from AK.

### AK – Lead the Ace to promise the King.

**Partners Carding Response** – You want to give a positive response (high spot card) when you have the Q or a doubleton against a suit contract.

#### What should partner play on the A with these holdings?

Q73

73 in a Notrump contract

73 in a Suit contract

### KQ – Lead the King to promise the Queen.

**Partners Carding Response** – You want to give a positive response (high spot card) when you have the A or J. Having either card makes this a suit worth attacking.

#### What should partner play on the K with these holdings?

J73

A84

83

A5 (Trick Question) – Consider overtaking the King and leading back the suit depending on what dummy looks like.

Other Honor Sequences – Lead card in **Bold**.

**Q** J x, **J** T 9, **T** 9 x

Special Honor Sequences for NT – Lead card in **Bold**.

K **Q** T 9, A **K** J 10 – These are special sequences where we are only missing one honor in a large sequence. If partner has the J in the first sequence or the Q in the second sequence, we want them to play it immediately so we know we can run the suit without blocking it. Conversely if partner does not play the missing honor on opening lead we know declarer has it and we switch to another suit waiting for partner to get in to lead our suit and capture that honor.

### Be Careful - High and Low Cards can be Relative

If your partner plays the 6 on your opening lead of an A, is it encouraging or discouraging if dummy holds 10432? If you hold the 5 it must be discouraging (or a singleton!). Confirm partner's play against your opening lead and the dummy to make sure their signal is what you think it is.