YOUR PARTNER LED. IT IS YOUR PLAY.

Sharing Sunday afternoon hands on Monday afternoon's lessons with Linda has been an eye opener for me. While the general level of play has improved consistently, and while bidding has also improved, the one thing that very few players have caught on to has been the subject matter of this lesson, WHICH CARD TO PLAY WHEN PARTNER LEADS A SUIT.

Most of us know that when on lead, if we lead a suit that contains a sequence, we lead the top of the sequence, and if we are still on lead we play the lowest card in the sequence at our next turn. You are defending a no trump contract and hold Q J 10 9 7. You lead the queen, and if declarer lets you hold the trick, you play the nine. This way partner knows that it is safe to unblock his king.

But if partner leads to you, and you have this holding, you play the 9, the **lowest of the touching cards**. If the eight is in the dummy, you play the seven. When it forces the ace or king, partner will know that you have all the cards in between.

Partner leads the 5 of hearts against a no trump contract, and this is what you see.

DUMMY

4 3

YOU

Q J 7

Play the Jack. If you play the queen, partner will think declarer has the jack and will not continue the suit. When you play the jack, partner knows two things about your holding. He knows that you might have the Queen, but he knows for certain that you do not have the ten.

I was playing this morning in an internet game, and partner led the 3 of diamonds against a suit contract. This is what I saw:

DUMMY

K 9 4

ME

Q 10 8 7

Dummy played small, and I played the **SEVEN,** as all these cards are equal. There was no reason to play the Queen because partner did not lead away from an ace, playing against a suit contract. My play was rewarded. Partner held the king and jack, and the poor little SEVEN forced the ace. Partner knew that I held all the intermediate cards, because if declarer had any of them, he would not have wasted the ace.

This rule is simple and easy to follow. All that you have to do is remember to do it.