

COVERING HONORS WITH HONORS: YES OR NO? By Maritha Pottenger

- 1) Cover an Honor with an Honor ONLY if there is a chance to PROMOTE a card in your hand, or in your partner's hand.
- 2) Cover the LAST of touching honors (if any)
- 3) It is almost never right to cover an honor in the opponents' trump suit. Examples follow.
Dummy has **QJ9** and Declarer leads the Queen.

You hold **K743** and play next after dummy. Do you cover?

How would you feel if you played the King and partner's singleton Ace took the trick? How would you feel if you played the King and Declarer took the Ace and then finessed your partner's 10?
Do NOT COVER the Queen. Cover the LAST of touching honors (the Jack in this case).

Dummy has **QJ104** and Declarer leads the Queen.

You hold **K932** and play next after dummy. Do you cover?

How would you feel if you played the King and partner's singleton Ace crashed against it? How would you feel if you played the King on the Jack (2nd round) and Declarer's Ace was doubleton?
Do NOT cover the Queen. Do NOT cover the Jack. DO COVER the 10 (promoting your 9).

Dummy has **QJ109** and Declarer leads the Queen.

You hold **K843**. Do you cover?

DO NOT COVER. You have nothing to promote. Your partner has nothing to promote.

The only exception is: in a trump contract, if Declarer's Ace is doubleton and Declarer only has ONE entry back to dummy. When Declarer uses the one entry and then plays the 10, you COVER (to prevent Declarer from discarding a loser). Declarer can trump and promote the 9, but cannot get back to it.

Dummy has **QJ74** and Declarer leads the Queen.

You hold **K43**. Do you cover?

Do NOT cover the queen. If Declarer then plays the Jack, DO COVER THE JACK. Partner could have a 9 or 10 that will be promoted to winning rank on the third or fourth round of the suit.

Dummy has **A54** and Declarer leads the Queen from his hand.

You hold **K743** and play next after Declarer. Do you cover?

If it is a competent Declarer, do NOT cover the queen. If Declarer plays Jack next, DO cover Jack. You may be able to promote a 9 or 10 in partner's hand. If Declarer is NOT competent, cover Jack in case partner has queen.

Dummy has **AJ54** and Declarer leads the 10 from his hand.

You hold **K72** and play next after Declarer. Do you cover?

Yes, you should cover. It is likely that your partner has the Queen. If you do NOT cover the 10, Declarer will let it ride and your partner will win the queen. After regaining the lead, Declarer can play a low card to the Jack, cash the Ace and your side will get only one trick. If you cover the 10 and partner has Q9x, you will get two tricks! (The 9 is the key card here.)

Dummy has **A1042** and Declarer leads the Jack from his hand.

You hold **Q53** and play next after Declarer. Do you cover?

This is the same as the example above. You must COVER in case partner has K9x. If you do not cover, Declarer gets 3 tricks. If you DO COVER, Declarer gets only two tricks.

Dummy has **AJ93** and Declarer leads the Queen from his hand.

You hold **K104** and play next after Declarer. Do you cover?

You must COVER. If partner has 8xxx, you are promoting partner's 8 to win the fourth round of the suit. If you do NOT COVER, Declarer will win all four rounds of the suit.

Dummy has **AJ54** and Declarer leads the 9 from his hand.

You hold **K104** and play next after Declarer. Do you cover? If so, with which card?

You must COVER the 9 with the 10 (NOT the King). If you duck completely, Declarer will let the 9 ride to your partner's Queen. The next time Declarer leads the suit from his hand, he will get THREE TRICKS. If you cover the 9 with the 10, it will force the Jack from Dummy which loses to partner's Queen. Now, if partner started with Q8x, your side will get TWO TRICKS.