

## THE ANXIOUS ACE By Buck Buchanan

As defenders, we frequently play our top honours, especially aces, with too much haste and too little thought. One of our challenges is to try to hold onto our aces (and kings) until we have the best of reasons for playing them. Here's an example:

S 72  
H KJ43  
D 94  
C 107643

S 65  
H A987  
D 1065  
C Q982

S AKQ1084  
H Q105  
D Q3  
C J5

S J93  
H 62  
D AKJ872  
C AK

1S                      2D

Pass                  Pass                  2S                  3D

All Pass

Opening lead S 6.

West ruffs the third round of Spades and returns a trump. Declarer can now count 8 tricks in the minors and needs to guess Hearts correctly to bring home the 3D contract. After drawing trump, declarer leads a low Heart from his hand. West plays...

...The Ace! Perhaps he was eager to take a trick.

Maybe he was afraid of not getting it at all if he waited. Could be he just didn't know what to do. In any event, West's urgent play of the Ace made Declarer's life easy.

All of us can empathize with poor West. Watching the deal unfold, however, he might have suspected that Declarer would have a problem in Hearts and been ready to play low smoothly. Very few Declarers would rise with the H King on this auction, so playing low would result in down one.

In general, playing second hand low is a useful guideline for Defenders. Exceptions are uncommon. One would be when Declarer is trying to make a contract by stealing a trick. Another when partner needs your immediate help in setting up defensive tricks.

## QUIZ BY MIKE LAWRENCE

1. Which of these Bridge Immortals acquired the most master points in tournament competition?

1. Alfred Sheinwold
2. Charles H. Goren
3. Oswald Jacoby
4. Eli Culbertson

2. Which has the highest percentage chance of happening?

- A finesse for a queen
- Six cards dividing three – three
- Taking two tricks with 432 opposite the AJ10

3. Which U.S President achieved near expert status as a bridge player?

- John F. Kennedy
- Dwight D. Eisenhower
- Harry S. Truman

4. Which of the following holdings represents ONE QUICK TRICK?

- QJ10
- AQ7
- KJ7
- KQ6

5. If you open three spades when vulnerable, how many tricks should you expect to take in your own hand?

- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9

6. Which distribution is dealt most often?

- 4-3-3-3
- 4-4-3-2
- 5-4-2-2

7. Traditionally, what is the Worst sin you can do in bridge?

- Revoke
- Ruff your partner's ace

- Lead from the wrong hand.

8. Which statement is common to bridge, tennis, and golf?

- Ace
- Deuce
- Ball

## **ANSWERS TO MIKE LAWRENCE QUIZ**

1. Oswald Jacoby
2. Taking two tricks with 432 opposite the AJ10
3. Dwight D. Eisenhower
4. KQ6
5. 7
6. 4-4-3-2
7. Ruff your partner's ace.
8. Ace