


Board 2
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

Negative Discarding

	♠ 7 2		
	♥ 7		
	♦ K J 8 4 3		
	♣ 9 7 5 4 2		
♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 ♥ 6 5 3 2 ♦ A ♣ 3		♠ 6 ♥ Q 8 4 ♦ 10 9 7 5 ♣ A K 10 8 6	
	♠ 5 4 3		
	♥ A K J 10 9		
	♦ Q 6 2		
	♣ Q J		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	All pass	Pass	1 ♥
4 ♠			
4 ♠ by West			

Auction Commentary: West has just 4 losers, and wants to be in game. Since partner is already a passed hand, West overcalls the game right away, afraid that any bid lower will be passed out.

Opening Lead: ♥ 7

Planning the Defense: When North watched South play the 2nd and 3rd top ♥, they need to be sure to signal properly. Being careful to choose negative discards, (the lowest ♣ and the lowest ♦, because North doesn't want South to play a minor on trick #4), North is trying to convey that they wish partner to continue the ♥ suit. North can see the dummy, and knows they can overruff that ♠ 6.

Takeaway: The problem with negative discards is the same as the problem with a high attitude discard: partner has to be watching in order to know what to shift to!

Board 3
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

Negative Discarding

<p>♠ 6 3 2 ♥ A 8 4 3 2 ♦ 10 9 ♣ J 10 7</p>	<p>♠ Q 10 8 ♥ J 10 9 7 ♦ Q 5 4 ♣ 9 6 3</p>	<p>♠ A K J 9 ♥ — ♦ 8 7 6 3 2 ♣ 8 5 4 2</p>	<p>♠ 7 5 4 ♥ K Q 6 5 ♦ A K J ♣ A K Q</p>
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 NT	All pass	
	3 NT by South		

Auction Commentary: Opener's 2 ♣ bid is forcing -- it shows 22 or more HCP. By agreement, responder bids a 2 ♦ "waiting bid, relaying the auction back to Opener to further describe their hand. Opener's 2 NT rebid clarifies his hand as 22-24 HCP and balanced. With 5 HCP opposite the 22-24 in partner's hand, North knows that game must be bid. But with a "flat" 4-3-3-3 shape, responder doesn't bother with Stayman, and just bids 3 NT.


Opening Lead: ♥ 3

Planning the Defense: As there was no Stayman inquiry, a major suit lead is the norm. How does the 3rd hand (advancer) signal to partner? Play the 2 ♣ on the 1st trick. Declarer cannot make 9 tricks without setting up the ♥ suit, and plays another ♥. When West wins the ♥ A, East next plays the ♦ 2, and has now indicated that the only possible exit for West should be a ♠! The negative discards inferred the ♠ shift by process of elimination, and now the defense can set the contract.

Takeaway: If you can use negative discards instead of having to signal with a high spot card in your suit, it's much better. If East had instead signaled with the ♠ 9, the contract would have made, as the defense would only have scored the ♥ A and 3 high ♠s, instead of 4 high ♠s.

Board 9
 North Deals
 E-W Vul

Negative Discarding

<p>♠ 10 4 3 2 ♥ A Q 9 2 ♦ J 3 2 ♣ 7 2</p>	<p>♠ A K Q 6 ♥ J 8 5 ♦ A Q 9 ♣ J 8 4</p>	<p>♠ J 9 8 ♥ 7 3 ♦ 8 7 5 ♣ A K Q 6 3</p>	
			
	<p>♠ 7 5 ♥ K 10 6 4 ♦ K 10 6 4 ♣ 10 9 5</p>		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	All pass	
1 NT by North			

Auction Commentary: After the strong opening (and the vulnerability putting EW as vulnerable), East shouldn't overcall the ♣ suit. Whatever the final contract, East knows North will probably be Declarer. So there's no reason to direct the lead with a 2 ♣ bid.

Opening Lead: ♣ A

Planning the Defense: Discarding tells a story about the discarder's hand.
 - A low spot card says, "I do not like this suit, you had better cover it."
 - A high spot card says, "I like this suit; please lead this suit, as I have it covered."

The first discard from West is the 2 ♠, and the second discard from West is the 2 ♦. This "Negative Carding" asks East not to play either of these two suits. East must be watching, and must believe that partner is requesting a shift to a ♥.

Discarding the ♥ 9, which would be the normal attitude signal, could be costly for the defense. With that ♥ 9 discard, NS would make 3 ♥ tricks. Keeping that ♥ 9 in West's hand holds the Declarer to 2 ♥s.

Takeaway: Against a NT contract, it is often better to discard what you do not like, which will tell the same story!

Board 10
 East Deals
 Both Vul

Negative Discarding

	♠ 9 3 2		
	♥ 8 6 3 2		
	♦ K Q J 10 2		
	♣ 4		
♠ A J	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ K 5 4	
♥ K J 5		♥ A Q 10	
♦ 9 8 6		♦ 7 4 3	
♣ J 10 9 8 7		♣ A Q 6 5	
	♠ Q 10 8 7 6		
	♥ 9 7 4		
	♦ A 5		
	♣ K 3 2		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 NT	Pass
3 NT	All pass		
3 N by East			

Auction Commentary: West knows that those ♣s will likely set up for tricks. Don't try to be in a minor suit when partner opens in NT and you have enough for game. In 3NT it's easier to make 9 tricks than the 11 tricks that a try for 5♣ would require. (Look, you have 3 ♦ losers with no place to park them if you're in 5♣!)

Opening Lead: ♠ 7

Planning the Defense: When the dummy wins the ♠ J, and North plays low, South needs to give this careful thought. South has 3 pieces in ♣s, and Declarer is starting the suit to arrange for discards. South should duck the first ♣ trick, and see if partner signals on the second one. North needs to pitch the ♦ K on trick #3, screaming for a ♦ lead! This defensive shift to ♦s will kill the contract. NS will win 4 ♦ tricks and the ♣ K.

Takeaway: The discard of an honor is normally the top of a sequence denying the Ace, and promising the KQJ.