

A Lightner Double

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<https://watsongallery.ca/bridge/aaBidding/LightnerDouble.pdf>

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This is from section 5.9.5 of the book *Enemy of the Declarer*.

A Lightner double is a double of Notrump or a slam that asks for an unusual lead. Some just play 3NT or a slam not any Notrump. Some play any Notrump except 1NT.

Unusual leads are the following:

- Dummy's first side suit.
 - The takeaway here should be that leading a suit of the declaring side is an unusual lead.
- A long suit in a suit contract.
- A short suit in a Notrump contract.
- If both defenders have bid a suit, the unusual lead is the opening leader's own suit.
 - There are not enough points for the defenders to have each bid a suit, in addition to holding the dummy's first side suit.
- If the dummy has bid a suit and one defender has bid a suit, the usual lead is the defender's suit.
 - The unusual lead is the dummy's first side suit.

Example 5.30: Lead Your Shortest Suit Partner


South opens 1NT, and North bids 3NT. East doubles with the following hand.

♠73 ♥987 ♦43 ♣AKQJ109

With the Lightner double, it is likely that West finds a club lead, his shortest suit, not the usual lead of a major when the auction goes 1NT then 3NT directly.

Example 5.31: Your Longest Suit, Partner

Neither vul.

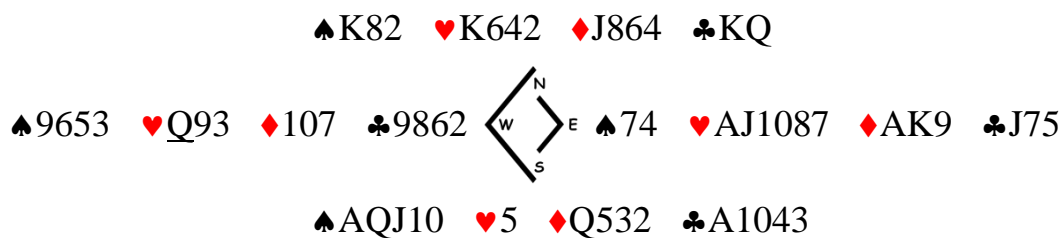
♠KJ3 ♥76 ♦KQJ10 ♣KQ97
 ♠104 ♥42 ♦32 ♣J1086432  ♠7652 ♥A53 ♦987654 ♣---
 ♠AQ98 ♥KQJ1098 ♦A ♣A5

W	N	E	S
P!	1NT	P	2♣
P	2♦	P	6♥
P	P	dbl	all pass

West would never dream of preempting with that phone-call suit. 1-800 is not toll free when the opponents are down one in 6♥. However, since the dummy has no side suit, East must want the lead of West's longest suit, a club. He may find that lead regardless, but now it is certain with the Lightner double. The declarer loses two tricks for down one and -100.

Example 5.32: Dummy's First Side Suit

Both vul.



W	N	E	S
			1♦
P	1♥	P	1♠
P	3♦	P	3NT
P	P	dbl	all pass

This hand was like a hand played during an ACBL IMP speedball tourney on BBO. East made a Lightner double asking for the dummy's first side suit, hearts, to be led. In normal circumstances, West leads the ♥3 because his partner likely needs count. However, he has no entries and is on lead only one time if he leads a small heart.

Therefore, he makes the best of it by leading the ♥Queen which wins. West then plays the ♥9 which also wins. He then exits the ♥3.

The defense gets five hearts and two diamonds for down three and +800. 4♠ has a shot, but not if 3NT doubled gets corrected to 4♠. The lead of the ♥Queen taps the declarer, and this is a problem because spades are four-two. If South gets to 4♠ without bidding 3NT, the heart suit, being just a sufficiently guarded honour, is likely not led.

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