

STANDARD Vs REVERSE CARDING IN DEFENSE

QUESTION FROM MR. R.P NARAIN

R.P.Narain's question :- I have played normal or standard carding from a long time. Finding many pairs adopting reverse carding, I too have decided to switch over and try. Are there any obvious merits/demerits of reverse carding vis-a-vis normal carding ? Which do you recommend.

SRIDHAR'S VIEWS :

There is merit in playing reverse carding in attitude signals, i.e. signaling and discarding with a SMALL card to ENCOURAGE and high card to discourage. It is based on the assumption that in a suit you are interested, you can ill-afford a high card often as a signal; eg you hold AQ102 in hearts sitting above dummy which has KJ9; you wish to ask partner to play heart, you can hardly afford the 10 as it may turn 3 tricks into 2 for defense ! It is convenient to be able to signal with 2 and retain 3 winners. Also in a suit that you are NOT interested, you can afford to throw HIGH cards to discourage; for eg you hold 876 in hearts in the same position above you can throw the 8 painlessly.

However the advantage of Reverse signals is not so huge that you should switch from a method that you and your partner are comfortable with; I do recommend that you discuss with your partner to assess the relative comfort levels and decide. I play reverse signals with most of my partners. I also find almost all top pairs in the world do likewise.

With best wishes

Sridhar