

## THE ADVENTURES OF BORIS THE IMPROVER

### Hand from club competition

This hand is board 19 from Monday the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Boris is sitting west. I have moved everyone anti clockwise by one so that the cards are in the usual position to make Boris's play easier to follow. I hope this doesn't confuse anyone.

Tabitha/Alice

♠ A Q T 9 5 2

♥ Q 6 2

♦ A T 9

♣ A

♠ 7

♥ A K J T 8

♦ J 6 5 2

♣ K Q 6

Boris/Felicity

Boris opened one heart and Tabitha thought carefully about her response. There was plenty of time to tell partner how strong she was later in the auction. The important thing was to find out more about Boris's hand. She responded one spade, the opposition stayed silent and Boris bid two diamonds. Tabitha knew that Boris bidding hearts first meant the partnership had a 5-3 heart fit and that is where the contract should be played. She was tempted to bid four hearts but remembered Boris teasing her about being timid. She decided to be brave instead and over two diamonds she bid four no trump to ask for aces. When Boris showed his ace by bidding five diamonds Tabitha bid six hearts. This would have been the final contract had Boris realised that Tabitha was taking his advice for a change. He thought that if timid Tabitha can bid six there must be a grand in it and promptly bid seven hearts. This became the final contract.

A club was led and Boris decided to try and set up dummy's spades as a come home suit. After winning the opening lead with the Ace of clubs he played the Ace and King of hearts. Satisfied that the trumps were split 3-2 and that the spades could be ruffed twice Boris played a small spades to the Ace. A small spade from dummy was ruffed in hand dropping the King on the way through. A heart to dummy's Queen took out the last opposing trump and another low spade was ruffed in hand. The King and Queen of clubs were cashed and two diamonds discarded from dummy. Boris claimed for seven with the Ace of diamonds as an entry to dummy and the Queen of spades dropping the Jack. This left the 10 and 9 as winners.

Boris's plan required the trumps to be 3-2 and the spades to be either 3-3 or 4-2 with the King as part of the doubleton. Felicity played the contract in six hearts and could afford to lose a trick if she needed to. With safety in mind she took a completely different approach. Albert led a spade which made no difference as she decided at trick one that the best chance of making the contract was to ruff two diamond losers in dummy. Felicity played Ace of Spades, Ace of diamonds, Ace of clubs and the 2 to her Ace of hearts in hand. This was followed by the King and Queen of clubs with two diamonds being discarded from dummy. A diamond was ruffed followed by a spade ruff in hand another diamond and a spade ruff left Felicity with King Jack of hearts and the Jack of diamonds. The remaining trumps were

drawn in two rounds and as the Jack of diamonds was a trick Felicity made seven hearts as a welcome unexpected bonus.

### The full deal

Tabitha/Alice		
♠ A Q J T 9 5 2		
♥ Q 6 2		
♦ A T 9		
♣ A		
♠ J 8 4 3		♠ K 6
♥ 9 4		♥ 7 5 3
♦ 8 7 3		♦ K Q 4
♣ T 9 7 2		♣ J 8 5 4 3
Jodie/Albert		Michelle/Derek
♠ 7		
♥ A K J T 8		
♦ J 6 5 2		
♣ K Q 6		
Boris/Felicity		

### Analysis

Results from Papatoetoe Club– 2 pairs 6H 1 light and one pair each going; 3H making 4, 3D making 4, 2S making 4, 4S making 5, 3NT making 5.

According to the computer E/W can make 2 clubs 5 diamonds 7 hearts, 5 spades or 5 no trump.

**Just a reminder; Boris is west.** I would rate the ideal contract as six hearts making seven. At Papatoetoe Club two pairs bid the correct contract and two pairs made the correct number of tricks. Unfortunately nobody did both and nobody should beat themselves up about it. Going on to X-Club, *link available on our result page* it's easy to see that other clubs have failed to do much better. On the same night eleven tables played these cards at Howick Club. One pair was in 6H making 7 and got 100% for their efforts at the club and 98% on X Club. I think this is a statistic worth following up.

Calculating match points is easy. You get two for every pair you beat and one for each pair you come equal with. This is expressed as a percentage of the maximum available. For example if there are 105 tables and you beat the other 104 pairs your way you get 208 match points or 100%. If six pairs bid 6H making 7H and beat the other 99 pairs they get  $198+5=203$  match points. Allowing for adjusted scores Kay at Howick got 202.9mp or 97.55% so that sounds about right. Well done.

Back at our own club I can only guesstimate how the heart contracts were played. I was sitting North and they played in spades against us. Declarer has two losing spades if spades are trumps. In no trumps defence will either win two spades or two diamond tricks. Only in hearts can something be done about the losers. If declarer takes out three rounds of trumps before making a plan they will only make eleven trick. They are fundamentally playing the

contract as if it was no trumps and not using the full potential of the suit to ruff out losing cards.

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