

THE ADVENTURES OF BORIS THE IMPROVER

Making the most of the distribution

This is board 23 from Monday 27th November 2017. It is not an easy hand to bid and like so many in the real world depends on the opposition making a contribution to the auction. I thought it was worth writing up as it illustrates the competitive nature of bidding and the play shows the advantages of planning ahead and avoiding dangers. Boris is sitting East but he his cards are placed at the bottom of the screen as is conventional with declarer.

George opened the bidding with one no trump and Lou passes. Jodie can't bid two clubs because they are playing Stayman, so she passes. Boris has seventeen points and doubles. George passes and Lou reasons that her hand is too weak to leave the double in and bids two diamonds. Jodie passes and Boris bids two spades. George and Lou pass leaving it up to Jodie to compete with three clubs. Boris now bids three hearts. George passes and Lou revalued her hand. She is no longer worried about only having three points. Boris has a powerful two suited hand. She has a fit in both majors plus a very valuable void in a minor. Lou bids four hearts. This becomes the final contract and you should be able to make five hearts..

Lou
♠ T 9 6
♥ 5 4 3 2
♦ Q J T 7 4 2
♣ Void

♠ K 7 4 3 2
♥ A K 9 7 6
♦ Void
♣ A K 8
Boris

George led the Ace of diamonds. Boris decided that lack of entries made setting up dummy's diamond suit a lost cause. He decided to set up his spade suit instead. He ruffed the opening lead with the 6 and next played the Ace. The King would be needed later as an entry. This was followed by the Ace and King of clubs two spades being discarded from dummy. The 8 of clubs was ruffed next and the ten of spades led from dummy.

Jodie has no option but to go up with the Ace and lead a diamond. Boris ruffed in hand and led a small spade that is ruffed in dummy. The spade suit is now set up and dummy's last trump can be played to the King in hand. This revealed that the trumps had split 3-1. His only trump was the 7 and the Queen was still out. Had Boris not set up the spade suit this would have been a problem. Boris made the contract by leading out his three spade tricks. Jodie ruffed the 7 and led back the King of diamonds. Boris ruffed this with his last trump and took trick thirteen with the 2 of spades making five hearts as required.

Tabitha played in two hearts. She ruffed the opening diamond lead and took out two rounds of trumps. She followed with two rounds of clubs discarding diamonds from dummy and then ruffed the 8 of clubs. The ten of spades was led and lost to the Jack. Felicity led the Queen of hearts followed by King of diamonds. Tabitha's last five cards were the King three small spades and the last trump. She ducked as she hoped the Ace of spades would be cashed. No

such luck. Felicity led the Jack of clubs. Alice had the suit counted and overtook with the Queen that Tabitha trumped. She led a small spade and Alice took the last three tricks.

The full deal

	Lou/Dereck/Agatha	
	♠ T 9 6	
	♥ 5 4 3 2	
	♦ Q J T 7 4 2	
	♣ Void	
♠ Q J 5		♠ A 8
♥ Q T 8		♥ J
♦ A K 9		♦ 8 6 5 3
♣ J T 9 7		♣ Q 6 5 4 3 2
George/Felicity/Jill		Jodie/Alice/Jordon
	♠ K 7 4 3 2	
	♥ A K 9 7 6	
	♦ Void	
	♣ A K 8	
	Boris/Tabitha/Albert	

It may seem counter intuitive to throw away cards in a suit declarer is trying to set up. Having trumps in dummy makes all the difference. If Tabitha discards two spades instead of diamonds, after the club ruff Alice will put her Ace on dummy's last spade when it is led. A diamond return is ruffed, King of spades cashed and a spade ruffed in dummy. A diamond is ruffed next giving declarer ten tricks. The defence get the last two tricks with the last trump and a club.

Albert played in four spades. He ruffed the diamond Ace lead, and lost a small trump to the Jack. Jill lead a club that Albert won with the Ace followed by the King discarding two hearts from dummy. He next played the Ace of Hearts and ruffed the 8 of clubs. A heart was led to the King in hand. The third round of hearts is ruffed in dummy and over ruffed by Jordon who leads the Queen of clubs. Albert ruffs and then leads the King of spades followed by the 9 of hearts. Jill's Queen of Spades can only make one trick.

This board was played seven times at our club for seven different results. **Reminder Boris and Tabitha are sitting East.**

4H by E 3 light, 2H by E making 3H, 2H by E making 4H, 2S by E making 4S, 2NT by E making 5NT, 4C X by N 2 light, 2 NT X by S 2 light. These results differ wildly from the computer predictions. N/S can make 2C. E/W can make 2D, 5H. 4S.

At Howick club ten tables played and got nine different results. The double up was 4S doubled by E making 4S. Nobody did this at Cambridge although their 13 tables still managed to get 13 different results. These included 4H making 4H, 4H making 5H, 2H making 6H.

The important point about this hand is than when declarer is in danger of running out of trumps forcing defenders to ruff a side suit is very useful.

Brian Spendelow