

## THE ADVENTURES OF BORIS THE IMPROVER

### Hands from the club

The first hand is board 20 from Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019. Three pairs played the contract in four spades. One South made four and two made five. One declarer played in three no trump making four. Since everyone should make six, lets see how Boris goes with it.

### The bidding

Agatha opened one no trump. Boris responded two clubs and after Agatha's rebid of two diamonds bid three spades. Agatha put him to four and as their opposition stayed silent this became the final contract. Lou led the 5 of diamonds.

Agatha  
♠ 8 6 2  
♥ A J 9  
♦ A K J  
♣ T 8 6 5

♠ 9 3  
♥ K T 3  
♦ 7 5 2  
♣ K Q 4 3 2  
Lou

♠ Q T 5  
♥ 8 6 4  
♦ Q 9 8 6 4 2  
♣ 9  
Michelle

♠ A K J 7 4  
♥ Q 7 5 2  
♦ T  
♣ A J 7  
Boris

### The Plan

Boris counted out his losers. As clubs were not led, he had two club losers, one possible spade and two possible heart losers. He would need some finesses.

### The play

Boris won the opening lead with the King of diamonds. He next led the two of spades to his Ace to guard against Lou having a singleton Queen. At trick three he led the Queen of hearts. Lou covered with her King and Boris took the trick with Dummy's Ace. He next led the 6 of spades to his Jack and when that won the trick, played his King of spades to drop the Queen.

At trick six Boris went for his hat-trick finesse. He played the 2 of hearts to the 9. It won the trick. Boris was on a roll. He then played the Jack of hearts noting with some satisfaction that it cleared the suit and set up the 7 of hearts in hand as a winner. Boris then played the King of diamonds, discarded a club and the 5 of clubs to his Ace. The 7 of hearts and his last two trumps took the next three tricks leaving Lou to take the last trick with the King of clubs. She wasn't impressed and muttered something about how lucky he was to make six spades.

"Well you know what they say Lou. The Good Lord loves a trier," said a grinning Boris.

"I think the expression; The Devil looks after his own is far more appropriate," Lou replied.

Board 23 Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019. Results; 4 spades making 6, 4 hearts making 6, 4 hearts making 5, 3 spades making 4 and 2 diamonds making 4. Felicity was East but I have put declarer at the bottom of the page as usual. They should be able to make seven spades.

### The bidding

Tabitha opened one diamond. Felicity responded one heart, Tabitha rebid one spade and then gulped when Felicity bid four spades. Felicity had instructed Tabitha that she should be more aggressive and realising that her hand was stronger than what she has shown, Tabitha tried for a slam by bidding four no trump as an ace ask. Felicity responds five hearts to show two aces and Tabitha nervously signed off in six spades. Dereck led the King of clubs. Felicity called the director for lead out of turn. Already worried about not messing up a slam Tabitha thought about the various options she was given and then tabled her cards making Felicity the declarer.

Tabitha

♠ A 8 3 2

♥ K Q T

♦ A K 7 3 2

♣ 5

♠ T 7

♥ J 8 5

♦ 8 5 2

♣ K Q T 6 4

Dereck

♠ Q 5 4

♥ 9 3 2

♦ Q J T 9

♣ 9 8 7

Albert

♠ K J 9 6

♥ A 7 6 4

♦ 6

♣ A J 3 2

Felicity

### The Plan

Felicity took a little while to play the 5 of clubs. Like all good players she liked to plan the play of the whole hand first if at all possible. Many players overvalue the usefulness of cross ruffing. It is usually better to draw trumps in one hand and ruff losers in the other. On this board it is better to ruff two diamonds in hand rather than two clubs in dummy because ruffing two diamonds sets up a third diamond trick when they are split 4-3. Add them to six spades, three hearts and a club, with favourable distribution you get a grand total thirteen tricks.

### The play

Felicity won the opening lead with the Ace of clubs and led the 6 of diamonds to Dummy's Ace. She next led the 2 of spades to the Jack and when that won the trick laid down the King of spades. Noticing that both opponents followed suit Felicity knew that the Queen of spades was now bare for the taking. There was no hurry and the little trumps had other duties.

At trick five Felicity played the 4 of hearts to the king. She ruffed the 2 of diamonds in hand, led the 6 of hearts to the Queen and then ruffed the 3 of diamonds in hand. At trick nine Felicity led the 8 of clubs which she ruffed with the 8 of spades in Dummy. The Ace of spades and the King of diamonds took out both of Albert's Queens and the 7 of diamonds and the Ace of hearts took the last two tricks for a total of thirteen for seven spades.

Brian Spendelow.