

## THE ADVENTURES OF BORIS THE IMPROVER

There are times during a bridge game that players find themselves mentally willing partner to lead a particular suit. Unfortunately, this doesn't usually work. Partner needs a reason and there are rules as to how you can communicate what is the best way to defeat a particular contract. There are times that a certain amount of imagination is required.

### Know your partner - The Bidding.

Albert was the dealer and opened one heart. Boris passed and since they were playing five card majors, Felicity bid two hearts. Lou bid two spades, Albert bid four hearts and Boris passed. This became the final contract. Boris led the 9 of clubs.

Felicity  
♠ K 5 3 2  
♥ T 7 4  
♦ A Q 7  
♣ 6 3 2

♠ A Q 8 4  
♥ Q 2  
♦ 9 8 4 3 2  
♣ 9 4  
Boris

♠ J T 9 7 6  
♥ 6  
♦ T 6 5  
♣ A K Q J  
Lou

♠ Void  
♥ A K J 9 8 5 3  
♦ K J  
♣ T 8 7 5  
Albert

### Planning

Normally Boris would lead partner's suit. What stopped him was holding the Ace and Queen of that suit. It is usually better to sit back and wait until partner gets in and leads it. Lou was one of Boris's regular partner's and knew his style of defence and Boris was confident she would lead a spade at the first sensible opportunity. It is worth noting that if Boris had led a spade at trick one, Albert would have no trouble in making five hearts. One club loser could be discarded on the King of spades and another on the Ace of diamonds.

### The Play

Lou won trick one with the Jack and led the Ace of clubs at trick two. Boris did a rapid count of the cards. His hand and dummy held four spades each and Lou must have five for her bid. This added up to thirteen, leaving none for Declarer. There was no way that Lou would know this. A spade lead from Lou at trick four seems logical as she knows Boris has the Ace. If Albert holds the Queen of hearts, one spade and one diamond, a spade at trick four is necessary to prevent the spade loser being discarded on a diamond. What card should Boris play at trick three to tell Lou not to lead a spade? At trick three Lou led the King of clubs and Boris discarded the Ace of spades. After she had recovered from the shock, Lou led the Queen of clubs at trick four. Boris trumped with the Queen of hearts and defeated the contract.

## Hopefully Helpful Hints

Hands frequently occur that do not seem to fit into the system. It is necessary for the players to work out what they want to achieve and then basically wing it. I class eight card suits in this category. This is board 9 from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

**I have put East at the bottom of the page since they are destined to be Declarer.**

	Dummy	
	♠ Q J 9 7	
	♥ 7	
	♦ A K 4	
	♣ A T 9 8 4	
♠ A K 6 5 4 2		♠ T 8 3
♥ 3 2		♥ Q 9
♦ Q T 6 3		♦ J 5 2
♣ 6		♣ K Q 7 5 2
Mr Defender		Mrs Defender
	♠ -Void	
	♥ A K J T 8 6 5 4	
	♦ 9 8 7	
	♣ J 3	
	Declarer	

## The Bidding

Opinions may differ on this one but I think that with 9 points and a solid eight card suit you are too strong to open three hearts. You do not want to shut everybody up, you want to know if partner has enough points to bid and cover some of your 6 losers. The best way to do this is to open one heart. The opposition will most likely bid 2 spades and your partner should either bid 3 clubs or 3 no trump. Both bids show points and you can confidently bid 4 hearts.

## The results

4 D by E 3 light, 3H by E making 5, 5S by S 5 light, six Es either 4H or 5H making 5, 3NT by W making 5. The most common result of 4H making 5 is worth 61%. This decreases to 44% on X club because a lot of players at other clubs make six. This is how.

## Ace of spades lead -5 times

This is ruffed in hand and followed with the Ace and King of hearts. Having dropped the Queen of trumps you are now down to one diamond and one club loser. These can both be traded for one spade loser. At trick four Declarer leads a club to Dummy's Ace, leads the Queen of spades and discards the club loser from hand. After the defence has won with the King, Declarer claims for six. The diamond loser is discarded on the Jack of spades.

## 6 of clubs lead - twice

This looks suspiciously like a shortage and Declarer should go up with the Ace. Next follows drawing trumps in two rounds. At trick four the Jack of clubs is led; Mr D shows out and it is taken by the Queen. Declarer wins the next trick, crosses to Dummy with a diamond and leads the ten of clubs. If covered by the King it is ruffed, Declarer goes back to Dummy with the other diamond entry and the 9 of clubs is led and the diamond loser discarded.

Brian Spendelow.