

Breaking the Cardinal Rules of Bridge

During Congress two hands caught my fancy – let me present them as quizzes first. Both are lead problems.

1.

Rose Duff E			
♠ Q94			
♥ 6			
♦ A76			
♣ AQ8632			
W	N	E	S
P	1NT	P	2♦*
P	2♥	P	4♥
P	P	P	

*2D was a
Transfer

QUIZ: Your lead please?

2.

Alon Apteker E			
♠ 96			
♥ A10765			
♦ KQ5			
♣ 1064			
W	N	E	S
		P	1♣
1♦	1♠	X*	P
2♦	2♠	3♦	3♠
P	P	P	

QUIZ: Your lead here?

What Happened?

1. We teach our students: **“Never lead unsupported aces”** and **“Aces are made for killing kings and queens”**. Rose Duff of C.T. missed this lecture.

She led the ♣A (from A-Q!), found out that dummy had a stiff, then switched promptly to the ♦A! She struck gold when partner followed with the queen. All in all, they won a club, a diamond, diamond-ruff and the trump ace to beat 4♥ by one trick.

Main Table:

- West (Andre van Niekerk):** ♠ 87632, ♥ A1073, ♦ Q, ♣ J104
- East (Rose Duff):** ♠ Q94, ♥ 6, ♦ A76, ♣ AQ8632
- Contract:** 4♥ -1 N

Other Table:

- West (Janette Schewitz):** ♠ 10, ♥ KJ9852, ♦ J10952, ♣ 5
- East (Harold Bernstein):** ♠ AKJ5, ♥ Q4, ♦ K843, ♣ K97
- Contract:** 4♥ = N

Score Table:

	W	N	E	S
P		1NT	P	2♦*
P		2♥	P	4♥
P		P	P	

In the other room, East lead his trump 6. It went: H6 – H2 – H3 – HQ. North was Carol Grunder and she gratefully discarded dummy’s club when she cashed the two top spades. Next came a heart to the king and ace, but West then played the ♣J (no D-ruff!) and forced dummy to ruff. Carol then cashed the ♥J and played DJ – DQ – DK – DA, All in all, she made 10 tricks having lost 2 trumps and the diamond ace.

2. Bridge lesson: "Never underlead aces in a suit contract!"

It was desperation time midway through the 3rd qualifying round of the pairs and swings were required. Alon led the ♥5! Another rule broken.

The screenshot shows a bridge hand interface with the following details:

- Contract:** Bd 10, Dlr E, 3♠-1 N
- Players:**
 - North: Chris Bosenberg
 - West: Craig Gower
 - East: Alon Apteker
 - South: neville eber
- Hand Cards:**
 - North: ♠ AQ10852, ♥ J32, ♦ 96, ♣ K3
 - West: ♠ J73, ♥ Q9, ♦ AJ1074, ♣ J72
 - East: ♠ 96, ♥ A10765, ♦ KQ5, ♣ 1064
 - South: ♠ K4, ♥ K84, ♦ 832, ♣ AQ985
- Bidding Table:**

	W	N	E	S
			P	1♣
1♦		1♠	X*	P
2♦		2♠	3♦	3♠
	P	P	P	

Tr 1: H5 - H4 - HQ - H2

Tr 2: H9 - H3 - HA - H8

Tr 3: H10 - HK - S7 - HJ

Tr 4: DA

TR 5: Diamond to the queen.

The defense took the first 5 tricks and 100% of the spoils.

Moral of the story:

There are no hard and fast rules in bridge. Only guidelines.