

## **When to lead from unsupported or broken honours?**

Recent conversation went like this:

*Anonymous*: Would you ever lead from broken honours?

**Me**: At trick one?

*Anonymous*: Yes

**Me**: No, not unless I had broken honours in every suit and partner hadn't bid.

*Anonymous*: Why not?

**Me**: The classic and typical situation is where you lead small from KJx and declare has AQx. You should have made two tricks but you end up with one.

*Anonymous*: So you would do it sometimes?

**Me**: No. You might find partner with the honours you're missing, like if you lead from KJx and partner has Axx or Qxx. But you wouldn't gain anything.

*Anonymous* (persistent now): So, it's about 50-50 then?

**Me**: No, never lead from broken honours, it's 100 – 0.

*Anonymous*: But you might have KJX, you lead to your partner's Axx, he leads back through declarer's Queen and you make three tricks.

**Me**: Sure, you might. So what? You would make those tricks anyway. How is declarer ever going to make his Queen? Don't be fooled by the odd time when you make this kamikaze lead and your side makes some quick tricks. You have gained nothing and you've risked losing a lot.

*Anonymous*: So lead from rubbish then?

**Me**: Yes. Maybe you lead from 643 and your partner's got the King, Declarer has AQ. A poor partner will complain that you trapped his King. Does he think declarer is an idiot? If you hadn't taken that finesse for declarer, declarer would never have taken it themselves? They would have just cashed the Ace?

## **The Moral**

Bridge, like much of life is like this:

If you want to win, follow a set of rules. Follow them all your playing career unless you think you're on the verge of playing for the national team at which stage you might have gotten to the point where you can break the rules.

If you want to improve, change your habits and learn from experience. Logic is logic, a lead from KJx is bad, rain makes you wet, that's just how it is.

If you're not bothered about improving, enjoy your bridge, I'll enjoy taking the results off you and we'll both be happy.

The rule for defenders is this: **Sit tight, your tricks will come. Don't give them away. Hang tough and make playing against you a tough experience.**