

Play **Better** Bridge! – Correct Opening Lead

This was Board 11 last week: some opponents tried 5♥, but 4♠ was a popular choice as well. Here Dummy and Declarer have arrived in 4♠.

Dummy: ♠ JT765 ♥ KJ9 ♦ void ♣ QJT85

Declarer: ♠ AKQ432 ♥ 2 ♦ 853 ♣ 732

On the K♦ lead, declarer ruffs, pulls trumps in one round (they split), and leads the 2♥ towards dummy's ♥KJ9. LHO might win the A♥, switch to a club and get partner a club ruff for down one. But if RHO leads out of turn, what option would allow declarer to avoid the potential club ruff?

Answer on next screen....

OLOOT! (Opening Lead Out Of Turn)

- ♠ This is the most common Director call, and is almost 100% preventable: simply make all of your opening leads **face down**, and you will never need to call: someone will say “not your lead” and you can simply pick up the unexposed card.
- ♥ When the Director arrives for an OLOOT, assuming no opponent has told the leader it actually was his or her lead, there are five options (for declarer alone to choose from before seeing dummy): 1, 2) Accept the OLOOT and be dummy (partner is declarer) or declarer (see dummy, then play from hand, then LHO, then dummy), 3, 4) Request or forbid a lead of the OLOOT suit from the correct leader (the OLOOT is returned to the player’s hand), and 5) Let the correct leader lead any card and the OLOOT is a penalty card (to be played at the first legal opportunity).
- ♦ Instead of worrying about too many choices or getting the choice wrong, best is to select the choice that seems most advantageous to your side.
- ♣ The Phil Wood Rule: “if they don’t know **whose** lead it is, they probably don’t know **what** to lead either!”, suggests accepting the lead, unless you can see that the OLOOT might be damaging: then forbid the lead of that suit!

Play **Better** Bridge! – Opening Leads Out of Turn

Dummy (unseen): ♠ JT765 ♥ KJ9 ♦ void ♣ QJT85

OLOOT vs 4♠!

Declarer: ♠ AKQ432 ♥ 2 ♦ 853 ♣ 732

On the OLOOT (Opening Lead Out Of Turn), declarer's choice of the five options must be made without seeing dummy or consulting partner. If the OLOOT is a small heart, declarer might just accept the lead and play the two from hand. Either LHO has the ace, making the king good, or RHO has led from the ace and the king will win the first trick and the other hearts in dummy can be ruffed! A spade OLOOT should be accepted as well: we are not afraid of having trumps pulled when we have six to the AKQ. Diamonds or clubs as the OLOOT is a more difficult choice without knowing what dummy has.