

Boston réformé and Boston of Fontainebleau

Permanent suit rankings

(± 1810)

Boston réformé and Boston of Fontainebleau are direct descendants of Boston whist, inheriting most of its basic principles, but to which have been added some interesting features.

The suit ranking ('first choice', 'second choice' and ordinary suits) no longer depends on the turning up of a card; it is fixed from the very start:

- In Boston réformé, the sequence is diamonds, hearts, clubs and spades;
- According to a French set of rules from 1813, Boston of Fontainebleau introduces a ranking which we shall encounter more often: hearts, diamonds, clubs and spades.

The player who wishes to play in a trump contract, designates ('bids') the suit in which he wishes to play. A player who bids "*Six Hearts*", overcalls a player who has bid "*Six Clubs*", etc.

The bidding continues until three players have passed, but a player can no longer re-enter the auction once he has passed, unless he does so in order to bid *misère*.

Although it's essentially 'every man for himself', one contract (the lowest) is played by two players. When the declarer has bid for five tricks, the player who feels prompted, can declare himself *whister* (=partner), thereby implicitly promising to bring along three tricks. The partnership that is formed in this way will have to collect at least eight tricks in order to score points on this deal. When the bidding has been finished, the player to declarer's right leads and the play continues in exactly the same way as in Boston whist.

When a trump game is being played, the ace, king, queen and jack of the trump suit qualify as *honours*.

If the contract is made – *and only in that case* – the player (or the pair playing together) scores four extra tricks if he was dealt (alone or together with his partner) the four honours, and two extra tricks if he (alone or together with his partner) was dealt three honours.