

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A MATH MAJOR PART II

This hand from the Richmond paper makes the point that I have made in almost every lesson on play of the hand. You need to have a plan, and often need to make that plan before you play a single trick. On this hand, you have two tricks to make your plan.

You are in a team game, so making your contract is paramount. Overtricks, while useful, are unimportant.

K J 8
8 7 6
10 6 5 4 2
Q J

A Q 10 9
2
A 7 3
A K 5 4 2

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 Club	1 Heart	Pass	2 Hearts
Double	Pass	3 Diamonds	Pass
3 Spades	Pass	4 Spades	All Pass

You might not like the auction. You might think that North's raise to four spades was more than a little aggressive. But you are in 4 spades, so make it.

West leads the King of hearts, followed by the Queen. Now is the time to make your plan. Declarer was worried about the trump split if he ruffed the second heart, so he pitched a diamond and did it again on the second heart lead. West shifted to trump, and the suit split very badly, and declarer went down. It would have been the right plan if his trump were not the top eight trumps in the deck. However, when West did not shift to a trump at trick two, declarer might have:

Well, he might have counted his winners and losers. One diamond, at least two clubs, and 7 tricks on a high cross ruff. That makes 10.

Sometimes you do not have to be a math major; all that you have to do is count to ten.