

Plan the Play & Play the Plan

Over the last few weeks on the Friday lessons (at 11:15 – all intermediates welcome) we have been talking about the play of the hands in a suit contract. One of the things the experts stress is to have a plan. Any Plan is better than no Plan.

Most players when they are waiting for dummy to go down have a little sequence of things to do. Here is mine maybe it will be useful for you too.

1. Analyse the Lead
2. Review the Bidding
3. Count losers in Suit contracts (winners in NT).
4. Work out a way to eliminate the losers

I try to see the hand as a whole rather than a collection of suits.

Analyse the Lead.

Always check from the opponents system card what leads they play. i.e MUD, Low from Honour or Overlead All. We all have system cards on the table DON'T WE.

For example, if the lead is a small H and dummy has AJx and you have 10XX. You know that each defender has an honour and that you will win 2 H tricks. Work it out!! What would the lead be if either defender had both the KQ.

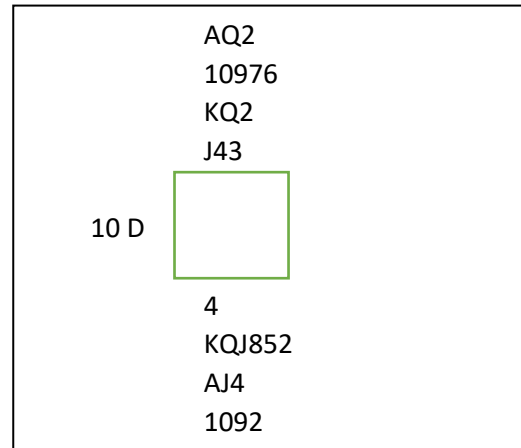
Review the Bidding

Useful information can be gleaned from the opposition with regard to their strength and shape.

Counting Losers

Count the losers in the hand with the most trumps. If both hands have the same number of trumps choose the hand with the best trumps. In this hand –

You have one losing S, 1 H, 0 D and 3 C. Can you see a way to get rid of one of these losers.



If the spade finesse works then you can throw a club on your top spade

Often the first decision you have to make is whether to draw trumps. If you draw trumps here the defenders will take their A and then rattle of three club tricks-before you have had time to implement your fiendish plan. Better DELAY drawing trumps till after you have eliminated the club loser.

PS. In this hand the spade finesse did work. YEAH!! But if it didn't at least you gave it your best shot!