

More Tips on Counting for Beginners

1. Concentrating on Counting Winners Again

You should concentrate on winners!

Further to the previous article look at this hand and after the lead and dummy goes down establish how many “top” tricks you have what is the best way of establishing the additional tricks to make the contract.

Before looking at the explanation try to work out the answer yourself!

Perhaps it is best to use a pack of cards and lay-out the hands as shown. Some players struggle to relate to the play without the cards themselves.

Dealer: South

♠ 83
♥ AK2
♦ A954
♣ 9642

Vul: Neither

♠ J10976
♥ Q10
♦ KJ86
♣ QJ

♠ -----
♥ J9863
♦ Q1072
♣ K1053

♠ AKQ542
♥ 754
♦ 3
♣ A87

Bidding

<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>
1♠	p	2♦	p
2♠	p	3♠	p
4♠	All Pass		

Lead: ♣Q

Immediately you take the ♣Q with the ♣A and cash the top trump, ♠A.

What a shock the ♠s are split 5-0 with West having the 5!!!!

Counting losers you consider all is lost since you have 5 losers, 2♠s, 1♥ and 2♦s.

Concentrate on the winners!! You must make 10 tricks, how? You have 4 “top” tricks outside of trump ♥AK, ♦A, ♣A and 6 trumps, so you must make all the

trumps to make the contract. This relies on ruffing 3 diamonds in South. Fortunately you have 3 entries in dummy to be able to lead the losing clubs for the ruffs. Therefore if there is only one way of making the contract **GO FOR IT**.

Cash ♠KQ (you could do this any time), then cross to the ♦A and ruff the ♦4, cross to the ♣K and ruff the ♦5. Cross to the ♥A and finally ruff the ♦9. Fortunately West has a 4th diamond and you make your 10 tricks leaving opponents to make the last 3

Yes, you could consider yourself lucky that the ♦s split; however, that was the only way the contract can make after the unlucky trump break.

If West had found a ♥ lead, which would be unusual, it would have taken away ♥K, one of the entries you would have needed to establish the 3 ruffs in declarers hand and would have gone one off. *Then you are very unlucky to have had the 5-0 spade split.*

Sometimes you win them and sometimes you lose them, but take your chances when you have them.