

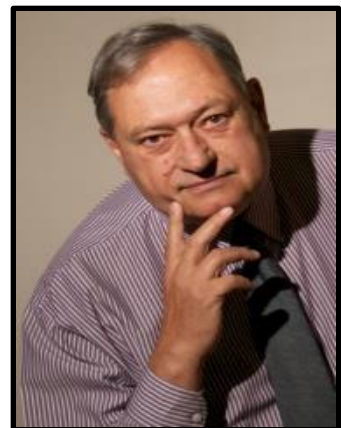
Hand Evaluation



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Time for a Joke

On their way to get married, a young Catholic couple was involved in a fatal car accident. They found themselves outside the Pearly Gates waiting for St. Peter. They began to wonder if they could possibly get married in Heaven.

When St. Peter arrived, they asked him if getting married in Heaven was possible.

St. Peter replied, "This is the first time anyone has asked. Let me go and find out."

The couple sat and waited for an answer ... for a couple of months. While they waited, they discussed the pros and cons. If they were allowed, should they get married, what with the eternal aspect of it all? "What if it doesn't work out?"

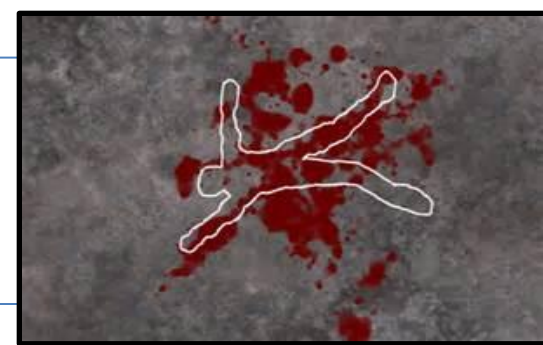
Yet another month passed before St. Peter finally returned, looking somewhat peeved. "Yes," he informed the couple, "You can get married in Heaven."

"Great!" said the couple. "But we were just wondering; what if things don't work out? Could we also get a divorce in Heaven?"

St. Peter, red-faced with anger, slammed his clipboard on the ground and screamed, "It took me 3 months to find a priest up here! Do you have ANY idea how long it'll take me to find a lawyer?!"



The Bennett Murder



Playing bridge is like going to a special gym for the mind. It's as addictive as golf and can be learned in a week or studied for a lifetime. One facet that separates bridge from most other games is that one shares one's fate, win or lose, with another person. Partnership emotions run the full gamut, from adoration to sympathy, from support to skillfully applied "one-upsmanship." The pastime has been likened to taking amphetamines while teaching your spouse how to drive.

In 1929, the Bennetts of Kansas City, Missouri, invited the Hofmans to their home for an evening of bridge. After a heated discussion over a hand, Myrtle Bennett went to the bedroom and retrieved a pistol. She chased after her husband and fired twice through the bathroom door, missing him both times. Mr. Bennett then rushed out into the living room toward the front door. His wife caught up with him and shot him two times before he could open it. The second shot was fatal, adding new meaning to the bridge term "drop dead bid."

Surprisingly, a diagram of the bridge hand was entered as evidence at Myrtle's trial. She claimed to the court that she had bumped into a chair, causing the gun to go off accidentally. Myrtle was found innocent, despite the two bullet holes in the bathroom door and the two in Mr. Bennett.

So, if you want to keep your partner content, it's important to evaluate the strength of your hand properly. There are two distinct phases, the first to assess its value before the bidding begins, and the second as the bidding progresses.

In particular, hands with 6-4 and 5-5 distributions play really well if you find a fit.

Pre-Bidding Strength



1. High Card Points (A=4, K=3, Q=2, J=1): are good place to start.
2. Shape: A hand can be promoted for containing long suits, but not for shortness until you find a fit. Add 1 pt. for each card in a suit after the 4th.
So, ♠98742 counts as 1 extra HCP.
3. Q's and J's need support: ♠AQ42 ♥532 is better than ♠A842 ♥Q53.
4. Intermediates: 10's and 9's are important, especially when supported by honors and in longer suits. ♠AQ102 ♥10932 is better than ♠AQ42 ♥7653.
5. Tight honors are bad: Lower your expectations for singleton and doubleton honors like: A, K, Q, J, AK, AQ, AJ, KQ, KJ, QJ, etc.
6. Higher suits: (♠'s and ♥'s) are better than (♣'s and ♦'s).

I wonder why.



Quiz Time



Are these bad, average or good 13 HCP hands?:

Long Suits – YUM!

Q needs support

Tight honor

Tight honors

Both higher suits

Long Suits – YUM!

(a)

♠ K10953
♥ QJ9
♦ AK1042
♣ ---

a) Good

(b)

♠ K
♥ A832
♦ Q742
♣ KJ43

b) Bad

(c)

♠ KJ62
♥ Q103
♦ AK64
♣ 86

c) Avg.

(d)

♠ AJ10953
♥ KJ43
♦ KJ
♣ 5

d) Good

10's and 9's in both suits

10 and 9 in this suit

Extra trump support
or a secondary long
suit adds extra value.

As the Bidding Progresses



If you've found a fit:

On the **short side of trumps** (Usually Dummy):

Voids	= 5 more points
Singletons	= 3 more points
Doubletons	= 1 more point

On the **long side of trumps** (Usually Declarer):

Voids	= 3 more points
Singletons	= 2 more points
Doubletons	= 1 more point

➤ If you haven't found a fit:

Lower your hand evaluation for shortness in partner's suit(s).

➤ If an opponent bids:

Add value for being short in their suit.

Reduce value for any trapped honors in front of their suit(s).

Examples



South: ♠AQ43 ♥53 ♦K62 ♣A932

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	Pass	1C	1D

Your hand just got devalued to 10 or 11 HCPs.

South: ♠AQ43 ♥3 ♦KQ62 ♣Q932

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1H	Pass	1D	Pass

Bid 1S, but if you don't find a fit, devalue your hand by 1-2 HCPs.

South: ♠AQ43 ♥3 ♦KQ62 ♣A972

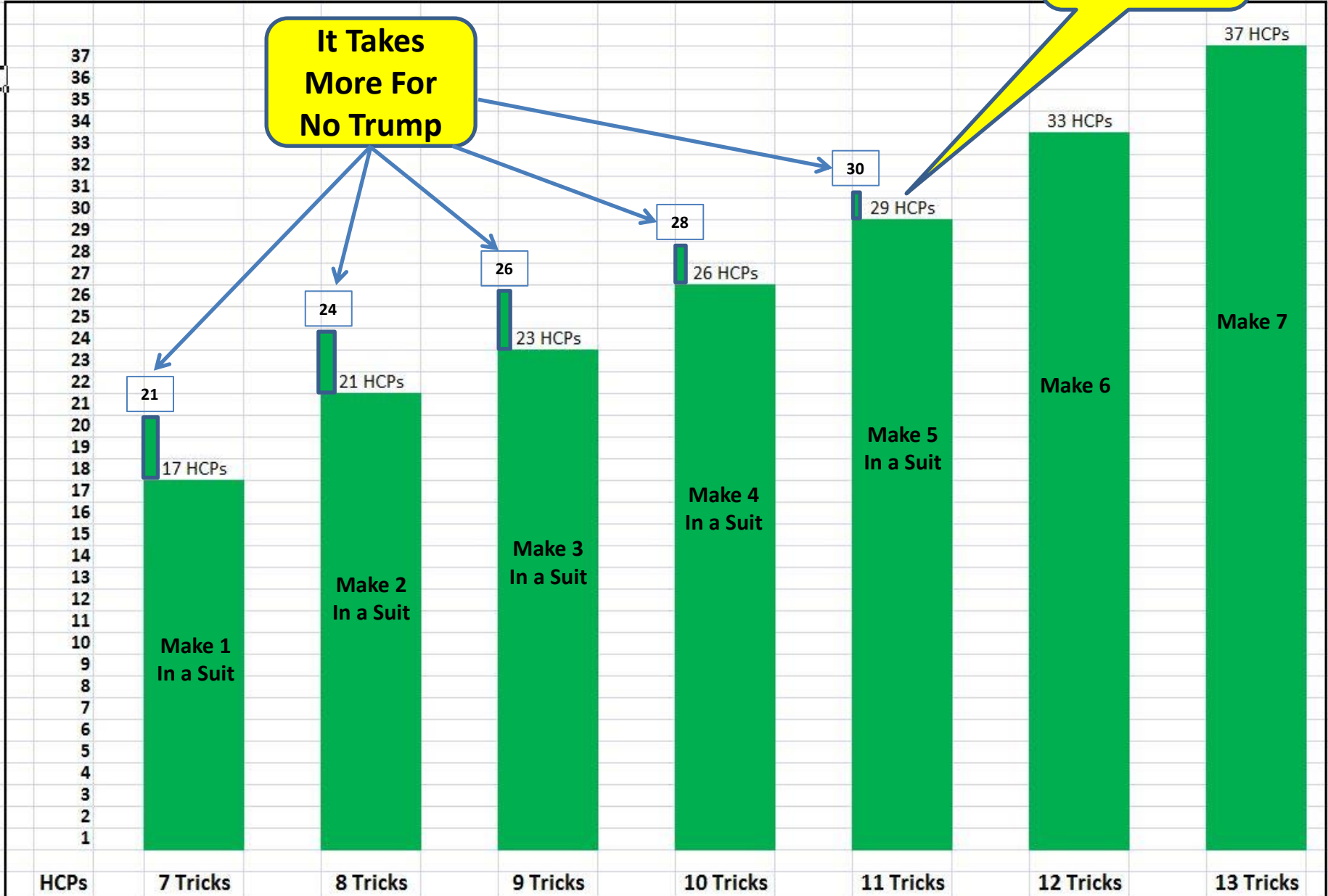
<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1S	Pass	1D	Pass

Your hand just became good enough to jump to 3S.

Using Adjusted HCPs

These are Adjusted HCPs

It Takes More For No Trump



30

29 HCPs

28

26 HCPs

26

23 HCPs

24

21 HCPs

21

17 HCPs

HCPs

7 Tricks

8 Tricks

9 Tricks

10 Tricks

11 Tricks

12 Tricks

13 Tricks



Time to Play