

Vulnerability

We are going to see to what extent the vulnerability should influence our bidding decisions.

Firstly when we have average to good hands and are considering going to game.

e.g you partner
1Sp-----3Sp
?
AQxxx
xx
KJxx
Kx

There is no doubt that 4Sp *might* make and partner could have 12 points

e.g you partner
AQxxx Kxxx The only losers are 2 Hrts and 1 club
xx xxx { and on a diamond lead 11 tricks will make }
KJxx AQ
Kx QJxx

alternatively the two hands could be as follows with partner having a misfitting 10 pts

e.g you partner
AQxxx KJxx Now you could lose as many as 6 tricks.
xx KJx {your losers are 2 x Hrts ; 3 x diamonds; 1 x club}
KJxx xxx Not only would you not make 4Sp you might struggle
Kx Qxxx to make more than 1 Sp !

This is not news to most players and there is no way to know which hand partner has in advance of your final bid. It is fair to say I think though that whatever the theoretical risks in practise such 4Sp contracts seldom go more than one down.

Many players have the belief that the risk is acceptable when not-vulnerable {where if they go light it will only cost them 50 per trick } but that they should be more cautious when vulnerable { when undertricks will cost 100 a time }.

Now actually this approach { or attitude perhaps } is mathematically unsound!
In fact -the gain from making a vulnerable game outweighs the increased penalty of not making it.

You may be surprised to learn that if you bid three such uncertain vulnerable 4 Sp games on the trot and made *only one of them* {the others going one off } then you would score about the same as if you had stopped safely three times making your contract each time.

Oddly, if you were *non-vuln* and tried the same approach { of bidding game regardless } then you would make a loss on the three consecutive deals. You would have been better off not bidding game on any of them !

If you are prepared to bid risky games then you should do so vulnerable rather than non-vulnerable.

