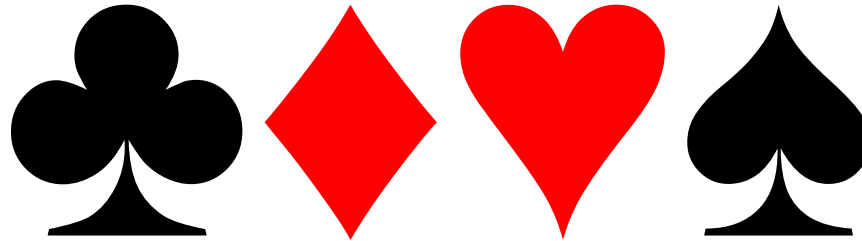




# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



Week 13 Welcome



Steve Bailey



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

This week we are looking at the **Losing Trick Count (LTC)**.

The LTC is another evaluation technique that should be used alongside **high card points** and evaluated **Points**. It evaluates points and shape.

*Why it works, I am not sure. But it does.* It is recommended for general use to help you bid your auction more accurately.

It is a method of counting the "Losing Tricks" in your hand (which are not quite the same as 'losers') and assuming that the rest are "winners".

The method is simple, but only applies to suit contracts **after** a fit is found.

*And as with all these bridge methods, it isn't always correct.*

*EG It reckons AJxxx is worth the same as QJxxx which isn't the case.*

*But use it all the same - it gets excellent results.*



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

This development of the **Losing Trick Count**.

From wikipedia:

"

The origins of the Losing Trick Count (LTC)—without that name—can be traced back at least to 1910 in Joseph Bowne Elwell's book *Elwell on Auction Bridge* wherein he sets out, in tabular form, a scheme for counting losers in trump contracts similar to the basic counting method given below.

The term "Losing Trick Count" was originally put forward by the American F. Dudley Courtenay in his 1934 book *The System the Experts Play* (which ran to at least 21 printing editions). Among various acknowledgments, the author writes: 'To Mr. Arnold Fraser-Campbell the author is particularly indebted for permission to use material and quotations from his manuscript in which is described his method of hand valuation by counting losing tricks, and from which the author has developed the Losing Trick Count described herein.'

"



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

### The **Losing Trick Count** (LTC).

It only applies once you have found an 8+ card fit in a suit that you want to play in.

So don't use it before you have found a fit.

1C (P) 1S (2D) / #3S ...

3S is an explicit 8+ card fit in S, and you want to play in it.

NOW you can use the LTC. *In fact, Opener knows of the fit before rebidding.*

While

1C (1H) Dbl ....

A Negative Double, promising L4UnbidMajor (**Spades** here).

If Opener has L4C and **L4S** there is an implicit 8 card fit in Spades.

So Opener can use the LTC, and once he bids S, Responder also knows of the fit.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

### The **Losing Trick Count** (LTC).

The LTC is excellent at evaluating strength and shape into one value. It saves having to do many of the calculations that are required if you use the points methods.

However, as with the points methods, there are a few key values you have to remember. Despite which it is simpler.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

### How does the LTC work?

- Wait until you have an 8+ card fit.
- Evaluate your **Losing Tricks** (LTs)  
A **LT** is NOT the same as a **loser**.
- Determine your partner's LTs and add that to your LTs.  
That number is based on some values you have to memorise.
- Subtract that total from 18 and consider bidding at that level.

Eg: You have 7LTs, you assume your partner has 9LTs.  
Total 16LTs.  $18 - 16 = 2$ .  
So you can bid to the 2~level of your fit suit.

*As I say, I don't know why it works, but it provides good advice in a simple form, merging high card information with length and shortage in suits.*



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## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

### Evaluating your LTC / What is a LT.

There are four rules for counting your LTs.

- Only count the top 3 cards in each suit.  
*Extra cards are deemed winners by length.*
- Of those top 3, only A K Q are deemed winners.
- Dropable honours count as losers.  
*(So for L2, only A K are winners.  
And for L1, only A.  
A void (L0) suit has no losers.)*
- An unsupported Q is worth half a loser. It is unsupported if with none of A K J.

There may be the occasional "tweak" to the number of LTs, for example:

Kxx	Axx
Kxx	Axx
Kxx	Axx
Kxxx	Axxx

both have 8 LTs, but the right hand is obviously better than the left.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

### Evaluating your LTC / What is a LT.

- For each suit evaluate the top 3 cards, AKQ are winners.

J 9 8	5 2	Evaluate J98. No AKQ, so 3LTs.
K 9 8	6	Evaluate K98. 98 are 2LTs.
K Q 8		Evaluate KQ8. 8 is 1LT. <i>K makes Q a full winner.</i>
Q J 7	3	Evaluate QJ7. J7 are 2LTs. <i>J makes Q a full winner.</i>
<del>Q</del> 9 8	6	Evaluate Q98. (Q)98 are 2½LTs.
A K Q	9 3 2	Evaluate AKQ. There are no LTs.

- If only L2Suit, only consider AK.

Q 3	Evaluate Q3 in L2Suit as 2LTs.
K 3	Evaluate K3 in L2Suit. 3 is 1LT.
K Q	Evaluate KQ in L2Suit. Q is 1LT.
A K	Evaluate AK in L2Suit. There are no LTs.

- If only L1Suit, only consider A.

K	Evaluate K in L1Suit. K is 1LT.
A	Evaluate A in L1Suit. There are no LTs.

- If a void, then the suit has no LTs.

- L0Suit has no LTs.



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## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

Example hands, after finding an 8+ card fit.

- |   |       |   |      |   |
|---|-------|---|------|---|
| ▪ | ♠ 543 | 2 | 3LTs |   |
|   | ♥ 975 |   | 3LTs |   |
|   | ♦ J62 |   | 3LTs |   |
|   | ♣ JT9 |   | 3LTs | Total = 12LTs (2hcp). <i>(Many LTs. Few Pts.)</i> |
  
- |   |       |   |       |  |
|---|-------|---|-------|--|
| ▪ | ♠ AKQ | 2 | 0LTs  |  |
|   | ♥ KQ5 |   | 1LTs  |  |
|   | ♦ Q62 |   | 2½LTs |  |
|   | ♣ AQ9 |   | 1LTs  | Total = 4½LTs (22hcp). <i>(Few LTs. Many Pts.)</i> |
  
- |   |       |     |      |                      |
|---|-------|-----|------|----------------------|
| ▪ | ♠ AKQ | 543 | 0LTs |                      |
|   | ♥ K5  |     | 1LTs |                      |
|   | ♦ AQ  |     | 1LTs |                      |
|   | ♣ QJ9 |     | 2LTs | Total = 4LTs (21hcp) |

*So we have evaluated our Losing Tricks. What next?*



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

### What next?

Having evaluated our LTs, we need to make an estimate of our partner's LTs.

Start by assuming that Opener has 7LTs and Responder has 9LTs.

You have to memorise these two values.

Further bidding in the auction will show when better hands are held.

We subtract both LTs from 18 to work out what level is recommended.

If {N} opened 1S and {S} holds

♠ QJ76	2LTs	
♥ 532	3LTs	
♦ 87	2LTs	
♣ A854	2LTs	Total = 9LTs (7hcp, 7Pts)

Responder {S} now knows of the 8+ card spade fit.

He can re-eval his Pts:  $7\text{Pts} + 1\text{Pt}(\text{L2D}, 135) = 8\text{Pts}$

Which is in the range 6..9Pts and, last week, {S} would have responded 2S.

This week {S} evaluates his LTC (9LTs) and assumes {N} has 7LTs, so the LTC is recommending he bids  $18 - 9 - 7 = 2$ . He bids 2S. The same bid.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

Continuing... Now it is Opener's rebid.

{N} can assume an 8+card S fit from {S}'s response (on rare occasions, {S} may only have L3S if responding using evaluated points; if the partnership uses LTC then it should be L4S. That is L4OtherMajor.)

If {N} as opener holds

♠ AK532      1LT

♥ 4            1LT

♦ 32           2LTs

♣ KQ763      1LT      Total = 5LTs (12hcp, 14Pts)

He can re-eval his Pts:       $14\text{Pts} + 2\text{Pts}(\text{L1H},123) + 1\text{Pt}(\text{L2D},123) = 17\text{Pts}.$

Using points, jointly {NS} have (from {N}'s view)

$17\text{Pts} + 6..9\text{Pts} = 23..26 \text{ JPts}.$

A jump to #4S seems risky if {S} has only 6Pts. So probably bid **3S** invitational.

(And {S} would probably pass that invite.)

However using LTC, {N} gets  $18 - 5\text{LTs} - 9\text{LTs} = 4$ , suggesting a **4S** bid.

Note that 5LTs is 2 better than the assumed opener's 7LTs. So rather than do the subtractions, you can just say "5 is 2 better than 7, 4S is 2 better than 2S".



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

### Assumed values

All each player needs to do to use LTC is memorize the reference assumptions.

Respond 1~level	6Pts	9LTs	<<< Must remember this
Respond 2~level	10Pts	8LTs	
Overcall	8Pts	8LTs	
Opener 1~level	12Pts	7LTs	<<< Must remember this
Take Out Double	13Pts	6½LTs	
Jump Shift	16+Pts	6LTs	
Strong 2 opening	20Pts	4LTs	



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Losing Trick Count

Treat the LTC as advice not as an edict.

In particular, with advised higher bids, use other methods to evaluate and check the advice is good.

When the LTC suggests a Slam contract, check that you jointly have control of all suits and have the required number of keycards to support a slam bid.

When the LTC suggests a Game contract, is it because of high cards or shape?

With a distributional shape, consider an immediate jump to Game.

This suggests "this far and no further, don't bid on".

With high cards, take your time and use other techniques to work to Game.

Eg Splinters, Jacoby 2NT, a Delayed Game Raise.

This may allow Partner to progress to a slam when he has the right cards.

Examples could be provided, but let the set hands be examples.

You may want to bid a set hand once (then play it), get it wrong and then bid the auction again to see if the right contract can be reached. *You may even wish to replay it if the play went poorly. Add 10 to each pair number.*



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Spring tournament

### **Spring Tournament: April 17**

The second April session will be another tournament with freely dealt boards.

In the 2 hours available, it will be around 10 boards played. Everything will be organised as a normal Duplicate Pairs event.

So {N} will manage the tables and score the results on a **single** traveller, which {E} will check. And pairs and boards will move tables.

I will try to do the scoring before we leave the hall (it takes around 15 minutes to do), and I'll have a couple of small kid's party trophies for the winning pair.

Please find a partner. Then find a second pair to form a "table".

Please let me know as soon as possible who is with whom.

If necessary, I will seek extra players to make up the numbers. Let me know if you are having problems.

So start organising yourselves now - maybe over coffee.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



## Week 13 Play

### Play

{NS} have the pair number of their table, {N} has his back to the stage.

{EW} have the pair number of their table plus 8.

**Play boards in sequence. Have an incoming pile and an outgoing pile.  
Pass outgoing to next lower numbered table – Table 1 to highest table.**

Some boards have instructions on card. The appropriate people should read each card at the time it says and follow its instructions.

If you play a board twice, record the second play on the traveller using your pair numbers PLUS TEN (eg 1 v 9 becomes 11 v 19).

*If you wish to fill in a personal results card, they are available. They are commonly used at duplicate clubs.*

*Don't forget to describe partner's bids and plays to the table.*

**Any questions? Tea / coffee & biscuit. (25p)**

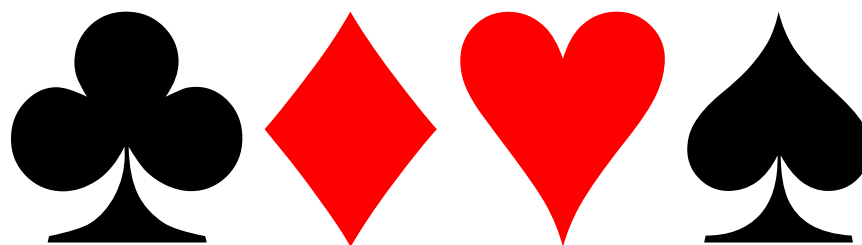
**PLAY**



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



Week 13



The end

Week 13 set hand  
references follow.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2023-24



## Week 13 Set hands

### Set hand sources

BSA100

Bernard Magee ~ Big Seminar week 100



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2023-24



## Week 13 Set hands

### Set hand abbreviations

Dlr	Dealer	(NESW).
Vul	Vulnerability	(None NS EW All).
Rotn	Rotation	Defined by one card, usually A♠. Mostly different to source publication.
Dcl	Declarer	(NESW)
OL	Opening Lead	
Trk	Tricks	(0..13)
NS# EW#		Score for NS or EW
NS% EW%		Percentage of NS and EW
Ref	Reference result	(Sometimes there may be more than one)

Blue results as played.

Red results are reference results.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2023-24



## Week 13 Set hands

1 N None BSA100\_sh#1 A♠=N

NS	EW	Contract	Dcl	OL	Trk	NS#	EW#	NS%	EW%
1	9	4S+1	N	JC	11	450	-	83.3%	16.7%
2	10	3S=	N	8H	9	140	-	0%	100%
4	12	4S=	N	JC	10	420	-	33.3%	66.7%
Ref		4S+1	N	4S	11	450	-	83.3%	16.7%



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2023-24



## Week 13 Set hands

2	E	NS	BSA100_sh#2						A♠=W	
NS	EW	Contract	Dcl	OL	Trk	NS#	EW#	NS%	EW%	
1	9	6H=	W	AD	12	-	980	50%	50%	
2	10	3H+2	W	8S	11	-	200	100%	0%	
4	12	6H=	W	JS	12	-	980	50%	50%	
Ref A		6H=	W	AD	12	-	980	50%	50%	
Ref B		6H+1	W	JS	13	-	1010	0%	100%	



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2023-24



## Week 13 Set hands

3	S	EW	BSA100_sh#3							A♠=N
NS	EW	Contract	Dcl	OL	Trk	NS#	EW#	NS%	EW%	
1	9	4H+1	S	AD	11	450	-	75%	25%	
4	12	4H=	S	5D	10	420	-	0%	100%	
Ref		4H+1	S	AD	11	450	-	75%	25%	



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2023-24



## Week 13 Set hands

4 W All BSA100\_sh#4 var A♠=W

NS	EW	Contract	Dcl	OL	Trk	NS#	EW#	NS%	EW%
1	9	4H-2	E	2C	8	200	-	100%	0%
2	10	3H-1	E	JC	8	100	-	66.7%	33.3%
4	12	2H+2	E	JC	8	-	170	33.3%	66.7%
Ref		4H=	E	QS	10	-	620	0%	100%

Var: Dealer now AS hand, was 2S hand.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2023-24



## Week 13 Set hands

5 N NS BSA100\_sh#5 A♠=N

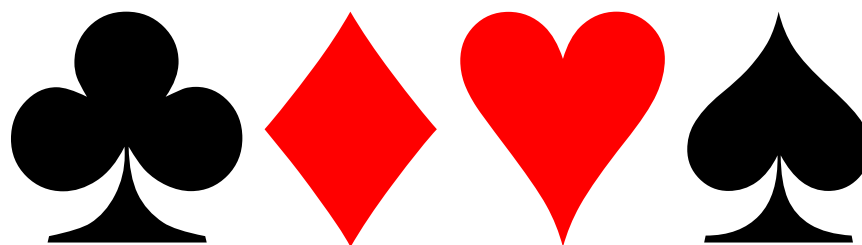
NS	EW	Contract	Dcl	OL	Trk	NS#	EW#	NS%	EW%
4	12	3C=	N	3D	9	110	-	0%	100%
Ref		3C+1	N	10H	10	130	-	100%	0%



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2025-26



Week 13



The very end