

For a Future LSBC Newsletter and Corner

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When you are playing a notrump contract and are short in a suit, and have the ace; it is usually correct to hold up on the ace as long as possible.

The rule of 7, is to count the number of cards you have between your hand and dummy and subtract that total from 7. The answer is how many times you should duck.

In the hand below since I have 5 spades between the 2 hands, $7-5=2$, means I should duck twice. Course that's all I can duck without renegeing.

8	3NTS=	400	88.5%	11.5%																			
Refresh			72.0%	27.9%																			
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A routine auction.

N 1 C

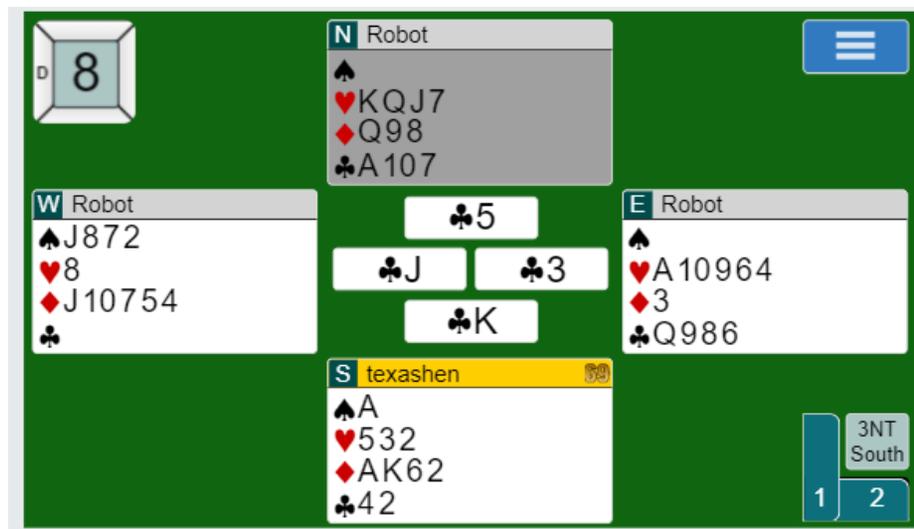
S 3NT (13-15 points with no 4+ card major)

West leads the King and then the Queen. I duck twice.

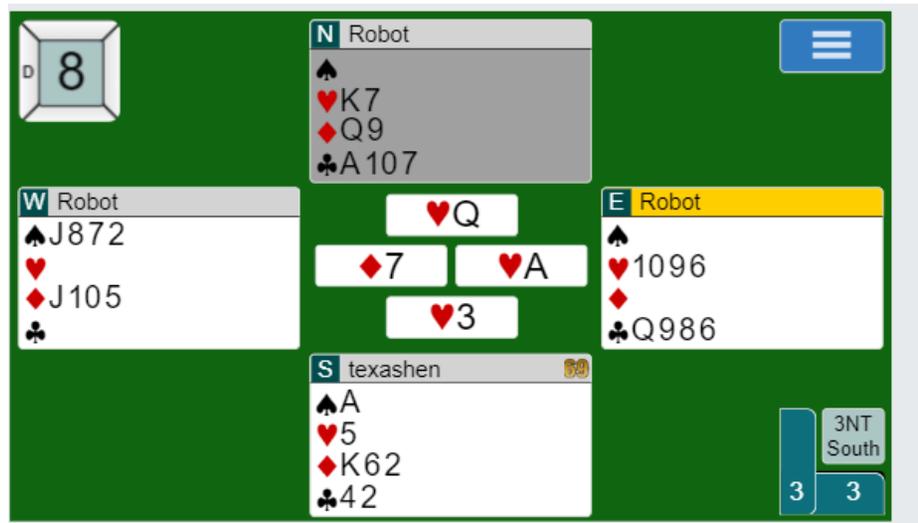
Turns out that I only had to duck once as East only has 2 spades. But I don't know that. As long as I duck at least once West no longer has an entry to its spades. That is a key to this and other deals.

West switches to the jack of clubs.

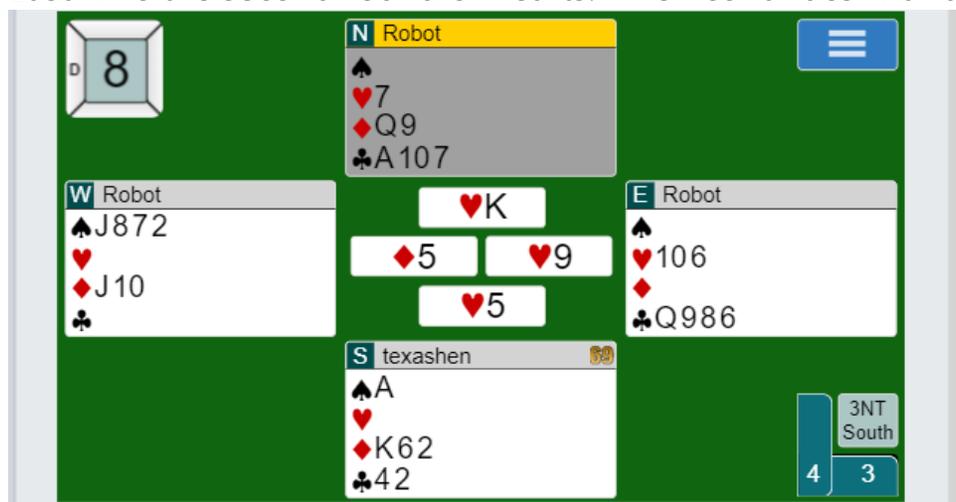
I win the ace. I'm sure West would not lead the Jack if it had the Queen. Maybe I can endplay East.



I'm fairly certain West does not have the ace of hearts or it would have continued with a spade, having an entry to the good spades. But I don't see a better choice than playing hearts.



East wins the second round of hearts. Then continues with the 9 of hearts



West foolishly discarded a diamond, making the 3rd diamond in my hand good. So, in addition to the 4 tricks I already had, I take 3 diamonds and the 2 black aces, making my contract.

A final note, if the hearts had split 4-2 (the most common split), I could have made the contract by throwing East in with the last heart and having it lead a club away from its Queen into dummy's A 10. That would have been a nice lesson.

