

BIDDING 21 - RULE OF 10

The rule of 10 helps you decide if you can insist on your suit being trumps in the face of partner bidding 3NT or repeatedly bidding their suit.

You add the length of the suit to the number of honours in the suit. The 10 counts as an honour if there is at least one honour of the AKQ as well. If the total is 10 or more, you can insist on your suit being trumps, even with partner being void.

QJ1095432

8 cards + 3 honours = 11. You can insist on this suit as trumps

KJ108765

7 cards + 3 honours = 10. You can insist on this suit as trumps

AKQJ43

6 cards + 4 honours = 10. You can insist on this suit as trumps

J10876543

8 cards + 1 honour (10 only counts if you have one of the AKQ as well) = 9. Not good enough to insist on this suit as trumps

AQ76543

7 cards + 2 honours = 9. Not good enough to insist on this suit as trumps

	♠ 7		
	♥ K10982		
	♦ AK2		
	♣ K753		
♠ AJ86		♠ 2	
♥ QJ		♥ 7654	
♦ J865		♦ Q943	
♣ A102		♣ QJ98	
	♠ KQ109543		
	♥ A3		
	♦ 107		
	♣ 64		

W	N	E	S
1D	1H	P	1S (1)
P	2C (2)	P	4S (3)
P	P	P	

- (1) Assuming my partner's overcalls are not stronger than 15 HCPs, I tend not to respond to overcalls if I don't have support and don't have a 10 count. However, here you can see that you can insist on the spade suit according to the rule of 10 and the South hand has a fair bit of power if North has an opening hand rather than an 8-11 overcall.
- (2) The new suit should confirm a full opening hand. If you are 8-11, I would either raise the spades one if I liked them or repeat my original suit.
- (3) I'm definitely bidding 4S at teams where trying to get the game bonus is everything. I'm doing the same thing in pairs, but I'm less happy about it. If North is a touch weaker (eg substitute the CQ for the CK) then game is in trouble. However, when one opponent opens, showing where most of the points are, you frequently can make game on weaker hands because you have a better idea how to play the hand. The HA is also a good card and might help getting the heart suit running.

On the hand in question, South lost SAJ and CA and made 10 tricks.