



THE 8TH ANNUAL ALL INDIA SHREE CEMENT OPEN BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIP 2025

Date: 4th May 2025

Day 4

The final of the 8th Shree Cement Tournament was contested over four rounds of 12 boards each between Formidables and Mavericks. With a 12 IMP carryover, Formidables set the tone early and maintained their dominance throughout, winning all four sets decisively. This victory continues their remarkable winning streak at the Shree Cement event over the past several years.

In the play-off match between Monica Jajoo and Rampage, Rampage surged ahead with a commanding 49 IMP lead in the first set. Although Monica Jajoo's team managed to recover some ground in the second set, Rampage's early advantage proved insurmountable, securing them a comfortable and convincing win.

TEAM NO	TEAM NAME	C/O	R 1	R 2	R 3	R 4	TOTAL	DIFFERENCE
FINAL	FORMIDABLE	12	25	42	40	40	159	62
	MAVERICKS		8	25	31	33	97	
PLAYOFF	MONICA JAJOO	0	6	46	16	-	68	-45
	RAMPAGE		55	28	30	-	113	



8th Shree Cement Championship winner: Team Formidables

Match Point Pairs Final Leaderboard

RANK	PAIRS NAME
1	Pinaki Prasad Khan & Satyabrata Mukherjee
2	Raju Tolani & Vinay Desai
3	Biswajit Poddar & Shambhu Nath Ghosh
4	Pranab Bardhan & Sumit Bhowmik
5	Pranab Roy & Joyrup Mullick
6	Rana Roy & Abhijit Chakraborty
7	Sukalyan Sarkar & Sanjib Ganguly
8	Asit Baran Chakraborty & Subhasish Sarkar
9	Swetadri Saha & Krishna Das Chakraborty
10	Subhajit Choudhury & Souvik Kar
11	Vivek Saraogi & Ajay Kumar Bagadia
12	Swapan Some & Sekhar K Bandopadhyay
13	Sumit Saha & Swapan Sardar
14	Moloy Mondal & Kingshuk Bhattacharya
15	Raj Kumar Chowdhury & Goutam Mazumder
16	Girish Kumar & S M Moin

The Matchpoint Pairs Final saw enthusiastic participation, with 52 pairs competing across two sections of 26 pairs each. The format featured a all play all within the section, with every pair playing two boards against each of the others—making it a 50-board final.

Emerging victorious were Pinaki Prasad Khan and Satyabrata Mukherjee, who claimed the title with consistent and skilful play. Finishing as runners-up were the experienced duo of Raju Tolani and Vinay Desai.

The top 24 pairs from the final standings will be eligible for master points. Congratulations to all the finalists and especially to the winners for their outstanding performance.



MP Pair Winner



MP Pairs Runners up

IMP Pairs Final Leaderboard

RANK	PAIRS - NAME
1	Rathindra Nath Kundu - R Anbazhagan
2	Vibhas Todi - Satyabrata Lahiri
3	Pulak Panji - Gourav Biswas
4	Sanjay Raha - Chandan Chowdhury
5	Joyjit Sen Sharma - Ranjan Bhattacharya
6	Baneet Kumar Malhotra - Kavita Ajmira
7	Ajay Kar - Rana Chakraborty
8	Pramod Ranjan Das - Amit Chakraborty
9	Sagar Bhunia - Tanmoy Majumder
10	Saurav Basak - Arnab Ghosh
11	Saswata Ballav - Chiranjib Ballav
12	Vinay Mohan Lal - Avijit Sarkar
13	Santi Ranjan Dutta - Mala Singh
14	Somik Mitra - Rajat Kanti Dawn
15	Amal Kumar Sarkar - Salil K Mondal
16	Pallab Roy - Shantanu Roy

Rathindra Nath Kundu and R. Anbazhagan claimed top honours in the IMP Pairs Final with a composed and consistent performance. Vibhas Todi–Satyabrata Lahiri finished a close second, followed by Pulak Panji–Gourav Biswas in third place. Strong showings were also recorded by Sanjay Raha–Chandan Chowdhury and Joyjit Sen Sharma–Ranjan Bhattacharya, who placed fourth and fifth respectively. The top eight pairs included impressive efforts from Baneet Kumar Malhotra–Kavita Ajmira, Ajay Kar–Rana Chakraborty, and Pramod Ranjan Das–Amit Chakraborty.

Congratulations to all the winners and participants on a well-fought final.



Glimpse of the day



Larry Cohen: The Champion of Clear Bridge



Larry Cohen, a 25-time national champion and ACBL Hall of Famer, revolutionized bidding with *To Bid or Not to Bid*, introducing the Law of Total Tricks. Co-author of *On the Other Hand* with David Bird, his newsletters on larryco.com offer quizzes and hands that make learning fun. Cohen's clear, engaging style, seen in *The Bridge World*, demystifies bridge for all levels, earning him global acclaim. This write-up is prepared by Dr. Rounak Ghosh for the Shree Cement 2025 Bulletin, sourced from the best references and articulated in the engaging voice of Larry Cohen.

The Law of Total Tricks: The Science Behind Competitive Bidding

Introduction

If there's one principle that revolutionized competitive bidding at the club and tournament level, it's the **Law of Total Tricks (LoTT)**. It's not a perfect "law," but it's one of the best guidelines we have to decide how high to bid in competitive auctions. With the right understanding and application, you'll bid more confidently, sacrifice accurately, and avoid being pushed around by the opponents.

Let's break it down, explore the math, examine real-life examples, and correct some common misconceptions — all with accuracy, clarity, and the strategic insight you'd expect from someone like me, who's lived by the Law since the 1980s.

What Is the Law of Total Tricks?

The **Law of Total Tricks** states:

"The total number of tricks available on a hand equals the total number of trumps held by both sides in their respective best suits."

Let's say:

- **Your side** has a **9-card fit** in hearts.
- **Their side** has an **8-card fit** in spades.

Then, according to LoTT:

Total tricks = 9 + 8 = 17.

Not *your tricks* — **total tricks** that exist on the hand. So maybe you can take 9 tricks in hearts and they can take 8 in spades. Or vice versa.

This simple addition — fit + fit — gives us a valuable compass for judging how high to bid.

Basic Application: How High Should You Bid?

The practical takeaway:

- **Compete to the level equal to the number of trumps your side holds.**

If you have:

- **8-card fit?** Compete to the 2-level.
- **9-card fit?** Compete to the 3-level.
- **10-card fit?** Compete to the 4-level (or sacrifice).

That's the basic guideline. It's not about high-card points — it's about trumps.

Let's see this in action.

Example 1: Competing With a 9-Card Fit

You hold (South):

♠ K 7 5 4

♥ Q J 9 6 2

♦ 8

♣ 8 6 5

Partner opens 1♥. RHO bids 1♠.

You bid 2♥ (support, weak).

LHO jumps to 2♠. Partner passes. RHO passes.

Back to you. What now?

You know:

- You and partner have at least a **9-card heart fit**.
- They likely have an **8-card spade fit**.

Per LoTT:

$9 + 8 = 17$ tricks total. Expect about 8-9 tricks for your side, 8-9 for theirs.

So? **Bid 3♥.**

You're competing to the 3-level because you have 9 trumps. It's not a game try — it's just following the Law.

Even if you go down one (-50 or -100), that may be better than letting them make 2♠.

Example 2: What If You Have 10 Trumps?

Change South's hand slightly:

♠ K 7 5

♥ Q J 9 6 4 2

♦ 8

♣ 8 6 5

Same sequence. Partner opens 1♥, RHO bids 1♠, you bid 2♥, LHO bids 2♠, pass, pass...

Now, you count **6 hearts** in your hand, and **partner opened 1♥** — likely with 4. So you're sitting on a **10-card heart fit**.

10 trumps = safe to bid to the 4-level.

Bid 4♥.

You're not bidding because of HCP (you still have only about 6). You're bidding because you hold trump length. If they can make 4♠, you might even be saving — and if they can't, you're preempting them out of a makeable contract.

LoTT Assumptions: What Makes It Work

The Law is most accurate when:

- Both sides have fits in **different suits**
- Distribution is relatively **normal** (no freak 6–0 splits)
- You count **honestly** (don't assume partner has 5 when he showed 3)

Don't apply the Law blindly. Like all tools, it's only as good as your judgment.

Adjusting the Law: When to Be Cautious

Sometimes, the Law overestimates the number of tricks, especially when:

1. **Defensive strength is high** (e.g., HCP concentrated in short suits)
2. **Fits are poor** (trumps are weak or missing top honors)
3. **Distribution is flat** (lots of 4–3–3–3 hands around)

You can "adjust" the Law:

- **Subtract a trick** when vulnerable with poor trumps
- **Add a trick** when non-vulnerable with excellent trumps and distribution

Example 3: Adjusting for Flat Hands

North-South have a combined 9-card heart fit. But the hand looks like this:

South: ♠ Q 7 5, ♥ Q 9 6 4 2, ♦ K 8 5, ♣ Q 7

North: ♠ K 8 2, ♥ A J 5, ♦ Q J 6, ♣ K 9 4 3

They have **8 hearts** — but flat hands, soft values, and few ruffing values.

Would you want to push to the 3-level on this? Probably not.

Point says "yes" — but this is when you mentally **adjust** it. Say "LoTT minus 1" and stay at 2♥.

LoTT in Sacrifices: Knowing When to Go Down

Suppose your opponents are headed to 4♠, and you hold:

♠ 7 6

♥ K 10 9 8 6 4

♦ 5 2

♣ 8 7 4

Partner opens 1♥. You raise to 2♥. They bid 4♠.

You know you have a **10/11-card heart fit**. 4♠ is game for them.

Should you bid 5♥?

Check vulnerability. If you're **non-vulnerable**, going down 2 (–100) might be a good sacrifice if 4♠ makes (–420).

LoTT says:

If they can make 10 tricks and you have 9 trumps, you probably have 9 tricks too.

So 5♥ down 1 isn't far-fetched. You might even make it.

LoTT at Matchpoints vs IMPs

At matchpoints, being down 1 isn't a disaster — but neither is letting them play 2♠ making 2. You want to go plus when you can. Use the Law a bit more cautiously.

At IMPs, preventing game or sacrificing at the right time can swing 5–10 IMPs. LoTT becomes more aggressive.

Common Misconceptions

1. **LoTT is not about points.** It's about **trump length**. Don't confuse it with "rule of 20" or opening criteria.
2. **LoTT doesn't say who will win more tricks.** It just tells you the total. Your side may get 8, they get 9 = 17 total.
3. **LoTT is less reliable with misfits.** If neither side has a good fit, don't try to force the math.

The Law in Action: A Real-Life Hand

Vul: Both

Dealer: South

South:

♠ Q 10 6 3

♥ K J 9 8 5 2

♦ 6

♣ 7 3

North:

♠ A 9 7

♥ A 4 3

♦ K 7 2

♣ Q 10 9 2

South opens 2♥ (weak). West bids 2♠. North raises to 3♥. East bids 3♠. South?

South knows:

- 6 hearts in hand, partner raised — probably a **fit of 9**
- They have a spade fit — assume 8 or 9

LoTT says: total tricks ≈ 17 or 18.

If 3♠ is likely to make, South should bid 4♥. Even if it goes down 1, it may beat their game.

If 3♠ is going down, let them play it.

It all comes down to judgment — but the Law helps inform that judgment.

Final Thoughts from Larry

The Law of Total Tricks won't give you perfect answers, but it gives you *direction*. It's your guidepost in competitive auctions when points don't tell the story. Trust the fit. Understand the total. Adjust based on distribution and vulnerability.

Most important of all — **discuss it with your partner**. If your partner is on board with the Law, you'll both bid more fearlessly and more constructively.

Let your trumps speak.

Technical Team



Tournament Directors



Tournament Organization & Bulletin Team



Tournament Reviewer



BBO Vugraph Team



Dealing Team



Caddies Team

And with that, dear readers, we bring our coverage of the 8th Shree Cement Tournament to a close. It has been our pleasure to bring you the highlights, drama, and brilliance from this remarkable event. We sincerely hope you've enjoyed following the action as much as we've enjoyed sharing it with you. Your feedback means a great deal to us—please do write in. We listen closely and strive to make each edition better than the last. **Until next time - happy bridging!**