

A decorative graphic on the left side of the cover features several playing cards. Two cards are prominently displayed, overlapping each other. The top card is the Ace of Hearts, showing a large red heart in the center and a smaller one in the top right corner. The bottom card is the Ace of Diamonds, showing a large red diamond in the center and a smaller one in the top right corner. Scattered around these cards are various other playing card symbols, including hearts, diamonds, clubs, and spades, in both red and black colors. The cards have a white face with a gold border.

JULIAN
LADERMAN

USEFUL
PROBABILITY
FOR BRIDGE
PLAYERS

Contents

Preface		7
Part I	Table Talk at the Bridge Table	9
Chapter 1:	Who Needs Bridge Probability?	11
Chapter 2:	Asking the Right Question	21
Chapter 3:	Coincidences and the Unexpected	28
Part II	Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Probability	35
Chapter 4:	Likelihood of Suit Splits	37
Chapter 5:	The Hideous Hog's View of Probability	47
Chapter 6:	Equally Likely Outcomes	60
Chapter 7:	Combining Bridge Probabilities	78
Chapter 8:	Deciding How to Play a Suit	89
Chapter 9:	Percentage Plays	99
Chapter 10:	Examples of Bridge Overriding Probability	107
Chapter 11:	Restricted Choice and Bayes' Theorem	117
Chapter 12:	Game Theory and the Cheater's Dilemma	127
Chapter 13:	Gambling and Expected Value	134
Chapter 14:	Probability of Types of Hands	144
Chapter 15:	Bidding Maxims and Partnership Holdings	159
Chapter 16:	Bidding Conventions	172
Chapter 17:	Bidding Decisions	182
Chapter 18:	Statistics for the Human Element	194

Part III	Much More than You Ever Wanted to Know About Probability	207
Chapter 19:	Number of Ways Events Happen	209
Chapter 20:	Probability of Types of Hands (Again)	220
Chapter 21:	Probability of Partnership and Defensive Holdings	230
Chapter 22:	Probability of Hand Repetition	239
Chapter 23:	History and Future of Bridge Probability	247
Afterword		259
Appendix 1:	More Accurate Tables for Suit Splits	264
Appendix 2:	The Formula for Bayes' Theorem	265
Appendix 3:	<i>A Priori</i> and <i>A Posteriori</i>	266
Appendix 4:	Playing Random Cards	267
Appendix 5:	The Birthday Problem	269
Appendix 6:	Summary of Mathematical Pretending	270
Bibliography		271
 Pages with Important Reference Tables		
	<i>Table of Suit Splits (two digits)</i>	38
	<i>Table of Suit Splits (four digits)</i>	264
	<i>Table of Hand Shapes</i>	151
	<i>Table of Partnership Distributions</i>	168
	<i>Table of Individual HCP</i>	154
	<i>Table of Partnership HCP</i>	160

GENERAL INTEREST

Beginners rely heavily on bridge maxims. Are they accurate? What is the mathematics behind them? *Useful Probability for Bridge Players* examines these questions. The emphasis here is on ‘useful’. This is not an academic tome, but a discussion of the aspects of probability that every bridge player needs to know and understand. Topics include suit splits, suit combinations, percentage plays, the Principle of Restricted Choice, choosing bidding systems/conventions and the application of probability to bidding decisions.

– Praise for *A Bridge to Inspired Declarer Play* –

“... [Laderman] gives the most comprehensible explanation of probabilities I can remember reading.”

The New York Times (Dec, 2009) Phillip Alder



JULIAN LADERMAN, Ph.D (New York) is a retired applied mathematics professor (CUNY) who specializes in making difficult concepts clear. He is the author of *A Bridge to Simple Squeezes* and *A Bridge to Inspired Declarer Play*, both ABTA Book of the Year award winners. His bridge history book, *Bumblepuppy Days*, won the IBPA Alan Truscott Memorial Award.

