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When probability trees don't work.

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Summary: Tree diagrams arise naturally in courses on probability at high school or university, even at an elementary level. Often they are used to depict outcomes and associated probabilities from a sequence of games. A subtle issue is whether or not the Markov condition holds in the sequence of games. We present two examples that illustrate the importance of this issue. Suggestions as to how these examples may be used in a classroom are offered.

Classification: K50 K60 M40

Keywords: Markov condition; conditional probability; teaching probability; simulation

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