

Problem 12060

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Prove

$$\sum_{n=2}^{\infty} \frac{H_n H_{n+1}}{n^3 - n} = \frac{5}{2} - \frac{\pi^2}{24} - \zeta(3)$$

where $H_n = \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{1}{j}$ is the n th harmonic number.

Solution proposed by Roberto Tauraso, Dipartimento di Matematica, Università di Roma “Tor Vergata”, via della Ricerca Scientifica, 00133 Roma, Italy.

Solution. It is straightforward to verify that for $n \geq 2$,

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{H_n H_{n+1}}{n^3 - n} &= \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{H_{n+1}^2}{n+1} - \frac{H_n^2}{n} \right) - \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{H_n^2}{n} - \frac{H_{n-1}^2}{n-1} \right) + \frac{3}{4} \left(\frac{H_{n+1}}{n+1} - \frac{H_n}{n} \right) - \frac{5}{4} \left(\frac{H_n}{n} - \frac{H_{n-1}}{n-1} \right) \\ &\quad - \frac{3}{4} \left(\frac{1}{n} - \frac{1}{n-1} \right) - \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{(n+1)^2} - \frac{1}{n^2} \right) - \frac{1}{4(n+1)^2} - \frac{H_{n+1}}{2(n+1)^2} \end{aligned}$$

(just set $H_{n+1} = H_n + \frac{1}{n+1}$ and $H_{n-1} = H_n - \frac{1}{n}$, expand and simplify). Hence, as $N \rightarrow \infty$,

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{n=2}^N \frac{H_n H_{n+1}}{n^3 - n} &= -\frac{H_2^2}{4} + \frac{H_1^2}{2} - \frac{3H_2}{8} + \frac{5H_1}{4} + \frac{3}{4} + \frac{1}{8} - \frac{1}{4} \sum_{n=2}^N \frac{1}{(n+1)^2} - \frac{1}{2} \sum_{n=2}^N \frac{H_{n+1}}{(n+1)^2} + o(1) \\ &= \frac{3}{2} - \frac{1}{4} \left(\sum_{n=1}^{N+1} \frac{1}{n^2} - 1 - \frac{1}{4} \right) - \frac{1}{2} \left(\sum_{n=1}^{N+1} \frac{H_n}{n^2} - H_1 - \frac{H_2}{4} \right) + o(1) \rightarrow \frac{5}{2} - \frac{\pi^2}{24} - \zeta(3) \end{aligned}$$

where at the last step we used the known results

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^2} = \zeta(2) = \frac{\pi^2}{6} \quad \text{and} \quad \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{H_n}{n^2} = 2\zeta(3).$$

□

Appendix. Since $D(\text{Li}_r(z)) = \frac{1}{z} \text{Li}_{r-1}(z)$ where $\text{Li}_r(z) = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{z^k}{k^r}$, it follows that

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{H_n}{n^2} &= \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{\sum_{j=0}^{n-1} \int_0^1 t^j dt}{n^2} = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^2} \cdot \int_0^1 \frac{1-t^n}{1-t} dt = \int_0^1 \frac{\zeta(2) - \text{Li}_2(t)}{1-t} dt \\ &= [-\zeta(2) \ln(1-t) - 2\text{Li}_3(1-t) + 2\text{Li}_2(1-t) \ln(1-t) + \text{Li}_2(t) \ln(1-t) + \ln(t) \ln^2(1-t)]_{0+}^{1-} \\ &= 2\text{Li}_3(1) = 2\zeta(3) \end{aligned}$$