

# Matters Arising 183

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 13 - 17 May 2024

## Three Losers

A  
A K Q J 8 4  
6 5  
A K 10 3

8

9 7 6 5  
7 5  
9 8 4 2  
8 7 2

How well do you know your way around your strong openings?

On Thursday's board 8 North had a 3 loser major suited hand, and South a Yarborough. North requires very little for game - the trumps to run for no loser and the clubs to be played for one loser. The former is surely a reasonable hope - even if partner is void the chance of a 4-3 break exceeds 60%. As for clubs, if partner has at most two then there must be chances of a club ruff, and if four

then the 3-2 break is favourite to pick the suit up for one loser. Even with three clubs in partner's hand there are three chances - the suit is 3-3, the QJ fall doubleton, or when you run all your trumps bar one, a defender with four clubs discards one.

Perhaps the real question is if you're not playing the sequence 2C - 2D - 2H as forcing regardless of whether 2D is a negative response or merely a meaningless relay, why not? If opener has eight playing tricks with no hint of a ninth then for game they need partner to have two solid tricks, with which they would surely reply to a 1H opening, so no need to open 2C.

Without using Benjaminised Acoll, and assuming 2C isn't game-forcing two auctions appeal:

2C - 2D - 2H - 2NT - 3C - 3H - 4H and  
2C - 2D - 3H - 4H.

In the first auction 2NT is a (second) negative - some may prefer a Herbert (next suit up is negative) 2S.

In the second auction 3H sets the suit and is game-forcing, asking partner to cue-bid.

	A	
	A K Q J 8 4	
	6 5	
	A K 10 3	
Q 10 8 4		K J 3 2
10 3 2		9 6
Q J 3		A K 10 7
Q J 6		9 5 4
	9 7 6 5	
	7 5	
	9 8 4 2	
	8 7 2	

South has the worst possible club holding but the suit broke so declarer didn't need any help from discards.

## Defensive Hold-Up

	9 7 6 2	
	9 6	
	Q J 9 2	
	8 6 4	
K 10 5		Q J 8 4 3
Q J 5		2
7 6 4 3		A 8 5
10 3 2		K Q 9 5
	A	
	A K 10 8 7 4 3	
	K 10	
	A J 7	

On Tuesday East opened 1S before South put their foot down at most tables and insisted on playing in hearts, typically at the 4 level.

West dutifully led their partner's suit and South surveyed their prospects. If trumps are 2-2 the contract makes for the loss of AD and 2 clubs. As we see though hearts failed to break and declarer was left feeling resigned to 1 off.

However When declarer switched to KD after 2 rounds of trumps East usually rose with the Ace, and suddenly declarer had 11 tricks as two clubs could now disappear on diamonds. If East were to display a little patience and hold off for one round then the contract is beaten.

Bad play by East? Not necessarily, but a lack of partnership understanding perhaps. It is common but not universal to signal length on suits led by declarer. If West plays the 7D under the K East should be able to read this as the beginning of a peter to show an even number of diamonds. Which means declarer has an even number too and East can safely hold off on the first round.

## Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (7 tables): Chris Walker & Chris Wilkinson

Tuesday F2F (7 tables):

NS: Debbie & Roger Wilkinson

EW: Sarah Bullock & Gwen Wiles

Tuesday BBO (6 tables):

Amanda Etherington & Martyn Harris

Thursday am (5 tables):

Brenda Richardson & Rita Davies

Thursday BBO (4 tables): Mike & Sally-Ann Rothwell

Total 29 tables for the week.

I welcome any comments or queries sent me at [martyn@orpheusmail.co.uk](mailto:martyn@orpheusmail.co.uk) though they may be used in future issues should I choose to produce such. Or they may not. You have been warned.

NB, I do try replying to mails raising a specific point, so if I seem to ignore you do check your spam folder after a day or three.

*Martyn Harris*  
spadeilike on BBO