


Matters Arising 186


being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 3 - 7 Jun 2024

Club Clanger?

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

Three Easts played in clubs on Monday's board 6. Perhaps the auction was 1C - 1S - 2C - 2H - 3C, maybe with a 3H - 4C tacked on the end. Two declarers faced the lead of the 7S, the other the AD. None made 11 tricks. There appears to be at most a diamond and a club loser, so I fear an obsession with drawing trumps.

Winning the KS early and taking the club finesse will certainly remove the enemy teeth quickly, partly because when the finesse fails South may well return a trump to prevent a diamond ruff, possibly taking a diamond before playing the club in case one of dummy's majors runs. There is now no way of avoiding a second diamond loser.

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


Suppose declarer allows T1 to go 7S, 8, 10 A, and returns a diamond. Even if this runs around to North who switches to a club East rises with the A, ruffs their second diamond and plays a heart to the A in hand to tackle the remaining trumps.

South does best to win and lead a major won on table with the K. Now declarer has to get back to hand to draw the last trump, knowing that South has it.

Spade ruff or heart ruff? The original 7S lead looks suspiciously doubleton, so a spade would create a trump promotion for the defence as ruffing small would allow an over-ruff whilst ruffing high leaves South's last trump boss. The position in hearts is less clear, so this is a better choice. Indeed a heart finds South with a third card in the suit, and East returns safely to hand to draw the last trump for 11 tricks.

Limited Entry

A K J 7 5 4 3		With 5 losers North has a very	
Q 4		simple plan for the auction - open 1S	
K 9 8 7		and if partner squeaks rebid 4S.	
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			In practice East overcalls in clubs,
			but this is hardly an insurmountable
			obstacle, with South either bidding
			2H or making a negative double.

2			
K J 10 8 6		Although we like to keep our 2 level	
A 6		responses up to the normal 10+ point	
J 10 7 5 3		strength after an overcall, one can't	
		afford to follow this too religiously	


in competitive auctions, and 2H over 2C is reasonable.

East leads AC, and North looks for a plan for the play as simple as that for the auction. Think your thoughts.

As far as losers are concerned there seem to be a heart, possibly a spade assuming a 3-2 break, and maybe 2 diamonds. One diamond can be ruffed barring a bad break, reducing the loser count to at most three.

However dummy's hearts are surely good for diamond discards, so the contract looks like it can be made for the loss of AH and maybe a trump. The danger though is that if the AH is held up for one round then the long hearts can only be reached via AD. That precious entry must be preserved, so no crossing to AD to take a trump finesse, or in preparation for a diamond ruff.

Thus trumps are played from the top. If the Q drops, great. If not a third round is played, and a diamond return by the defence won in hand so that hearts can be tackled Q first whilst the AD remains on table as entry. Both declarer's long diamonds now disappear on hearts.

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

In practice the QS comes down in 2, so the last trump is drawn before tackling hearts, and 12 tricks are made.

Classic Auction

10 9 7
A
K 10 4
A J 7 6 5 2



A K J 4 3
K 6 3
J 9 7
K 3

1S – 2C – 2NT – 3S – 4S is the classic auction on this hand from Tuesday.

With North having promised 10+ points with their 2C response South's 2NT rebid, whether 15–16 or 15+, is game-forcing as the partnership are now guaranteed at least a combined 25 count. Thus North can show secondary spade support by bidding 3S, safe in the knowledge this won't be passed out.

10 9 7
A
K 10 4
A J 7 6 5 2

Q
Q 9 5 2
Q 8 5 3
Q 10 9 4



A K J 4 3
K 6 3
J 9 7
K 3

8 6 5 2
J 10 8 7 4
A 6 2
8

A favourable lie of the cards allows 12 tricks to be made in both spades and NT, but what would you rather be in on a heart lead not knowing how the enemy resources are divided?

Stopping short of game is surely an accident, for even if you play 2C as not promising 10+ points, 3S must still be forcing for you would not remove 2NT into a possible 4–3 fit on modest values.

Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (7½ tables): Sam Norman & Alan Anderson

Tuesday F2F (6 tables):

NS: Andrew Peill & Shaffin Jaffer
EW: Gwen Wiles & Sarah Bullock

Tuesday BBO (5 tables):

Amanda Etherington & Martyn Harris

Thursday am (7 tables):

NS: Mary & Neil Adams
EW: Jill & Chris Yates

Thursday BBO (5 tables):

= Andrew Peill & Shaffin Jaffer
= Alan Wearmouth & Martyn Harris

Total 30½ tables for the week.

Underbid Slam

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



7
8
A K Q 9 8 7 3
A 10 6 4

Those who reached 6D on this hand from Thursday then had the task of proving they had underbid.

Over to you to make the lot on the lead of a heart - there is no club or heart void.

The only losers in hand are the three clubs below the A. One can go on KS at some point, the other two will have to be ruffed.

With 10 trumps at most three will be needed to draw the enemy ones, so there is plenty of opportunity to be extravagant with our ruffs to deny any chance of an over-ruff.

Play goes win AH, club to A, ruff C with 10D. 4D to A, ruff club with JD. Ruff H with KD and draw remaining trump(s). Then it is safe to cross to AS to discard the last club on the KS, leaving South with just trumps.

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

J 10
K 10 9 5 3 2
5
J 5 3 2



7
8
A K Q 9 8 7 3
A 10 6 4

Q 9 6 4 3
Q J
6 2
K 9 8 7

I welcome any comments or queries sent me at 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