

Matters Arising188


being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 17 - 21 Jun 2024

Love those Tens

K J 10 Partner opens 1C. Your bid.
 8 7 2
 Q 10 4 This was the problem facing South on
 A 10 4 2 Monday's Teams session, board 18.

If looking to bid NT should it be 1 or 2? If supporting clubs should you make a single raise (9 losers partner) or 3 (10 points and three 10s)?

If in doubt bid game is one of the tactics associated with team play, so presumably South will want to bid 2NT or 3C rather than 1NT or 2C.

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

North would presumably raise 2NT to 3NT on the strength of their 15 count, but pass a 1NT response. 2C would also be destined to be passed, but North would want to go on over 3C. Both 5C - 6 losers becoming 5 off the back of a known 9+ card fit - or 3H angling for 3NT are possible, with South accepting the invitation implied by 3H. Thus responses of 1NT and 2C would end the auction, 2NT and 3C lead to game.

Both 5C and 3NT make, the latter more easily than the former. What of the 10s?

The 10C is gold dust. Switch it with any of the defender's spot cards and the club suit cannot be picked up for no loser.

The 10D sets up a finesse, which admittedly fails, but which still prevents West from leading a second round of the suit.

The 10H sets up a finesse in hearts, and is also ready to come to the top should the JH not be in a long hand.

The 10S ensures that there is a spade stop.

With so much help from 0 points, perhaps we shouldn't be surprised that game makes.

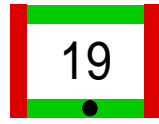
Bad Luck?

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

3C by East was a popular contract on this hand from Thursday, with North having opened 1H. There appear to be just 1 heart 1 diamond and either 1 or 2 spade losers depending on the location of AS, which looks favourite to lie North as desired.

The most demanding defence started with a heart to Q and North's A, followed by a diamond switch. It seems natural to draw trumps in 3 rounds if need be, ending on table so that a spade could be led towards the K.

Thus after winning the diamond switch the AC is played. When South shows out declarer keeps their nerve. Cross to table with KH and lead a spade. North rises with A and continues diamonds. Win with the remaining high diamond, ruff the third spade with KC to prevent any over-ruff, and take the marked finesse against the 10C so that the trumps can still be picked up for no loser.

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


Variations on this line are available on any defence, and secure 10 tricks, which on the night would have been an outright top. The bad luck of a 4-0 trump break and of North having only 2 spades and thus able to ruff a third round don't come into play.

Pick-a-bid

A K Q 8 3
 --
 A Q
 A K 10 9 8 6

North had visions of finding a way to slam when they picked up this 2 loser hand on Monday's board 2. However East dealt and opened 1H, and West raised to 2H. No prizes for guessing that South would be short of values.

Time for North to take action. They might try double on the off-chance that partner bids a black suit - partner bids diamonds of course, 3H, which must be forcing but otherwise of unclear meaning, or whatever they think they can make. Even at pairs one would presumably intend to open this hand with a game-forcing bid so here should choose between 4S and 5C. At teams there is an onus on not missing games, so bids such as 3S or 4C aren't good enough - partner will have no idea how little they need to raise to game - a doubleton club could be enough - and will almost certainly believe they haven't got it.

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

Two Norths elected to play in clubs and made 11 tricks on the inevitable lead of a top heart. You will of course have spotted that there are 12 tricks available on any lead and have your own opinion as to whether the line should have been found at the table.

Want to check your spot?

Ruff the opening heart lead, and lay down AK C. When the suit fails to break switch to spades from the top. You don't mind East ruffing in as it is a natural trump trick they will be scoring anyway. East can't prevent you reaching dummy with a spade ruff - yes you are ruffing a winner - and so you get to take the diamond finesse, which perhaps against expectations works.

This line should be found at the table. Even if declarer isn't looking for a twelfth trick they want 11. Should West have 4 spades and declarer started with 3 rounds of trumps then they are looking at a spade loser as well as a diamond and a trump, whereas the proposed line always allows declarer a spade ruff if trumps at worst 3-1. The diamond finesse working is merely a bonus.

Around The Club

This weeks winners were
 Monday (9 tables teams): Brian Smith & Carl Penson
 Ray Gregory & John Ellwood
 Tuesday F2F (7 tables):
 Robert Boyd & Dorothy Bayliss
 Tuesday BBO (6½ tables):
 Ina Gray & Mary Anne Peden
 Thursday am (6 tables):
 NS: David Crowe & Jane Curzon
 EW: Neil & Mary Adams
 Thursday BBO (4½ tables): John & Wendy Ellwood

Total 33 tables for the week.

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