


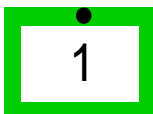
Matters Arising 195

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 5 - 9 Aug 2024

Bidding Problems

| | |
|---|--|
| 10 5 3 | Tuesday board one looks like a simple |
| A 6 4 | warm up for the rest of the session. |
| A 10 7 5 | The bidding seems destined to go |
| K J 10 | 1NT 2H |
|  | 2S 3H |
| | 4S |
| K Q J 4 2 | 2H is a transfer, 3H shows a second |
| K 10 9 8 | suit and is game forcing, being a new |
| Q J 8 4 | suit at the 3 level after a transfer, 4S |
| -- | agrees spades but has nothing more to |
| | say. |

Yet only one of 5 tables played in 4S. Indeed two tables played in hearts. Maybe North took the 3H rebid to mean "sorry partner, forgot we play transfers".

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


Those in 4H are unlucky to run into a 5-1 trump break, but even a more normal 4-2 one would leave declarer struggling to match the 11 tricks available in spades.

With KD outside 6D also makes. I won't claim this is unbidable, but it is difficult to come up with a credible auction to that destination even on sight of all the hands let alone at the table.

One South was confronted with a 2C overcall from East. Intervention over 1NT is far from uncommon, and partnerships need at least some basic agreement as to how to cope with it.

The simplest agreement is that bids at the 2 level are non-forcing, those at the 3 level are forcing. On this hand South would bid 3S game-forcing, and North 4S. Hardly foolproof, for North might have 2 spades and 4 hearts, but at least it gets you to the right level. Simply bidding 2S on both moderate and good hands, and hoping partner will guess whether they can afford to continue is asking to play at the wrong level.

K Q 10 3 2 A few hands later East was confronted
 K with a similar problem when their
 K 10 9 3 partner opened 1NT and North
 Q 9 6 overcalled 2H. The KH doesn't pull its
 weight as 3 points, but the shape and
 presence of two 10s and two 9s surely leaves East
 reluctant to stop short of game. 3S rather than 2S is the
 recommended bid. Both 4S and 3NT are easy makes:

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

K East could have been stumped though if
 K Q 10 3 2 the majors are switched around the table.
 K 10 9 3 Now they hold the hand left and have to
 Q 9 6 deal with a 2S overcall of partner's 1NT,
 with only one heart bid below game
 available. Is 3H forcing, non-forcing or a partner will
 have to guess what I've got bid?

Lebensohl is a convention in which 2NT is used a puppet bid, demanding partner bids 3C. Its purpose rather like transfers is to create more auctions. Used to help deal with intervention over 1NT, if responder cannot bid their suit at the 2 level then using Lebensohl and rebidding their suit (or then passing if their suit is clubs) is a non-forcing sequence, simply seeking to compete, leaving an immediate 3 level response as forcing.

Thus with the hand above left responder 4 bids 3H forcing over 2S intervention, K Q 10 3 2 but with the hand right they go through J 10 9 3 Lebensohl, first bidding 2NT and then Q 9 6 3H over partner's forced 3C rebid.

If responder could bid their suit at the 2 level they now have 3 sequences available to show it, with the division of labour being: bid at 2 level purely competitive, bid at 3 level forcing, bid via Lebensohl invitational.

Using Lebensohl does result in the loss of 2NT as a natural bid after intervention, with a values showing double being a possible replacement.

Fallible Losing Tricks

| | | |
|----------|---------|-----------|
| | A 5 | |
| | 8 4 3 2 | |
| | A K 7 | |
| | A K 8 3 | |
| Q 6 2 | 15 | J 8 7 4 3 |
| 10 9 7 | ● | K Q 5 |
| 10 9 4 3 | | 6 5 2 |
| Q 7 2 | | J 10 |
| | K 10 9 | |
| | A J 6 | |
| | Q J 8 | |
| | 9 6 5 4 | |

Bidding game was a minority occupation on Tuesday's board 15, with some auctions quickly stalling following a 1C – 2C start. South has 9 losers so is nominally correct in raising 1C to 2C, and with 6 losers themselves North can see no reason to progress beyond 3C. However, like the point count, the losing trick count is not an infallible guide to hand valuation, and it is normal to add the rider that if the point count clearly indicates a stronger bid, go with the points.

11 points most definitely suggests raising to the 3 level, so 1C – 3C is a better start, after which North will surely essay 3NT.

Indeed with a flat 11 and poor support for partner's minor the hands are tailor made for the old-fashioned sequence 1C – 2NT – 3NT.

Should North open 1H South's obvious reply is 2C, leading to North completing the auction with 3NT.

Two Obstacles

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

How would you tackle 5C on a spade lead after West had pre-empted in hearts? This hand from Tuesday saw two declarers in 4C, but there seems no reason not to try for 11 tricks.

| | |
|---|----|
| ● | 24 |
|---|----|

Following the pre-empt the spade lead looks singleton, and you are not surprised that the KJ sit over the Q so your play from dummy to T1 is irrelevant.

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

Looked at from South's point of view, they need to bring in diamonds for the loss of one trick, and also cannot afford to lose more than 1 spade.

Two lines appeal. One is to ruff a spade before drawing trumps and then take the double finesse in diamonds. The other is to go straight for the double finesse, with intent to discard a spade on the fifth diamond.

Clearly if you want to ruff a spade then trumps cannot be drawn until after the ruff. Nor can the trumps be drawn if playing to discard a spade on a diamond, for if you did draw them East could cash 2 spades if gaining the lead with a diamond honour.

| | | |
|---------------|-----------|----------------|
| | Q 4 | |
| | A 8 7 | |
| | A 9 7 5 2 | |
| | A J 6 | |
| 6 | 24 | K J 10 8 7 3 2 |
| K Q 9 5 4 3 2 | ● | J 10 |
| Q 6 4 | | K |
| 7 3 | | 10 9 5 |
| | A 9 5 | |
| | 6 | |
| | J 10 8 3 | |
| | K Q 8 4 2 | |

Both lines can be made to work, but with a shortage of entries to the South hand other than in trumps the former seems more dangerous than the latter.

The latter line goes win T1 with AS and run JD, losing to K. East probably cashes a spade and switches to JH, won on table with A. Now draw trumps ending in hand and run 10D. When the diamond honours split South is home, provided they don't block the diamond suit. Yes, if East has both diamond honours you are now destined to lose 2 spades and 2 diamonds, but leaving the trumps out would cost a ruff in diamonds whenever not 2–2.

Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (8 tables): Tim Harrison & Richard Brazier

Tuesday F2F (6 tables): Margaret & Dennis Pook

Tuesday BBO (5 tables):

Amanda Etherington & Martyn Harris

Thursday am (9 tables):

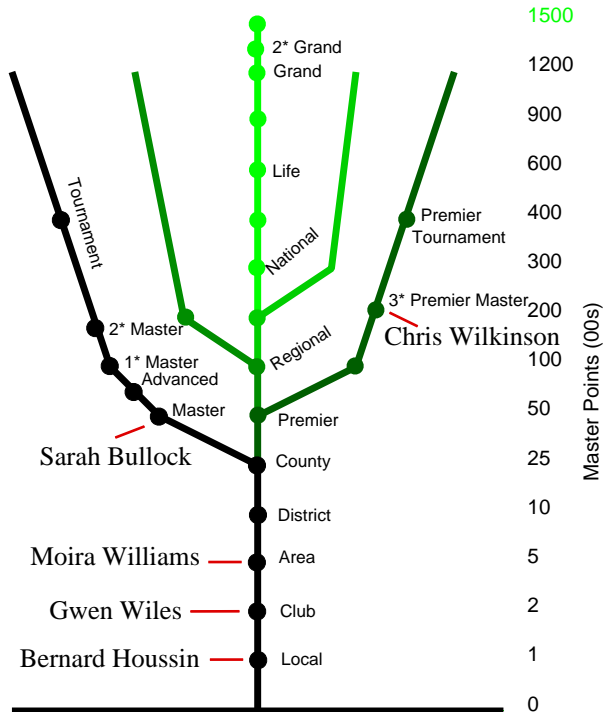
NS: David Crowe & Tutor

EW: Lyn Percival & Bob Churchward

Thursday BBO (5 tables): Ray & Irene Gregory

Total 33 tables for the week.

Congratulations to Chris Wilkinson, Sarah Bullock, Moira Williams, Gwen Wiles and Bernard Houssin who all achieved Master Point promotions during July.



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