

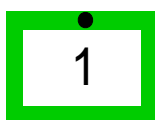
Matters Arising 105

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal Online 14 - 18 Nov 2022

Shape Matters

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

Board 1, Tuesday. Would you open the North hand? On the day the verdict was 5-3 in favour of doing so.



A Q 5
A 9
10 8 5 2
Q 8 3 2

Arguments against: you have but 11 points and a poor suit which you would have to rebid over a 2H response.

Arguments for: you have a singleton to go with your 11 high card points leaving you with 7 losers, with the 10 9 of clubs providing extra solidity.

Now how do you cope as South after the auction goes

1S	2H	X	3H
P	P	?	

We do not open 1S on flat hands with less than 15 points - that is 1NT territory. Nor do we open 1S with any 4-4-4-1 shape hand. Thus a 1S opening always shows 5 spades or 15+ points.

The same is not quite true for 1H openings for with a singleton club in a modest 4-4-4-1 hand it is all but universal to open 1H.

Partner has declined to continue despite our negative double seeking a minor bid at the 3 level, suggesting weakness and hence also suggesting 5 spades. Thus 3S (conservative with 7 losers) and 4S are now both possible.

Onto the play in 4S. East leads a diamond to West's A, who returns the suit. East ruffs and switches to KH. Naturally you call for the A from table. What next?

Having already lost 2 tricks we can only afford to lose to one of the black kings. Moreover we don't want to take an unsuccessful spade finesse and suffer another diamond ruff. Thus we keep the spade finesse in reserve should the club one fail.

We continue with QC, encouraging West to cover an honour with an honour. If this holds then a repeat finesse is tried, for whilst possible it doesn't seem that likely that East has two singletons.

In practice West is likely to cover the Q, resolving the position in clubs, and declarer follows up with a spade to A and another trump to clear the suit as quickly as possible so as to deny the defence a chance of a second diamond ruff.

Yes, this line denies us the chance of finding both black Kings outside and making an overtrick, but even in pairs making a 23 point game on an 8 card fit should be a decent score.

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

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

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

A Q 5
A 9
10 8 5 2
Q 8 3 2

Those who ruffed a heart to hand after winning the A so as to be able to take the spade finesse indeed ran into a second diamond ruff.

We also see another reason for opening with the North hand - those who don't may run into a 2/3H opening from East, which South opposite a passed partner will see no reason to contest, allowing East-West an easy part-score.

Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (6 tables): Russell White & Jeremy Harris
Tuesday F2F (5 tables): Roger & Debbie Wilkinson
Tuesday BBO (8 tables): Hilary Parker & Gay Talbot
Thursday F2F (5 tables teams) Ellis Cup Q2:

Babs Matthews & John Farmer with
Tim Matthews & Ian Reeves

Total 24 tables for the week.

The Ellis Cup semi-finals and final will take place on 15th December with the draw for the semi-finals being Babs Matthew, John Farmer, Tim Matthews, Ian Reeves

v

Russell White, Jeremy Harris, John Nicholls, Bob Boyd

Mike & Sally-Ann Rothwell, Martyn Harris, Robin Rose

v

Mike & Stella Howse, Alan & Carolynne Farmer

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