

Matters Arising 111

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal Online 26 - 30 Dec 2022

Around The Club

With no face to face bridge on Monday or Tuesday there were just two winners this week:

Tuesday BBO (3½ tables): Ray & Irene Gregory

Thursday (5½ tables): Phil Rowland & Stuart Taylor

Total 9 tables for the week.

On Thursdays we normally play 24 boards. However this Thursday 11 pairs turned out, which with the help of a pair of robots gave us the option of playing either a full 11 round Howell with 2 boards against every other pair, or a ¾-Howell with pairs playing 3 boards against each of 8 other pairs and none against the remaining three pairs. It was felt that the full movement would be fairer even though it meant only 22 boards were played in total. Complaints to me.

Piling up the master points in December were

Mondays:	Robert Harvey	74
	Andrew Smith & Bob Boyd	72
	Mike Howse & Peter Goulding	66
	Russell White	61
Tuesdays F2F:	Debbie & Roger Wilkinson	12
	Lesley & John Sellar	12
	Bob Boyd & Dorothy Bayliss	12
Tuesdays BBO:	Ray & Irene Gregory	48
	Amanda Etherington	48
	& Martyn Harris	
	Steve Barron & Andrew Peill	36
Thursdays:	Ina Gray & Mary Ann Peden	30
	Gillian Whyte	60
	Martyn Harris	58
	Phil Rowland & Stuart Taylor	54
	Mike & Sally-Ann Rothwell	44

Getting There I

J 4 Put yourself in the North seat for
K Q 10 9 6 Thursday's hand 9. As dealer what do
-- you open?
K Q 9 7 4 2

The classical answer is 1C, clubs being the longest suit. Looking ahead though you may not enjoy a 1S response, giving a choice of suppressing the heart suit by rebidding 2C, or reversing into hearts thereby showing extra strength. Admittedly the hand has considerable potential, containing only 4 losers, but if partner has a similarly distributional hand with spades and diamonds then they may well be disappointed by the quality of your reversing values.

So open 1H then. But how will you subsequently persuade partner to play in clubs if necessary?

No perfect bid then.

In practice either opening can lead to J 4
game.

K Q 10 9 6

--

After 1H the bidding continues 1S - 2C - 3H - 4H, with 3H being jump preference. Some might claim that with 9 losers South is only worth simple preference, but a 10 count including 2 Aces is surely too good for this, and that is without the potentially helpful intermediates of 10S and 9D.

K Q 9 7 4 2



A 10 7 5

A J 3

J 9 6 2

5 3

With 1C there are more numerous credible auctions to consider, with 1C - 1S - 2C - P being the one that perhaps justifies a 1H opening.

The potentially hair-raising reverse works on this hand: 1C - 1S - 2H - 2NT - 3H - 4H with the forcing nature of North's reverse permitting the 2NT rebid from South, though it could be argued that false preference of 3C, or 3D, 4th suit forcing, are better choices at this point. In either case though North would still rebid their hearts to reach game.

The slower approach of 1C - 1D - 1H - 1S - 2H - 3H - 4H also gets the partnership to game.

Despite the many options available, three pairs missed the game.

J 4

K Q 10 9 6

--

K Q 9 7 4 2

K 3 2

8 2

A K 8 5 3

J 10 8



Q 9 8 6

7 5 4

Q 10 7 4

A 6

A 10 7 5

A J 3

J 9 6 2

5 3

Game makes by setting up clubs with the help of a ruff, so don't be too quick on the drawing of trumps.

Getting There II

A K 8 5 2 On Thursday's board 17 West was last to
K 9 5 bid, with the auction having gone P – P –
J 2 1D by the time it was their say.

A 10 4 We often overcall with a single digit worth
of points, so it seems sensible to put an
upper limit on such a bid, and I tend to think that with
16+ points one should start with a double, unless you
are balanced and have the opponents suit stopped in
which case 16 points is in 1NT overcall territory.
Double on balanced hands should be reserved for those
too strong for a 1NT overcall.

On that basis this hand is a maximum for a 1S overcall.

North passes and East bids 2H. Now what?

Partner passed originally, so is limited. Nevertheless it
seems sensible to assume that partner has decent values
within the context of a passed hand, for they can't
simply be assuming that their hearts are better than your
spades. Partner is all but marked with 5 hearts, for with
6 they will surely have opened a weak 2, and your
failure to double means they can't expect support for a 4
card heart suit.

At this point some chose to pass, presumably in relief at
finding a playable contract, but being so much stronger
than they might have been West surely must raise.

A K 8 5 2	● 17	Q 7
K 9 5		Q J 10 4 2
J 2		10 9 4
A 10 4		K Q J

After a raise East is happy to continue to game, and
with just two diamonds and a trump to lose this should
be an easy make with the help of 3 spades, 4 hearts and
3 clubs.

It seems remarkably straightforward to bid the game,
yet three East-Wests didn't. The problem is obviously
harder than I make it out to be.

	10 9 4 3	
	8 7 6	
	7 3	
	8 7 6 3	
A K 8 5 2	● 17	Q 7
K 9 5		Q J 10 4 2
J 2		10 9 4
A 10 4		K Q J
	J 6	
	A 3	
	A K Q 8 6 5	
	9 5 2	

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