

## Matters Arising 113

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 9 - 13 Jan 2023

### Tunnel Vision


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

You are West playing in 4S on the lead of 9D on this hand from Tuesday. Plan?

There are plenty of likely tricks - 6 trumps, 4 hearts and AD, so what could go wrong. The lead suggests the KD is over the Q, so we have to count a diamond loser, one in hearts unless lucky and 1 in clubs. That appears OK too.

However the three declarers lulled into a sense of security and deciding this meant they could draw trumps soon regretted their decision, for with no trumps on table there would be an unavoidable second diamond loser when the defence gets in with a heart.

After winning AD at trick one declarer must either duck a heart at trick 2 ready to run the hearts and discard a diamond or two from hand, or return a diamond ready to ruff a third round on table. The former risks a heart ruff if the suit is 4-1, so the latter looks better.


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

In practice either play works to ensure at least 10 tricks, whereas those suffering from tunnel vision and believing that drawing trumps is always the first job in a suit contract were restricted to 9 tricks. A costly affliction.

### 1NT Double Trouble

If A stands for any suit how do you play the double in the auction 1A - P - 1NT - X?

There is a tendency to think that as it is a double of No Trumps it should be for penalties. However with both opponents bidding doubler cannot expect their side to have a significant majority of the points, and with the stronger hand over them will rarely be able to double for penalties with confidence. Consequently this double is best played as a take-out double of the original suit.

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

Some Norths had to engage with the sequence on Monday's hand 8 with West opening 1D and South doubling East's 1NT reply. It is rarely right to pass a take-out double through weakness, so North should bid 2H which presumably South will leave.

Nothing makes North-South, but only an unlikely penalty double of their contract leaves them worse off than allowing East-West to make 8 tricks in No Trumps.

Whether South is best advised to double the 1NT, pass or bid 2S is a matter of opinion.

Had West been slightly weaker and opened 1NT we could have been looking at the sequence


1NT - P - P - X.

Again this is classically regarded as a penalty double. With enemy values over the double though, and defeat of the contract (if possible) perhaps dependent on partner's blind lead, it again seems more sensible to use the double as take-out. As such one doesn't need the big points of a penalty double as long as partner knows the sort of values to expect so can judge when to make a penalty pass.

## Rebid?

A 9 7 East had a rebid problem on Monday,  
 K J 10 7 6 when hearing partner reply 1S to their  
 A K 8 opening 1H.  
 A 4 With 19 points and a decent 5 card suit  
 game is the obvious destination, but how  
 does East discover the best one? 3NT is the practical  
 rebid for many, as there appears no natural and forcing  
 alternative.

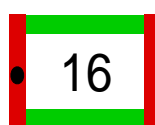
Consider though the merits of 3D. As a jump in a new  
 suit it is game forcing. It gives room for partner to show  
 secondary heart support or length in spades, and  
 diamonds will be supported only reluctantly in which  
 case you can still retreat to 4S. Putting up with the  
 occasional 4-3 fit in a spade game is a small price to  
 pay to be able to explore all the game options.

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

On the night West would rebid their spades over 3D,  
 and with more tricks available in spades than NT the  
 operation would be a success.

It is worth noting that the bidding of three card suits is  
 regarded as natural and hence not alertable, with the  
 exception of opening bids of 1 of a major which the  
 EBU bars participants from making by systemic  
 agreement.

## Unusual

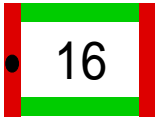


9 8  
 J 9 6 3  
 Q 10 8  
 A 10 7 3

South had a decision to make on  
 Monday's hand 16, with the bidding  
 having gone 1S – 2NT – 4S by the  
 time it reached them. Partner's 2NT is  
 the Unusual NT, showing at least 5-5  
 in the two lowest unbid suits, so the  
 minors in this case.  
 Is 4S likely to make and if so will 5C  
 be a good sacrifice?

It seems unlikely that the defence could do much  
 damage in the majors against 4S, and with East-West  
 having at most 4 clubs and 5 diamonds the chances of  
 singletons as well as honours surely limit expectations  
 for defensive tricks in the minors. The chances of 4S  
 making seem good.

Green against red South could afford to go 3 off for a  
 good sacrifice, so would need to limit losers to 5 tricks.  
 Partner has at most three major suit cards, so if all those  
 lose three off would require us to restrict losers to one  
 in each minor. Depending on the sort of rubbish on  
 which you make an Unusual 2NT bid you may or may  
 not fancy your chances.

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

In 4S neither defender can tackle diamonds and score 2  
 tricks there. Once North follows to 2 rounds of trumps  
 they are marked with a singleton heart, so the finesse of  
 JH will be taken and declarer can offload minor suit  
 losers on dummy's long hearts. 4S makes despite having  
 no minor suit singletons to help their cause.

In 5C declarer loser 3 major suit tricks plus one in  
 diamonds. Two down for 300, assumed doubled. A  
 good sacrifice indeed.

## Red Alert

A Q J 10 6 4  
Q 10  
A J  
J 8 6



K 9 3  
A 6 3  
Q 10 7 4 2  
Q 7


On this deal from Monday North found themselves declarer in 4S, with East laying down the two top clubs and continuing the suit at trick 3. From here the contract cannot be beaten. Over to you.

There is nothing useful to discard from dummy in a loser on loser play, so ruff high.

You have lost two club tricks so need to avoid 2 losers in the red suits.

Playing 2 rounds of trumps ending on table and then taking the diamond finesse leaves you vulnerable to a heart return if the finesse loses, for AD is still blocking its suit and the defence are now knocking out AH, the last entry to the long diamonds before you can use them.

Instead draw all the trumps, in 4 rounds if necessary. Now play off A and J D. If the defence allow the J to hold you have no diamond loser so make the contract for the loss of 2 clubs and a heart. If they take their K then AH is entry to table so that you can discard your second heart on QD.

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

In practice there is no defence at trick 1. Suppose East switches to a heart after cashing their 2 club winners. Declarer allows this to run and West wins and switches to a diamond. Up goes the Ace. 2 top trumps are followed by QH and a trump to table. The JD disappears on AH.

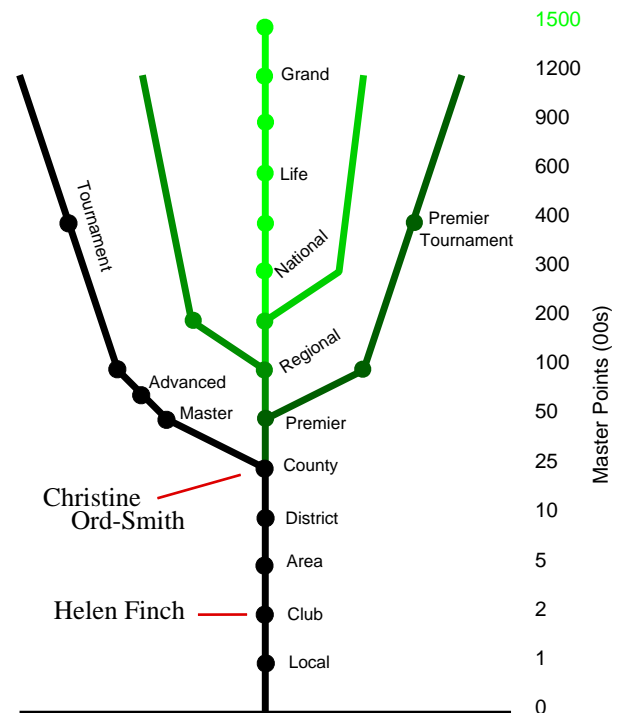
Both red Kings are wrong, but the defence cannot take advantage. But declarer can go wrong either by ruffing a third club low or by taking the diamond finesse after 2 rounds of trumps.

## Around The Club

This weeks winners were  
Monday (6½ tables): Chris Wilkinson & Chris Walker  
Tuesday F2F : cancelled  
Tuesday BBO (7½ tables): Bob Stow & Phil Hoyle  
Thursday (6½ tables): Tim Harrison & Martyn Harris

Total 20½ tables for the week.

During December there were Master Point promotions for Christine Ord-Smith to County Master and Helen Finch to Club Master.



I welcome any comments or queries sent me at [martyn@orpheusmail.co.uk](mailto: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