

## Matters Arising 115

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 23 - 27 Jan 2023

### Another Double

K This is South's non-vulnerable hand on  
 J 6 3 Thursday's board 6. East opened 1NT,  
 Q J 10 9 8 6 South passed, West instituted a transfer  
 A 10 5 sequence and at 5 out of 6 tables North  
 doubled. East completed the transfer.  
 Now what?

I'm guessing that the lack of action from South on the first round was due to conventional defences removing a natural diamond overcall from the options. What surprised me is that three Souths passed again despite hearing their partner double.

Since the 2H bid was artificial the normal interpretation of the double is neither penalties nor take-out but showing the suit bid. The other two of us bid hearts for a straight top. At my table I lurched straight to game, pressurising West to guess whether to bid 4S or not when that action is uncertain, and hoping that my singleton spade means they've run into a bad break if they do bid on. Meanwhile the singleton also helps my chances if 4H is passed out.

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

Dummy proved to be within reasonable expectations for the double and the contract made easily.

I can understand 3H from South as it is arguably a more sensible bid than 4H, but why pass when partner has gone out of their way to tell you they have hearts?

Should we read anything into East completing the transfer? When a transfer bid is doubled I like to play that completing the transfer shows at least 3 cards in the suit whereas pass is a doubleton. This makes both bids alertable as they have meanings that the opposition may not expect. The advantage is that partner has useful information to help them to decide whether to compete further.

### Suit Play

How should one tackle the club suit below as West playing in NT after South has bid spades?

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

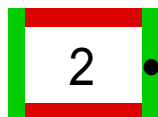
The normal way is K followed by A so that if North shows out on the second round there is a marked finesse against South's J. On this occasion South dropped the 9 under the K, which coupled with their presumed length in spades certainly doesn't look like from four. Consequently it is North who we wish to guard against having 4 clubs, and with the 9 out of the way we can do that by playing the Q next. South shows out and North's J gets trapped.

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

Also of interest is South's play at trick 1 on the lead of 5S. With West likely to have AH South has no side entry to the spades so should duck trick one, hoping that when partner gets in they can lead a second spade and allow the suit to run. Taking A and K at the first two tricks confines the defence to just those two in spades, something that South should be able to foresee.

## Minor Game

A 5 3 2  
10 9  
Q J 5  
A K 5 3



9  
A J 4  
A K 10 9 6  
J 10 6 2

On Monday it wasn't unusual to find South declaring 5D, though not all made the contract. What would be your plan on the lead of 8C?

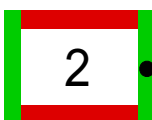
That 8C could be second from rubbish, top of a doubleton, or singleton. However with all Aces present we don't need to worry about East getting in to give West a ruff. Moreover if the lead is from 9 8 7 4 then the Q will tumble at trick 1 and we have a warning as to the danger of

East ruffing.

You rise with the A and the Q doesn't appear. What next? We think we have a club loser, but with none in diamonds or spades we need to avoid conceding two heart tricks. One way would be to take the double finesse in hearts, losing just one trick unless West has both K and Q. Alternatively we can look to ruff a heart on table.

At trick 2 run the 10H. We don't mind West getting on lead, but allowing East to win a trick with KH say could allow them to give their partner a club ruff. Today the 10 loses to the K and West switches to KS.

Win, cash QD, then AH, ruff a heart with J, then draw the remaining trumps. A club will need to be conceded at some point, but 11 tricks are ours.

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

The double finesse line also works - running the 10H at trick 2 to the K, drawing all the trumps on regaining the lead and then finessing the JH, but this does not seem to be as good a line.

Being Monday we have no record of the bidding but I suspect that it wasn't unusual for South to open 1D and have it overcalled 2D by West to show the majors. This both increases the likelihood that the club lead was singleton and that both K and Q of hearts are offside.

## Jacoby And More and Less

J 6 5  
Q 8 4 2  
A K Q  
A J 4



A 10 9 8  
A K 9 7 3  
J 3  
9 8

On Thursday's board 19 a few pessimists with the East hand responded 3H to their partner's opening bid of 1H. 12 points, 7 losers and 5 card support sounds like game to me, but I guess you never know.

The use of the Jacoby 2NT convention whereby a response of 2NT to an opening bid of a major shows game values and agrees the suit is fairly widely used and indeed was wheeled out at several tables.

However don't think you can sit down with a new partner and agree to play Jacoby and that's it. Unlike Stayman the responses to Jacoby are not fixed, so you'll need to check what continuations partner plays.

I currently use Jacoby with 4 partners, who each like their own responses, and am aware of other options too.

Partner I: 3C shows <15 pts with no void, 3D shows 15+ and promises a shortage, 3 of the major 15+ with no shortage and 4 any is <15 with a void.


Partner II: 3 suit is singleton, 4 suit 1st round control, 4 of the major is minimum with no shortage, 3 of the major is extra values with no shortage.

Partner III: 3 suit is shortage, 4 suit is a second good suit, 3 of the major 15+ good suit, 3NT 15+ poor suit, 4 of the major is minimum with nothing else to report.

Partner IV: 3C is 5 losers, 3D is 6 losers, 3H is 7 losers.

Note the use of the Principle of Fast Arrival - in a game forcing auction a game bid is weaker than a lower one.

Making 6H on the hand is easy, simply finesse twice in spades and as long as North has at least one missing honour you are home barring a 4-0 trump break or early ruff. On a club lead of course you will need to discard a club on a diamond before tackling spades.

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

However bidding the slam with confidence is difficult, for success hinges on those good spade intermediates.

Suppose for example we 'strengthen' the East hand by adding three points in the form of KC, but lowering the spots on the spades:

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

Now 6H requires the club finesse to work so that we can discard a spade on each of the minors. It is tempting to think this makes it a 50% slam, but that falls into the trap of regarding things that work as certainties. Here for example if South has all the trumps there will be no play, and although that probability isn't large it still takes you below 50%. A nominally stronger hand in point count terms but with the same distribution produces a poorer slam contract, needing one card (QC) right rather than the either of two (KS, QS) of the original deal.

## Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (7½ tables): Russell White & Jeremy Harris

Tuesday F2F (4½ tables):

Angela Davenport & Jennifer Spencer

Tuesday BBO (8 tables): Michael Cox & Sandra Bell

Thursday (6 tables): Tim Harrison & Martyn Harris

Total 26 tables for the week.

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