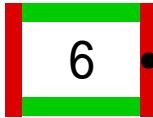


Matters Arising 122

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 13-17 Mar 2023

Trump Promotion

A K 3
A Q 5
A 9 7
10 8 5 3




Q J 8 7 6 2
J 8 7 3
10 6
6

On Tuesday South found themselves declaring 4S on the lead of KD, with East having opened 1D and West being silent.

Declarer can count 6 trump tricks, AD, and at least two heart tricks. Ruffing minors in hand will just change natural trump tricks into ruffs unless you can find the distribution and entries to make four such ruffs, so a third heart looks the best bet for the 10th trick, which is

likely to require the suit to be 3-3.

Not needing the trumps for other purposes draw them. East shows out on the first round, but there is no need to panic as declarer can happily play off the top 4 trumps. Indeed since we are only planning to lose one heart we can afford a 5th trump to put extra pressure on the defence to find the right discards, should it be possible so to do. Declarer of course is happy to throw clubs from the table.

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

East is likely to be loath to discard a club honour, and cannot afford more than 3 diamond discards else declarer can set up a diamond trick on table. A heart discard meanwhile would enable declarer to score their long heart. Even if East does retain all their hearts a suspicious declarer will finesse against the 10 on the third round rather than playing for the drop.

Suppose though that declarer doesn't draw all the trumps before taking the heart finesse or conceding the lead in some other way. East can cash a winner in each minor and then lead a third diamond. If South ruffs small, West overruffs; if South ruffs high this promotes the 10S into a winner later, for declarer no longer has enough honours to draw it.

Reading Partner

Imagine you are West and see partner lead the 3H against a NT contract after North has shown a powerful hand. Over to you.

A Q 9
K 10 7
J 8 7 6
Q 10 4




4
J 9 2
10 5 3 2
J 8 7 5 2

Standard leads exist to help us, and the 3H looks like 4th from strength, so partner presumably holds the A or Q.

(With four small the standard lead is the second highest, which will then be followed by the third highest so as to distinguish it from MUD. As partner hasn't seen your original 4th best they will wonder where it is and are likely to come to the conclusion that it is in your hand, so that the play of 2nd and then 3rd has a good chance of not being mistaken for a doubleton.)

If partner has underled the A, then declarer has the Q and always has a trick in the suit even if we rise with the K. If partner has led from the Q then our ten will be enough to force the A.

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

Insert the 10 and the defence have 3 heart tricks, for if declarer ducks the K comes next. Playing the K though allows declarer 2 tricks in hearts, one of which will be with the J giving declarer a second valuable entry to dummy - the other entry in clubs you can't stop. A double whammy relative to the marked play of the 10H.

This Week's Winners

Monday (7½ tables): Mike Howse & Martyn Harris,

Wraight Cup: Hilary Pickup & Jackie Beavon

Tuesday BBO (7 tables): Ray & Irene Gregory

Tuesday F2F (5 tables): Roger & Debbie Wilkinson

Thursday Teams (3 tables):

Mike Ollerton & Chris Banks

Tim Harrison & Richard Brazier

Thursday Ellis Cup Finals (4 tables)

Russell White & Jeremy Harris

Steve Barron & Robert Boyd

Total 26½ tables for the week.

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