

## Matters Arising 131

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 15 - 19 May 2023


### Winners Later

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


West plays in 6D on the lead of QC on this hand from Thursday. Declarer's problem is getting to hand to draw trumps., but this is easily solved by ruffing a small spade at trick 3 after cashing the QD. It may seem natural to cash the top spades before ruffing the third one, but with entries available to table later this is not necessary, and the immediate ruff is safer - the spades are less likely to be 8-0 than 7-1, small though the latter chance is. There is also an option of ruffing a club after cashing the 2 honours there, but why risk the clubs being 6-1?

The contract makes unless clubs are 7-0, the spades 8-0 or the trumps 5-0.

6NT is a lesser contract for the only sure entry to the West hand is by overtaking QD, which means playing for the suit 3-2. Still a good contract, but 6D is better.

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

### Just The Bid

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

With 20 points and a modest 5 card major North opened 2NT on this hand from Thursday. With transfer responses employed, a 3S response is released for use as the partnership sees best, and many elect to use it to show precisely 5 spades and 4 hearts with a game-going hand, as it is otherwise impossible to bid such a hand whilst keeping the option of 3NT open.

North is charmed. Their two small clubs are irrelevant as South is known to have 4 minor suit cards which regardless of denomination with disappear under North's minor suit winners. North also knows there is a 10 card fit, and with a doubleton heart needs only a little help for slam. From the full deal we can see that that help is forthcoming.

An interesting question arises for those using Roman Keycard Blackwood. Does 4NT over 3S specify the suit that you are to play in, is it straight ace asking, or should both major suit kings be regarded as keycards?

### Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (8 tables): Ray Gregory & Carl Penson

Tuesday F2F (6½ tables):

Helen Finch & Moira Williams

Tuesday BBO (5 tables): Ray & Irene Gregory

Thursday (teams, 5 tables):

Ray Gregory & John Ellwood,  
Carl Penson & Brian Smith

Total 24½ tables for the week.

## Overcall Trouble

	K 9 8 2	
	4 3 2	
	K J 8 2	
	A 3	
5 4	<b>10</b>	J 6 3
A Q 10 9 7		K J 8
A 5 4		Q 9 6
7 5 4		10 9 8 2
	A Q 10 7	
	6 5	
	10 7 3	
	K Q J 6	

Thursday's board 10 seems fairly innocuous at first sight. South opens 1NT and if West passes North uses Stayman and raises the 2S response to 3. Its teams, so South uses their two 10s and good clubs and trumps as justification for going to game, a contract that depends on guessing the diamonds correctly.

Suppose though that West overcalls 2H. North is somewhat stuck for a bid as they have enough points for a natural raise to 2NT but the lack of a heart control makes such a bid problematical, whilst bidding a 4 card suit may well not please partner.

Salvation may come in the form of a double, though that depends on the meaning you attach to it.

A take-out double works well on this occasion, whereas a penalty double could go wrong, though doesn't here as West will make only 5 trumps and 2 diamonds.

Many players use a nebulous values showing double - too strong to pass but nothing particular to say. South will not want to pass this out for penalties, so bids 2S hoping that if North has neither a fit there nor a heart stop then a minor part-score will be playable.

With all their points in their two long suits, some Souths might prefer to open 1C rather than 1NT. If West is silent North-South have no trouble locating their spade fit, whilst 1H from West causes no problems as North starts with a negative double to promise 4 spades.

This approach can still lead to problems if there is interference. Try changing the hands a little:

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

Where next for South if the auction starts  
1C – 1H (overcall) - 2D?

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