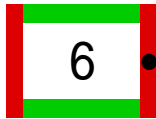


Matters Arising 133

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 29 May - 2 Jun 2023

Look Ahead

A South found themselves in a high level
 Q 9 5 heart contract on this hand from
 A 6 4 Tuesday, with a spade being the most
 K Q 10 8 4 2 common lead.



A standard draw trumps and think line produces 10 tricks – 2 spades, 5 hearts, 2 diamonds and a club, provide a club is established before the AD is removed as entry.

K 10 4
 A K J 10 3
 K 5 3 2
 6

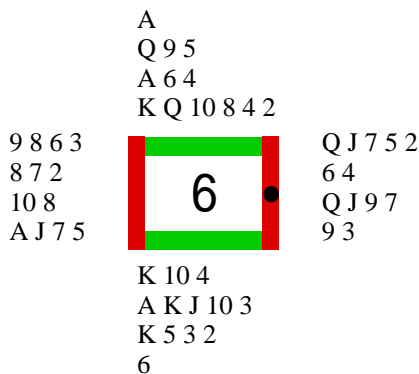
A little less quick on the draw (of trumps) and declarer can secure a spade ruff on table for 11 tricks.

However if we look ahead we can see that we have two small diamonds in hand that ideally need to be disposed of. Perhaps we can ruff these on table having first discarded one of dummy's diamonds on KS.

After AS we cross to hand with KD and lead our club towards table. If West rises with A, we now also have the option of discarding diamonds on clubs.

Suppose though that West has the A but holds off. KC wins on table, cash AD, ruff a club, KS discard a diamond, and play the hand on a big cross-ruff. We make 2 spades, 2 diamonds, a club and 8 trumps. The lot.

And if East has AC and takes it we will still get 12 tricks on a similar cross-ruff with one diamond from hand disappearing on QC.

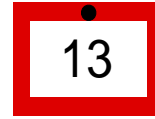


As ever when looking for a cross-ruff it is worth checking on the size of our trumps, for we do not wish to suffer an over-ruff. We see we need only to make one low ruff in each hand, for the rest of our trumps are high.

Read The Play

K J 7 Tuesday board 13 saw
 K 7 6 4 the same riveting
 J 7 auction at every table:
 10 8 5 4 1NT by South, passed
 out.

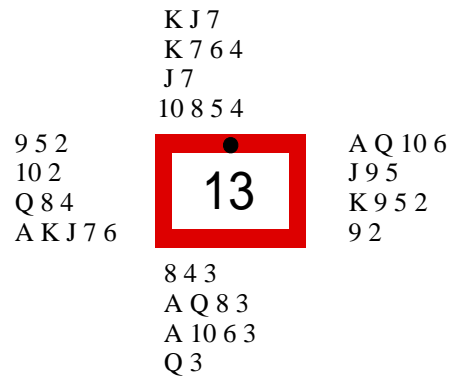
9 5 2
 10 2
 Q 8 4
 A K J 7 6



West's first task was to select a lead, with one such defender selecting the 5S, MUD. Declarer called for the 7 from table, and East's 10 held. Back came a small diamond which West won with the Q. Well trained, West returned partner's diamond suit, with declarer winning with the A over East's K. Declarer now took 4 heart winners, on which both defenders shed a diamond. Declarer's 10D cleared that suit, and their fourth one secured the contract.

Rewind to trick 1. West led a spade won by East's 10. It is inconceivable that declarer has held off with the Q, and whilst they might be trying some hold up play with Ax that doesn't seem too likely, particularly as partner would then have switched with a spade holding of QTxxx.

East's diamond play wasn't because they liked diamonds but an attempt to get West on lead to continue spades.



A spade at trick 3 would lead to 4 spade tricks, 3 clubs and the already secured QD for the defence. 2 down.

West does in fact have one difficulty when on lead with QD. Should they rely on partner having 4+ spades so that they can make a discard on the 4th round to tell partner to lead a club, or should they cash a top club honour to inform partner of the situation before going back to spades? And if the latter, should they then cash the second top club in case partner started with a singleton? Not clear cut, but on the deal all variations work.

Elsewhere a club was led, with a top honour favoured over the fourth best, though one defender lay down the unreadable JC.

Now you are East, and partner K J 7
has led a club running to K 7 6 4
declarer's Q. Declarer plays a J 7
heart to the K on table, and 10 8 5 4
runs the JD to partners Q.
Back comes a spade which
you win with the Q over
dummy's J. Now what?

13	A Q 10 6 J 9 5 K 9 5 2 9 2
----	-------------------------------------

For one East the answer was a small diamond. This is surely wrong, for why has declarer played diamonds in the manner they did? They look suspiciously like someone playing for split honours in diamonds and so hold A 10, which indeed proved to be the case. Partner may have held off the AH, with declarer having AKQ C, in which case a heart will get partner on lead to put through another spade, or partner may have a high club honour, so lead a club. But a diamond continuation at this point is a failure to read what has happened so far.

Around The Club

This weeks winners were
Monday (8 tables): Hilary Pickup & Jackie Beavon
Tuesday F2F (6 tables): Roger & Debbie Wilkinson
Tuesday BBO (6 tables): John & Wendy Ellwood
Thursday (5 tables): Michael Cox & Gillian Whyte

Total 25 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