

Matters Arising 143

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 7 - 11 Aug 2023


Thin Game

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

Where East opened 1H on this hand on Monday their side declared in hearts at anything up to and including game level. There are only a combined 19 points, but the 5-5 fit and singletons give cause for optimism. How would you play the hand on the lead of QS?

Losers: one in each suit. Winners: 4 natural trumps plus AK S. 6 tricks. We need 4 ruffs in the same hand, when a maximum of 3 are available.

One more trick and one less loser needed. If the AC is onside we can set up the KC as a trick on which we discard a spade loser. However we can't allow the defence to knock out our second spade stop before we have the club established. Hence win T1 with KS and lead a club. North rises with A and switches back to 9S. Rise with A, cash KC and discard dummy's last spade. Now duck a diamond ready for a big cross ruff.

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

When the dust has settled you have made AK S, KC, 3 diamond ruffs, 2 club ruffs, and a spade ruff. That accounts for all the trumps bar two in each hand, which amounts to one round losing to the A and another round winning. 10 tricks in all.

With trumps 2-1 you can afford to draw them before performing the cross-ruff. Were they 3-0 you couldn't.

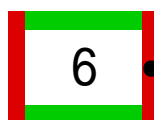
On Monday at least two Easts passed initially, for two Norths played in 1NT. Of the four Easts who faced QS lead two made 10 tricks and two didn't. Finally two Souths elected to lead 3S, leaving declarer with a decision: should they let the lead run hoping it is from

QJ and hence the 10 wins so there is no spade loser, or should they rise with the K and play as suggested above. In practice both worked.

Easy Game

A 10 8 4
A 6
A Q
A J 8 6 5

A combined 28 points make for a much easier game on this hand from Thursday than that in the previous article even if in 4S here we have one less trump than then.



K Q 9 7 5
J 9
K 10 9 3
10 7

There are 5 top side suit winners, and 5 certain trumps too.


(Quickie question: how do you guarantee 5 trumps even if the suit is 4-0?)

Counting losers is even more encouraging - just one in each of hearts and clubs.

A variety of leads was tried. Imagine South declares on KH lead. Over to you.

It's pairs so you shouldn't be satisfied with the 10 obvious winners, nor indeed with losing the two obvious losers if there is a way of making one or both disappear. Dummy's second heart can go on KD, so there is a chance for 12 tricks.

After winning T1 with AH, cash AQ D and KS. When both defenders follow continue with QS. If both defenders follow to this too you duck a club and it is all over. Dummy has 2 trumps left to ruff your second heart and fourth diamond, and the AC to take care of your second club, leaving you with just trumps.

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

Only two of 7 tables saw 12 tricks made, at the others declarer only found 11 tricks. The main culprit was playing trumps early before unblocking the diamonds.

Consequently to discard the heart loser declarer then had to use another trump to enter hand, so hadn't got enough left to ruff all the potentially losing small red cards.

And the quickie question?

There is a 2 way finesse against the JS if needed, so cash one of the K or Q first. If someone shows out on the first round you still have the wherewithall to take advantage of the marked finesse. If both follow to the first round then three rounds at most will be needed to clear the suit, so no finesse necessary.

Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (8 tables): EW: Russell White & Jerney Harris
 NS Tim Harrison & Richard Brazier

Mike Howse & Martyn Harris

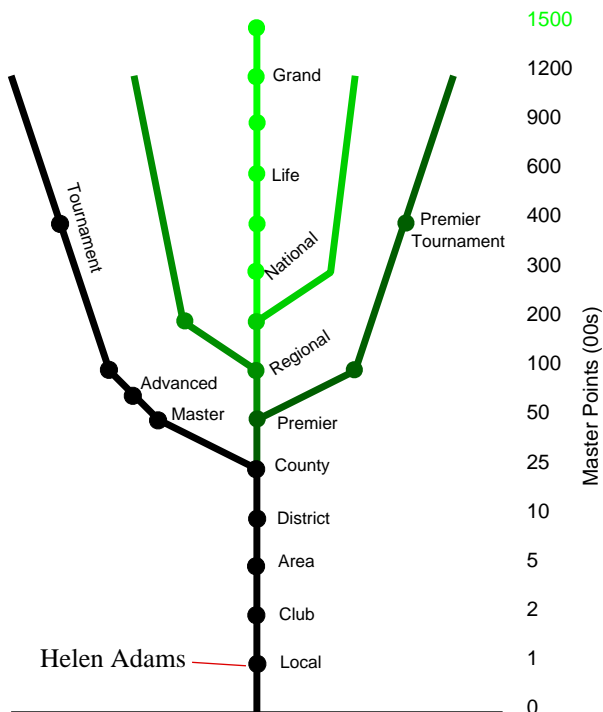
Tuesday F2F (8 tables): Sam & Judy Rayner

Tuesday BBO (5 tables): Ray & Irene Gregory

Thursday (7 tables): Alan Wearmouth & Martyn Harris

Total 28 tables for the week.

Helen Adams took the first step up the master point tree in August, being promoted to Local Master.



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