

# Matters Arising 144

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 14 - 18 Aug 2023

## Not the Jack

Monday's board 22 saw South having to negotiate the perils of this 4S contract. 11, 10 or only 9 tricks resulted depending on the line taken. One trick of the difference can be attributed to the missing high heart honours being split, so that declarer is on a guess in that suit. As for the other ... I'm getting ahead.

A 10 3  
K J  
J 9 6 2  
Q J 5 2




K Q J 7 4  
10 8  
A Q 3  
A 9 3

Suppose West leads a heart, you guess wrong, and West is back on lead at trick 3, producing the 6C. This runs to Q, K and A. Over to you.

It looks as if there is a diamond loser so we need to avoid losing a club. Our third club needs to disappear on a diamond.

After winning the AC, draw three round of trumps ending on table and take the diamond finesse. Not by leading the J but by leading small to Q.

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

West can win the K, but can't stop us accessing dummy via diamonds or JC to get our club discard when the 10D appears. However if we try running the J then West wins and plays another club. The diamonds are blocked, and we are forced to lose a club trick.

## Major Decisions

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



A J 3  
K Q 8  
A 10  
Q J 8 6 4

Monday's board 21 was played in 3NT by North at all 8 tables, each time facing a small spade lead (not the 2). I suspect the bidding was 1NT - 3NT at each table too.

Declarer calls for the 3S and West is the first with a decision to make. Third hand plays high, or 8S?

Dummy has 17 points and West 8. Add in declarer's reputed 12-14 and East has 1-3.

Suppose partner has KS. Play the QS, it will win, after which declarer picks up 2 spade tricks by finessing against partner's K. Playing the 8 declarer will need the 10 to pick up 2 spade tricks.

But what if declarer has the K. Then playing the Q allows declarer 3 spade tricks. Playing the 8 restricts them to two, unless declarer has the 10 too in which case they have 3 tricks again.

Whether or not partner has the K playing the 8 may gain, depending on the location of the 10.

Sometimes we need to play the Q to set up tricks quickly, but that is clearly not the case here where partner can have nothing to set up.

(It may be that not all declarers played small at T1 - they might have called for the J hoping for a successful double finesse. Optimists.)

Over to declarer. West has won trick one with 8S and continued with the Q. What plans should declarer have?

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


Declarer can count 5 club and three heart tricks together with Aces in the other two suits. 10 tricks. They could duck with intent to set up a red suit squeeze - squeezes may be in the offing when we can count all bar one of the remaining tricks as won.



A J 3  
K Q 8  
A 10  
Q J 8 6 4

After winning AS whether at T2 or T3, run the clubs discarding diamonds and then play the hearts, starting with the K and Q. That way if East shows out you will have a marked finesse against the J.

There is indeed a marked heart finesse, allowing declarer to make 11 tricks, or 12 by finessing the JS if West played QS at T1:

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

Missing out on the heart finesse, or discarding the red 3s on the long clubs - some people seem always to discard their lowest cards irrespective of suit - restricts declarer to 10 tricks.

### Creating A Safe Hand


A 6	You are North in 3NT on the lead of
A K Q	2S on this hand from Thursday. Over
J 9 8 7 6	to you.
A Q 8	



J 10 8	That 2S looks fourth best, in which
5 4 3	case the most you can lose is KD and
A Q 10	3 spades. The contract should not be
K 9 5 2	in doubt, but like Oliver, you should

b) force an honour from West beaten by the A, leaving West as a safe hand to finesse into.

b) happens, we finesse diamonds into the West hand, and they produce the K. But regardless of the position of the remaining honour the defence can now only take one more trick in spades. Contract made plus 2.

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

West would be very happy to cover the 8S with the 9 at T1, with declarer then destined to lose 3 spades and KD.

### Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (8 tables) NS: Mike Howse & Martyn Harris  
EW: Russell White & Jeremy Harris

Tuesday F2F (8 tables):

Steven Barron & Andrew Peill

Tuesday BBO (6 tables):

June Taylor & Alan Heppensatll

Thursday (4 teams): Mike & Stella Howse

Alan & Carolynne Farmer

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