

Matters Arising 152

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 9 - 13 Oct 2023

5-3 Fit?

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




A 6 5
K Q 8 4 2
8 7
A K Q

A recurring problem for Acoll bidders is how to identify the presence of a 5-3 fit.

Here is Monday's hand 5. South opens 1H and North responds 1S. South now has a slightly awkward choice between 2NT, showing their point count but hoping that the lack of a diamond stop doesn't come back to haunt them, and a game-forcing 3C even though South has only 3 clubs and is slightly shy of the necessary strength.

North will bid 3H after either rebid - note that the auction 1H - 1S - 2NT - 3H is forcing, asking partner to rebid 4H with a 5 card suit, else 3S with 3 spades or otherwise 3NT. Thus 5-3 fits can be found in either major.

The jump rebid of 3C won't be to everyone's taste though may be necessary if South is so strong that the only alternative is 3NT. Partner is very unlikely to raise clubs, for they have preference to hearts (3H), 3NT, and fourth suit forcing (3D) available, all of which would be more attractive on the relevant hands.

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

The defence can't stop 5H, but if they find a diamond lead will hold 3NT to 9 tricks.

Don't Hold Back

The hand right turned up to entertain us on 9 8 7 Thursday. Prediction time. Love all, and A Q 6 2 you are North with East dealer. What do 7 4 3 2 you think you will be bidding on the first 9 2 round of the auction?

9 8 7
A Q 6 2
7 4 3 2
9 2

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



A 10 4 3 2
9 4
10 5
A Q 10 6

6 5
K J 10 8 7 5 3
K 9 6
5

Amanda (East) opened 1S. Tim (South) decided to crank up the pressure to max by bidding 4H. Spade-like went 6S, hoping not to be missing an easy grand, and Richard, confident of no defence to 6S bid 7H, the answer to the earlier question. Amanda greeted the sacrifice in the traditional way, for an East-West top. In fact all Richard's options at this point were losing ones, for no one else bid a slam.

Indeed no-one else opened with the East hand, which seems a bit strange as it has 7 losers, 10 points all in the long suits, with 3 tens as back-up.

How much of a punt was 6S? Partner is known to have 5 spades and/or 15+ points, for with a weaker hand she would not open 1S on a 4 card suit as 14- points is either weak NT territory or a 4-4-4-1 hand on which 1S is never the chosen bid. The 4H bid certainly seems to increase the chances that she holds 5 spades, whilst if she has only 4, and hence 15+ points, the 4-3 fit is likely to be playable.

Did we miss a grand? Yes, though it is uncomfortable to play. South leads a club and declarer can see 11 black tricks and the AD. The 13th trick will have to be from either a diamond finesse or a heart ruff. The latter then presents problems for drawing trumps after the ruff, needing either to overtake the second round of trumps to clear a 3-2 suit with the 10, or rely on the hand with the singleton club being short of trumps so that the club suit can be used to reach hand again. In practice all plans work.

Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Sunday, Betty Limb Cup, (4 tables): Anne Urquhart

Monday (6½ tables): Robin Rose & Martyn Harris

Tuesday F2F (7 tables):

NS: Andrew Peill & Steven Barron

EW: Dennis & Margaret Pook

Tuesday BBO (6 tables): Ina Gray & Mary Anne Peden

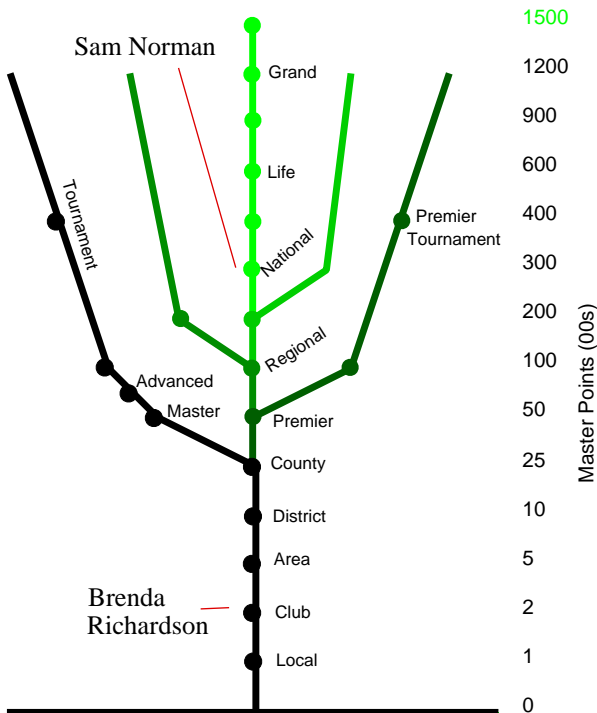
Thursday am (4 tables):

Carolyn Rayner & Jo Ainsworth

Thursday (5½ tables): Michael Cox & Gillian Whyte

Total 29 tables for the week, plus 4 on Sunday.

September saw two Master Points promotions with Sam Norman becoming a National Master and Brenda Richardson a Club 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