

Matters Arising 153

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 16 - 20 Oct 2023

K for Konfusion

A K 10 2
9 8
A K 8 7 2
9 6

13

On Tuesday no defender found a killing lead against 4S, but only half the declarers took advantage. I suspect more would have made the contract had South held the 5H instead of the K.

Q J 9 7 4 3
K 4
10
Q 10 8 2

The commonest lead was a trump, revealing a 2-1 break. Counting ten tricks is easy: 6 trumps, AK D and 2 club ruffs in the North hand.

The danger is that the defence might take 4 tricks - 2 clubs and 2 hearts if the AH is wrong. The easy way of preventing this is to discard the 4H on the second diamond honour, but on the night there was a marked reluctance to bare the KH.

	A K 10 2	
	9 8	
	A K 8 7 2	
	9 6	
6 5	13	8
A 10 7 3 2		Q J 6 5
J 3		Q 9 6 5 4
A J 4 3		K 7 5
	Q J 9 7 4 3	
	K 4	
	10	
	Q 10 8 2	

Those who discarded a club, which could be ruffed anyway, on the second diamond honour, found to their cost that AH was wrong and they had 2 heart losers. Those happy to bare his majesty romped home.

Another King Confuses

K Q 9 7 2
K J 10 4
J 10
A 4

West's bid of hearts was brushed aside as North reached 4S on this hand from Tuesday. No surprise to see a heart led.

19

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

Allowing the lead to run to hand by discarding a diamond ensures that KH will win a trick, and all but makes the contract safe. However given dummy the defence will surely regard a diamond switch as marked, and any chance of overtricks will disappear. At pairs this matters unless you are sure you are in a contract that few will reach.

Try this. Ruff the lead on table and play a trump to the K, revealing a marked finesse should trumps be 4-0. They're not. Now a second heart ruff and clear the trumps. With 2 heart ruffs and 5 natural trump tricks secure, the three top clubs will complete the contract.

	K Q 9 7 2	
	K J 10 4	
	J 10	
	A 4	
8	19	J 6 5
A 8 6 5 2		Q 9 7 3
K Q 8 5 3		A 7 4
J 9		8 7 2
	A 10 4 3	
	--	
	9 6 2	
	K Q 10 6 5 3	

When clubs behave declarer makes a further 3 tricks - all 13 in total.

Delicate Manoeuvres

K 8 7 6
K Q J 5
A 6 3
9 5

On Monday all pairs played this hand in 4H, mostly by South but sometimes by North. Making the contract was a minority achievement though.

10

A 3
A 9 7 4
Q 10 2
Q 7 6 4

There are two top club losers, and at least one loser in diamonds. Thus the diamonds will have to be played for just one loser, and no other losers are allowed. Fortunately there are no other quick losers.

Turning our attention to winners there are 2 in spades, 4 natural trumps and 2 assumed in diamonds so as to restrict losers to one there. We need two more tricks, which have to come from ruffs. These will need to be made in the same hand so as not to use up a natural trump winner.

Conclusion: drawing trumps in three rounds will be wrong as this leaves us a trick short (3 trumps, 2 ruffs, 2 spades, 2 diamonds). Consequently we will be making ruffs whilst the opponents hold at least one trump. Further, whether we seek to ruff 2 spades South or 2 clubs North the second ruff will happen when one defender is out of the suit. The second ruff will need to be high. This is a common occurrence when holding a 4-2 side-suit in a trump contract.

On the night there was no shortage of different attacks from the defence with all suits being led at at least one table. Suppose North declares on a trump lead. It will be easier to ruff spades as that can be done immediately. The AH needs to be preserved for the second spade ruff, so play goes: win T1 North, AS, KS, ruff a spade low. Return to hand via a trump and ruff the last spade with AH, which is in fact dummy's last trump. Now AD, draw last trump and lead a diamond ready to test your guessing skills.

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

With East holding KJ D you can't guess wrong, and the contract is made.

Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (7½ tables): Mike & Sally-Ann Rothwell

Tuesday F2F (8½ tables):

NS: Andrew Peill & Steven Barron

EW: Roger & Debbie Wilkinson

Tuesday BBO (7 tables):

Amanda Etherington & Martyn Harris

Thursday am (6 tables):

NS: Helen Finch & Moira Williams

EW: Tutor & Sheila Wilson

Thursday Teams (7 tables):

Tim Matthews & John Farmer

Ian Reeves & Felicity Kay

Total 36 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