

Matters Arising 156

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 6 - 10 Nov 2023

Transfers Still Apply

	Q 7 6		
	J 9 7 6 5 3		
	10		
	9 3 2		
A 9 4 3	<div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">10</div>	10 8 5	
2		K 10 4	
Q 8 7 6 2		K J 5 3	
7 6 4		J 10 5	
	K J 2		
	A Q 8		
	A 9 4		
	A K Q 8		

Tuesday, and North-South have hands demanding an auction starting 2C – 2D – 2NT, not that that always happened. After such a start it seems natural to play the same responses as to a 2NT opening - Stayman and transfers say. Thus the auction can continue 3D – 3H – 4H to reach a contract that turns out to be fireproof. Yet the majority of the field ended up in 3NT which even if the defence don't find their diamonds will still score less heavily.

Why Transfer?

	A Q 4		
	K J 7 4		
	J 7 4		
	Q 3 2		
10 9 6	<div style="border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">17</div>	8 7 5 3	
A		10 3	
A Q 10 6 2		9 8 3	
10 7 6 4		K 9 8 5	
	K J 2		
	Q 9 8 6 5 2		
	K 5		
	A J		

On Monday's board 17 every NS played in hearts after North opened 1NT, a denomination destined to secure 10 tricks for the loss of a club and 2 diamonds.

One declarer though made 11 tricks as South declined to transfer and simply played in hearts themselves. West led a diamond, saving declarer from one of their losers there.

One can argue long and hard as to whether the diamond lead is sensible, but there is no doubt that South's set of honours are such that they'd like the lead to come round to them. Arrange it - forget transfers and simply bid 4H.

Slam Stories

	9 7 3		
	10 8 5		
	8 7		
	J 9 6 4 3		
K Q 10 8	<div style="border: 2px solid green; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">19</div>	A J 6 4	
A J 7 4		Q 6	
9 6 5 4		K Q J	
Q		A K 10 7	
	5 2		
	K 9 3 2		
	A 10 3 2		
	8 5 2		

Everyone bid slam with the East-West hands on Thursday's board 19. Most auctions were of the form 1H – 1S – raise – ace ask – answer – slam, though one West opened 1D. Best not ask what there intended rebid over a 2C response was. Theories abound as to what to open with a 4–4–4–1 hand, each with its own Achilles Heel, but opening the suit above the singleton on a weak hand is liable to run into the problem of the continuation if partner bids the singleton. Fortunately that response didn't arise.

One East chose 6S as their slam, and with KH outside the contract is an easy make - 3 natural trump tricks, 2 hearts with the finesse, 2 diamonds, 3 clubs and a ruff in each hand.

One East chose 7NT - a misunderstanding in the bidding presumably. South did not let this make.

The remaining 4 Easts chose 6NT, greedy for the extra 10 points it scores in comparison to 6S. Against these two Souths led 2H, one the AD and one (I confess it was I) the 5S.

The 5S was designed to give nothing away, and indeed that proved to be the case as declarer drifted quietly one off, having nowhere to turn to to create an extra trick to make up for the ruff available in 6S.

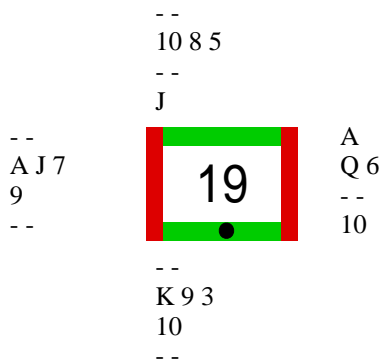
The 2H lead proved fatal to the defence as declarer ran it to the Q and then followed up with the finesse of JH. 4S, 3H, 2D, 3C were the sources of declarer's 12 tricks. There is some logic to the lead though, in that it could set up a trick to be cashed when in with AD.

Leading an Ace against a slam can save the trick from disappearing, but equally it may set up tricks in the suit for declarer. Consequently an Ace lead can be as much

about denying declarer the chance of an overtrick as defeating the contract. In NT of course if the defence has another trick you can take the A when in with that, so there is less pressure to grab the A against NT than against a suit slam.

The lead of the AD should prove fatal to the defence, for if declarer assumes KH is onside there is a fairly automatic double squeeze. Suppose South takes partners 8D (or 7) as a come-on and continues the suit. Declarer wins, cashes their other diamond honour hoping for a 3-3 break. No suck luck. Next comes QC, 3 spades ending in hand, and AK C (discarding a heart and spade) hoping for the 10 to drop. No luck here either. Meanwhile North has discarded a club on the third diamond and South a heart on the third spade.

The position reached is



Now comes the AS. South still has to retain 10D so jettisons a heart. Its job done, the 9D is released from table. North has to retain JC to prevent declarer's 10 winning, so a heart has to go. Now neither defender has three hearts. Declarer continues with QH and regardless of whether or not South covers, dummy has three heart tricks.

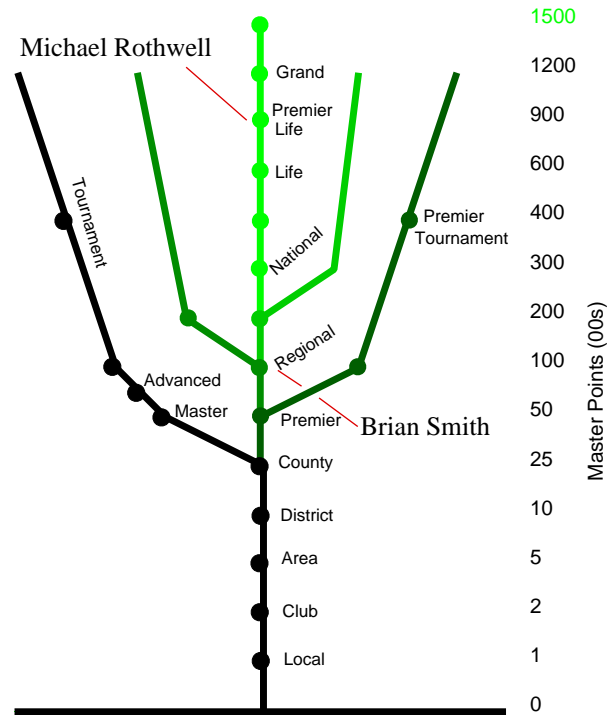
Around The Club

This weeks winners were

- Monday (7 tables): Russell White & Jeremy Harris
- Tuesday F2F (9 tables): David & Shirley Harris
- Wraight Cup: Helen Finch & Moira Williams
- Tuesday BBO (6½ tables):
- Hilary Storey & Jacky Truelove
- Thursday am (6 tables): David Airey & Tutor
- Thursday BBO (6 tables): Hilary Parker & Gay Talbot

Total 34½ tables for the week, plus 4 on Sunday.

Two members achieved masterpoint promotions during October - Mike Rothwell to Premier Life Master and Brian Smith to Regional Master. Well done to both.



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