

Matters Arising 162

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 18.22 Dec 2023

Keeping Control

Imagine you played this hand from Monday in 4S after North bid hearts twice. It matters not whether you declare from the East or West seat since the inevitable heart lead means that East will be on lead to trick 2.


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

Prospects are rosy, for if trumps behave you can draw them in 3 rounds and knock-out AC. In due course you also lose AD to make 11 tricks.

You start drawing trumps by playing one to the 10, with North dropping the 9, and continue with the Q so that all your trumps are high. North shows out on this second round. Over to you.

Clearly you can't afford to draw the rest of the trumps else North will have a field day with hearts when the defence get on lead with a minor suit Ace,

Consequently you attack clubs, with South winning the third round with their Ace and then leading another heart to an honour from North. It seems natural to ruff, but if you do you can't draw trumps and enjoy the clubs. Try instead the effect of discarding a diamond from hand so that if a third heart is led you ruff in the West hand, discarding another diamond. Now you can draw trumps and enjoy the clubs, making 4 trumps, 4 clubs, AH and a heart ruff in the West hand. This is not the only way of making the contract, but is as comfortable as any as declarer is in control throughout.

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

Being out of black cards when declarer declines to ruff, North's alternative to a heart is a diamond, and whether Ace or small this allows declarer a diamond winner which is equally as good as a heart ruff in the West

hand for them.

If South tries a third trump in place of the second heart then declarer still can't draw trumps, but they retain control by playing clubs. If South ruffs West over-ruffs and sets up a diamond.

If South doesn't ruff West discards two diamonds and then plays that suit. So far declarer has won 4 clubs, 3 spades and AH. The last two tricks they need will be a heart ruff East and a diamond ruff West even if South has discarded diamonds to prevent a diamond winner.

Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday: (6½ tables): Russell White & Jeremy Harris

Tuesday F2F (7 tables):

Robert Boyd & Dorothy Bayliss

Tuesday BBO (6½ tables): Hilary Parker & Gay Talbot

Thursday am (5 tables): Bernard & Sabina Houssin

Thursday Ellis Cup Finals (Teams, 4 tables):

Mike & Sally-Ann Rothwell

Robin Rose & Martyn Harris

Total 29 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