

Matters Arising 169

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 5 - 9 Feb 2024

Ten Is Not Enough

A K 6 4
8 5
5 2
A K J 10 4

8

Three of the five declarers who played this hand in spades on Monday made 10 tricks. Presumably the bad trump break was responsible for them not making 11, for if four rounds of trumps are drawn there are 4 spade, 5 club and 1 diamond trick without a hint of more.

Q J 10 8
7
A 8 6 4
Q 7 5 2

North, faced with a top heart lead, can immediately see a heart ruff which can be taken high to guard against a 9-1 heart break. The only problem

would be if declarer had already laid down AK S as a heart ruff would now leave a spade loser.

Played by South on KD lead declarer wins and returns the suit. Now there is a diamond ruff available for an 11th trick before drawing trumps.

There is no point thinking that if trumps are 3-2 you can draw them and get rid of a heart loser on the long club as you won't have two trumps left to ruff both North's remaining hearts.

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

At two further tables EW found a good sacrifice in 5HX, with NS understandably taking the penalty rather than pushing on to 5S.

The last table played in 5C by North. Presumably North opened 1C, East overcalled hearts, and South didn't make a negative double to show their spades, supporting clubs instead. Over 1H it is useful to deploy a double to show 4 spades and bid 1S with 5+. Over a jump to 2H (or even 3H) the double shows at least 4 spades, though with 5+ spades and a hand that fully justifies bidding at the level concerned a spade bid is preferred.

The Right Discard

9 8 3 2
8 6 3
A 10 2
A 4 3

17

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

No prizes for guessing that this hand from Tuesday was played in spades. Missing KH and KC it looks as if declarer needs one of two finesses to work to make a small slam, but a diamond lead gave them an immediate chance to go wrong. What to discard whilst winning with AD? Those who habitually throw the lowest card available chose 4H leaving a club loser even if the King is onside. Discarding the 8C ensures that the only possible losers are the missing Kings, for the third club can then be ruffed East and the fourth heart West.

	7 5	
	K 2	
	K Q 9 6 5	
	9 7 5 2	
9 8 3 2		A K Q 10 6 4
8 6 3		A Q J 4
A 10 2		--
A 4 3	17	Q J 8
	J	
	10 9 7 5	
	J 8 7 4 3	
	K 10 6	

With both KH and KC onside there are 13 tricks for those who discard the 8C, but only 12 for those throwing 4H.

I Spy Danger

In a poor contract it can be useful to ask oneself *what can go right?* and play for it, and when things look rosy ask *what could go wrong?* The same is true when dealing with individual suits.

A J 8 7 6 2
J 3
J 9 6
8 7




On Thursday North found themselves in a comfortable spade game on board 3.

Trumps are plentiful, and plenty of people played off the A only for East to show out leaving 2 trump losers despite KQ being onside.

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

As is often the case when knowing that you must lose a trick when setting up a suit it pays to do so early. Nothing can be done if it is East who holds all 3 outstanding trumps, but if

it is West either small to the 10 sets up a marked finesse or small towards the J is a successful double finesse.

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

For those facing a defence of KH followed by a diamond switch the immediate play of the AS is perhaps right, for declarer won't want to lose a trick to a trump and then suffer a diamond ruff, for a 4-1 diamond break is a credible possibility.

As it happens the defence can always take 3 tricks if East starts with a diamond, for West can ensure they win the second trump by splitting their honours if spades are led from the South hand, and underlead their AH so as to receive another diamond from partner.

Split Honours

K Q 7 5 3
Q 6 5 3 2
Q
5 4




A 4 2
A 10 9
K 4 2
K 9 3 2

NS might end in game in either major on this hand from Thursday. With AD, at least one club and at least one heart to lose this is not a hand about overtricks. Indeed we need several things to be right - we may not be able to survive a bad split in our chosen trump suit, and AC needs to be onside. Moreover we can only afford one heart loser, so what is the best way of achieving this?

Playing the A first and then leading towards the Q works if there is a singleton honour or if West started with Jx or KJx. It also works if West started with Kxx if we guess to go up with the Q on the second round, or if West started with Jxx and we guess to duck the second round.

However leading small to the 9, followed by small to the 10 works whenever East has at least one honour, except when they hold Kxxx or KJxxx, with no guessing involved. This is a variation on the theme of playing for split honours - if the first finesse fails then if honours are split the second will work.

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

As usual the split honour play also works when both honours onside.

Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (8½ tables): Russell White & Jeremy Harris

Tuesday F2F (7 tables):

NS: Jean Dale & Ralph Rogerson

EW: Brenda Richardson & Helen Finch

Tuesday BBO (6½ tables):

Judy Rayner & Charlotte Casson

Thursday am (9 tables):

NS: Bernard & Sabina Houssin

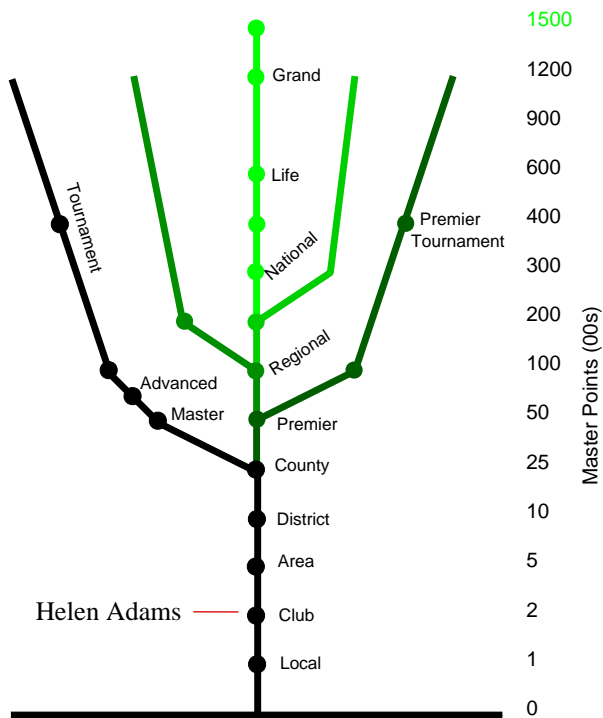
EW: Brenda Richardson & Rita Davies

Thursday BBO (6 tables):

Andrew Smith & Dudley Hargreaves

Total 37 tables for the week.

Well done Helen Adams, who was promoted to Club Master during January.



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