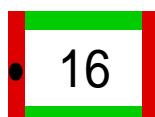


## Matters Arising 202

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 23- 27 Sept 2024

### Pre-empt

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



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

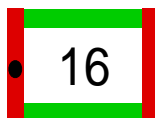
Half the field found themselves in 4H after East opened with a 3C pre-empt on this hand from Tuesday's play.

What might South bid? There is no doubt that their best suit is hearts, but with 4 spades too double looks better, particularly with good tolerance for diamonds as icing on the cake.

If West passes I would prefer 3S to 3D on the North hand as partner's doubles do tend to be major suit

orientated, though if West makes a nuisance by raising to 4C over the double perhaps 4D looks safer than 4S, though I suspect I would still find the lure of a major too strong.

However with a powerful hand South doesn't wish to settle for 4D anyway and may well bid 4H over a 4D response. This surely cannot be South's only suit after their double, so if they haven't got diamonds they must have spades, and North bids 4S confident of a fit.

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

4H makes for the loss of AC and two trumps, but in 4S there is only one heart loser as two hearts can disappear on diamonds, making spades the superior contract.

### Balancing Act


A 7 4 3 Dealer opens 1NT, which is passed around to you in fourth position. What do you do?

Q 8 7 6

A This was the problem confronting East on Thursday's board 3, with Pass being the commonest decision, lacking any other obvious options.

Double to show a strong hand in fourth position is likely to be a low mileage choice, particularly as with the 1NT hand sat over them, the fourth hand is going to be wary of a nominal penalty double without considerable strength.

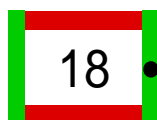
Perhaps it is better to use Double as a balancing bid, showing similar values to opener - say 11 to 14 - using it in effect as a take-out double that you hope partner will have the strength to pass for penalties. With opener and 4th hand having similar strengths there is presumably about a 50-50 chance that second hand will be better than third, and even if they are not it may well be possible to find a contract that either makes or costs less in defeat than the opposition can make by declaring.

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

West has no problem identifying that they and partner have the greater fire power, so passes the double. Best defence sees a small club led to East's A with a small diamond returned. The unfortunate layout for South means the defence can take 4 tricks in each minor, leaving East on lead to put a small spade through declarer. Even if they guess right they will still lose 2 spades and AH on top of the 8 minor suit losers. 5 off for 1100. The defence is unlikely to be perfect as neither defender knows where the limited values South possesses lie, but even two off for 300 is equivalent to 6 undoubled undertricks.

## Overtrick

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



Thursday's board 18 saw most Wests in 4S on the auction 2H (weak, South), 4S (West), though one pessimistic West only overcalled 3S, playing there when partner understandably saw no reason to raise.

The Norths were clearly all well-trained, for the 4H kicked off proceedings at all tables.

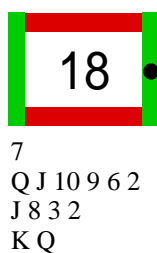
The contract is not in danger, for declarer can count 7 spades, 2 hearts and AD as winners.

There is also an obvious opportunity for an overtrick through ruffing a heart. With only one ruff intended there is a temptation to draw one round of trumps first, though this proved fatal to the chances of an overtrick for those who played a spade to the J at T2 followed by the second top heart and then the third heart, as North was able to ruff in with the 10.

What actually is declarer protecting against by playing off a trump? North having singletons in both majors.

It looks right simply to continue with the second top heart at T2 and then the third, knowing that if South has 6 hearts as normal then you can overruff anything North trumps with. Then you can lead the second trump from table, and if South follows overtake to make drawing trumps easy.

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



Drawing one round of trumps with AS and then ruffing the third heart with JS seems an option, but then how does declarer get off table to draw the last trump? There is a very real danger that South will gain the lead and secure a trump promotion for partner by leading another heart. Hence the desire to have a trump left on table after the heart ruff to make trump extraction easy.

## Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (8 tables): Ann Adkins & Kevin Holden

Tuesday F2F (6½ tables): Shaffin Jaffer & Andrew Peill

Tuesday BBO (6½ tables):

Robin Rose & John MacLachlan

Thursday am (3½ tables): Neil & Mary Adams

Thursday BBO (4½ tables):

Alan Wearmouth & Martyn Harris

Total 29 tables for the week.

I welcome any comments or queries sent me at [martyn@orpheusmail.co.uk](mailto: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