

## Matters Arising 206

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 21 - 25 Oct 2024

### Retaining Control


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

Imagine you are West playing in 4S on this hand from Monday, South having bid clubs vigorously. North led 9C, won by South who continued with another club honour. Over to you.

What 10 tricks are you planning on making? A club ruff at T2, 4 natural trump tricks and 4 diamonds comes to 9. The tenth will come from hearts provided North has at least one heart honour and you lead through them twice in the suit. A top spade and AD will give the entries to do that.


What could go wrong? North might over-ruff at T2 should South have 9 clubs. Or trumps might be 4-0. To guard against that you will want to lay down AS so you can pick up 4 trumps in either hand, though of course you suspect it will be North with trump length if there is a bad break. Consequently you cannot afford to ruff high if you want two entries to lead hearts from hand.

You ruff with 8S and lay down AS. South shows out. There is a great temptation to draw trumps with the help of the marked finesse against the J, but if you do you will have no trumps left. As soon as you lose a heart you could face an avalanche of clubs. Consequently you must turn your attention to hearts now.

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

South wins with the K, but is powerless - a club gives a ruff and discard, a diamond puts declarer on lead to play a second heart towards table whilst a heart does the job for them. Once the heart is established declarer can draw the remaining trumps and enjoy their red suit tricks.


### Get Stuck In

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

East-Wests combined 25 count seems to call for 3NT on this hand from Monday's teams, yet only 3 out of 8 tables got there. The 'problem' appears to lie with East's bid when North opened 1H.

1NT is the obvious choice, showing a flat 15-17 with some control over opener's suit. Opposite a 1NT overcall it is normal to play *System On* ie Stayman, Transfers and other responses to a 1NT opening apply, with strength adjusted to allow for overcaller's extra values in comparison to a 1NT opening.

Here West has no interest in the majors and knows their side has at least 25 points in total, so would reply 3NT.

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

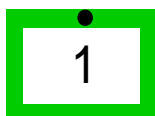
When South leads 10C against 3NT there is a strong inference they are void in hearts, for it would be usual to lead partner's suit. Indeed the bidding marks South with little or no values of consequence, making the lead of partner's suit even more normal.

Consequently declarer can count on 3 heart tricks to go with 4 clubs and 2 top diamonds for an easy make.

A pass by East over 1H would see NS playing there, with no chance of EW gaining sufficient compensation for their missed game no matter how much they defeated the contract by, whilst the East hand doesn't represent a standard take-out double - anyone employing double here can hardly be surprised if they and partner cannot read each other's values sufficiently well in the subsequent auction to reach game.

## Make Life Easy

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



A 10 4  
10  
A Q J 5 4 2  
A Q 2

The first board of Tuesday's F2F session saw an easy to make 6D contract. Being a minor suit slam though it wasn't easy to bid, and many pairs sensibly opted for 3NT.

Played by North on a small heart lead declarer could claim 12 tricks at T1 if they wished. Why?

If 10H wins T1 then declarer has 2 heart tricks, 3 in clubs, 6 in diamonds plus AS. That's twelve.

Alternatively if West covers the 10H North wins and returns the suit, setting up two further heart tricks. Now declarer 3 heart tricks instead of the 2 above, so 13 all told. Pity they had to lose one to achieve this, but 12 tricks are safe.

Unfortunately not all NT declarers made 12. We can only speculate that they were carried away by the prospect of lots of diamond winners and started by running the suit, A few tricks in North had to find discards, and looking to protect QS discarded hearts, their easiest to promote potential winners.

There may be no hard and fast rules for cardplay, but *first set up your winners, then cash them* remains an excellent guideline on most hands.

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

## Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (9 tables, teams):

Mike & Sally-Ann Rothwell  
Robin Rose & John MacLachlan

Tuesday F2F (8 tables): = Margaret & Dennis Pook  
= Sarah Bullock & Andrew Peill

Tuesday BBO (4½ tables):

Charlotte Casson & Judy Rayner

Thursday am (6 tables):

= Diana Smethurst & Sarah Bullock  
= Rita Davies & Brenda Richardson

Thursday BBO (4½ tables):

Alan Wearmouth & Martyn Harris

Total 32 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