

Matters Arising 260

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 2 - 6 Nov 2025

Which Game?

J 9 7 5
Q 7 4
A K 3
A J 9

14

A 2
K J 10 6 5 2
6 2
K 4 3

whether to pull or not. For many partnerships the agreed number is 3.

My preferred NS bidding sequence on Monday's board 14 is 1H – 1S – 2H – 4H, though no doubt some North's will have jumped straight to 3NT, after which South might pass but is likely to pull to 4H.

As an aside because the jump to 3NT takes up so much room it would be sensible to agree with your partner how many cards you should have in their major in such a sequence to help them decide

J 9 7 5
Q 7 4
A K 3
A J 9

K Q 10 8
9 8
8 7 5 4
8 6 2

14

A 2
K J 10 6 5 2
6 2
K 4 3

6 4 3
A 3
Q J 10 9
Q 10 7 5

The implication of something in spades in the North hand provided by both a 1S and a 3NT response is likely to put West off a spade lead, leaving declarer to do all the work themselves in 4H. They should lose a trick in each of spades, hearts and clubs leaving the contract making exactly.

An active lead of KS allows declarer to win with the A, and after drawing trumps lead a spade towards the J to create a resting place for their losing club. The 4th best spade leaves declarer with no loser if they try either the J or 9 at T1. Thus on a spade lead declarer makes 11 tricks.

3NT from North will surely attract a lead of QD after which declarer makes 5 hearts, 2 diamonds, 2 clubs and a spade for +1. Better than those making 4H exactly, but behind those making an overtrick in 4H.

Don't be Bullied

A Q 9 3
J
A 8 6 3 2
J 9 6

On Monday's board 15 South will have opened a weak 2H at most tables, leaving West with the hand left to decide what to do. Four Souths ended up in 2H, so at least that many Wests passed.

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

A Q 9 3
J
A 8 6 3 2
J 9 6

15

K J 6
A K 7
7 5 4
K 8 5 4

4 2
Q 10 9 8 6 5
K Q
Q 10 2

Typically 2H goes one off, but this is little compensation to EW for their missed 3NT game.

West has a classic take-out double - opening values and tolerance for all the other suits. Yes, they are asking their partner to bid at the 3 level, but even if partner is weak EW would be unlucky to concede a significant penalty, and it is quite possible that if EW can't make anything then NS can get a better score by declaring anyway.

In practice East will respond 3NT to the double as they have a double heart stop and the values for game opposite opening values.

Weak 2s are pre-empts, designed at least in part to stop the opposition finding their (best) contract. With a hand such as West's you cannot afford to be bullied out of the auction. Nominally East's hand is stronger with 14 point to West's 12, but they have no sensible bid other than pass if 2H comes round to them.

Around The Club

This weeks winners were

Monday (9½ tables): Robert Boyd & Steven Barron

Tuesday F2F (8 tables, teams):

Bernard Houssin & Ralph Rogerson

Brenda Richardson & Sarah Bullock

Tuesday BBO (5 K tables + 3 Barrow):

Bob Stow & Shaffin Jaffer

Thursday am (6 tables):

= David Airey & Jennifer Whalley

= Sarah Bullock & Diana Smethurst

Thursday BBO (5 K tables + 6½ Wearside):

Ray Gregory & John Ellwood

Total 33½ 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