

## Matters Arising 67

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 21 - 25 Feb 2022

### Duck or Rise?


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

On this hand from Tuesday five Easts ended up declaring in 3NT after their partner's opening of 1H drew a 2C overcall from North. The defence kicked off with the JC. Over to you.

At least 5 heart tricks (barring a 6-0 break), 3 spades and the AC. Diamonds under control. This looks an easy assignment. Yet the choice of card at trick one from dummy made the difference between success and failure.

Those who played AC continued spade to hand and a heart finesse. North won and could cash KQ C and AD but the rest were declarer's.

Those who ducked left South on lead. Out of clubs, a diamond came next. North rose with the A and played a small club to table. When North regained the lead with KH they had a running club suit, and these declarers went up to 4 off.


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

The overcall and lead combine to place KQ C North, so the 10C is a second stop in the suit, provided the AC is played at trick one. Those who rose with the Ace were ahead in the race to establish their suit whereas those who ducked discovered that North could set up their suit first despite South being unable to continue clubs.

As ever duck for a purpose, not simply because you can and are weak in the suit.


### Double Dummy

Double dummy problems are artificial in that you plan the play seeing all four hands, but they can help give an insight into the art of the possible and so broaden one's technical repertoire. Here is Monday's board 12, with East charged with the responsibility of making 6C against a defence starting with two top spades. You will of course ruff the second one. Now what?

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

We can count a total of 6 club tricks, 3 hearts and 2 diamonds on the finesse - it's double dummy so we know the finesse works. That comes to 11 tricks. One more needed.

'One more needed' is often the cue for a squeeze, and that is indeed the case here. East draws trumps in 2 rounds, and then plays their remaining three trumps too. This is the position immediately before East plays their last trump:

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

So far North has discarded a heart and a diamond so that they retain control of both red suits. Declarer discards a diamond on their last trump and North ... ? A heart allows dummy to make an extra heart trick, whilst a diamond allows a finesse and the A to clear that suit to the benefit of declarer's 9. Ouch either way.

