

## Matters Arising 69

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 7- 11 Mar 2022

### Ten for Starters

Imagine you were West declaring Tuesday's hand 14 in 4S on the lead of 5H. Plan the play.

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

Resources seem rather scarce, which is not surprising on a combined 20 count, and there are just seven top tricks - AH, AC and 5 natural trump tricks. Realistically the only chance for additional tricks is ruffs, which of course need to in the short trump hand to be extras as ruffs in the long hand simply turn natural trump tricks into ruffing ones. Fortunately there are 3 small hearts West asking to be ruffed, and our trumps are so large that the only one the enemy can beat is the 6.

Win AH, ruff a heart with 7: 2 tricks.


Club to A, ruff a heart with Q: 4 tricks.

Overtake 5S in hand, ruff last heart with A: 6 tricks.

Declarer still has 4 boss trumps to secure the contract.

We can also see that from the start there are always three minor suit losers as there are no useful discards.


As we have seen so often, draw trumps and then think is a losing tactic.

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

### Blockage

Board 8 from Monday saw North in 3NT on the lead of 5H. North plays small from the table and West rises with the A before returning the suit. Over to you.

|            |
|------------|
| A Q 7      |
| J 6        |
| A J 10 4 2 |
| A K Q      |


|   |   |
|---|---|
|  | 8 |
|---|---|

There is a pleasantly large number of tricks available, namely 3 in clubs, 2 in hearts, at least 4 in diamonds and at least one in spades. Consequently we are in overtricks mode. We would like to take finesses in both spades and

|         |
|---------|
| 10 9 5  |
| K 10 3  |
| Q 8 7 3 |
| 10 4 3  |

diamonds, which means two entries to table. If we take the diamond finesse first by running the Queen, even if that loses the suit will provide a second entry unless it is 4-0. Since we have a heart entry there appears to be no problem.

However appearances can be deceptive, for 'no problem' depends on the card North played from hand at trick one. Suppose North lazily plays his 6. The heart return draws his J and East ducks even though from the play at trick 1 they obviously hold the Q. How do we get to table? If we overtake with the K and the diamond finesse loses we could end up losing 4 hearts and KD as the defence's hearts can now run. So much for overtricks. Consequently we have to play the 10 from table and attack diamonds from hand, losing to the K even if it is onside. Unblocking the JH at trick one means that we contribute the 6 at trick two enabling us to win on table whatever East contributes, and still retain a heart stop.

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

With KD onside unblocking JH results in an easy 11 tricks - 2 hearts (the second after we return to table with a long diamond), 5 diamonds, 3 clubs (taken after we have knocked out KD but before returning to table via the long diamond) and a spade. The spade finesse is only risked if the enemy discards suggest this is safe.

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.

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