

Matters Arising 77

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal Online 2 - 6 May 2022

Limit Bids

Amongst the most valuable bids in a players armoury are limit bids - ones that define the hand within a narrow range so that partner can judge the best contract. Their successful deployment require that the bid not be used on hands outside of the limits, and that partner knows what the limits are.

Which brings us to Tuesday's board 10:

	A K 2	
	9 8	
	J 10 5	
	A K Q 5 4	
J 10 8 4 K 5 3 Q 8 7 3 J 3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> 10 ● </div>	Q 6 5 A 7 6 4 9 6 2 10 6 2
	9 7 3	
	Q J 10 2	
	A K 4	
	9 8 7	

The bidding is passed around to North who opens 1C. This should draw a 1H response. What next?

North has only one suit and rebidding it would be a limit bid:

- a) 2C shows a weak opening hand with at least 5 clubs
- b) 3C is strongly invitational with a 6 card suit - partner should only pass with a bare response. As often when the suit involved is a minor 3NT rather than a raise is the hoped for continuation.

Neither of these descriptions match the hand North holds. No Trump rebids are also limit bids.

- i) 1NT shows 15–16 or 15–17 according to taste, though in the latter case you will need to be able to distinguish later between the 15s and 17s.
- ii) 2NT is a point or two stronger.

With 17 points and a good 5 card suit 2NT looks right even if you normally only rebid 1NT with 17 points.

South holds 10 points, so any NT rebid from North should attract an immediate raise to 3NT. Bidding 2NT over a 1NT rebid risks playing in the part-score with game likely.

On the night only 3 out of 8 North-Souths found a simple safe auction to 3NT.

Quickie Problem

On Thursday (teams) five pairs elected to play in hearts on their five card fit, three played in 3NT. Your task is to make 6H as North on any lead, though try it against QD.

5 natural trump tricks, together with AC and the AK in each of the other suits comes to 10 tricks in total. Two more needed, which will have to come either from setting up the spades or by ruffing the small diamonds.

A 4
A K 10 9 8
A K 7 2
8 5



K 10 7 3 2
Q J 7
6
A 10 9 6

Given that none of our trumps can be beaten by the enemy the ruff two diamonds plan looks good. Win trick one and ruff a diamond. No need to cash our other top diamond, risking running into a 7–1 diamond break, unlikely though that may be.

Return to hand via AS and ruff your other small diamond. Lead dummy's last trump and overtake to draw the remaining trumps. The opponents get a club at trick 13.

A 4
A K 10 9 8
A K 7 2
8 5

Q J 6 5
6 5 2
10 8
K Q J 7



9 8
4 3
Q J 9 5 4 3
4 3 2

K 10 7 3 2
Q J 7
6
A 10 9 6

Indeed 7H can be made by setting up the spades for a club discard as well as ruffing the diamonds. However this requires a 3–2 trump break so is best not tried unless you are actually in that contract.

Context is All

A K 8
A K 7 3
A J 8 5
7 3



Q 9 6
4 2
K 10 7 4 3
K 8 2

Many people are aware of the dictum that when missing Qxxx in a suit you play to drop the Queen on the second round, assuming no marked finesse appears through one defender showing out on the first. Unfortunately too many appear to regard this as an unbreakable rule.


This is board 16 from Thursday's teams when making the contract outweighs any thought of overtricks.

Played in 3NT from either side of the table most declarer's were not confronted by the testing club lead. Despite this most either went down or tried to!

Even allowing for the loss of a diamond trick declarer can count 4 diamonds, 3 spades and 2 hearts. so the only danger is the lead of a club through the King.

Suppose a heart is led. Win in the North hand, cash AD in case Q is singleton, and then finesse the 10. No, you don't look stupid if this loses to a doubleton Q in the West hand, for they cannot hurt you by leading clubs, so you are bound to make at least the nine tricks mentioned in the paragraph above.

Allowing East to win the third round of diamonds with the Queen is daft though, for a big club now from them will spell disaster if West has the A over your K.

<p>10 7 5 4 2 J 5 6 A J 10 6 5</p>	<p>A K 8 A K 7 3 A J 8 5 7 3</p>  <p>Q 9 6 4 2 K 10 7 4 3 K 8 2</p>	<p>J 3 Q 10 9 8 6 Q 9 2 Q 9 4</p>
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Those who made the contract despite allowing East to win the third diamond can count themselves very lucky.

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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