

Matters Arising 80

being some thoughts prompted by hands played at Kendal BC 23-27 May 2022

You Played Where?

A Q J 2 You are East on Tuesday's board 4, happily
 A Q 9 5 3 contemplating opening 1H when you see
 6 that partner has opened in front of you.
 10 7 6 2NT (20-22). Time for transfers:

2NT - 3D - 3H - 3S - 3NT

Partner clearly has at most 2 hearts and at most 3 spades. But you are missing at most an Ace and a King, so you are not leaving things there are you? Even without transfers you might alight on something agricultural, like 2NT - 6NT. After all it was only the thought of 7H/S that makes you want to do otherwise.

With a different partner you hear 2C opened, 8 playing tricks or 23+. You bid 2D (relay) and hear 3D from partner. 3H from you, presumably forcing, and 3NT from partner. How grotty can partner be?

xx xx AKQJxx AKx

As 8 playing trick hands goes, that's hardly full of goodies, with no hint of a ninth trick, yet combined with yours and a diamond break no worse than 4-2 you can see 2 spade tricks, a heart, 6 diamonds and 2 clubs. Eleven, with a 12th coming from a successful finesse in either major.

OK, maybe partner hasn't AK C. How about

xx Kx AKQJxx KQx

I don't think either this or the hand above are 2C openers, but some people do. Count the tricks. 1 spade, 3 hearts, 6 diamonds and a club. 6NT depends on the spade finesse even opposite this dubious 2C opener.

Stopping short of slam is surely not an option. Yet three out of eight pairs did. Pessimists are alive and well and sitting East.

	9 8 4	
	J 7 6 2	
	10 9 5 4	
	9 3	
K 7 5 K 4 A Q J 8 2 A K Q	<div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">4</div>	A Q J 2 A Q 9 5 3 6 10 7 6
	10 6 3	
	10 8	
	K 7 3	
	A K Q	

Why We Interfere

On Thursday's board 9 North passed, East 10 9 5 4
 opened 1H and at five tables South 7 5
 overcalled a spade. West had to decide A 10 9 8 5
 what to do with the hand right. A 10

Supporting partner's hearts is out of the question, so the options are

- a) 1NT, though partner will expect a spade stop,
- b) 2D, though partner will expect more for a 2 level response,
- c) X, though partner will expect both minors,
- d) Pass, though partner will expect you to be somewhat weaker.

Nothing is perfect, a situation that arises more often after interference than without. Which is part of the reason people interfere. My choice would be a), for any honour from partner, even if singleton, would be enough for the suit to be stopped.

On Thursday 3 Wests chose pass. East rebid 2H and game was missed.

	8	
	8 6 3 2	
	Q J 3 2	
	K Q 9 7	
10 9 5 4 7 5 A 10 9 8 5 A 10	<div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">9</div>	K Q J A K Q J 10 4 7 6 4 2
	A 7 6 3 2	
	9	
	K 6 4	
	J 8 5 3	

Not that it was always West's fault. At one table where West did venture 1NT East still only rebid 2H even though they held a more genuine 8 playing tricks than many hands opened 2C.

With West holding 2 Aces and able to handle declarer's third club in two ways - either by ruffing or discard, making 4H is straightforward. Even on the unsporing defence of A spades followed by a spade ruff declarer makes 10 tricks: win minor suit continuation, draw trumps, cash the remaining spade honour in hand, cross to the other minor suit Ace and discard the third club on 10S.

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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