

BRIDGE



with Raju Ramchndani

The dream run of the **A Team** finally came to an end. After winning their first 5 games with an average of well over 24 they succumbed to **Gold Coast** in a 9-21 defeat. Although they are still at the top of the table it is too close for comfort. If they win their remaining matches then they should smoothly sail through. Anything less and it could go down to the wire.

Other teams in contention for the League title are **Gold Coast**, **Recreio A** and possible outsiders **IBA**. **KCC B** is having a terrible year with only one win out of 5 matches.

The Standings as at 17 August, 2010 are:

	Games Played	Points
KCC 'A'	6	131
IBA	7	129
Gold Coast	5	100
Rotary	8	97
Recreio 'A'	4	90
LRC	5	84
Recreio 'B'	6	69
KCC 'B'	5	63
HK Club	6	61
Helena May	4	25
Country Club	3	23*

* Penalty of 6 VPs

In this issue we will talk about the "Rule of 20" and the "Rule of 22".

This will help you to decide whether to open the bidding or simply to Pass. It will also help you to decide when to open at the one level instead of opening Weak 2s.

1 What action would you take as dealer, neither side vulnerable, with the following hands?

(A)	(B)	(C)
♠ K Q 6 4	♠ A 8 6 5 2	♠ A 9 7 6 3
♥ 5	♥ 5	♥ 5
♦ A J 8 6 3 2	♦ 7 3	♦ 8
♣ 7 5	♣ A Q 6 4 2	♣ A J 9 6 4 2



The basic yardstick for opening the bidding is 12 HCP. Unless there are at least two serious defects in the hand, open the bidding if you have 12 HCP or more. You should also open the bidding with fewer HCP if you have good shape as compensation. A good test, devised by Marty Bergen of the USA, is the Rule of 20: Add your HCP to the number of cards in your two longest suits. If the total comes to 20 or more, open the bidding. With some qualifications, this is a sound approach at pairs or at teams bridge.

Applying the Rule of 20 you should open each of the above hands. Bid 1 ♦, your longest suit with (A). If partner responds 1 ♥, you will rebid 1 ♠, but over 1 NT or 2 ♣, your rebid is 2 ♦.

With (B) start with 1 ♠, the higher-ranking when you hold two five-card suits. Over 1 NT, rebid 2 ♣, but over 2 ♦ or 2 ♥ you are not strong enough for 3 ♣ and so you should rebid 2 ♠.

Some prefer to open 1 ♣ with five spades and five clubs. That will work if the opponents promise not to intervene, but meek opponents are hard to find these days. If you open 1 ♣ and they bid and raise a red suit to the three-level or higher, will you introduce your spades then with such a weak opening? It is better to open 1 ♠ and risk missing clubs than to open 1 ♣ and risk missing spades.

Open your longest suit, 1 ♣, with (C). Over



1 ♦ or 1 ♥, rebid 1 ♠ and bid the spades again on the next round if partner has not shown support for spades yet. Given that you open 1 ♠ with 5-5 in the black suits, the sequence of 1 ♣, then spades and spades again indicates five spades and hence six or more clubs.

Tip 1: Use the Rule of 20 as a base for deciding whether to open.

2 What action would you take as dealer, neither side vulnerable, with the following hands?

(A)	(B)	(C)
♠ A 8 6	♠ K 8 6	♠ Q J 6 5 2
♥ A 4 3	♥ Q J	♥ 5
♦ A 6 3 2	♦ Q J 6 3	♦ K Q
♣ 7 6 4	♣ K 8 4 2	♣ Q 8 6 4 2

Using the Rule of 20 would suggest that you should pass (A) since the total of HCP (12) plus the cards in your two longest suits (4 + 3) = 19. However, most top players would open (A) with 1 NT if playing a weak 1 NT or 1 ♦ otherwise. The reason is that aces are undervalued in the 4-3-2-1 point

count. The value of an ace is closer to $4\frac{1}{4}$ and so (A) is closer to 13 points than 12. This upgrading accounts for the advice in most texts that you should add 1 point if holding all four aces.

The Rule of 20 also suggests that you should open (B) and (C) as both measure 20. You should pass (B) despite its 12 HCP as it has two strikes against it: it is aceless and the Q-J doubleton is a poor holding. Hand (C) should also be passed: it, too, is aceless, the clubs are poor and the doubleton K-Q is poor.

A modification to the Rule of 20 will make your valuation more accurate: Add HCP plus the number of cards in your two longest suits plus the Quick Tricks in the hand.

Quick tricks (QT) are the tricks you figure to win in the first two rounds of a suit. These are tricks you are likely to win whether as declarer or in defence. The quick trick scale is:

A-K = 2 A-Q = $1\frac{1}{2}$ A = 1 K-Q = 1
K = $\frac{1}{2}$ (0 if singleton king)

When counting quick tricks as well, the standard for opening is 22 or more. Hand (A) measures 22, therefore open. Hand B has only 1 QT and measures 21, therefore pass. Likewise, (C) has only 1 QT and its count comes to 21. Therefore pass unless you have some multi-opening to show a weak hand with 5 spades and a second suit.

Tip 2: Add quick tricks to the Rule of 20 to produce the Rule of 22.

If anyone is looking for a Bridge partner for Tuesdays, please contact the reception and leave your name and contact number. We will do our best to find you a Bridge partner.

See you all at the Bridge table on Tuesdays at 7 pm.

Campout

It's time to get the mould out of the tents and air out those sleeping bags as it is time once again for Campout on 22–23 September and what a great time to go camping during Mid-Autumn Festival – lay out on the ground and look up and see the moon at its fullest. Enjoy the luxury of camping at KCC with hot and cold running water, big-screen TV, BBQ dinner and a sizzling breakfast, a short walk back to the car in the morning and all that for only HK\$100 (Members) and HK\$60 (children under 12 years); Guests HK\$135 (adults) and HK\$99 (children under 12 years).

Bookings maybe made at the F&B office on 34737145/125. If you need a tent make sure to book early as the Club has only a limited number of these.

Hong Kong Cancer Fund – “Stride for a Cure” Join the KCC Team

Last November the “KCC Team” raised over HK\$163,000 for the Hong Kong Cancer Fund by participating in the annual “Stride for a Cure” walkathon at Tai Tam Country Park.

This year the walk will be held on Sunday, 28 November, again at Tai Tam and our intention is to try and beat the sponsorship total we collected last year. Money raised goes towards cancer research.

Initially we need to register our team members who wish to take part in the walk. There is increased interest in doing the walk and raising funds by Club members, many of whom wish to do the walk in memory of friends and relatives who have suffered from the disease and in particular for Laura Trayford.

The number of walkers comprising the KCC Team will be limited to 50, so if you wish to take part, please contact Mike Kennedy or add your name to the list of walkers at KCC reception as soon as you can.

This year we will have a dedicated web page http://www.cancer-fund.org/scripts/diy_detail.aspx?diyid=96 so that you, your friends, family and colleagues can donate online as well as through your KCC membership account.

Please help by investing in the future of Cancer Care.

