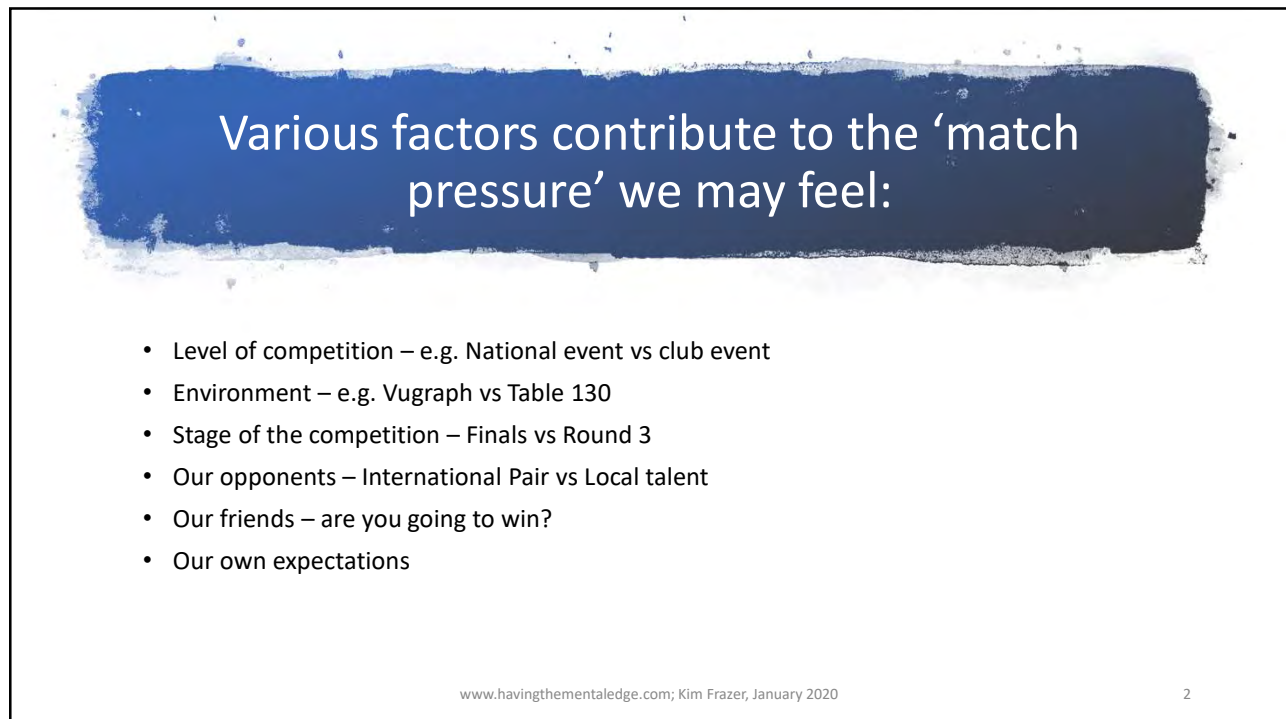
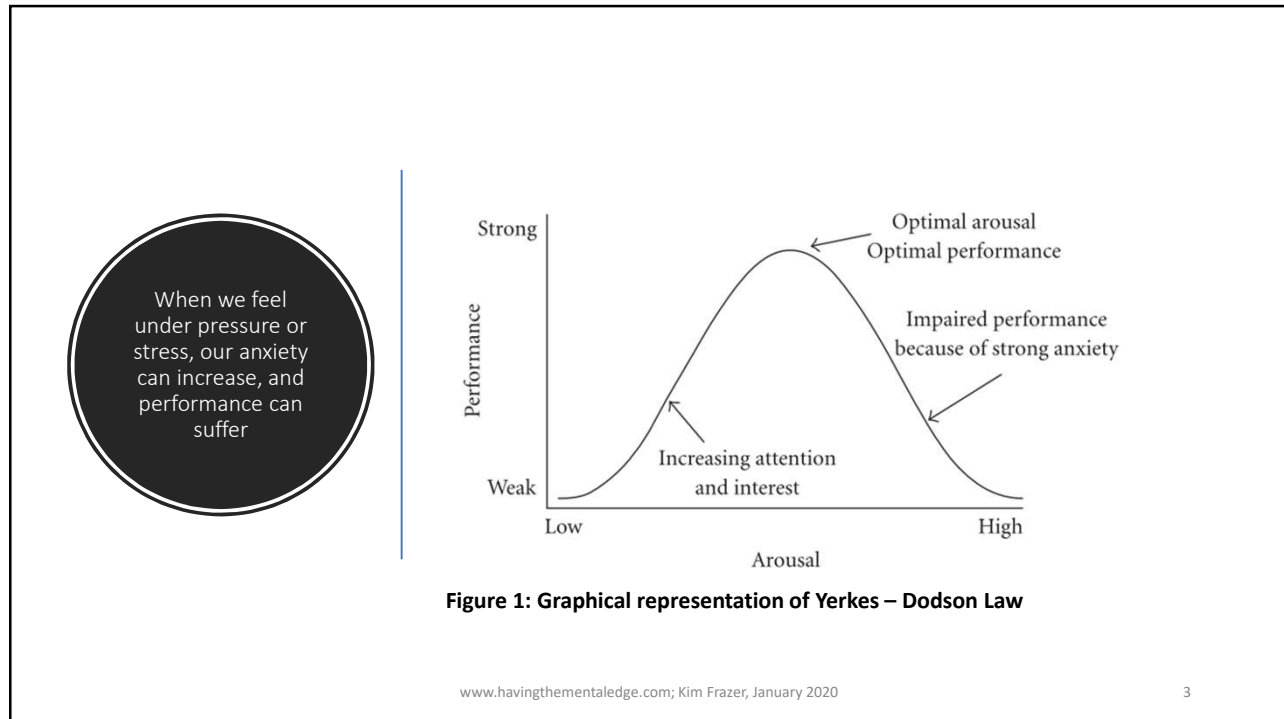




1



2



3

‘Handus Horribilus’

Dealer: West
Vulnerable: All

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>♠ J976 ♥ K64 ♦ 93 ♣ Q642</p> | <p>♠ 4 ♥ AQJ9875 ♦ Q4 ♣ 987</p> | <p>♠ AQ83 ♥ 2 ♦ 10652 ♣ KJ105</p> |
| | <p>♠ K1052 ♥ 103 ♦ AKJ87 ♣ A3</p> | |

On this board, our expert player later described this as: ‘his worst hand-play of the year’.

- Last round of the day when the team was in contention to win the event.
- South became declarer in 4H
- Lead 9D. Won by dummy’s queen.
- Declarer played for trumps to be 2/2, and lost control of the hand when West signalled for a club on the second round of hearts.
- He eventually lost two clubs, a heart & a spade to go down on a board where most were making 12.

And what was North thinking about when they didn’t open this?

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Managing Pressure & Maintaining Focus

- Whether it was pressure or loss of concentration that caused the uncharacteristic error on the hand, some tactics can be employed to prevent this type of ‘mental lapse’. One tactic is to:

Segment performance & set segment goals.

- So for the last round of the day a segment goal to assist with maintaining focus & occupying the mind with a task other than your placing or the scoreboard might be to set a technical task like:
 - ‘Slow down on every board and think about the opening lead & its implications’; or
 - ‘Count the hand and consider what can go wrong on a seemingly easy hand’ before playing to trick one
- It is easy to become complacent and neglect these fundamental tasks when tired or under pressure.

On the previous hand, declarer clearly didn’t stop to consider: ‘what can go wrong if trumps don’t split’.

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Another type of pressure we experience at bridge is: Time Pressure

- Who has ever rushed to finish hands so that you could put a board on the table with 30 seconds to go and had a bad outcome for your team or your partner & you?
- As you were rushing to play all your boards; on how many of them did you give away an overtrick or make an undertrick?
- How much stress did you feel during the round knowing you were running out of time?

When you miss a board because you ran out of time, there are four possible outcomes on the board:

- A flat board
- A swing board in your favour
- A swing board against you
- A board your team-mates did well on or did badly on.

Oh – and there is also the possibility of a penalty from the director for being slow.....

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Dealer: East
Vulnerable: N-S

♠ 1032
♥ 7
♦ J1093
♣ AQ986

♠ 96
♥ KJ10543
♦ 86
♣ J104

♠ AKJ874
♥ 862
♦ Q
♣ 532

♠ Q5
♥ AQ9
♦ AK7542
♣ K7

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-----------------|----------|-------|
| | Pass | 2♠ | Dbl |
| 3♠ | 4♣ ¹ | Pass | 4♦ |
| Pass | 5♦ | All Pass | |

1 - Long hesitation

A No 1 seeded team rushed to play this board in a congress, even though they were out of time in the round. Later they wished they'd skipped it!

- At the other table East opened 3S & everyone passed.
- Perhaps a loss of concentration or some match pressure at play?

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Managing your table tempo can help avoid time pressure

- Arrive at the table a little bit early
- Have a short spiel on your system ready for the opponents
- Check you have your system card, pen, etc with you (not left at the last table)
- Discuss hands at the end of the round, not during it; politely ask opponents to do the same;
- Consider when to write down the contract, or lead or enter the data into the scoring unit
- Claim if you can, rather than playing out every card

Make the director aware if your opponents are exceptionally slow - you do have rights, but only if you say something.

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| | |
|--|---|
| <p>North</p> <p>♠ 32</p> <p>♥ AKJ</p> <p>♦ QJ6</p> <p>♣ AK1073</p> <p>South</p> <p>♠ AJ54</p> <p>♥ Q98764</p> <p>♦ K</p> <p>♣ 85</p> | <p>Managing your table tempo also means you will have time to consider the play on difficult hands without feeling like you are under 'time pressure'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NS reach 6H played by South • West led the spade King (overleads) & South under pressure failed to find a line which would lead to success – ie. • Cross to dummy with a trump • Play Ace, King and a club ruffed in hand. Cross back to dummy with a heart (finding trumps split evenly - so far your plan is working) • Play the remaining two clubs pitching the king of diamonds and a spade. Now play the queen of diamond and when East covers you are home since you kept a trump as an entry card allowing you to throw a spade on the jack of diamonds. |
|--|---|

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