

10 full tables on Monday, and we got through the complete movement of 27 boards! And 7 full table on Friday, it won't last – but 4 or 5 tables through the low season will be fine. Mind you, we have picked up a number of residents lately (Hans, Don (US), Don(UK), Chris, Jan; to name but a few).

Last week's winners: Monday 10/2/03

Friday 14/2/03

N-S winners	John/Ralph	61%	winners	Alex/Jeff	65%
E-W winners	Chuck/Terry	63%	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mike/Philip	63%

I've received a couple of requests. One was to explain the reverse, and the other to indicate which doubles are for penalties and which are for take out. I'll deal with the reverse this week and try to cover doubles next week.

We also have a few interesting hands from last week. Chuck's finally gone (did I hear a sigh?), so this will be the last chance to feature him for a month or so.

### The Reverse

A reverse is defined as an unforced rebid at the level of two (or more) in a higher ranking suit than bid originally. Now as partner will have to go to the three level to give preference to your 1<sup>st</sup> suit, you obviously need a strong hand. 17+ points is the norm. Also, a reverse *guarantees* more cards in the 1<sup>st</sup> bid suit. Let's have a few examples (and check that you would bid them as I suggest), in all cases you play a strong NT and 5 card major system: -

Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3	Hand 4	Hand 5	Hand 6
♠ Q7	♠ 2	♠ A	♠ -	♠ AQ	♠ A
♥ KQ87	♥ AK864	♥ AQ74	♥ K765	♥ KJ75	♥ AKJ4
♦ A10964	♦ AKJ74	♦ AQJ763	♦ K765	♦ K9875	♦ AKQ964
♣ Q4	♣ K9	♣ J5	♣ AQ954	♣ KJ	♣ 105

1. Open 1♦. If partner responds with a black suit or 1NT, do not bid 2♥. That would be a reverse, advertising values that you do not have. Pass 1NT, over 1♠ bid 1NT and over 2♣ bid 2♦.
2. This time you have values for the reverse, but it is incorrect as opening 1♦ and rebidding 2♥ *promises* more ♦'s than ♥'s. Correct is to open 1♥ and then jump to 3♦.
3. A classic reverse. Open 1♦ and rebid 2♥ over 1♠, 1NT or 2♣.
4. Here is where I disagree with many people. I open 1♣ and then support a red suit and bid 2♣ over 1♠. Over 1NT it's not so easy, but 2♣ is still best. Insufficient values to reverse.
5. You have the values for a reverse, but with the high cards outside the long suits, I prefer a (strong) 1NT opening. Two doubletons, but that's where the points are.
6. This is tricky. It is really too strong for a 1♦ opening. If you play strong two's, then fine. Otherwise it has to be a 2♣ opener (also fine). A 2NT opener is out with two short suits and the hand has too much playing strength.

So, got the hang of it? How would you bid hand 18 from Monday? A *very* interesting hand with umpteen different ways to bid it, depending upon your system and style. The hand was played 9 times and, *with no opposition bidding*, there were 7 different final contracts! That must be a record for a non-slam hand. The correct contract was reached just once. Let's start with Chuck/Me:

East, Terry	West, Chuck	East	West	(1) a reverse
				(2) Lebensohl, East must bid
♠ A	♠ 109762	1♦	1♠	3♣ and await developments
♥ AQ74	♥ 8532	2♥ (1)	2NT (2)	(3) forced
♦ AKQJ64	♦ 8	3♣ (3)	3♥ (4)	(4) a very weak hand with ♥'s
♣ 105	♣ A84	4♥ (5)	pass	(5) a very strong hand with ♥'s

This is where I agree with Chuck and disagree with Hans. Chuck plays better minor, and he thought that bidding was better than playing in a possible 3-1 fit in 1♦. 1♦ is very unlikely to be a good final contract when you have 9 cards in the majors and a singleton ♦. Hans would always pass the West hand – he insists that the auction will get out of control if partner has a very strong hand. Best to check the Lebensohl convention. Who is correct? I agree with Chuck, but it is really a matter of style; neither is wrong or right, up to you and your partner. Also, it depends to an extent on your opening two strategy. So, would I have been passed out in 1♦ if playing with Hans? No.

I know that Hans will not respond with sub-minimal values and with Hans I play Benjamin two's - I would open the East hand 2♣ - in this case a strong 2♦ opener.

Let's consider how to bid this hand in detail. First of all, the opening bid. If your partnership style is that you need 6 points to bid over a possible short minor (as with Hans), then you cannot open this hand 1♦. The second point to consider is if you do open 1♦, then would partner take a reverse (1♦ - 1♠ - 2♥) as forcing? :-

With Hans, I would open a Benjamin 2♣.

With John, I would open an Acol 2♦ (strong and forcing).

With a partner who does not play a strong 2 structure and who is likely to pass 1♦, then you simply have to open 2♣.

If partner will bid over 1♦ with minimal values but would pass a reverse (my style, and that of Gary/Don), then you have to open 2♣ if you do not have a strong two structure.

Now I said that my preferred style is to play the reverse as non-forcing; however, Chuck had made it very plain to me that he plays it as 100% forcing (I tend to go along with whatever my partner plays). I also know that Chuck (unlike Hans) will not pass an opening of 1 of a minor with an unsuitable hand, thus I was able to open 1♦ and we had the bidding mechanism to easily reach the correct contract. If partner is likely to pass the reverse, then a rebid of 2 or 3NT looks reasonable – partner should not pass this. The problem is not only that 3NT may not make if partner has no ♣ stop (OK in this case) but also, you may miss a superior ♥ game (as is the case here). If you go along with my preferred style of responding to a minor with sub-minimal values and perhaps passing a reverse, it may be worth considering playing Benjamin two's (you still have a weak opening 2♥/♠).

What happened on this board? 4♥(+1), 5♦ and 3NT were all bid and made once. 1♦ was passed out twice. The 2♥ reverse was passed once and there were three other ♦ partscore contracts. I don't really understand these ♦ partscores. As I mentioned a couple of weeks back, do not go out of your way to play in a minor (even a very good minor) – especially when you have a 4-4 major fit (with no major fit, go for 3NT!).

A jump rebid in ♦'s is incorrect on this hand as it denies a 4 card major. A sequence like 1♦ - 1♠ - 3♦ is wrong. I checked the scores, and all of these were played by East, so they did not open 2♣.

So, two things you have to clarify with your partner. Do you bid on minimal values over partner's 1♣/♦ opening? And, if so, is a reverse over a 1 level response forcing?

Up to you. If you feel that you need to play the reverse as forcing but don't know how to show opener that you have a very weak hand and don't know how to stop below game, then ask me or Chuck about Lebensohl.

One final hand from Monday, the North hand from Board 17. What do you open?

♠ AQJ32      Hans and I were tidying up after the session and Jan asked what we  
♥ 975432      would open. Normally one opens the longer major, but there is a problem  
♦ KJ            here. If you open 1♥ and partner responds 1NT, 2♣ or 2♦, then you are  
♣ -            not strong enough to reverse into 2♠ (partner will expect 17+ points).

Hans and I were in agreement that you should open 1♠ and rebid 2♥. Partner will not take you for 6♥'s, but that is better than failing to mention that great ♠ suit. The ♥'s are weak and may be treated like a 5 card suit. With 5-5 you always open the higher ranking suit.

## Pre-empt Only Once

Board 8 from Monday was interesting: -

Dealer: ♠ AQ  
West ♥ 1092  
Love all ♦ KJ1032  
♣ 932

♠ 9 N ♠ 542  
♥ Q73 W E ♥ AKJ854  
♦ A8654 S ♦ Q97  
♣ AQ86 ♣ 10

♠ KJ108763  
♥ 6  
♦ -  
♣ KJ754

West	North	East	South
Chuck	Hans	Me	Bob
1♦	pass	1♥	3♠
pass	pass	4♥	4♠
5♥	dbl	all pass	

South led a ♠ to North's ♠A and North returned a cunning ♦J. I covered with the queen and South ruffed. It did not look too good when South placed a low ♣ on the table. After some thought, I played ♣Q (I now needed the ♣ finesse to make the contract). When this held it was ♥ to the ♥A, ruff a ♠ low, back to hand with a ♣ ruff, ruff the last ♠ with dummy's ♥Q, back to hand with

another ♣ ruff, draw the last 2 trumps, over to the ♦A and finally pitch the last losing ♦ on ♣A. Hans said well played; Chuck simply asked why I took so long in a lay-down contract – that's about as close to a compliment as you will ever get from Chuck. So what is the moral here?

South should have bid 4♠ at his first turn. The rule when pre-empting is that you decide how high you are prepared to go and then bid to that level immediately. Over an initial 4♠, it would be difficult for East to bid 5♥. The South hand has only 7 ♠'s, but it is worth an initial 4♠ because of the good 'body' in ♠'s and because of the 2<sup>nd</sup> suit. Note that you will never get a chance to bid this 2<sup>nd</sup> suit – opponents will compete in a red suit which is then too high to mention ♣'s. Most of the field were in 4♠ making. One E-W pair were in 6♥ minus 1; I suspect that this happened when South initially bid 4♠ and East bid 5♥ which West raised to 6♥ (perhaps after North raised to 5♠?). An initial 4♠ bid really does make life difficult for E-W.

This general rule applies to all pre-empts, either openings or overcalls – pre-empt just once (as high as is wise) and do not bid again unless partner invites. Bidding twice allows the opponents to find a fit and to gauge their combined strength. The only possible exception is when you have a weak two-suiter *and you are able to bid both suits*.

Finally, what can we say about North's final double? The opponents have been pushed up into 5♥. Maybe it makes, maybe not. Assuming that 4♥ makes and that a fair % of the field will be in 4♥ then there is absolutely no % in doubling. If 5♥ makes then you convert an average into a bottom, if there are only 10 tricks then you get a top anyway. No, the only reasonable bid other than pass is 5♠! Since 6 of North's points are in partner's suit it seems very likely that 5♥ makes (perhaps the calibre of the opposition should be taken into account?!), and if 5♥ does not actually make then 5♠ may well! Give South a ♥ void (very likely on the bidding) and 5♠ could well make. In this actual case 5♥ makes but 5♠ would go minus one – an excellent result for N-S.

**Raising Partner's Pre-empt**

Board 18 from Friday. N-S vul.

♠ J96      Now, onto an associated topic. Partner pre-empts, should you raise the  
♥ A76      pre-empt? This is West hand 18 from Friday. At favourable vulnerability  
♦ K1085    your partner has dealt and opened 3♥, passed to you. What do you do?  
♣ 975      two reasonable alternatives: - with 1/2 your points in partner's suit,  
I would up the anti and bid 4♥ - make it difficult for the opponents to  
reach 4♠, which stands good chances looking at this hand; pass is a rather feeble alternative. What you  
should not do is pass, hear the next hand bid 3♠ passed round to you and then bid 4♥! Why push them  
into game which they were incapable of bidding on their own? Partner was max (9 points), yet 4♠ made  
– Alex played it very well.

East	South	West	North	This was the actual bidding. At the end of play, West suggested that North was lucky – indeed he was, lucky that West kept the auction alive and lucky that South woke up in time to make the 4♠ bid that he should have made on the previous round. I'll give you the complete deal later.
3♥	pass	pass	3♠	
pass	pass	4♥	pass	
pass	4♠	all pass		

So, a similar theme. If you wish to raise partner's pre-empt, do so immediately; before opponents can gauge their combined strength and fit. Under no circumstances do it later.

**Spot the Correct Bid!**

	West	North	East	South
♠ K1097	N	1NT (1)	pass	2♣ (2)
♥ AK7	W E	2♠	pass	3♣
♦ A1086	S	dbl	pass	pass
♣ A9				
Dealer:	♠ 85			
West	♥ 86	(1) 15-17 ?!		
E-W vul	♦ KJ2	(2) ♣'s and another suit (playing DONT)		
	♣ KQJ864			

Board 16 from Friday. So here comes the question: can you spot a single bid that is remotely sensible? Send answers on a postcard. Obviously both players deserve a zero, unfortunately the scoring system is such that one of them must get a good score. Perhaps I can arrange for them to partner each other. The bottom lines? Once you have opened 1NT you have said it all. Do not bid again uninvited. Do not open 1NT outside your range. Do not double with just two trumps when you have already said your hand (twice). Bridge is a partnership game. Understand your defence to a strong NT. Do not bid twice with a weak hand under a strong NT. I've run out of space.....this really is .....well, ..... not Bridge.

What happened? I shall not dignify this with a result. They both deserve zero minus. How should you bid the South hand? DONT is just about the only defence to a NT that allows you to play in 2♣, shame South forgot the system (sic). You double (showing a single suited hand) and then pass partner's expected 2♣ response. Playing Multi Landy you could bid 2♦ to show a single suited hand (and then bid 3♣), but pass is probably best. West should, of course, open 1♦ playing a 15-17 NT.

## Spot the Correct Bid, part 2

Board 17 from Friday, yes – the very next hand: -

♠ Q96	N	West	North	East	South
♥ A82	W E				
♦ 9765	S	-	pass	1♣	1♥
♣ A74		dbl (1)	pass	1♠	3♦
	♠ J10	3NT	pass	4♠	5♦
Dealer:	♥ KQ973	5♠	pass	pass	pass
North	♦ AKQJ32				
Love all	♣ -			(1) negative, 4♠'s	

So here comes the question: can you spot a single bid by West or South that is remotely sensible? Send answers on .... Obviously both players deserve.....

I have a lot of problems with West's bids here. Obviously the initial bid should be 1NT, it is a flat heap. Quite why it is later worth 3NT after South has shown a strong hand baffles me – as does a five level bid when partner has shown a minimum opener and simply corrected! People who bid like South deserve to be chopped, gifting them tops like this only spurs them on. 5♠ on the 4-3 fit was not a roaring success. 5♦ would be two off.

How do you bid the South hand? You could double and then convert a ♠ bid by partner to ♦'s. Alternatively, overcall 2♦ followed by a ♥ reverse bid. There are also conventional ways to show two-suiters (Ghestem, Michaels). The sequence chosen shows 5-5 or longer ♥'s than ♦'s; it invites partner to give preference to ♥'s. West, of course, should bid 1NT and pass thereafter.

## Spot the Correct Bid - A Complete Hat-trick!

Friday's movement entailed playing 3 boards against each opponent. After the previous two fiascos it seems fitting to study the last board of the set. We've seen it before, so let's look at the complete deal. Hand 18 from Friday: -

		West	North	East	South
Dealer:	♠ K10832				
East	♥ J	-	-	3♥	pass
N-S vul	♦ A64	pass (1)	3♠ (2)	pass	pass (3)
	♣ A842	4♥ (4)	pass	pass	4♠ (5)
		all pass			
♠ J96	N	♠ Q5			
♥ A76	W E	♥ KQ109432	(1) I prefer 4♥ to pass.		
♦ K1085	S	♦ 72	(2) easy, but not so easy if West had bid 4♥		
♣ 975		♣ Q10	(3) I'm sleeping		
	♠ A74		(4) a really silly bid		
	♥ 85		(5) OK, I'll bid what I should have last go		
	♦ QJ93		since you push me into it.		
	♣ KJ63				

A note about West's 1<sup>st</sup> pass. I prefer 4♥. 4♥ is an excellent bid as opponents do not know if it is weak or very strong. It would take a very bold (reckless?) North to compete over 4♥.

How do you bid the South hand? An initial pass is correct as a double would show a stronger hand and guarantee 4♠'s. When partner bids 3♠, a raise to 4♠ is automatic. West should, of course, bid 4♥ immediately in which case the pre-empt works and N-S will probably not find the ♠ game.

This deal is slightly different from the last two outings of West/South. This time they managed just three really bad bids before South finally got it right. These two cowboys were the same as the two previous hands. I just cannot wait to see what mayhem ensues if I can get them to partner each other. I shall certainly be kibitzing. Between them they made a total of 14 silly bids on just three boards. Now

these two guys are not beginners – they have both won and recorded other good scores in recent weeks. Doubtless these three tops helped Alex/Jeff to their 65% win! I don't really want to drop any names, but Alex's bids were impeccable throughout. Alex is going back soon, no problem; I have a perfect partner in mind for Jeff.

### **It's all about Shape**

36-24-36 is fine, 48-24-38 is considered preferable by Dolly Parton fans. But let's be serious. Hans told me of a sorry tale where one of our members had a 5332 shape and downgraded it (I believe he mis-understood what I said about flat hands). This is not a bad shape, it is average + (if partner has bid your doubleton, it is still reasonable; if partner has bid one of your 3 card suits it is good). But let's assume partner has not bid yet. Then 4333 is bad (deduct 1 point), 4432 is average, any other shape is good (add on a bit according to how shapely it is). 5332 is goodish (add on ½ a point). But remember, you need to have honours in long suits.