

Last week's winners: Monday 18/8/03

Friday 22/8/03

1st Clive/Ken 63%
 2nd Martin/Rosemary 56%

only 6 players,
 so no results_

Chuck Chuck out?

It's crunch time. Chucks behaviour is becoming more and more erratic. I believe that it has led to at least one player leaving the club and I have had enough. There is no stopping Chuck from telling everybody what he thinks they have done wrong after every single hand. A case in point, a couple of months ago Clive said that he would play with Chuck if Chuck held off with the criticism; Chuck replied that that was impossible. Now I enjoy playing with Chuck, perhaps because he always gets it back in good measure from me. I feel that somebody who criticises absolutely everybody on just about every deal should be able to take it himself and so I write it up in the news sheets. I believe I said a few weeks back that you should not criticise people nor say anything if you don't know what you're talking about. Anyway, I most certainly disapproved of his three psyches in one week (as indicated in last week's news sheet) and I also included a few of his other atrocious bids. 'Donald' was, of course, Chuck. I also suggested that perhaps some sort of apology was in order for his *illegal* controlled psyche and subsequent verbal abuse of Kenneth. His reaction last Monday was to openly tear up the news sheet in the middle of the Club; isn't that the equivalent of somebody burning the American flag?. I would be fascinated to know if anybody other than Chuck disagreed with a single sentence in the news sheet (No 42) that Chuck so demonstratively tore up? As far as I am concerned I have had enough of his bad manners and attitude. I feel that the club will be a far better place without him (although the news-sheets may be a bit duller). If Chuck should return, I would like to send him packing. He is incapable of adjusting to a 'lower' standard of play than his 'A' flight back in USA. Mind you, I understand that he has also been banished from clubs in the USA!

You may recall that way back in news-sheet 2 I put Chuck 'on notice' because of his general behaviour and because he walked out of the club three boards into the session leaving his partner partnerless. That incident alone would get him banished by a less lenient director. Nothing much has changed.

Anyway, rather than me making a universal decision, I would like to know that I have the backing of Club members. So please fill out the voting ballot. Everything will remain confidential; there is no need to put your name if you wish to be anonymous. I will simply print the results next week and any comments that anybody wishes to make (but no names unless you wish).

Bidding Quiz

Hand A	Hand B	
♠ AK92	♠ Q9842	With Hand A, partner opens 1NT (15-17). You bid 2♣ Stayman and LHO doubles. Partner replies 2♦, what do you bid? What does partner's 2♦ mean? (he could pass or re-double).
♥ AQJ8	♥ J763	
♦ Q753	♦ 7	With Hand B, partner opens 2NT (20-22). You bid 3♣ Stayman and partner replies 3♦, what do you bid?
♣ 2	♣ Q98	

No Stopper? Board 6 from Monday 18th, dealer East.

West (A)	East	West	North	East	South
♠ AK92	♠ QJ6			1NT	pass
♥ AQJ8	♥ K73	2♣	dbl	2♦ (1)	pass
♦ Q753	♦ AKJ62	3NT (2)	pass	pass	pass
♣ 2	♣ Q6				

A ♣ was led and the defence took the first six ♣ tricks. What went wrong? First of all, what is the 2♦ reply after the Stayman 2♣ bid has been doubled? Obviously you bid the normal 2♥/♠ if you have a 4 card major; if you have no major suit then you now have three options instead of just one. In addition to the normal 2♦ you have pass and re-double. What is the difference between these three bids? You have to agree this with your partner, but a sensible approach is: -

- Pass = no 4 card major, contains a ♣ stop
- Re-double = no 4 card major, an excellent ♣ suit, perhaps 2♣ doubled is making?
- 2♦ = no 4 card major, no ♣ stop

Now then, what should West bid at (2)? West thought that since East had no 4 card major then he surely had a ♣ stop (they had not discussed the above agreement!). Playing this agreement it's easy. East has 15-17 points but no ♣ stop. Thus his points are outside ♣'s, excellent, simply bid 6♦!

No Stopper Again Board 7 from Monday 18th, dealer South.

West (B)	East	West	North	East	South
♠ Q9843	♠ AJ6				pass
♥ J763	♥ AK	pass	pass	2NT (1)	pass
♦ 7	♦ J85	3♣ (2)	pass	3♦ (3)	pass
♣ Q98	♣ AK754	3NT	pass	pass	pass

Déjà vu? The same pair reach an equally poor 3NT on the very next board, this time with no ♦ stop. What went wrong this time? Again, it is something that you must agree. If the major suits were switched in the West hand then West could transfer into ♥'s and then bid 3♠, showing 45 in the majors and offering East a choice of 3NT, 4♥ or 4♠. Unfortunately there is no room to do it this way round (when 54) as you go above 3NT (2NT - 3♥ - 3♠ - 4♥). The Dutch have a solution (a direct 3NT shows this hand pattern). However, probably the simplest solution is to use Stayman and then bid 3♠ over a 3♦ response; this is forcing and shows this hand shape.

And what happened? South did lead a ♦ but missed his partner's encouraging signal and so he switched to ♥10. Declarer won with ♥A, over to ♣Q and the ♠ finesse. This failed but South hoped partner had ♥K and so continued with ♥'s. The resulting 11 tricks for E-W made up for the bottom on the previous board. Look for partner's signals!!

Last week I mentioned Super-accepts of a transfer, let's have a closer look: -

Super acceptance of a transfer. (breaking the transfer after opening 1NT)

The law of total tricks (The LAW) implies that it is always safe to super accept with 4 trumps. Thus we can super accept with 4 trumps and a min or max hand. Super-accepting with just 3 trumps is a bone of contention, many players will super-accept with 3 good trumps and a non-min hand with good shape.

Now onto an interesting point. The LAW states that it is safe to go to the 3 level (combined number of trumps is 9) if the distribution of points between the two sides is approximately even, or if you have more. This is clearly the case with an opening strong NT, but not so with a weak NT. It is dangerous to super accept with a weak NT opening, but if partner is bust, then why have the opponents not said anything yet? If you play a weak NT, it's up to you. I play super-accepts with a strong NT only.

Before we continue, it is only fair to say that my view of super-accepting is not universally accepted. I will super-accept with 4 trumps or with just 3 very good trumps, good shape and a near max. Some players suggest super-accepting with any max, either 3 or 4 'trumps'. Others insist that the only requirement for a super-accept is 4 trumps (the law says that's OK even if minimum). Chuck will only super-accept with a max and 4 trumps. Any scheme is fine, you just have to agree it with partner.

There are umpteen variations on what you should bid when you break the transfer (super-accept). Some players insist that a response of the suit directly below trumps cannot be made as responder needs that for a re-transfer. Others feel that it is more important to be specific about shape. Some players prefer only to show doubletons if they are 'worthless' – Jx (maybe Qx) or worse. Another alternative is to pinpoint a weak suit (either 2 or 3 card) that contains no top (A or K) honour. I give one workable scheme here: -

Super Accepts, showing 4 (possibly 5) cards in the major, can work as follows, where min is (15-16) and max is (16½ -17). In this scheme, the doubleton is weak: -

After 1NT - 2♦ (xfer to ♥) -

2NT 4 ♥'s, no weak doubleton, max pts
or 3 ♥'s. max pts
2♠ 4 ♥'s, doubleton ♠, max pts
3♣ 4 ♥'s, doubleton ♣, max pts
3♦ 4 ♥'s, doubleton ♦, max pts
3♥ 4 ♥'s, any shape, min pts

After 1NT - 2♥ (xfer to ♠) -

2NT 4 ♠'s, no weak doubleton, max
or 3 ♠'s. max pts
3♣ 4 ♠'s, doubleton ♣, max pts
3♦ 4 ♠'s, doubleton ♦, max pts
3♥ 4 ♠'s, doubleton ♥, max pts
3♠ 4 ♠'s, any shape, min pts

After these bids, responder often continues with a re-transfer, which opener must accept: -

3♦ transfer to 3♥
4♦ transfer to 4♥

3♥ transfer to 3♠
4♥ transfer to 4♠

Responder is then able to pass, bid game or to investigate slam. A subsequent 4NT bid is RKCB for the suit agreed, although you may prefer to use 4♠ as RKCB when ♥'s are trumps.

Example 1

West	East	West	East
♠ KQ84	♠ AJ1073	1NT	2♥
♥ 64	♥ AJ	3♥ (1)	4♥ (2)
♦ AK82	♦ Q63	4♠	4NT (3)
♣ A73	♣ KJ10	5♣ (4)	5♦ (5)
		6♦ (6)	6♠ (7)

- (1) West is middle range, but with good trumps and shape, he makes the max pt super-accept, showing a doubleton ♥.
 - (2) re-transfer
 - (3) Key Card for ♠.
 - (4) 0 or 3
 - (5) Do you have ♠Q ?
 - (6) Yes, plus ♦K
 - (7) East has now located every one of West's high cards, and settles for the small slam.
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Example 2

West	East	West	East
♠ KQ84	♠ AJ1073	1NT	2♥
♥ KQ6	♥ AJ	3♦ (1)	3♥ (2)
♦ 82	♦ Q63	3♠	4♠
♣ AQ73	♣ KJ10	pass	

- (1) super-accept, weak doubleton
 - (2) re-transfer
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Example 3

West	East	West	East
♠ KQ84	♠ A10732	1NT	2♥
♥ K64	♥ J9	3♠ (1)	pass (2)
♦ K2	♦ Q63	pass	
♣ A9732	♣ J76		

- (1) super-accept, 4 trumps, min pts
- (2) opposite a minimum, even with 4 trumps, game does not look good.