

Pattaya bridge Club News-sheets 2005



Club News Sheet – No. 114

7/1/2005



Mon 3/1/05	N-S winners		E-W winners	
	1 st Martin/Rosemary	62 %	1 st Rulf/Ole	64 %
	2 nd Alex/jeff	60 %	2 nd Lars/Rune	57 %
Wed 5/1/05	1 st Rune/Lars	63 %	2 nd Clive/Terry	59 %
Fri 7/1/05	N-S winners		E-W winners	
	1 st Mike(Can)/Phil	62 %	1 st Bjorn/Jim	57 %
	2 nd Bob/Dave	61 %	2 nd Margit/Peter	50 %

On Monday we had a 'simultaneous' with pre-dealt hands. At the end of the session a booklet was distributed with the hands and commentary by Brian Senior. At our club many of the deals did not go the way Brian predicted! His commentary is largely playing Acol (weak NT and 4 card majors) and I'll indicate differences where relevant.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A partner opens 1♣ and you bid 1♦. Partner then bids 1♥, what do you do?
♠ 953	♠ J4	
♥ J10	♥ A	With Hand B you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♦. RHO doubles (showing the majors), what do you bid?
♦ AK863	♦ 852	
♣ 654	♣ AKQJ743	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C LHO opens 1♦, partner doubles and RHO bids 1♥, what do you do?
♠ 876	♠ J6432	
♥ K84	♥ QJ1073	With Hand D you open 1♠. Partner responds 2♦ and you bid 2♥. Partner then bids 2NT, what do you do?
♦ K73	♦ A	
♣ A1092	♣ K9	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1♠ and you bid 2♦. Partner then bids 2♥, what do you do?
♠ K5	♠ A5	
♥ K5	♥ 73	With Hand F you open 1♣ and LHO overcalls with a weak 2♠. Partner doubles (negative, promising 4♥'s and 11+ points), what do you bid?
♦ Q10954	♦ KJ95	
♣ A543	♣ KQJ54	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1♥ and RHO overcalls a weak 2♠. What do you do (you are vulnerable, they are not)?
♠ AQ108	♠ K107	
♥ 1065	♥ AKJ962	With Hand H partner opens 1NT. (a) What do you bid?
♦ AJ73	♦ -	(b) Suppose you choose a 2♦ transfer and partner bids 2♥, then what do you do next?
♣ Q4	♣ 10974	

How big a hand?

How many points does the 1NT bid in this sequence show?

West	North	East	South
1♦	pass	pass	1♠
1NT	...		

Play Quiz

You are declarer in a NT contract. You are in hand but have only one sure entry to hand left. You want to tackle this ♠ suit, so which card do you lead from Jxx?

Dummy	You(declarer)
♠ A1098	♠ J32

How much of a stop for 1NT?Board 2 from Monday 3rd

Dave brought boards 1 and 2 to my attention because the East-West hands were inverted when he played them. Now I possibly did mis-deal board 1 (next page) but this one was correct when I played it on round two and the East-West hands were then apparently switched somewhere before it got to Dave's table on round 8. I feel that 3♦ by N-S is the best contract whichever way round the E-W hands are and so I let the results stand (anyway, I don't know in which round the E-W hands were switched). The diagram here is that at Dave's Table.

Dealer:	♠ QJ5	<u>Our Table (E-W hands the other way round)</u>				
East	♥ 10653	West	North	East	South (me)	
N-S vul	♦ 864	-	-	pass	1♦	
	♣ K73	pass	1♥	dbl (1)	3♦ (2)	
		all pass				
♠ 9432	N	♠ 876	<u>Table A (as diagram)</u>			
♥ AQ72	W E	♥ K84	West	North	East(C)	South
♦ Q	S	♦ K73	-	-	pass	1♦
♣ Q854		♣ A1092	dbl	1♥	1NT (3)	all pass
	♠ AK10					
	♥ J9					
	♦ AJ10952					
	♣ J6					

Our Table: In Brian's commentary there was no dbl at (1) and South just bid 2♦ at (2) and 3♦ was eventually reached. I think that 3♦ at (2) is just about acceptable.

Table A: But with the E-W hands switched as in this diagram the dbl comes from West. (3) So what did you bid with this East hand C in this week's quiz? You don't have to respond to partner's take-out double when RHO bids but ten points opposite partner's take-out double is worth a noise, but what noise? I don't really like 1NT with just Kxx in ♦'s; partner has asked you to bid one of the other suits and I think that 2♣ (promising around 7-10 pts as it's a free bid) is a better bid.

And what happened? The most popular contract was 3♦ by South, just making and scoring just above average. 1NT by East receive the ♦J lead and went three down for a cold bottom. The bottom line: -

- When partner makes a take-out double he is asking you to pick from the other suits and is short in the suit bid, so only bid NT with good stops in the enemy suit.

An advanced sacrifice?

Board 25 from Monday 3rd

This board actually was switched – I presumably had mistakenly inverted the East-West hands when I prepared the deal. I feel that the same 3NT contract as Brian suggested should easily be reached, but one individual claimed that 3NT was just ‘lucky’ and that 5♣ is a better bid at (3); let’s have a look: -

Brian’s Table (E-W hands the other way round)

Dealer:	♠ J4	West	North	East	South
North	♥ A	-	1♣	dbl	1♠
Love all	♦ 852	2♥	3NT (1)	all pass	
	♣ AKQJ743				

Table A

♠ AK97	N	♠ 863	West	North(B)	East	South
♥ J1042	W E	♥ Q8753	-	1♣	pass	1♦(2)
♦ A64	S	♦ QJ7	dbl	3NT (3)	all pass	
♣ 82		♣ 106				

Table B

	♠ Q1052	West	North(B)	East	South
	♥ K96	-	1♣	pass	1♦
	♦ K1093	dbl	5♣ (3)	all pass	
	♣ 95				

Brian’s Table: This one is easy – The East-West hands were swapped to that in the diagram above and so it was East who doubled and Partner (South) decided to bid 1♠ and West bid 2♥. So you expect a ♥ lead and with a ♥ stop and 8 tricks in the North hand a 3NT bid at (1) is ‘obvious’.

Table A: The actual deal we had (East-West as above) was perhaps more interesting. This time East passes but what should South bid? Walsh players bid 1♠ at (2) (I like to play Walsh but know of nobody else who plays it!), but 1♦ is ‘standard’ and bid by most people. This time it’s West who doubles (showing both majors); what did you bid at (3) with this North hand B in this weeks quiz? I cannot see any other remotely sensible bid other than 3NT – more of this later.

Table B: The same as Table A, except that this North chose 5♣ at (3)

So what do you think, 3NT or 5♣ at (3)? There was a lengthy discussion after the event. North at Table B claimed that 5♣ is the best bid as the ♠ suit may be wide open. I believe that 5♣ is a very silly bid and that 3NT is ‘obvious’, here are my arguments: -

- 1. Partner may easily have a ♠ stop
- 2. The opponents may well not lead a ♠ (a ♥ lead look favorite).
- 3. Even if they do lead a ♠ and partner has no stop then there will only be 4 losers if they split 4-4. If one opponent had 5 ♠’s then he probably would have bid them.
- 4. 3NT describes this hand type perfectly – there may be a slam for N-S and a 5♣ bid shuts that out.
- 5. 3NT requires 9 tricks to make. 5♣ requires 11 tricks to make and partner will need a lot of help here for 5♣ to succeed.
- 6. Even if 5♣ makes, 3NT with an overtrick scores more.

North at Table B then tried another tack, and he even managed to convince one player that he was partially correct! He claimed that 5♣ is a good bid as the opponents may have a major suit game and so it’s an ‘advance sacrifice’.

My bidding is not ‘advanced’ enough to even think of that! With an excellent 15 points with two aces and an unlimited partner I would think more about a possible slam our way than about the opponents possibly bidding game.

Now I subsequently gave the North hand to Austin and he came up with an equally good, perhaps superior bid at (3). 1♠ would be natural and so a jump to 3♠, especially in the opponent’s presumed suit, is not. It is in principle a splinter but when partner’s suit is a minor (♦’s here) he should indicate a

stop in the suit by bidding 3NT. This would obviously be an excellent bid if South is on the same wavelength and had say ♠ Kx. But I still like my direct 3NT for the reasons stated earlier (they may not lead a ♠ and/or ♠'s may split).

And what happened? 3NT was bid at four tables, either making exactly or +1 (it made +1 on a ♠ lead(!) and only exactly on a ♥ lead) and scored well. 5♣ was bid twice and went down on both occasions.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't worry unduly about a lack of a stop in a suit unless the opponents have bid it.
- With a long minor (especially a solid one) think 3NT.
- If you want to find out if partner has a stop in a particular suit, then ask him.

1NT difficult to reach?

Board 25 from Monday 3rd

Brian's commentary says that 1NT is difficult to reach, not playing Standard American: -

Dealer:	♠ 953			<u>Brian's Table</u>			
North	♥ J10			West	North(A)	East	South
E-W vul	♦ AK863			-	pass	pass	1♣
	♣ 654			pass	1♦	pass	1♥
				pass	2♣ (1)	all pass	
♠ K7	N	♠ 10864					
♥ A852	W E	♥ K74		<u>Table A</u>			
♦ Q543	S	♦ J97		West	North(A)	East	South
♣ Q102		♣ K87		-	pass	pass	1♣
	♠ AQJ2			pass	1♦	pass	1♥
	♥ Q963			pass	1NT (1)	all pass	
	♦ 10						
	♣ AJ93						

Brian suggests that North should bid 2♣ at (1), I'm not convinced. I guess that playing Acol it's difficult as a 4 card major opening is allowed and this South sequence would often indicate 5♣'s. Playing Standard American South could have 3♣'s for this auction (even just 2♣'s if you play the short ♣) and I would bid 1NT at (1) despite the lack of a ♠ stop and I would bid 1NT even if playing Acol.

And what happened? Two pairs did reach 1NT. Alex/Jeff of course reached 3NT (and made it!). I guess that if you continually overbid like this then you have to play well?

The bottom line: -

- Don't worry unduly about a lack of a stop in a suit unless the opponents have bid it.

3NT by South whatever?

Board 10 from Monday 3rd

Brian says that this board should end up in 3NT by South whether West overcalls in ♠'s or not, I disagree – I was South and most certainly did not bid NT.

Dealer: ♠ K109
East ♥ AJ106
Both vul ♦ A10
♣ 10972

♠ J876432	N	♠ Q
♥ 94	W E	♥ KQ852
♦ Q64	S	♦ 8732
♣ A		♣ 863
	♠ A5	
	♥ 73	
	♦ KJ95	
	♣ KQJ54	

-
Brian's Table
West North East South (F)
- - pass 1♣
pass 1♥ pass 1NT (1)
pass 3NT all pass

Our Table
West North East South (F)
- - pass 1♣
2♠ (2) dbl (3) pass 3♠ (4)
pass 3NT all pass

Brian's Table: With no interference it's easy. The 1NT rebid here at (1) was 15-16 playing a weak NT and I agree that this South hand is easily worth that.

'Our' Table: But playing a strong NT it's different, and it's also different if there is a ♠ overcall. 2♠ at (2) was a weak jump overcall – I would not bid it with such a weak suit, especially vulnerable (see page 11). Anyway, after the 2♠ overcall my partner's double at (3) was negative – promising 4 ♥'s and values to at least compete to the three level. So what did you bid at (4) with this South hand F in this week's quiz? 2NT would be 12-14 but is non-forcing and a bit feeble. 3NT is possible although partner may take it as 18-19 points. Anyway, this South hand now has values for game but ♠ Ax is not a good enough stop against most vulnerable two level overcalls in my opinion. I would prefer to be in 3NT only if partner also has a ♠ stop – so I asked him. 3♠ at (4) asks partner to bid 3NT with a ♠ stop and he obviously obliged.

And what happened? Looks like Brian was wrong here – North was declarer in 3NT at 4 tables out of 10. 3NT made +2 at our table for a shared top.

The bottom lines: -

- A negative double promises the unbid major(s) and values to compete to the next bid in that suit. So in this situation it showed values to compete to at least 3♥.
- If you want to find out if partner has a stop in a particular suit, then ask him.

Nobody in 3NT!

Board 6 from Monday 3rd

Brian says that this board should end up in 3NT by West - and this time I agree. But it seems that the whole club is indoctrinated with the concept that you should always play in a 5-3 major suit fit. I guess you know my opinions by now, I will usually always play in a 4-4 fit, but not always in a 5-3 fit. If the 3 card hand has weak trumps and no obviously weak suit elsewhere then 3NT is often better, as here.

Dealer:	♠ 64	-			
East	♥ J	<u>Brian's Table</u>			
E-W vul	♦ 109654	West (G)	North	East	South
	♣ K10952	-	-	1♥	2♠ (1)
		3NT (2)	all pass		

♠ AQ108	N	♠ 5	<u>Table A</u>			
♥ 1065	W E	♥ AK743	West (G)	North	East	South
♦ AJ73	S	♦ KQ82	-	-	1♥	2♠ (1)
♣ Q4		♣ A73	4♥ (2)	pass	4NT	pass
	♠ KJ9732		5♥	pass	6♥	double
	♥ Q982		all pass			
	♦ -					
	♣ J86					

Brian's Table: (1) 2♠ is a weak jump overcall. Now this is a much better example (decent suit) than the examples on pages 5 and 11. I was South and I also overcalled 2♠.

But what did you bid with this West hand G at (2) in this week's quiz? Playing Acol 3NT is fairly obvious as the 1♥ opening only promises 4 cards. Playing Standard American it's different as it's a 5 card opener and thus a known 5-3 fit. But with these lovely ♠'s and weak ♥'s I would bid 3NT.

Table A And here we see the problem with West bidding 4♥. As I said, I would bid 3NT and warn partner that I have value in ♠'s and not in ♥'s. 4♥ is a very poor bid with just three poor trumps. East is expecting 4 card support opposite and does not know about the 'wasted' values in ♠'s. He reasonably went into slam mode and with all the aces present obviously bid 6♥.

And what happened? Not a single pair at our club found 3NT. 6♥ was bid at three tables, it was obviously hopeless and went 3 down at most tables. I put the blame squarely on West's shoulders.

The bottom lines: -

- Do not directly support partner's 5 card major first go at a high level with only 3 trumps, especially three poor ones.
- A 5-3 fit is not always better than NT.
- AQ108 is an adequate stop for NT!
- Don't worry unduly about a lack of a stop in a suit unless the opponents have bid it. So don't worry about the ♣Qx in this West hand.
- Qx is an interesting holding, I mentioned it in my booklet on hand evaluation (Appendix B in the 2003 Yearbook). It is usually best in declarer's hand as if dummy has Axx (as here) then the suit is immune from an opening lead without conceding two tricks.

Play in a major?

Board 14 from Monday 3rd

I made a different decision to that at Brian's table on this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ K5	<u>Brian's Table</u>			
East	♥ K5	West	North(E)	East	South(D)
Love all	♦ Q10954	-	-	pass	1 ♠
	♣ A543	pass	2♦	pass	2♥
		pass	2NT (1)	pass	3♥ (2)
♠ Q10987	N	pass	3♠	pass	pass
♥ A8	W E	dbl	all pass		
♦ J32	S				
♣ Q107					

♠ A	
♥ 9642	
♦ K876	
♣ J862	

♠ J6432
♥ QJ1073
♦ A
♣ K9

Table A

West	North (E)	East	South
-	-	pass	1 ♠
pass	2♦	pass	2♥
pass	3NT (1)	pass	4♥ (3)
pass	4♠	pass	pass
dbl	all pass		

Table B (our table)

West	North (E)	East	South (D)
-	-	pass	1 ♠
pass	2♦	pass	2♥
pass	2NT (1)	pass	pass (2)
pass			

Brian's Table: Pretty straight forward and described in the booklet. I agree with Brian that 3NT would be an overbid at (1) because of the mis-fit.

Table A: This North decided to bid the 3NT game with his 12 count; so this time it's 4♠ that gets doubled. So it looks like a horrible ♠ contract is unavoidable? Let's see what happened at my table: -

Table B: I was South here and my partner (Joe) correctly bid just 2NT at (1). But what did you do at (2) with this South hand D in this week's quiz? A 3♥ bid shows 5-5 and is obviously very reasonable as it's what Brian suggests, but my thoughts were along these lines: - 'Partner may or may not have a 3 card ♥ suit, even if he has and we miss a 5-3 ♥ fit that is not always bad – I have most of my points in the minors and 2NT should play very well, especially as it is unlikely that we will get a ♠ lead'.

And what happened? We did not get a ♠ lead and 2NT played very well (just making). Three pairs overbid to 3NT (including Alex/Jeff of course) with two going down; Martin/Rosemary's fine showing was helped when they made an overtrick in 3NT!

All ♠ contracts scored badly whether they were doubled or not.

The bottom line: -

- Always look for the 4-4 major suit fit, but a possible 5-3 fit is not always preferable to NT.

Brian gives E-W a clear run to 4♠, we did not make it so easy for them: -

Dealer:	♠ -		<u>Brian's Table</u>			
South	♥ 10972		West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ KJ652		-	-	-	pass
	♣ AQ52		pass	pass	1♠	pass
			2♠	dbl	4♠	dbl
♠ 1032	N	♠ AJ9875	all pass			
♥ AJ843	W E	♥ KQ				
♦ Q74	S	♦ -	<u>Our Table</u>			
♣ 107		♣ K8643	West	North	East	South (me)
	♠ KQ64		-	-	-	1♦ (1)
	♥ 65		pass	1♥	1♠	pass
	♦ A10983		2♠	3♦	3♠ (2)	pass
	♣ J9		pass	4♣ (3)	pass	4♦
			all pass			

- Brian's Table: 4♠ doubled was reached three times on Monday and, as Brian says, it should make.
- 'Our' Table: (1) It was different here – I decided to open the South hand. Now it does not conform to the rule of 20 (it's 19) but all the points are in two suits and a 1098 sequence is worth something in a 5 card suit. You also have an easy 1♠ rebid over a 1♥ response from partner.
- (2) The Law says it's OK to bid 3♠ here (9 combined trumps). 3♠ is merely competitive and does not invite partner to bid 4♠. The hand is probably worth a game try (either dbl, 3♣, 3♦ or 3♥ are all game tries).
- (3) Obviously North wants to push on to 4♦, but bids his ♣'s on the way in order to inform South where his points are if he ends up defending. This is not a game try as North has already attempted to sign off in 3♦.

And what happened? 4♠ doubled made twice and went two down once. There were an assortment of other contracts but 4♦ made and scored a virtual top.

The bottom lines: -

- 1098 in a 5 card suit is worth a point.
- In a competitive situation where partner has supported your suit then a bid of your suit (so the 3♠ by East at (2) here) is just competitive and a game invitation is any other bid.

Count Your Cards – or get an adjusted score

How many times do I cave to repeat this simple **rule**? It was last printed in news-sheet 109. On Monday we again had one table playing out a hand completely with one defender having 12 cards and 14 cards in dummy. Luckily the curtain cards were filled out (shame they did not check them before play) and it was easily remedied. I gave both parties an average minus. As we had the curtain cards I did not bother to penalise the previous table who mis-boarded it. It's very simple, count your cards before you even look at them.

A silly convention!

Board 14 from Wednesday 5th

There was controversy on this deal (of course it involved Alex and his partner), let's have a look: -

Dealer: ♠ K10952
East ♥ A1086
Love all ♦ K10
♣ Q8

♠ Q7 N ♠ AJ8
♥ 5 W E ♥ KQ2
♦ 942 S ♦ QJ853
♣ K1096532 ♣ AJ
♠ 643
♥ J9743
♦ A76
♣ 74

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♦ (1)	pass
pass	1♠	1NT (2)	2♥
3♣ (3)	all pass		

Table B

West	North	East	South
(Alex)		(Thorlief)	
-	-	1NT (1)	pass
2♦ (4)	etc to 4♣		

Table A: (1) This East hand has 18 points and decent shape; but the AJ doubleton is poor and so is the 5 card suit. I would not argue if you chose to open 1NT (I would).
(2) Did you get this right in this week's quiz? The bid shows 18-19 points.
(3) I guess you could gamble 3NT, but the ♠Q cannot be an entry and you need three ♣'s with partner (or ♣Ax and a lucky 2-2 split) for 3NT to make.

Table B: Here we had the problems. As I said, 1NT at (1) is fine, but I believe that Alex/Thorlief play a 16-18 1NT in any case. Now when Alex bid 2♦ at (4) there was no alert and I understand that Alex told his partner that he must alert. Of course this is illegal – you cannot alert your own bid. Anyway, upon being woken up Thorlief apparently simply said 'transfer'. So what's going on? I assume that Alex/Thorlief play 'compressed transfers'. This is a very silly convention which I describe on the next page. Anyway, Alex was way short of the 5 card ♥ suit that his partner indicated he had, so the pair were fined half a top. If experienced players want to play 'unknown' conventions then they have to be alerted and properly explained; failure to do this will be dealt with by adjusted scores.

And what happened? Alex/Thorlief got a poor score anyway, but they were additionally fined a ½ top. The fortunate ♣ situation meant that the 3NT bid at 4 of the six tables made.

The bottom lines: -

- I don't mind if a standard 2♦/♥ transfer is alerted or not; or partner of the bidder can simply announce 'transfer'. If you play this silly Compressed Transfer scheme then I guess that you have to announce 'transfer to ♥'s or ♣'s'.
- You cannot alert your own bid (or inform partner that he must alert). A breach of the rules like this by an experienced pair may lead to an adjusted score.
- Non-standard conventions must be alerted. A failure to do this by an experienced pair may lead to an adjusted score.

Transfers to a Specific Minor

Transfers to the majors are universally established and it is also very beneficial if you can transfer to the minor suits. Now many players play that 2♠ is a weak transfer to ♣'s which responder will either pass or correct. But it is much better if you can specifically transfer to ♣'s and to ♦'s (and thus use them with weak, invitational or strong hands). The best way to do this is '4-way transfers' whereby 2♠ is specifically a transfer to ♣'s and 2NT is specifically a transfer to ♦'s.

This is what many experienced players play but has the drawback that 2NT is no longer available as a natural raise of partner's 1NT opening. So a natural raise is done by bidding Stayman first. This works fine and most players are happy with this.

Compressed Transfers

A very silly convention, but since Alex/Thorlief appear to play it I'll explain it. If you want to retain 2NT as natural then you have no bid to explicitly transfer to ♦'s. One solution is to instead use the 2♠ bid as a transfer to ♦'s. Of course you then have no transfer to ♣'s and so you place a double meaning on the 2♦ 'transfer' bid: -

After 1NT - 2♦ - 2♥, 2♠ cancels the transfer to ♥'s and is instead a transfer to ♣'s.

This, of course, has numerous drawbacks: -

- 1- If the next player bids over the 2♦ 'transfer' then subsequent bidding is very messy.
- 2- Since the 2♦ bid may or may not be a transfer to ♥'s opener has to be very careful about super-accepting. Only one super-accept bid (2♠) is allowed and the continuations are somewhat convoluted.
- 3- There is considerable loss of accuracy when only one super-accept is available.
- 4- Of course, if the next opponent interferes over this super-accept (or normal accept) then responder is in a real pickle; opener cannot know if the transfer was anything but genuine.
- 5- A 2♦ bid allows the opposition to come in cheaply when responder has a weak hand with ♣'s.
- 6- When responder makes an artificial (transfer) bid there is always the danger that the next player will get in a 'cheap' double, to show values and/or as an opening lead indicator. If responder makes two such bids then it really does make life easy for the defenders.
- 7- This is by no means standard and if you fail to alert/explain this and also the subsequent 2♠ transfer then you will be penalised.
- 8- And, most important of all, there is a *very useful* meaning for 2♠ in this sequence.

So, in my opinion, it's all nonsense. 4-way transfers is the way to go.

I have a book on responses to 1NT which explains 4-way transfers and the sensible meaning for 2♠ in the sequence 1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ if you want to borrow it.

Worth a weak jump overcall?

Board 7 from Wednesday 5th

We (North-South) collected a huge score (1400) on this deal, let's have a look: -

Dealer:	♠ K				
South	♥ AQ94	West	North	East	South (me)
Both vul	♦ AQ106	-	-	-	pass
	♣ 10975	pass	1♦ (1)	2♠ (2)	pass (3)
		3♣ (4)	pass	3♦	dbl (5)
		3NT (6)	dbl	all pass	
♠ Q	N	♠ A87542			
♥ J732	W E	♥ 5			
♦ 984	S	♦ KJ53			
♣ KQJ83		♣ 62			
	♠ J10963				
	♥ K1086				
	♦ 72				
	♣ A4				

- (1) I would open 1♣. I believe it's always best to open 1♣ when equal length in the minors, regardless of relative strength.
- (2) A weak jump overcall. I guess it's not too bad but I would like a little more 'body' in the suit when vulnerable. Bear in mind that a weak jump overcall is slightly different from a weak two opening in that one opponent has already bid and so you are much more likely to get doubled for penalties.
- (3) Double (negative and showing four ♥'s) is a reasonable alternative here, but with these good ♠'s and nothing in partner's suit I preferred to defend 2♠ doubled (partner will normally re-open with a double when you play negative doubles and pass in this position)
- (4) It's a mis-fit and, as I always say, bail out ASAP (not in NT) with a weak mis-fit. I would most certainly pass here.
- (5) Of course I don't have ♦'s, but up to now partner is unaware that I have a decent hand and so a penalty double here gets the message across (I wanted to double 2♠ for penalties).
- (6) E-W are in a hopeless position now, but NT is bound to be the worst spot.

And what happened? 3NT doubled went minus five for 1400 to N-S. At another table 3NT went minus two, but that was by N-S as declarer! (A deserved bottom, don't you know about 4-4 fits, Alex/Thorlief? – surely it's better to know about basics like that rather than play silly 'advanced' conventions like compressed transfers?). Two N-S pairs were in a sensible 4♥, one made and the other went two off. One other table got East in 2♠ doubled and collected 800.

The bottom lines: -

- When partner makes a weak jump overcall, he has a 6 card suit. The queen should normally be adequate support and do not rescue him into your 5 card suit, especially when one level higher.
- When you are being bombarded by penalty doubles, never bid NT!
- Remember that if you play negative doubles then you have to pass with a hand where you would like to double for penalties and most partners (at least mine) will usually re-open with a double which you can then pass.

What does it mean?

Board 10 from Friday 7th, both vul

Assuming that you play transfers, then what does a jump to 3♥ over partner's 1NT opening mean?

Table A

North (H)	South	West	North	East	South
		-	-	pass	1NT (1)
♠ K107	♠ AQ2	pass	3♥ (2)	pass	4♥ (3)
♥ AKJ962	♥ Q83	pass	pass (4)	pass	
♦ -	♦ AJ54				
♣ 10974	♣ AJ6				

Table B

'Expert' Table

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	1NT (1)
pass	2♦ (2)	pass	2♥
pass	3♠ (5)	pass	3NT (6)
pass	4♦ (7)	pass	6♥ (8)
all pass			

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	1NT (1)
pass	2♦ (2)	pass	2♥
pass	4♥ (5)	all pass	

Table A: (1) It's 18 points, but knock off a point for the 4333 type shape and 1NT is the best opening. But what did this 3♥ bid at (2) mean? Actually it's up to you as you don't need the bid as natural when you play transfers. 'Standard' is that it's a good long suit looking for slam but there are better options that I spell out below.

(3) Having not discussed it, this South simply raised to game.

(4) And North has no idea if his partner has a hand suitable for slam or not.

Table B: (1) Again the good 1NT opening.

(2) What did you bid at (2) with this North hand H in this week's quiz? This North transferred, I think that that's best.

(5) But what should North do now? What did you do at (5) with this North hand H in this week's quiz? You have a lot more bidding space than Table A and I give my recommendations below.

And what happened? Just one pair out of nine reached the easy slam. Actually, that's not quite true, another pair did reach the 6♥ slam but then bid on to 7♥ going one off.

So how should the hand be bid to slam, and what's the best meaning for the jump to 3♥? Let's start with the jump to 3♥. I do not like the 'standard' meaning of a good suit looking for slam – it takes up too much room and it's best to start off with a transfer, especially as the correct hand is then declarer. There are a number of options (they are all spelled out in my book on NT bidding) but probably the best 'easy' option is to play splinters.

'Expert' Table: So how do we bid this hand? We start with a transfer as at Table B but should we bid at (5)? A 3♣ bid would be natural and game forcing but it's a poor suit and we want to play in ♥'s, a splinter is surely best. Now some experts do play that 3♠, 4♣ and 4♦ are splinters in this situation, but I prefer to have 4♣ as the ace (key card) ask and 4♦ as a general slam try. The very best solution is to play a jump in the other major as an ambiguous splinter and opener then asks about the shortage suit. It's all laid out in detail in the NT book. So 3♠ at (5) is an ambiguous (slam seeking) splinter, 3NT at (6) asks and 4♦ at (7) shows ♦ shortage. South could check on key cards but with no 'wasted' ♦K or ♦Q he has an easy 6♥ bid at (8).

Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1NT of course. What's the problem? Brian suggests 2♣ – I disagree, especially if you play that a 1♣ opening may be 3 (or even 2) cards. Playing Acol then 1♣ guarantees a 4 card suit but I would still bid 1NT.
- Hand B: 3NT. 9 tricks are usually easier than 11. If you are worried about the lack of a ♠ stop then you could bid 3♠ and if partner is on the same wave-length he will bid 3NT with a ♠ stop.
- Hand C: 2♣. When RHO bids after partner's take-out double you are not forced to bid, so it's a 'free bid' and shows some values (typically about 6-10). Partner is presumably short in ♦'s and so you bid your 4 card suit. ♦Kxx is not good enough to bid 1NT with partner's known shortage.
- Hand D: 3♥ or pass? 3♥ shows 5-5 in the majors and is what was recommended at Brian's table. I passed.
- Hand E: 2NT. This is now a poor 12 count as it's a mis-fit. 3NT is an overbid.
- Hand F: 3♠. You have one ♠ stop but that will not be enough, you need an additional stop from partner to make 3NT – so ask him.
- Hand G: 3NT. I agree with Brian here even though partner has promised 5♥'s. The big feature of this hand is the ♠'s sitting over the overcaller, not the miserable 3 card ♥ support. A pass (playing negative doubles) awaiting partner re-opening double is not really that attractive at this vulnerability.
- Hand H (a) 2♦, transfer. Now some players do play that 3♥ here shows a good suit looking for slam but I don't like it as it takes up loads of bidding space and how do you proceed after partner's 4♥?
(b) It's impossible unless you have some sort of system here. 3♣ would be natural and game forcing but this is a poor ♣ suit and the important points of the hand are the excellent ♥'s and the ♦ shortage – you can get this message across with a splinter. Now some players do play that 4♦ is a splinter (setting ♥'s as trumps) but I prefer to play ambiguous splinters (3♠ is a splinter setting ♥'s and showing shortage in an unspecified suit).
- How big a hand: The 1NT bid should be around 18-19 points – a hand that was too good for a 1NT opening and not good enough for a 2NT opening (i.e. a hand that would jump rebid in NT if partner had responded). It must be this sort of strength as partner has passed and so has only 0-5 points.
- Play Quiz: You must lead a low ♠. You hope to make 3 ♠ tricks and should play for split honours. If you lead the ♠J initially then this will run round to RHO's honour. When you get back to hand you then have only ♠xx left and so lead a ♠x, LHO ducks again and you have to win in dummy. You have no further entry to hand and if LHO started with Hxxx you will lose another ♠ trick unnecessarily.



Club News Sheet – No. 115

14/1/2005



Mon 10/1/05	N-S winners		E-W winners	
	1 st Clive/Ken	65 %	1 st Lars/Terry	70 %
	2 nd = Dave/Joe	54 %	2 nd David/Ursula	55 %
	2 nd = Norman/Ian	54 %		
Wed 12/1/05	1 st Clive/Terry	63 %	2 nd Chuck/Austin	60 %
Fri 14/1/05	N-S winners		E-W winners	
	1 st Chuck/Austin	63 %	1 st Gerard/Derek	60 %
	2 nd Clive/Ken	59 %	2 nd Alex/Jeff	57 %

Bidding Quiz**Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.**

Hand A	Hand B	(a) What do you open with Hand A? (b) Suppose that you choose 1♥ and partner bids 1♠, what now?
♠ QJ6	♠ Q4	
♥ Q10432	♥ A976	
♦ A74	♦ J852	With Hand B partner opens 1NT, (a) do you bid?
♣ AQ	♣ 843	(b) What do you do if RHO overcalls 2♠?
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C partner opens 1♦ and RHO double, (a) what do you bid? (b) Suppose that you bid 1♠ (or a –ve double to show 4♠'s) and partner bids 2♣, then what do you bid now?
♠ 10874	♠ AK93	
♥ KQJ	♥ KJ97	
♦ J632	♦ J102	With Hand D partner opens 1♥, what do you bid?
♣ KJ	♣ 42	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 3♥, what do you bid?
♠ AK765	♠ 43	
♥ J	♥ 10875	With Hand F partner opens 1♠, what do you bid?
♦ KQJ	♦ AKQ7	
♣ J1098	♣ K84	
Hand G	Hand H	(a) Do you open with Hand G? (b) Suppose you elect to pass; LHO opens 3♦ and partner doubles, what do you bid?
♠ AQJ763	♠ 982	
♥ 9754	♥ 32	
♦ -	♦ KQ92	With Hand H partner passes and RHO opens 3♦, what do you do?
♣ K95	♣ Q763	
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J partner opens 2NT (20-22). What do you bid?
♠ 6543	♠ Q9	
♥ A4	♥ 8763	With Hand K partner opens 1NT. What do you bid?
♦ 963	♦ AK6	
♣ K743	♣ J652	

Cheating yet again?

Board 1 from Monday 10th

Dealer: ♠ AQJ763
North ♥ 9754
Love all ♦ -
♣ K95

West	North(G)	East	South(H)
(Lars)	(Alex)(me)	(Jeff)	
-	pass (1)	3♦	dbl (2)
pass	pass (3)	pass (4)	

♠ K5	N	♠ 104
♥ AJ1086	W E	♥ KQ
♦ J5	S	♦ A1087643
♣ AJ42		♣ 108
	♠ 982	
	♥ 32	
	♦ KQ92	
	♣ Q763	

What do you make of the N-S bids here?

I asked a few people -

'*Inexplicable*' - Chuck

'*Was it Alex and Jeff?*' - Clive

'*Cheating*' - Austin

Let me (and Alex) know what you think.

- (1) What would you bid with this North hand G at (1)? Pass is reasonable but I would open 1♠. A 2♠ opener would be a poor choice as it's a bit good and contains a 4 card ♥ suit.
- (2) Presumably you passed with this South hand H in this week's quiz? Double here is, of course, *totally ridiculous* and is currently the top candidate for worst bid of the year. Now Jeff has made many very dubious bids before and I have defended him by simply saying that he does not have a clue, but with consistent good results in harness with Alex (North here) that cannot be the case – he is not stupid and knows exactly what he is doing?
- (3) But what can we say about this pass? Even worse than his partner's ridiculous double? This is, of course, more than just ridiculous from an experienced partnership. North thought for a while before passing – I can only assume that he got some sort of signal/indication from his partner. The double is take-out; bog standard.
- (4) East (me) asked about the double after North passed and North said that it could mean anything.

What can we say?

- 1- Alex's explanation of his partner's double as '*it could mean anything*' is totally unacceptable from an experienced long-standing partnership.
- 2- In fact the rules do not allow you to have a bid that '*can mean anything*'. If a double in this situation is anything but take-out then it must be alerted.
- 3- A pair who continually chatter away before, during and after each hand must surely have an agreement on something as basic as this?
- 4- There is no other explanation than that offered by Austin. Cheating. This pair have been accused of cheating before (Alex/Jeff in news-sheet 110 and Alex in news-sheet 114), and they are up to it again, this possibly being the most blatant example to date.

And what happened? The contract went one down for a poor score to E-W. When I saw all the hands I discussed it with a few of the club's top players and gave E-W their average for the session and N-S got a zero.

Now I said above that I believe that Jeff is not stupid; but I now believe that Alex and Jeff are both rather stupid, pulling a stunt like this when I was at the table (East). Any further *hint* of cheating or psyching by this pair and they are out.

Alex claims that everything is above board and that he will send the hand off to the Netherlands Bridge Bond to get their opinion. Go ahead, I would love to know what they have to say about your shenanigans.

OK, so you've heard what I (and other members of the club) think of Alex/Jeff's bidding here. Alex, of course, does not agree and so he wrote 4 pages of scrawl about themselves and also what he thinks of other members of the club. Here is a printable extract that I managed to decipher (Alex's hand writing is what one would expect from a doctor). I have inserted the numbers in brackets for later comment: -

A double can be - lead directing - penalty - showing points

but partner is always allowed at almost any level to change it's original meaning and turn a penalty double for instance into a competitive bid (1). But sometimes the precise nature of the double is unclear, cannot be clear (2). Nobody ever complained when a penalty double by Jeff gave them an absolute top. Nobody ever said that the double was used on naught (3).

When you ask the wrong questions, Terry, you tend to get the wrong answers.

You should ask whether your partner (West) shouldn't have said redouble (Law of total tricks) or bid 3♥ !! (4)

I am at a total loss in understanding your decisions. I believe it was Chuck who called your rulings those of a kangaroo court, I tend to agree there is some substance to that remark (5).

My response: -

- (1) 'Change the meaning of a double'. You cannot 'change the meaning', but of course you can convert partner's take-out double into penalties; that is usually when you have excellent trumps – most people would not consider a void to be excellent trumps.
- (2) 'The meaning of double is unclear'. The meaning of double here is most certainly clear – it is take-out, bog standard. You are not allowed to have a bid that 'can mean anything'.
- (3) 'Nobody ever said that (a Jeff) double was used on naught'. Oh yes they have! One example was when Jeff wanted to double a freely bid 4♠ contract after you had made a long pause and passed when he held ♠9742 ♥Q104 ♦1043 ♣1093 (News-sheet 110).
- (4) 'Wrong questions'. I most certainly did not ask my partner why he did not make any of the silly bids you suggest. You clearly do not understand the simple arithmetic involved in the Law of total tricks. East usually has 7 ♦'s, West had 2 ♦'s, that adds up to 9 ♦'s and so the 3 level is where you want to be – you may or may not make the contract but the Law says that it is 'safe', it is not 'safe' if re-doubled. Pass is the only sensible bid by West, 3♥ would be forcing and re-double would be that he expects 3♦ to make and to penalise you wherever you land (here he obviously does not relish ♦'s and has little defence against ♠'s).
- (5) 'Kangaroo court'. I only awarded E-W their average and you a zero after discussing the hand with many of the club's leading players – I put some of their comments earlier. Everybody agreed that your bidding was 'ridiculous' (Joe), 'incomprehensible' (Clive) or 'cheating' (Austin) and they all agreed that you should get a zero for your efforts. If you want to appeal the adjusted score, then how about putting up 500 bht (refunded if you win) and we'll have a meeting of the club 'experts' appeals committee to decide upon it?

So, Alex, there have been a few members who have tried to cross swords with me in a battle of (written) words and wit. Do you really think that you can do better than Chuck and Hans? Is your bridge knowledge that much better than theirs? They both came a distant second. If you want to continue this battle I'm game, but can you please improve the legibility of your writing or else type it up. I'm sure that readers find your views amusing and would love to have some more.

And it's nice to see that at least you and Chuck finally agree upon something.

Should I give an adjusted score?

Board 27 from Monday 10th

Not quite so controversial, but I was asked to adjudicate on this board: -

Dealer:	♠ Q4	<u>Table A</u>				
South	♥ A976	West	North(B)	East	South	
Love all	♦ J852	-	-	-	1NT	
	♣ 843	2♠ (1)	2NT (2)	pass (3)	3NT (4)	
		pass	pass	dbl (5)	all pass	
♠ J98652	N	♠ A	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ 3	W E	♥ KJ1052	West	North (B)	East	South
♦ Q103	S	♦ 76	-	-	-	1NT
♣ 762		♣ AJ1095	pass	2♣ (6)	pass	2♠
	♠ K1073		pass	2NT (7)	pass	3NT
	♥ Q84		pass			
	♦ AK94					
	♣ KQ					

- Table A: (1) Obviously a ridiculous overcall of a strong NT.
(2) But what did you bid with this North hand B(b) in this week's quiz? With or without the overcall it's a clear pass to me.
(3) East did not know what was going on – too many points in this pack. Anyway, he passed.
(4) With a sound maximum and excellent cover in the suit overcalled South has a clear 3NT bid.
(5) And with an excellent 13 count and a partner who overcalled a strong NT East has a clear double.
- Table B: (6) Did you bid with this North hand B(a) in this week's quiz? Pass is best...
(7) ... because if partner bids 2♦ or 2♠ you have to overbid with 2NT.

And what happened? 3NT doubled went two down for an absolute bottom to N-S and I was asked to adjust the score at Table A because of West's outrageous overcall. Should I?

I don't believe so. The poor score was of North's making. If he had simply passed the 2♠ overcall then he would have got a good score. N-S claimed that they would have made 1NT if left in peace. True, but would North have bid 2♣ and ended up in 3NT as at Table B? (That happened twice). In fact not a single table was left in peace in 1NT. Since North bid 2NT in this sequence despite being warned of values (ho, ho) and a ♠ suit on his right I can only conclude that he would have bid if there was no overcall? Or would he have bid later if he passed and East then suck his oar in over the pass? I discussed it with another experienced player and he said that an adjusted score would be unfair to other N-S pairs, I agree. Sorry guys, but you have to be accountable for your own actions.

The bottom lines: -

- You need a decent 8 or 9 points to raise partner's 1NT to 2NT, and if RHO has overcalled you really need something reasonable in his suit in addition. Pass is a bid.
- You need a decent hand/suit to overcall a strong NT. I have spoken to this West, maybe he'll have a point or two more next time?

How many points for game? – part 1 Board 13 from Monday 10th

Dealer: ♠ A10
 North ♥ J107632
 Both vul ♦ 102
 ♣ J107

Table A
 West North East South
 - pass (1) pass (2) 1NT
 pass pass (3) 2♦ (4) pass
 pass 2♥ (5) all pass

♠ K876 N ♠ 876
 ♥ KQ W E ♥ K84
 ♦ 953 S ♦ AQ8764
 ♣ Q654 ♣ 932
 ♠ Q954
 ♥ A964
 ♦ KJ
 ♣ AK8

Table B
 West North East South
 - pass pass 1NT
 pass 2♦ (3) dbl (6) 2♥ (7)
 pass pass

Table D
 West North East South
 - pass 2♦ (2) dbl (9)
 pass 3♥ (10) pass 4♥
 all pass

Table C
 West North East South
 - pass pass 1NT
 pass 2♦ (3) dbl (6) 3♥ (7)
 pass 4♥ (8) all pass

- Table A: (1) A weak 2♥ would be a poor opening with this hand, especially vulnerable.
 (2) Looks like a weak 2♦ opener to me.
 (3) But pass here is silly. Playing natural methods then 2♥ is called for; playing transfers it's obviously a 2♦ transfer.
 (4) In the balancing seat East bid his ♦'s.
 (5) North finally bid his ♥'s, but it's too late for South to take any further action.
- Table B: (3) This North did transfer.
 (6) And so East showed his ♦'s with a double.
 (7) After a transfer bid has been doubled I play that pass shows two of partner's suit, completing the transfer shows three of the suit and any other bid shows four (a super accept) except re-double which suggests playing in the doubled contract.
- Table C: (7) And this is how it should be bid. South has a clear super-accept and the double is irrelevant (except that it slightly improves the South hand).
 (8) Now this North hand may possibly not normally look for game, but after partner has super-accepted then it is clearly worth 4♥, especially if partner's super-accept promises 4♥'s (that's the way I prefer it).
- Table D: (2) This East opened a weak 2♦.
 (9) South has two sensible options, 2NT or double. With both majors I prefer double.
 (10) Normally one needs about 10-12 points to jump here, but with a six card suit where you know partner also has that suit, I think that a jump is in order.

And what happened? 4♥ was reached at most table. The bottom lines: -

- Upgrade your hand when a fit is discovered. This North hand is a monster once South has shown ♥'s.
- Play transfers. And play super-accepts!
- Four tens are worth a point or two.

How many points for game? – part 2 Board 19 from Monday 10th

We saw in the last deal that a 4♥ contract with only a combined 23 count was easily made because there was a fit (and a long trump suit). Contrast that with this combined 25 count with no chance of game. Who (if anybody) do you think is to blame for getting too high here, or is it just unlucky?

Dealer:	♠ 1094	<u>Table A</u>			
South	♥ J97	West(A)	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ K102	1NT (1)	pass	2♣	pass
	♣ K1084	2♥	pass	3NT	all pass

♠ QJ6	N	♠ K873				
♥ Q10432	W E	♥ K6	<u>Table B</u>			
♦ A74	S	♦ QJ963	West(A)	North	East	South
♣ AQ		♣ J6	1♥ (1)	pass	1♠	pass
	♠ A52		3♥ (2)	pass	4♥ (3)	all pass
	♥ A85					
	♦ 85					
	♣ 97532					

To answer the question first, West overbid at both of the tables (and at most tables on Monday): -

Table A: (1) So what did you open with this West hand A(a) in this week's quiz? A 5 card major does not deter me from opening 1NT, so is that best here?
I don't think so! As I keep on saying, points belong in long suits. This West has good shape but the 5 card suit is very weak, AQ doubleton is bad and four quacks are a minus. I would open 1♥ with the intention of rebidding 1NT (12-14) over a 1♠ response.

Table B: (1) Now this West (in my opinion) got it right...
(2) ... but unfortunately, it appears, for the wrong reasons! What did you rebid with this West hand A(b) in this week's quiz? This West hand is nowhere near worth a 3♥ rebid (generally showing 6 trumps and about 16-17 points). As I said above 1NT is the correct rebid.
(3) Obviously East has values for game opposite partner's strength showing bid and I prefer 4♥ to a risky 3NT.

And what happened? 4♥ went minus one, but scored well because 3NT was overbid (presumably with similar overbidding to Table A?) at 5 of the 8 tables on Monday going 2 down four times and just one down the last time. Just two pairs managed to stay out of game.

Here is a perfect example of a combined 25 count having no chance of game. Why?

How many times do I have to keep saying the same things?: -

- A miserable combined 25 count will not necessarily make game.
- Devalue a long suit with no top honours and poor intermediates.
- AQ doubleton is a bad holding.
- Devalue a hand when there is no fit.
- A miserable 15 count is not enough for a jump rebid.
- As Mother Duck said; quack, quack, quack, quack. 4 quacks are 4 bad cards.

How many points for game? – part 3 Board 4 from Monday 10th

So the last two deals have illustrated that points are not everything and that a fit is all important. Here we have a cold game with just 23 points but not everybody bid it. I was asked who, if anybody, underbid at Table A on this deal, what do you think?

Dealer:	♠ QJ10	<u>Table A</u>			
West	♥ 4	West	North	East (D)	South
Both vul	♦ KQ7643	1♥ (1)	pass (2)	3♥ (3)	pass
	♣ 1075	pass (4)	pass		

♠ 72	N	♠ AK93	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ Q10862	W E	♥ KJ97	West	North	East	South
♦ 95	S	♦ J102	pass (1)	pass (5)	1♥ (6)	pass
♣ AKQ3		♣ 42	4♥ (7)	all pass		

♠ 8654
♥ A53
♦ A8
♣ J986

<u>Table C</u>			
West	North	East	South
1♥ (1)	pass	1♠ (3)	pass
2♣	pass	4♥ (8)	all pass

To answer the question first, East was at fault at Table A: -

Table A: (1) A marginal opener? It conforms to the rule of 20 and with all of the points in the long suits is a clear opener in my opinion.

(2) A weak 3♦ overcall is an alternative to pass, but dodgy when vulnerable.

(3) 3♥ here shows 11 or a poor 12 points, so fine? What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz?

This is not a poor 12, it's a great 12. Excellent *four card* support, another suit headed by the AK, it's easily worth 4♥. Now you can simply bid 4♥ but most players play that as pre-emptive. I like the auction at Table C.

(4) With a minimum opener pass is correct here.

Table B: (1) This West chose to pass. Up to you.

(5) A weak 2♦ opening is a reasonable alternative to pass.

(6) I believe that this pair play 4 card majors and a strong NT.

(7) 4♥ is best by West here unless you play that 3♣ is fit-showing by a passed hand (you have to agree that – it's not standard).

Table C: (3) This is the best bid – you can support ♥'s later and there may even be a superior 4-4 ♠ fit.

(8) And 4♥ here shows a sound raise to 4♥ (as opposed to an immediate 4♥ at (3) which would be pre-emptive).

And what happened? 4♥ was bid at every table except Table A and made easily.

The bottom lines: -

- Upgrade 4 card support.
- A side suit headed by the AK is a great +.
- Aces and Kings are great cards (quacks are not).

How many points for game? – part 4 Board 21 from Wednesday 12th

So points are not everything. 3NT was hopeless on this combined 25 pts, was anyone at fault?

Dealer:	♠ 10874				
North	♥ KQJ	West	North(C)	East	South
N-S vul	♦ J632	-	pass	pass	1♦ (1)
	♣ KJ	1♥	1♠ (2)	pass	2♣ (3)
		pass	2NT	pass	3NT
		pass			
♠ KQJ	N	♠ 963			
♥ A10843	W E	♥ 965			
♦ 4	S	♦ K1097			
♣ 9753		♣ Q106			
	♠ A52				
	♥ 72				
	♦ AQ85				
	♣ A842				

To answer the question, North overbid: -

(1) I would open 1♣, but that's not the issue here.

(2) So what did you bid with this North hand C in this week's quiz? Now you know me - never deny a 4 card major, but there are always (very rare) exceptions.

Let's assume that the North hand is worth a game try, then you obviously bid 1♠ (or a negative double if that is your style) and then bid 2NT next go, excellent; showing 4♠'s, a♥ stop and invitational (a good 10 - poor 12 pts) values.

But is this North hand worth an invitation? I would not put it as worth 11 points. After the♥ overcall you can deduct a point from the♥ holding. And KJ doubleton is not worth 4 points. I would downgrade the hand to a poor 10 and not make an invitational bid. So 1♠ or 1NT? Now if you accept my hypothesis that the hand is not worth an invitation you now face the real problem. With no overcall you would respond 1♠ and pass a 1NT rebid from partner; but with the overcall partner cannot have anything in♥'s and may well not rebid 1NT (indeed, with this actual hand he would probably bid 2♣) and you would play in 2♦ which may well score less than 1NT if that makes an overtrick. So given that the North hand is only worth one 'shot', should you bid the 4 card♠ suit or show the excellent♥ stops by bidding 1NT? Close, and on this one occasion I would not argue if you chose 1NT at pairs scoring. At teams I would always show the♠'s as you don't mind playing in 2♦ at IMP scoring.

(3) I would bid 2♠ here, 2♣ promises 5♦'s.

And what happened? 4 out of the 5 pairs overbid to 3NT, making either 8 or 7 tricks. Just one pair stopped in 2NT but that too went down. 1NT would have scored a well-deserved top, as would 2♦ or 2♠. The bottom lines: -

- Deduct a point for KQJ trippleton if the opponents have bid the suit.
- KJ doubleton is a poor holding.
- A combined 25 points (without adjustment) does not always make 3NT.
- One possible exception to never denying a 4 card major is when you have values for only one bid and have to choose between showing good stops in an enemy suit or showing a 4 card major of your own. Typically when partner opens 1♣/♦, RHO overcalls in a major and you have 6-10 points with good stops in the overcalled suit and 4 cards in the other major. This is one situation where Acol may win out over a 5-card major system.

How many points for game? – part 5

Board 18 from Monday 10th

A combined 25 points again with an 8 card fit, so why didn't 4♥ make here?

Dealer:	♠ AK765				
East	♥ J	West	North(E)	East	South
N-S vul	♦ KQJ	-	-	pass	3♥ (1)
	♣ J1098	pass	4♥ (2)	all pass	

♠ J10832	N	♠ 94
♥ 5	W E	♥ K1096
♦ 854	S	♦ A1072
♣ AK72		♣ 654

♠ Q
♥ AQ87432
♦ 963
♣ Q3

Answer:

All those quacks and poor trump intermediates.

- (1) Would you open this South hand? Now a 3 level pre-empt at unfavourable vulnerability should be a good one. It would be nice to have a sturdier suit but I think that most people would open 3♥? Looks reasonable to me.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand E in this week's quiz? It has 5 losers in ♥'s, ♦'s, and ♣'s. If you assume that partner has ♥AKQ then you probably lose one ♦ and 3 ♣'s. If partner is short in ♣'s then there may be a ♠ loser. And, of course, partner may have a ♥ loser or two. All in all I don't think it's worth 4♥ and I would pass, but it's close.

And what happened? 4♥ went two down, with East being able to cash the ♥10 and 9 half way through. It would have been a different story if South had the ♥109 in place of the ♥32 but it would still be one down (East would not cover a ♥J lead and thus score his ♥K).

The bottom line. 15 points is often good enough to raise a vulnerable 3♥/♠ pre-empt to 4♥/♠, but probably not with just a singleton trump.

Intervening over a strong 2♣

Board 2 from Monday 10th

Dealer: ♠ K92
East ♥ KJ7
N-S vul ♦ 6
♣ KQJ1032

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass (1)
2♣ (2)	dbl (3)	pass	2♠ (4)
pass (5)	pass	dbl (6)	all pass

♠ -	N	♠ QJ73
♥ AQ1082	W E	♥ 9543
♦ AKQ4	S	♦ 10872
♣ A854		♣ 6
	♠ A108654	
	♥ 6	
	♦ J953	
	♣ 97	

- (1) A weak 2♠ is probably not a good opening at this vulnerability.
- (2) It's not good enough for a 2♣ opening by my standards. With no system to show a strong 3-suiter I would open 1♥ – it's unlikely to be passed out when you have a ♠ void.
- (3) Without some other agreement a double of a strong 2♣ shows ♣'s – it is not for take-out and does not invite partner to bid anything (except ♣'s).
- (4) If this hand was not good enough for a weak 2♠ opener then it is certainly not good enough to bid now when LHO has opened with a strong 2♣! Coming in with garbage is dangerous once one opponent has bid, and if he's opened 2♣!!
- (6) An obvious double if partner has anything resembling a 2♣ opener.

And what happened? 2♠ doubled went two down so minus 500 for a near top to E-W. If E-W were left to their own devices then they would have reached 4♥ – West would have bid 2♥ at (5) and East (me) would have bid 4♥, weak (fast arrival). At other tables 4♥ was reached five times but made on just one occasion.

The bottom lines: -

- A double of a 2♣ opening (or of the negative 2♦ response) simply shows that suit and does not show a particularly strong hand. Partner is not invited to bid any other suit.
- If a hand is not good enough to open a weak two then it's not good enough to come in at the two level when LHO has opened 2♣!

The direct raise to 4♥/♠ is weak

Board 23 from Wednesday 12th

If partner opens 1♥/♠ then a direct raise to 4♥/♠ (with or without intervention) is best played as weak: -

Dealer:	♠ 5				
South	♥ AQJ63	West	North	East(me)	South
Both vul	♦ Q9654	-	-	-	pass
	♣ AQ	1♠	2♥ (1)	4♠ (2)	pass
		pass	5♦ (3)	pass	5♥
		all pass			
♠ AQJ42	N	♠ K9873			
♥ 75	W E	♥ 82			
♦ K3	S	♦ 872			
♣ J987		♣ K62			
	♠ 106				
	♥ K1094				
	♦ AJ10				
	♣ 10543				

- (1) I think a 2♥ overcall is best here, with the intention of bidding ♦'s next go if you can.
- (2) You know me (The Law). I do not like to make life easy for the opponents. 4♠ is not bid here to make (of course it may make on a good day or if partner has a strong hand) – it is bid to make life difficult for N-S.
- (3) Difficult! Pass could be right on some days, 5♦ could be right on some days. This was a day when 5♦ was wrong.

And what happened? Actually, N-S are always getting a bad score once East bids 4♠. 4♥ was bid twice and made exactly. 4♠ was bid twice and went just one down. 5♥ went one down.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't make life easy for the opponents.
- Pre-empt to the limit first go (the 4♠ raise here is pre-emptive).
- A raise of partner's 1♥/♠ opening to 4♥/♠ is pre-emptive whether RHO intervenes or not.

The Law of Total Tricks

Low and behold, the Law works again. There are a total of 19 trumps (9♥'s and 10♠'s); N-S can make 10 tricks in ♥'s, E-W can make 9 tricks in ♠'s. Total 19.

Time for our recurring old chestnut. We had numerous attempts by various people on Wednesday to prove me wrong by denying a 4 card major. I note that Kees/Bjorn even tried it twice on these three boards. Let's see how well these aspiring theorists all fared: -

Look for the 4-4 major suit fit – part 1

Board 10 from Wednesday 12th

Dealer: ♠ Q1085
 East ♥ 2
 Both vul ♦ J83
 ♣ QJ1097

Table A
 West(F) North East South
 - - 1♠ pass
 3NT (1) all pass

♠ 43 N ♠ AKJ62
 ♥ 10875 W E ♥ AKQ9
 ♦ AKQ7 S ♦ 6
 ♣ K84 ♣ 652
 ♠ 97
 ♥ J643
 ♦ 109542
 ♣ A3

Table B
 West North East South
 - - 1♠ pass
 2♦ (1) pass 2♥ (2) pass
 4♥ (3) pass pass (4) pass

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this West hand F in this week's quiz? You have the values for game so bid it? No, you may miss a 4-4 ♥ fit. So bid 2♥? No, that promises 5 ♥'s. 2♦ is correct, this does not deny 4 ♥'s and if there is a 4-4 ♥ fit then partner will bid ♥'s.

Table B: (1) This West bid 2♦.
 (2) Now this East hand is probably worth a jump but E-W were playing 2/1 and so the 2♦ bid was game forcing. This is the main advantage of playing 2/1 – there is no need to leap about consuming much needed bidding space.
 (3) West was very happy to find a fit, but with a bare minimum for his game forcing 2♦ bid he now bid 4♥ - fast arrival and warning partner off slam.
 (4) East wisely heeds partner's warning.

And what happened? 4♥ was bid at 3 tables and either made exactly or with an overtrick (twice). 3NT made an overtrick and got an undeserved average because the contract at the last table was 6NT going two down.

The bottom lines: -

- Always look for the 4-4 fit. Here 4♥ is far better than 3NT (4♥ should always make +1) despite the adverse 4-1 ♥ break.
- Playing 2/1 may help in avoiding silly slams like this one? (I don't know how they bid the poor NT slam - 6♥ would be a better slam but that fails also).

Playing 2/1

Now look at Table B again and suppose that it's Standard American. So the bidding goes: - 1♠ - 2♦ - 3♥ - 4♥ - ? It would not be silly if East then tried Blackwood and upon finding just one ace missing bid slam. The problem is that in this sequence West has had no chance to state if he is minimum or not. That's the big advantage of 2/1 – more bidding space.

Look for the 4-4 major suit fit – part 2Board 11 from Wednesday 12th

Dealer: ♠ 1097
 South ♥ 765
 Love all ♦ QJ85
 ♣ Q93

♠ 6543 N ♠ AKQ8
 ♥ A4 W E ♥ KJ109
 ♦ 963 S ♦ A10
 ♣ K743 ♣ A105

♠ J2
 ♥ Q832
 ♦ K742
 ♣ J86

Table A

West(J)	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	pass	2NT	pass
3NT (1)	all pass		

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	pass	2NT	pass
3♣ (1)	pass	3♦	pass
3NT	pass	4♠ (2)	all pass

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this West hand J in this week's quiz? You have the values for game so bid it? No, you may miss a 4-4 ♠ fit. 3NT is a very poor bid.

Table B: (1) 3♣, Stayman is obviously correct. The quality of the ♠'s is largely irrelevant.
 (2) Partner has promised 4 ♠'s and so the correction to 4♠ is obvious.

And what happened? 3NT made +1 for a well deserved undisputed bottom. 4♠ was bid at all of the other 4 tables and made either +1, +2 or +3.

The bottom line: - Always look for the 4-4 fit; as I say to my wife, size is immaterial.

Look for the 4-4 major suit fit – part 3Board 15 from Wednesday 12th

Dealer: ♠ Q9
 South ♥ 8763
 N-S vul ♦ AK6
 ♣ J652

♠ 8642 N ♠ KJ53
 ♥ 1052 W E ♥ KJ
 ♦ Q985 S ♦ J432
 ♣ 93 ♣ Q104

♠ A107
 ♥ AQ94
 ♦ 107
 ♣ AK87

Table A

West	North(K)	East	South
-	-	-	1NT
pass	3NT (1)	all pass	

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1NT
pass	2♣ (1)	pass	2♥
pass	4♥	all pass	

(1) Here we go again. What did you bid with this North hand K in this week's quiz? You have the values for game so bid it? Let's hope that everybody is getting fed up with this by now (including the pairs who repeatedly do this). Table B got it right.

And what happened? Just 3 tables bid 4♥, all making +1. 3NT was bid at the other two, making exactly once for a 2nd bottom and deservedly going down once.

The bottom lines: - How many times do I have to keep on saying the same thing?
 How many times do I have to keep on saying the same thing?
 How many times do I have to keep on saying the same thing?

There was not enough room in this news-sheet for Friday's hands, so they will appear in the next issue.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 1♥. The hand is not good enough for 1NT (points in the wrong places).
(b) 1NT (12-14), it's not worth 15 points.
- Hand B: (a) Pass. You cannot bid 2♣ as you cannot cope with a 2♦ or 2♠ response; a subsequent 2NT would be an overbid.
(b) Pass. 2NT would be an overbid.
- Hand C: (a) 1♠ (or a –ve double) or 1NT. It depends upon what you intend to do next. If you think that the hand is worth a game invitation then you obviously start with either 1♠ or a –ve double. If you think that the hand is not worth an invitation then 1NT is acceptable as you will then be in the best spot if partner does not have 4♠'s.
(b) 2♦. This is the real point; I do not think that this hand is worth a 2NT game invitation. So I would either bid 1NT at (a) or else retreat into 2♦ here.
- Hand D: 1♠. A direct 4♥ bid is pre-emptive, so bid 1♠ and then probably 4♥ next go.
- Hand E: Pass. Not quite good enough to bid 4♥.
- Hand F: 2♦. You cannot bid 3NT as there may be a 4-4♥ fit. You cannot bid 2♥ as that promises 5♥'s. So bid 2♦ and partner will bid ♥'s if there is a 4-4♥ fit.
- Hand G: (a) 1♠. It conforms with the rule of 20 and with such a nice ♠ suit I would open. Pass is a reasonable alternative. I don't like a 2♠ opener because it's a bit too good and there may be a ♥ fit.
(b) 4♠ or 4♦. Obviously you want to be in game (or slam) and 4♦ has the advantage that a probable ♥ fit will be located.
- Hand H: Pass of course. Sorry about this one but Jeff did actually find a *totally absurd* double. And what's more, his partner passed with Hand G(b)! They were awarded an adjusted score of zero for their efforts which some people (including me) simply call cheating.
- Hand J: 3♣, Stayman. Look for the 4-4♠ fit.
- Hand K: 2♣, Stayman. Look for the 4-4♥ fit.

	N-S winners		E-W winners	
Mon 17/1/05	1 st Jim/Austin	64 %	1 st Bob/Dave	66 %
	2 nd Phil/Mike(Can)	59 %	2 nd Gerard/Derek	61
Wed 19/1/05	1 st Chuck/Austin	60 %	1 st Clive/Terry	60 %
	2 nd Larse/Arne	59 %	2 nd Bjorn/Kees	59 %
Fri 21/1/05	1 st David/Ursula	60 %	1 st Mr & Mrs Braggio	67 %
	2 nd Jan/Mike(Can)	59 %	2 nd Lis/Finn	52 %

We had a ‘simultaneous’ on Monday and so where I refer to the ‘booklet’ it’s the booklet of Monday hands that was distributed at the end of the session.

And we now have a ‘club champion’, details overleaf.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A RHO opens 1♠, what do you do?
♠ Q1054	♠ Q	With Hand B partner opens 1♠ and you respond 1NT. Partner then bids 2NT, what do you do?
♥ K9642	♥ K982	
♦ A3	♦ 10852	
♣ Q4	♣ Q1053	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 1♠, what do you bid?
♠ K5	♠ K8752	With Hand D you open 1♠ and partner responds 1NT, what do you do?
♥ K84	♥ QJ	
♦ A108	♦ AKJ9	
♣ AQ432	♣ K4	
Hand E	Hand F	What do you open with Hand E?
♠ AJ5	♠ 4	With Hand F LHO opens 1♠ and partner bids 1NT. (a) what do you bid? (b) suppose you choose a 2♦ transfer and partner bids 2♥, what do you do now?
♥ 976	♥ KJ653	
♦ KQ9	♦ A1082	
♣ AJ42	♣ 742	

Editorial

When we have 7 or more tables I generally play a Mitchell movement (N-S stationary), this is the first time that we've had a Mitchell on all three days! The numbers are certainly picking up now for all three days.

Can I again remind people to count their cards. We had yet another incident when dummy had 12 cards on Friday. Chuck informed me that dummy is everybody's responsibility and they should all be penalised according to the rules – you won't become club champion if you get zeros on boards like this! I was in a good mood and gave them all an average.

Actually, the reason for this fouled board was that a card had dropped out of the wallet. The wallets have expanded as the cards get older, I have introduced some new decks and they 'flop about' in their pockets. Hopefully Gerry will arrive soon with the new set of boards and cards that I have ordered.

I introduced a timer on Friday. I believe that the vast majority approved of this and it certainly cut down on the chatter between boards. Mike(Can) was not happy – he maintains that now that we start at 1.00 there is plenty of time. That is not the point! The point is that people do not like twiddling their thumbs for 5 (even 8) minutes while slow players are finishing (or even just starting!) their last hand. Let me know what you think.

Club Champion? After discussion with a number of members we have decided to have a club championship. For 2004 we decided that all days should be counted. What we did was take all results above 53% for any individual and total up the best 15 and then get the average of these best 15. I excluded myself from these calculations and that left 14 players with 15 or more results above 53%. Obviously the more times you play, the better your chances; but you can still get a good result if you had high scores (e.g Tonni, Hans and Chuck), a couple of 70%'s really help. The final results are below and anybody is welcome to check my mathematics if they suspect that I might have made an error.

As we now have meaningful numbers on all three days, we will probably have three separate championships this (2005) year. This is much fairer as some members do not play on Mondays, some not on Fridays etc. Let me know what you think.

Club Championship results for 2004

Position		%	No of results above 53%	
1	Dave	64.09	43	Congrats Dave.
2	Chuck	63.28	23	
3	Clive	61.06	29	
4	Kenneth	60.95	29	
5	Jeff	60.68	25	
6	Hans	60.66	18	
7	Bob	60.62	27	
8	Tomas	60.50	17	
9	Alex	60.29	22	
10	Tonni	58.93	15	
11	David (Swe)	56.96	15	
12	Jan	56.85	17	
13	Ian	56.78	15	
14	Mike(Can)	56.30	15	

So pretty close from 3rd – 9th. No other players got more than 15 results above 53%.

Alex answers back

Alex did not like my article last week where I suggested that Alex/Jeff were cheating. He and Jeff decided not to play on Monday and Alex spent ½ an hour writing up a note to me. Here it is: -

Terry: The grapes certainly are sour, for you of all people should know that these hands with an awkward distribution need a need a careful approach in bidding. Further, considering Clive for an opinion is totally ridiculous, he a leading player?? I said it could mean points or penalty, and I took my time thinking how much down you'd go, suppose Jeff had this hand.

What a load of twaddle! To start with, of course, South's proposed new hand has only 12 cards, so let's add a small ♣. We'll adjust West's hand to accommodate Alex's proposed new South hand and the lay-out would be something like this below. With the ♠K onside N-S do indeed make 7 tricks so it's down 3. But that's little compensation for the small slam (6♥) that N-S can make. Of course you could adjust the hand so that 6♥ does not make, but then 3♦ is just two down and is poor compensation for the easy 4♥ + 1 available to N-S.

Dealer:	♠ AQJ763	West	North	East	South
North	♥ 9754	(Lars)	(Alex)(me)	(Jeff)	
Love all	♦ -	-	pass (1)	3♦	dbl (2)
	♣ K95	pass	pass (3)	pass (4)	

♠ K52	N	♠ 104
♥ J106	W E	♥ Q2
♦ KJ5	S	♦ A1087643
♣ QJ42		♣ 108
	♠ 98	
	♥ AK83	
	♦ Q92	
	♣ A763	

← This is Alex's propose new lay-out (the West and South hands are altered from the actual deal).

Applying the Law

Now then, Alex, you tried to say something about the Law of total tricks in the last news-sheet and I indicated that you simply did not understand it; certainly not well enough to write to me about it. In this new layout of yours you have conveniently given South just two ♠'s and have the ♠K onside (so you set 3♦ by 3 tricks) but let's see what the Law says. N-S have 8 ♥'s (or 8 ♠'s, doesn't matter), E-W have 10 ♦'s, that's 18 trumps in all. You want to construct a deal so that 3♦ goes down 3 when partner has a hand that remotely resembles a reasonable take-out double, fine. So E-W make 6 tricks in this lay-out of yours. The total number of trumps is 18 and 18 - 6 = 12. You have a small slam your way!! It does not matter if you construct the deal so that N-S have 8 ♥'s or 8 ♠'s, whatever you do if you construct it so that 3♦ goes minus 3 when E-W have 10+ decent ♦'s (as implied by your partner's take-out double) then you usually have a slam your way. I suggest that you read up on the 'Law' before you try to lecture me.

But this is, of course, purely academic as double is a poor bid even with this new 'Jeff hand'. Has Alex not taught Jeff that a take-out double should be short in the suit bid? And I certainly would not double with just two small ♠'s.

- ♠ K98 So what happens if you give Jeff a more typical take-out double hand?
- ♥ AK83 6♥ is lay-down, add the ♥Q to this hand and 7♥ is there. 3♦ doubled
- ♦ 92 is always a terrible score (just 300 here) if Jeff has anything remotely
- ♣ A763 resembling a normal double.

Is your bidding a 'careful approach'? Let's come on to what Jeff said to me on Monday:

What Jeff said

- ♠ 982 So we're reverting to Jeff's actual hand. Jeff told me that as Alex was a passed
 - ♥ 32 hand he thought that game their way was remote and that 3♦ would probably
 - ♦ KQ92 go 3 down, so he doubled. What he did not tell me was how he conveyed the
 - ♣ Q763 message to partner that this was a penalty double. Further 'interrogation' of Jeff
- revealed that he considers all doubles of 3-level bids as penalty. Alex did not appreciate this and is currently discussing what they do with a normal take-out hand. You cannot have a bid that is either penalty or take out – you are leaving yourself open to accusations of 'cheating' when partner 'guesses' it correctly.

Who's a 'Leading' player?

As I said, I consulted several 'leading' players – they all said much the same as Clive did. So what's with this Clive-knocking (Alex gave me three more anti-Clive sheets, I probably won't reproduce them - take it from me that his facts were incorrect and his logic faulty). Clive is most certainly one of the club's leading players, obtaining consistently good results (just this last week -115- we have 1st on Monday, 1st on Wednesday, 2nd on Friday) and this is certainly without having to resort to possibly dubious tactics. I have just finished calculating the 'Player of the year' results. Clive came third (Alex was ninth), so how high up do you have to finish to be considered as one of the club's 'leading players' then Alex?

Sour Grapes?

Alex chose to pass initially, fine. If Jeff had simply passed the 3♦ bid and Alex then made a take-out double which Jeff would then pass for penalties then this would be sensible bidding and there would be absolutely no problem. The problem is that the N-S hands were the opposite of what they should have been according to the bidding! Is this the 'careful approach'?

And it made no difference to me and my partner if we got 68% or 70 % for the session. The point is that you have been clearly told to behave and warned about any incidents like this. In news sheet 110, I said 'this is the last warning' and 'take my warnings seriously'. In news-sheet 112, I said that you two 'will be closely monitored'. And Jeff was further warned in news-sheet 115 that he would be suspended if he psyched yet again. You both chose to ignore these repeated warnings, up to you. Have a nice day.

Anyway, Alex, you two are not actually suspended yet (but most certainly 'on notice'). I will happily reproduce any contribution to the new-sheet that you care to give me, but be prepared to come off 2nd best when you try to have a go at me or Clive or whoever. You may agree with Chuck on one point (kangaroos) but I believe that even Chuck would agree that my Bridge knowledge is far superior to yours.

Is that double of 3♦ for penalty?

Board 24 from Wednesday 19th

No controversy this deal – I didn't even bother to say anything! :-

Dealer: ♠ 6542
West ♥ 84
Love all ♦ AKQ2
♣ J102

♠ A7	N	♠ QJ82
♥ 97	W E	♥ QJ105
♦ J1098763	S	♦ -
♣ K8		♣ Q9643
	♠ K109	
	♥ AK632	
	♦ 53	
	♣ A75	

Table A

West	North	East	South
3♦ (1)	pass	pass	dbl (2)
pass	3♠ (3)	pass	4♠
all pass			

Table B

West	North	East	South
	(Alex)	(me)	(Magnus)
pass (1)	pass	pass	1♥ (1)
3♦ (4)	dbl (5)	3♠ (6)	pass
pass	pass		

Table A: (1) So would you open this West hand with 2♦, 3♦ or pass? Non-vulnerable it is probably a matter of style. Some players would like more points in the suit but it has excellent body and I would not argue if you chose any of these three bids.

(2) Now this is what a double of 3♦ should be! I will ensure that Alex/Jeff read this page. 3♥ is a very reasonable, perhaps preferable, alternative

(3) South's double is for take-out and this hand has a 4 card ♠ suit and so bid it, fine. But with these ♦'s a pass of the take-out double would be perfectly reasonable. Alex please note; as you said, you can convert partner's double into penalties if you wish and this ♦ holding is typical to do just that, a void in ♦'s is not!! Anyway, North decided to bid his ♠'s and South (unwisely) raised to game.

Table B: So let's see what happened at Alex's table this time!

(1) West passed, fine. So obviously did North and East and South opened 1♥.

(4) West now decided to enter the lists with 3♦. This is of course terrible, partner has passed and RHO has shown his hand; a pre-empt thus has less effect and is much more likely to get clobbered than when an opening bid.

(5) Alex slapped the double card down in a manner such that even the next table knew that it was a penalty double.

(6) Many people play negative doubles (up to say 3♦ or 3♠) but I (East) did not even bother to ask, the gestures made it clear that it was penalty. But actually I had no problem: partner did not open with a pre-empt and only did so later when South had bid ♥'s. The only logical explanation for this is that he has 4 ♠'s, so 3♠ at (6) is 'obvious'.

And what happened? 4♠ by North went two down for a bottom. The defence was not razor sharp against my 3♠ in a 4-2 fit and it went just three down for an average. At other tables 3♦ and 4♦ were doubled for the N-S top scores and one North went one down in 3NT.

The bottom lines: -

- If you have a doubtful pre-empt, then don't come in later when partner has passed!
- If you pass and then later pre-empt, that implies that you did not initially pre-empt because you had a 4 card major.
- A take-out double of an opening 3♦ is short in ♦'s, generally playable in the other 3 suits

Don't double with length in the suit opened

Board 11 from Friday 14th

Dealer: ♠ J3
South ♥ AQ108753
Love all ♦ K
♣ AJ9

♠ Q1054 N ♠ 72
♥ K9642 W E ♥ J
♦ A3 S ♦ Q98752
♣ Q4 ♣ 10632

♠ AK986
♥ -
♦ J1064
♣ K875

Table A

West (A)	North	East	South
-	-	-	1 ♠
2♥ (1)	dbl (2)	pass	3♣ (3)
pass	3NT	all pass	

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1 ♠
dbl (1)	redbl (4)	2♦	dbl
2♥ (5)	dbl	3♣ (6)	dbl
3NT (7)	dbl	all pass	

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this West hand A in this week's quiz? Pass or 2♥ I hope.
Pass is best but 2♥ is reasonable, double is a terrible bid.

(2) This N-S pair played natural methods and so double here was penalties; playing negative doubles you have to pass and hope that partner re-opens with a double as he normally would.

(3) With a ♥ void and a minimum opener I don't blame South for not passing here.

Table B: (1) This West chose to double here – I simply cannot see the point, if you want to bid then overcall with 2♥.

(4) Redouble here shows 9+ points and generally a mis-fit for partner and a desire to defend a doubled contract.

(5) And here we see just one of the problems caused by the initial double – N-S are now in doubling mode and there is no escape for E-W.

(6) I would pass here, let partner stew in the pot of his own making. Anyway, for partner to double and then bid a suit should show a hand that was too strong for a simple overcall (this West hand is nowhere near of course).

(7) It's in last week's news-sheet - when you are being bombarded by penalty doubles, never bid NT!

And what happened? 2♥ doubled by West would have got a poor score for E-W, 3NT doubled by West went for 1100. This hand is a mis-fit and whichever side declared went down. Popular contracts were 3NT and 4♥ by N-S and even 6♥ by North!

The bottom lines: -

- It's usually best to defend with mis-fits.
- Re-double shows 9+ points and usually a mis-fit with a desire to defend
- A two level overcall should be close to an opening hand, this West hand is very marginal.
- A double should show shortage in the suit opened and invites partner to bid any of the other three suits.
- If you double and then remove partner's choice of suit then that shows a hand that was too strong to simply overcall initially (so about 16 + points).

A much more sensible double

Board 2 from Friday 14th

Dealer: ♠ K2
East ♥ Q1062
N-S vul ♦ A985
♣ J102

♠ J753 N ♠ A98
♥ 9743 W E ♥ AKJ85
♦ K10 S ♦ 764
♣ 854 ♣ A3

♠ Q1064
♥ -
♦ QJ32
♣ KQ976

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♥	dbl (1)
pass (2)	1NT (3)	dbl (4)	2♣ (5)
2♥ (6)	2NT (7)	3♥ (8)	pass
pass	dbl (9)	all pass	

- (1) Now this is much more like it – a take-out double should be short in the suit bid and playable in any of the other 3 suits. As I have said before, a double does not necessarily quite guarantee opening values and obviously Austin (South here) agrees with me.
- (2) Now many players agree that a 2♥ (or 3♥) bid here is weak, but without that agreement pass is obviously fine.
- (3) On the border between 1NT and 2NT. I would also bid 1NT.
- (4) Now this shows a good hand, I would like a stronger hand than this when partner has promised nothing and both opponents have shown values.
- (5) But with his minimal double South obviously does not relish 1NT doubled.
- (6) And this 2♥ bid is very sensible, the previous pass showed very limited values and this 2♥ bid just shows ♥ support.
- (7) Quite why North decided that his hand is now worth 2NT when partner ran from 1NT and West has shown a little something is a mystery to me.
- (8) But it obviously worked out OK with East bidding like this. East has already overbid his hand and a pass is now called for, 3♥ will not make.
- (9) This means ‘3♥ will not make’.

And what happened? 3♥ doubled went for -800. Most E-W pairs were in ♥ partscores going down undoubled. One North was in 3NT going minus two, so I guess that a pass of North’s unwise 2NT would have given East a good score instead of an absolute bottom.

The bottom lines: -

- Listen to partner; if he says that he has no points then he has no points.
- Listen to partner; if partner does not like 1NT then he will not like 2NT.

Who overbid?

Board 21 from Friday 14th

3NT went two down here, anyone to blame or just unlucky?

Dealer:	♠ Q				
North	♥ K982	West	North(B)	East	South(D)
N-S vul	♦ 10852	-	pass	pass	1♠ (1)
	♣ Q1053	pass	1NT	pass	2NT (2)
		pass	3NT (3)	all pass	
♠ J964	N	♠ A103			
♥ A753	W E	♥ 1064			
♦ 43	S	♦ Q76			
♣ J82		♣ A976			
	♠ K8752				
	♥ QJ				
	♦ AKJ9				
	♣ K4				

To answer the question, North overbid
(and South had nothing to spare).

- (1) 1NT is a reasonable alternative.
- (2) What did you bid with this South hand E in this week's quiz? This bid should show about 17 – poor 18 points (with 18-19 bid 3NT). Now I was sitting behind Austin when he made this bid and he asked me if I would bid the same. I replied that it was marginal. It's 17 points but QJ doubleton is poor and the 5 card suit is poor (partner is known not to have ♠ support), I would probably bid 2♦ or pass. Anyway, looking at the traveller nobody played in 1NT and so I guess that most bid like Austin.
- (3) What did you bid with this North hand B in this week's quiz? Now South's bid was marginal, but this bid is not. You need about 8-10 to accept the invitation. This is 7 but the two 10's and decent intermediates bring it up to 8; but a singleton Q in partner's suit is miserable and pass is best.

And what happened? 3NT went two down for a clear zero. The most popular contract was 2NT by North (usually just making) so I guess that most auctions were like this except that North wisely passed at (3). Just one pair found the ♦ fit (playing in 3♦) for a good score.

The bottom lines: -

- A singleton (even a queen) in partner's 5 card suit is a miserable holding.

3NT is usually better than 5 of a minor

Board 22 from Friday 14th

Dealer: ♠ K5
East ♥ K84
E-W vul ♦ A108
♣ AQ432

♠ AJ1072	N	♠ 9643
♥ 62	W E	♥ Q1053
♦ 754	S	♦ 93
♣ K95		♣ J86
	♠ Q8	
	♥ AJ97	
	♦ KQJ62	
	♣ 107	

Table A

West	North(C)	East	South
-	-	pass	1♦
1♠	2♠ (1)	pass	3♦ (2)
pass	5♦ (3)	all pass	

Table B

West	North (C)	East	South
-	-	pass	1♦
1♠	2♠ (1)	pass	2NT
pass	3NT	all pass	

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this North hand C in this week's quiz? You can bid 2♠ to ask for a stop (or ½ stop – depending upon partnership agreement) but I don't really see the point, with a ♠ stop I would bid 3NT – if partner does not have a ♠ stop also then he probably has sufficient high cards to run 9 tricks. You know me by now – if 3NT is a viable option, then bid it.

Anyway, this N-S pair play that 2♠ asks for a ♠ stop.

(2) And South denied having one.

(3) And so North bid 5♦.

Table B: (1) This N-S pair play that 2♠ asks for a ½ stop or better.

(2) And South has a ½ stop.

And what happened? 3NT made comfortably, usually with overtricks. 5♦ scored a deserved joint zero.

Now it may not surprise you to learn that this North is the same North who tried to convince me that 5♣ was a good bid last week (when I bid 3NT). He was wrong then and he's wrong again here.

The bottom lines: -

- 3NT is usually a better contract than 5 of a minor, think I've said that before.
- If one stop in the enemy suit is probably enough and you have one, then don't bother to ask partner if he too has a stop.

An amusing remark

Chuck has been partnering Austin recently (a match made in heaven?) and I overheard the following:

-

Chuck: '*Gee, Austin, you're sure hard on your partners*'.

Anybody who has ever partnered Chuck will appreciate the humour here. In the past (before they met) I had frequently described Austin to Chuck as his twin brother, perhaps older brother is more apt?

How to stop short of an unmakeable game? – part 1 Board 2 from Monday 17th

The commentary in the booklet was that ‘the problem for N-S is to stop short of an unmakeable game’ and ‘if you play transfers in this sequence then you are better equipped’. This prophecy was totally born out at our club. Let’s have a look: -

Dealer:	♠ 4			<u>Table A</u>			
East	♥ KJ653			West	North(F)	East	South
N-S vul	♦ A1082			-	-	1♠	1NT
	♣ 742			pass	3♥ (1)	pass	3NT
				all pass			
♠ 108	N	♠ KQ9752					
♥ Q942	W E	♥ 107		<u>Table B</u>			
♦ 9743	S	♦ K5		West	North (F)	East	South
♣ 953		♣ AK6		-	-	1♠	1NT
	♠ AJ63			pass	2♦ (1)	pass (2)	2♥
	♥ A8			pass	2NT (3)	all pass	
	♦ QJ6						
	♣ QJ108						

Table A: What did you bid at (1) with this North hand F(a) in this week’s quiz? You have to make a 2♦ transfer. This pair do not play transfers in this situation – why not? Here we have the classic situation where it is unbidable without transfers - 2♥ would be weak and 3♥ is forcing – so how do you bid an invitational hand? It’s impossible without transfers.

Table B: This is how N-S should bid the hand. A 2♠ bid at (2) by East is possibly unwise when West has shown nothing and South has shown a big hand with values in ♠’s. And what did you bid with this North hand F(b) at (3) in this week’s quiz? The North hand is not worth a natural 3♦ game force and so an invitational 2NT is best. As partner is known to hold ♠ values and did not super-accept then pass may be an even better bid.

And what happened? 2NT made at one table and went down at another table. Most other pairs got too high (3NT and 4♥). East tried 2♠ twice and was doubled once, these were good scores for N-S.

The bottom lines: -

- Play ‘Systems on’ after a 1NT overcall.
- Be wary about bidding again when LHO has overcalled 1NT – he has a strong hand with values in your suit.

How to stop short of an unmakeable game? – part 2 Board 11 from Monday 17th

The commentary in the booklet was that ‘some N-S pairs will find it hard to stop short of this rather poor game’ Let’s have a look: -

Dealer: ♠ AJ5 South ♥ 976 Love all ♦ KQ9 ♣ AJ42 ♠ 92 N ♠ 1974 ♥ A43 W E ♥ QJ102 ♦ 863 S ♦ A75 ♣ KQ765 ♣ 1093 ♠ KQ863 ♥ K85 ♦ J1042 ♣ 8	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="4" style="text-align: center;"><u>Table A</u></th> </tr> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North(E)</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>pass</td> <td>1NT (1)</td> <td>pass</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>pass</td> <td>3♦ (2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>all pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="4" style="text-align: center;"><u>Table B</u></th> </tr> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">West</th> <th style="width: 25%;">North (E)</th> <th style="width: 25%;">East</th> <th style="width: 25%;">South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>pass</td> <td>1♣ (1)</td> <td>pass</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>pass</td> <td>1NT (3)</td> <td>all pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	<u>Table A</u>				West	North(E)	East	South	-	-	-	pass	pass	1NT (1)	pass	2♥	pass	2♠	pass	3♦ (2)	pass	3NT	all pass		<u>Table B</u>				West	North (E)	East	South	-	-	-	pass	pass	1♣ (1)	pass	1♠	pass	1NT (3)	all pass	
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pass	1♣ (1)	pass	1♠																																										
pass	1NT (3)	all pass																																											

Table A: What did you open at (1) with this North hand E in this week’s quiz? I guess that many will simply open 1NT without thinking? The rest of the auction is then automatic. 3♦ at (2) is game forcing and is probably better than 3NT as North may have nothing in ♣’s.

Table B: But Jim was North at this table. I was kibitzing and Jim said to me that he reads the news-sheets as he placed the 1♣ card on the table for his opening bid. Did you open 1♣ or 1NT with this North hand E in this week’s quiz? If you heed what I say about 4333 type shape then 1♣ (with a 1NT rebid to show 12-14) is clear.
 (3) Actually, North now has a choice of winning options after he has made the correct opening bid. Pass, 2♠ and 1NT are all very sensible.

And what happened? As it turns out, South has 5 ♠’s and so a ♠ partscore is better than 1NT. But 1NT still scores a near top, only being beaten by two pairs (1♠ and 2♠). All the other N-S pairs got too high (3NT and 4♠) and all deservedly went down.

The bottom line: -

- Deduct a point for 4333 type shape.
- Heed what I say?

How to stop short of an unmakeable game? – part 3 Board 1 from Monday 17th

The commentary in the booklet was that ‘the auction should go no further than 3♠’. It was different at a few of our tables, let’s have a look: -

Dealer:	♠ 10962					
North	♥ K5432		<u>Table A</u>			
Love all	♦ AJ		West	North	East	South
	♣ 96		-	pass	pass	1♠
			pass	2♥ (1)	pass	3♥
			pass	3♠	pass	4♠
			all pass			
♠ K3	N	♠ Q4	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ J8	W E	♥ Q76	West	North	East	South
♦ K9532	S	♦ 1074				(Austin)
♣ A1052		♣ KJ743	-	pass	pass	1♠
	♠ AJ875		2♦	2♠	3♣	pass
	♥ A109		pass	3♠	4♣	dbl
	♦ Q86		pass	pass	4♦	4♠
	♣ Q8		all pass			

Table A: (1) Now I don’t like this 2♥ bid for a number of reasons. First of all, it is not forcing after an initial pass and you may be left to play in 2♥. But secondly, if you bid 2♥ here and then support ♠’s at the 3 level then this implies just 3♠’s. The correct bid at (1) is either 2♠ or 3♠ (or 2♦ if you play 2-way reverse Drury).

Table B: Now it would appear that Austin too overbid. I would not like to be in 4♠, but then I am not Austin.

And what happened? 4♠ was bid three times and only Austin made it. There would appear to be 4 losers (2♣’s, 1♥ and 1♠). The opposition cashed two♣’s and switched to♦’s but Austin finessed, cleared the♦’s before pulling trumps and West was then end-played when in with the♠K. All the other pairs were in ‘sensible’ contracts of 2♠ or 3♠.

The bottom lines: -

- If you initially pass, then a simple change of suit over partner’s opening is no longer forcing. So North cannot bid 2♥ at (1)

A Free Drink?

Board 5 from Monday 17th

The commentary in the booklet offered a free drink for any pair who can make a good logical case for the sequence that got them to 6♦ on these cards. Clive had a pretty good shot at the table but I think that I can possibly improve on his fine effort having seen both hands.

Dealer:	♠ 104			<u>Table A</u>				
North	♥ K7			West	North	East	South	
N-S vul	♦ 109752			-	pass	pass	1♦ (1)	
	♣ K642			pass	2♦ (2)	2♥	2♠ (3)	
				pass	3♦ (4)	pass	5♦ (5)	
				all pass				
♠ 865	N	♠ KJ72		<u>Table B</u>				
♥ J1096	W E	♥ A8432		West	North	East	South	
♦ 3	S	♦ 84		-	pass	pass	2♣ (1)	
♣ QJ1095		♣ 87		pass	2♦	pass	3♦	
	♠ AQ93			pass	4NT (6)	pass	etc to 6♦	
	♥ Q5							
	♦ AKQJ6							
	♣ A3							

Table A: (1) This South opened 1♦ and I agree with the bid. 2NT is reasonable but not that attractive with two doubletons. 2♣ is a bit of an overbid as it's only about 8 or 8½ playing tricks.

(2) 2♦ is probably right here, I prefer it to 1NT.

(3) A reverse, and forcing.

(4) With a ♥ stop I would bid 2NT.

(5) South told me that he could think of no other bid. Now you all know me, I will not bid 5♣/♦ if 3NT is a viable option; I would bid 3♥, asking North for a ♥ stop. Presumably South did not do this because he thought that 3♦ at (4) denied a ♥ stop? Still, it does no harm to try again, and many players would play that 3♥ here only asks for ½ a ♥ stop (Jxx would be enough) if the 3♦ bid denied a full stop.

Table B: (1) This South chose a rather optimistic 2♣ opener.

(6) And North (Clive) launched into slam mode when the ♦ fit was uncovered. Now this is very reasonable but it is not recommended to bid Blackwood with a weak doubleton (if one ace is missing there may be an AK off the top). I would simply bid 4♦ at (6) and then this South would show slam interest with a cue bid of 4♠, showing the ♠ A and denying the ♥ A. It's now safe for North to bid (Roman Key card) Blackwood, especially as he will be declarer and the ♥ K is protected from the opening lead if partner does not hold the ♥ Q.

And what happened? 6♦ made for the top. 3NT contracts scored well. 5♦ scored above average as it made an overtrick and beat the people who made 3NT just exactly and those that did not even bid game. The bottom lines: -

- It's best not to bid Blackwood with a weak doubleton when you do not know if partner has a top card in that suit.
- You can always take it slowly after partner has initiated a game forcing sequence (2♣ - 2♦ - 3♦ is game forcing) and so there's no need to leap into Blackwood.
- If you want to know if partner has a stop in the enemy suit, then ask him.
- Clive is still waiting for his free drink.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: Pass. 2♥ is a not-too-bad alternative. Double is terrible, a double should be short in the suit bid and playable in the other three suits. If you double and then pull a 2♣ or 2♦ response from partner to 2♥ then that shows a hand that was too strong to overcall 1♥ initially.
- Hand B: Pass. You need about 8-10 points to accept partner's invitation. The singleton Q in partner's 5 card suit is an ill-omen and you should pass.
- Hand C: 3NT. You all know me by now, if 3NT is a reasonable option then
You could ask partner for a ♠ stop (by bidding 2♠) but what's the point?
- Hand D: 2♦ (or pass) or 2NT. It's borderline, 2NT here shows a good 17 or 18 points and this poor ♠ suit means it's a poor 17 in my opinion and I would bid 2♦.
- Hand E: 1♣ of course. You all know how many times I say to knock off a point for the 4333 type shape – so it's not worth 1NT. Jim got this spot on and deservedly got the resultant near top.
- Hand F: 2NT or pass. The hand is not worth a game force (3♦). The 'value' bid is an invitational 2NT but as partner is known to hold 'useless' ♠ values and did not super-accept then I think that pass is also a good bid.



Club News Sheet – No. 117

28/1/2005



	N-S winners		E-W winners	
Mon 24/1/05	1 st Valur/Valgaro	66 %	1 st Jon/Jan	63 %
	2 nd Larse/Arne	65 %	2 nd Gerard/Derek	60 %
Wed 26/1/05	1 st Clive/Terry	63 %	1 st Gerard/Derek	66 %
	2 nd Austin/Chuck	61 %	2 nd Larse/Arne	63 %
Fri 28/1/05	1 st Austin/Chuck	66 %	1 st Gerard/Derek	70 %
	2 nd Ursula/Jeff	63 %	2 nd Mike/Jim (both Can)	55 %

Editorial

Yet another week with all Mitchell movements; it won't last as people are beginning to drift back home now. And a couple of firsts this week: 13 tables on Monday! And a very rude French newcomer managed to get himself evicted from the club after just two rounds into his second appearance at the club! He'd already upset ½ a dozen or so players before he called me the rudest director that he had ever met! I guess that if you've gotta go

Both Chuck and Thorlief (both previously banned) have been playing regularly at the Wednesday club (not under my control) and both have behaved themselves admirably – I guess they know what happens when they misbehave? I have decided to let them both back into the Mon/Fri clubs on probation provided that they continue to behave themselves – no silly/unnecessary questioning of less experienced players (Chuck), no slapping down of bidding or playing cards (Thorlief), no brawls (Thorlief), no raising of the voice and *absolutely* no psyching (both). Along with Alex and Jeff these four may consider themselves 'on notice'. As Baden Powell once said, 'Be Prepared'.

Anyway, I needed to find a partner for Austin and Chuck is most certainly 'ideal'.

We had another 'simultaneous' on Monday and the hands were from a former World Championship.

There were no less than 3 mis-boardings on Friday, so the curtain cards will be back for all Mitchell (all boards are played on the first round) movements.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A Hand B With Hand A you open 1♥ and partner responds 1♠, what do you bid?

♠ AJ94

♠ -

♥ AKQ63

♥ -

♦ J64

♦ A1086532

You are dealer at unfavourable vulnerability with this Hand B freak. What do you open?

♣ 2

♣ 1098653

Hand C

Hand D

With Hand C partner opens a weak 2♦ and RHO overcalls 2♥. What do you do?

♠ 65

♠ J974

♥ J108632

♥ 732

With Hand D partner opens 1NT, what do you bid?

♦ KQJ

♦ K103

♣ 74

♣ A95

A well bid slam?

Board 20 from Monday 24th

As when it was played at the World Championships, less than ½ of the tables reached the excellent slam on Monday: -

Dealer:	♠ AJ94	<u>Table A</u>				
West	♥ AKQ63	West	North(A)	East	South	
N-S vul	♦ J64	pass	1♥	pass	1♠	
	♣ 2	pass	3♠ (1)	pass	4♠ (2)	
		all pass				
♠ K73	N	♠ 85	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ 98	W E	♥ J1072	West	North(A)	East	South
♦ K53	S	♦ 1097	pass	1♥	pass	1♠
♣ 109843		♣ KJ76	pass	4♣ (1)	pass	4♦ (3)
	♠ Q1062		pass	4♥ (3)	pass	4NT (4)
	♥ 54		pass	5♥ (5)	pass	6♠
	♦ AQ82		all pass			
	♣ AQ5					

Table A: (1) This was typical of pairs who missed the slam. 3♠ at (1) is fine (I guess?).
(2) But is the South hand worth an effort? It's just about strong enough to look for slam but two small in partner's suit is a very poor holding. I think that 4♠ is fine and as ½ of the World Championship contenders did not reach slam (and also less than ½ at our club) I suppose the majority agree with me?

Table B: (1) What did you bid with this North hand A in this week's quiz? I was North at this table but South did not have to think as I forced to game at (1). I liked my hand and 4♣ was a splinter agreeing ♠'s and showing a singleton ♣. Perhaps a bit of an overbid, but I have good trump support and the ♥AKQxx are excellent.
(3) 4♦ and 4♥ were cue bids, showing the ace resp.
(4) Now I have frequently said that you should not bid Blackwood with a weak doubleton but this sequence was perfect. It is usually best to cue bid before invoking Blackwood; in this sequence North has shown the ♥ ace and so South now bid Roman Key Card Blackwood.
(5) Two 'key cards' (the ♠K is included in the answer). Note that if you do not play RKCB it is not so easy to find out if partner has the ♠K or not after a two ace reply. With a keycard missing it's easy to stay out of the grand.

And what happened? 12 tricks were easy, just 5 out of 13 pairs bid the slam. And more than 50% of the World Championship finalists missed it also. Shame on them.

Now after the session one North player did grill me over South's 4♠ bid at (2), claiming that South should look for slam. I've stated my view (that North should splinter) but then only one of the World Championship contenders agreed with me!

The bottom lines: -

- AKQxx is worth far more than 9 points.
- If you can describe your hand in one bid, then do so (the 4♣ splinter here).
- Play splinters
- Play Roman Key Card Blackwood (RKCB).
- It's usually best to cue bid before using RKCB.

Bad timing – part 1

Board 8 from Monday 24th

Here we have an example of a silly bid at the wrong time. And a typical bit of Alex/Jeff theatrics too boot: -

Dealer:	♠ 2	<u>Table A</u>				
West	♥ 1098432	West	North	East	South	
Love all	♦ KQ73		(Alex)		(Jeff)	
	♣ J4	1♠ (1)	pass (2)	2♣	pass	
		2♠	pass (3)	3♣ (4)	pass	
♠ KJ9873	N	♠ Q6	pass (5)	3♥ (6)	3♠ (7) dbl (8)	
♥ Q75	W E	♥ J	all pass			
♦ 104	S	♦ AJ8				
♣ A5		♣ KQ98763	<u>Table B</u>			
	♠ A1054		West	North	East	South
	♥ AK6		2♠ (1)	3♥ (9)	3♠	dbl (10)
	♦ 9652		all pass			
	♣ 102					

Table A: (1) On the border between a 1♠ and a weak 2♠ opener. With reasonable ♥'s I think that 1♠ is best (it's best not to pre-empt in a major suit with a good holding in the other major).
(2) A very restrained pass from Alex, much better than a weak 3♥. With no honours and only a 6 card suit a 3 level pre-empt is unwise.
(3) And so it's an obvious pass now that the opponents have exchanged information.
(4) Now this is not forcing in Standard American. Playing 2/1 it is generally played as forcing but in most systems it is just encouraging. With game values you have to find a forcing bid and it's not easy (one reason why 2/1 is such a great system). Anyway, in Standard American it's difficult now and I can't see any alternative than an offbeat 3♦. Can you? Any ♣ or NT bid is non-forcing.
(5) Here's where the theatrics start. Apparently West thought for a long time here and then passed. Alex told him that he can't do that (nonsense of course) and so West called me over. I explained to Alex that West's long pause followed by a pass was only significant if West's partner gets another bid (i.e. if Alex bid now then East must pass unless he has a very clear-cut bid).
(6) Alex, of course, thought that he could take advantage of this and so he stuck in a stupid (opponents have exchanged oodles of information) 3♥ bid.
(7) And, of course, Alex called me back over when East bid. I looked at the East hand and stated that in my opinion he had a very clear 3♠ bid.
(8) And Jeff made an unwise double.
3♠ doubled made but Alex/Jeff did not get an outright bottom on the board, another North made an equally silly bid at Table B:

Table B: (1) This West chose a weak 2♠ opener, fine.
(9) But 3♥ here is not fine! It is not a pre-emptive bid (there's no such thing as a pre-empt over a pre-empt). This 3♥ overcall should show a *good* opening hand with a decent suit.
(10) And South obviously has loads to spare for a double in this auction.

And what happened? At most tables it was a part-score hand. 3♠ doubled made exactly against Alex/Jeff but they salvaged a point when it made +1 at Table B.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't try to twist the laws.
- It's not a pre-empt when the opponents have already both bid twice.
- You cannot pre-empt over a pre-empt.

Bad timing – part 2

Board 21 from Monday 24th

Here's another example of East 'pre-empting' at the wrong time: -

Dealer:	♠ Q3				
North	♥ KQ986	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ A107	-	1♥	pass (1)	3♥ (2)
	♣ QJ4	pass	4♥ (3)	4♠ (4)	pass (5)
		pass	dbl	all pass	
♠ 1085	N	♠ KJ9764			
♥ AJ103	W E	♥ 5			
♦ 64	S	♦ K953			
♣ K762		♣ 109			
	♠ A2				
	♥ 742				
	♦ QJ82				
	♣ A853				

- (1) In the booklet the East hand overcalled either 3♠ or a weak 2♠. One of these actions or even just 1♠ is obviously better than a feeble pass.
- (2) This South hand is worth 3♥, you can either bid it directly as here or else bid a minor first (or a forcing 1NT if you play 2/1).
- (3) North has a clear acceptance, but the bad break means that 4♥ won't make.
- (4) What a silly bid! If you want to pre-empt then do so at the earliest opportunity; to do so when the opponents have found a fit and gauged each other's strength is simply silly. And, of course, this is not a pre-empt as it consumes no bidding space.
- (5) A forcing pass, so
- (6) North must either double or bid 5♥. With a decent defensive hand double is clearly best.

And what happened? 4♠ went two down for a near top to N-S. 4♥ was bid 4 times and made just once. Most of the time it was part-scores.

The bottom lines: -

- Pre-empt to the limit at the first opportunity.
- It's not a pre-empt when the opponents have already bid game! It's usually just silly.

3NT is usually better than 5 of a minorBoard 24 from Wednesday 26th

Same old story, but this time with a twist: -

Dealer:	♠ AKJ				
West	♥ 92	West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ KQ2	pass	1♣	pass	1♥
	♣ KQJ74	1♠	2NT (1)	3♠	4♦ (2)
		pass	4NT (3)	5♠ (4)	pass (5)
		pass	dbl	all pass	
♠ Q7642	N	♠ 109853			
♥ A765	W E	♥ J4			
♦ 10	S	♦ J876			
♣ A52		♣ 106			
	♠ -				
	♥ KQ1085				
	♦ A9543				
	♣ 983				

(1) 18-19 points (and obviously with ♠'s well stopped).

(2) Now North's 2NT is not strictly forcing and so South felt that he had to say something. I would like a much better (slam-seeking) hand to bid past 3NT.

(3) North was not happy – he wants to play in 3NT and now cannot; still, 4NT should be safe.

(4) This is silly. 4♠ last go would have been acceptable (the Law – but it may be too high as N-S obviously have all the points) but this is certainly too high. Perhaps he thought that he was interfering with the opponent's Blackwood?

(5) And whether South thought that 4NT was Blackwood or not will never be known. Pass here is consistent with DOPI, or it could be just a forcing pass. Only South knows.

(6) Now North was not happy about being unable to play in NT and was sure that 5♦ would be a bad score, but 5♠ doubled certainly may get the top spot?

And what happened? 5♠ doubled went minus 4 and that 800 gave N-S their (ill-deserved?) top. East-West (well East anyway) got what they deserved. At other tables 3NT was bid 4 times making overtricks and one other pair obviously also do not listen to what I say about 3NT being better than 5 of a minor and went one down in 5♦. If East had simply passed at (4) and South had responded to 'Blackwood' then E-W would have got the top.

The bottom lines: -

- If it looks like the opponents don't know what they are doing, them leave them alone!
- If partner makes a (not strictly forcing) 2NT bid and the enemy interfere then a subsequent 4NT by him is unlikely to be anything other than to play?

What's a 2♣ overcall over a 1♣ opening?South hand 8 from Monday 24th

♠ 52 Jeff held this hand and overcalled a 1♣ opening with 2♣. Alex was asked
 ♥ 103 what the bid meant and he said 'strong'. Now you can play it as anything
 ♦ K532 you like; natural, strong, Michaels or whatever you wish, but regular
 ♣ AQJ94 partnerships really should have an understanding on something as mundane
 as this? Agreed Alex/Jeff?

A ridiculous 5♦ bid?

Board 5 from Wednesday 26th

Dealer: ♠ -
North ♥ -
N-S vul ♦ A1086532
♣ 1098653

♠ AKJ109432	N	♠ Q87
♥ 5	W E	♥ AKQ974
♦ 97	S	♦ 4
♣ A2		♣ KQJ
	♠ 65	
	♥ J108632	
	♦ KQJ	
	♣ 74	

Table A

West	North(B)	East	South
-	3♦ (1)	3♥	pass
3♠	4♣ (2)	4♠	pass
4NT	5♣ (3)	pass	5♦
5♠	all pass		

Table B

West	North	East	South (C)
-	2♦ (1)	2♥	5♦ !!! (4)
5♠	all pass		

Table A: (1) Now 7-6 distributions do not come up every day of the week, so what did you open with this North hand B in this week's quiz? I was North at Table A and chose 3♦ (with the intention of following up with a ♣ bid). I'm sure that everybody will agree that the subsequent bidding was very reasonable? 5♣ at (3) was both an attempt to disrupt the opponent's Blackwood and a try to get partner to bid a sacrifice if necessary.

Table B: (1) This North chose (in my opinion) a somewhat feeble 2♦ opening.
(2) And what did you bid with this South hand C in this week's quiz? I would bid 3♦, but pass is acceptable.

But what is this ridiculous 5♦ bid? Now this was on the last round of the session and the South player had had to leave. There was a sit-out and on this last round it was Alex/Thorlief to sit out and so I asked Alex if he would play the South hands at this table. Now Alex/Thorlief had just played the boards but what else can I do? I expect people to bid/play 'normally' under these circumstances. Anyway, for some reason Alex told Thorlief to play the boards. Thorlief had just played the hand 15 minutes earlier and knew that E-W were cold for 6♠, thus his ridiculous 5♦ bid!! This really is extremely stupid behaviour for somebody who has just had a life ban (tentatively) lifted! I guess it won't be long before he's banned again? If he pulls a stunt like this when playing with his real partner then he would most certainly be out again.

And what happened? Just one pair bid the 6♠ slam and 5♠+1 scored average.

The bottom lines: -

- If you are asked to bid/play a hand that you have already played then you should try to behave normally. Rest assured that if/when numbers are down to the extent that I have to call for dummies then I will consider Thorlief incapable of performing this simple task.

A Game Forcing Auction?

Board 17 from Friday 28th

Dealer: ♠ 4
North ♥ K843
Love all ♦ Q10975
♣ Q76

♠ 9862 N ♠ AKQJ1075
♥ J976 W E ♥ 2
♦ 63 S ♦ K2
♣ J54 ♣ AK9
♠ 3
♥ AQ105
♦ AJ84
♣ 10832

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	pass	2♣ (1)	pass
2♦ (2)	pass	2♠ (3)	pass
4♠ (4)	all pass		

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	pass	2♣	pass
2♥ (5)	pass	2♠ (6)	pass
pass (7)	all pass		

Table A: This was typical of most of the tables on Friday: -

- (1) Strong. This is ½ trick short of game and is well worth a 2♣ opener.
- (2) Negative.
- (3) Game forcing in Standard American. 3♠, showing a solid self-sufficient suit is a sound alternative
- (4) There are options here. 2NT is often played as a 2nd negative (+/- 0-4 pts) but I like the jump to 4♠ here (fast arrival).

Anyway. The reasonable 4♠ should always be reached?

Table B: (5) Obviously this West does not understand strong 2♣ sequences.

(6) 3♠ is again an alternative (showing a solid suit in a forcing sequence).

(7) But this West did not appreciate that this was a game forcing sequence??

Now as it happens 4♠ is not a solid contract. It made at most tables but the play at Table B was interesting. Obviously a ♦ lead gives declarer 10 tricks and this South chose a small ♣. Declarer tried the ♣J but North had the ♣Q and so East won. The ♠A cleared trumps and making 10 tricks now appears to depend upon the ♦A being onside? However, there is no need for haste and declarer simply led the ♥2 towards dummy (West) at trick two. South won with the ♥Q and, reluctant to break a new suit, returned a ♣ giving declarer 10 tricks.

Where did the defence go wrong? Now North could have overtaken partner's ♥Q and shot a ♦ through but I think that South was at fault. He knows that declarer has ample (trump) entries to dummy and if declarer had the ♥K he would have led ♥'s from dummy. And having taken the (incorrect) decision to take the ♥Q he should have exited with a ♥ rather than giving declarer a free ♣ trick.

However, it was not disastrous for N-S as the contract was only 2♠ at this table!

And what happened elsewhere? One other pair were in 2♠ (just +1). Most pairs were in 4♠ either making or going one down and one pair overbid to 5♠ going minus one.

The bottom lines: -

- When partner opens 2♣ then 2♦ is the (artificial) negative bid.
- When partner opens 2♣ then after any response than 2♦ the sequence is game forcing.
- In Standard American after a 2♣ opening the only sequence that is not forcing to game is 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT - pass, where 2NT shows 23-24 points and obviously responder is bust.

That flat 4333 type shape again

Board 15 from Friday 28th

Dealer: ♠ Q1052
South ♥ K1086
N-S vul ♦ 74
♣ 1084

♠ J974 N ♠ K8
♥ 732 W E ♥ AJ54
♦ K103 S ♦ A962
♣ A95 ♣ K76

♠ A63
♥ Q9
♦ QJ85
♣ QJ32

Table A

West(D)	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass (1)
pass	pass	1NT	pass
2♣ (2)	pass	2♥	pass
2NT	all pass		

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	pass	1NT	pass
3NT (2)	all pass		

Table A: (1) It conforms with the rule of 20 (just) but with all these quacks I too would pass with this South hand.

(2) What did you bid with this West hand (D) in this week's quiz? It's 8 points so Stayman followed by an invitational bid?

No! And I'm happy to say that ½ of the club got this one right – deduct a point for the flat 4333 type shape. The correct bid at (2) is pass.

Table B: (2) Obviously this West does not read, or take notice of, the news-sheets.

And what happened? 1NT was bid 4 times but made on just one occasion and everybody else went down – the more they bid the more they (deservedly) went down. The bottom lines:

- Deduct a point for the 4333 type shape. Now I realise that most of you are fed up with me saying this week after week, but I bet that without my continued writings then just about everybody would have made an effort with this West hand? It's gratifying to know that at least ½ of the club listen to some of what I say and stopped in 1NT.

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: 3♠ (invitational) or a 4♣ splinter. Now 3♠ was the clear choice amongst the World Championship contenders (just one chose a 4♣ splinter) but I think that the hand is worth a game force. Now the invitational 3♠ bid is usually around 16-17 points and a game force (4♠ or a splinter) would be around 18-19. This hand is only 15 but with good trumps and a 5 card suit headed by the AKQ (worth far more than 9 points) and a singleton I think it's worth a game force, and if you play splinters then 4♣ (agreeing ♠'s and showing a ♣ shortage) is perfect. Now 4♣ may be a slight overbid but you have got the hand off your chest and described it perfectly; if slam is on then it's child's play after the descriptive opening bid and splinter.

Hand B: 3♦. Pass is a possibility if you have the mechanism to show a minor two-suiter later but I prefer 3♦ followed by a subsequent ♣ bid. 2♦ is too feeble and a higher ♦ pre-empt rules out the ♣ suit.

Hand C: 3♦. Nine combined trumps so that's what 'the Law' says. Pass is acceptable. 5♦ is simply cheating if you have seen the hand before (the 5♦ bidder had).

Hand D: Pass. It's not worth a bid (2♣ followed by an invitation) as you should deduct a point for the 4333 type shape.



Club News Sheet – No. 118

4/2/2005



	<u>N-S winners</u>		<u>E-W winners</u>	
Mon 31/1/05	1 st Sirthale/Lehtinen	66 %	1 st Jim(Can)/Ian	60 %
	2 nd Norman/Joe	60 %	2 nd Ken/Clive	59 %
Wed 2/2/05	1 st Austin/Mike(Can)	59 %	1 st Jim(Sco)/Richard(Irl)	57 %
	2 nd Ken/Jeff	54 %	2 nd Bjorn/Kees	56 %
Fri 4/2/05	1 st Michael/Ole	66 %	1 st Norman/Terry	59 %
	2 nd = Dinnie/Sheila	56 %	2 nd Bob/Dave	58 %
	2 nd = Alex/Thorlief	56 %		

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A LHO opens 1♣ and partner overcalls 1♦. RHO passes, what do you do?
♠ Q1085	♠ Q82	
♥ J8	♥ KJ7	With Hand B you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♦, what do you rebid?
♦ Q643	♦ 63	
♣ K102	♣ AKJ83	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C RHO opens 1♣, what do you bid?
♠ K7	♠ AJ74	
♥ KQ5	♥ Q54	With Hand D partner opens 1♣ and you respond 1♦. Partner then bids 2♣, what do you do?
♦ AKJ752	♦ QJ42	
♣ J4	♣ 75	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1NT. You transfer and partner obediently bids 2♥, what do you bid now?
♠ AQ	♠ K3	
♥ Q10652	♥ AK3	What do you open with Hand F?
♦ Q9	♦ A104	
♣ AK85	♣ QJ1098	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1NT and so you bid 2♣, Stayman. Partner responds 2♥, what do you bid now?
♠ K873	♠ AQ109	
♥ A9	♥ 7542	With Hand H you open 1NT and partner bids 2♣. You respond 2♥ and partner bids 3NT, what do you do?
♦ A32	♦ K106	
♣ Q1093	♣ AK	

A Sound Overcall

Board 16 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ Q1085
West ♥ J8
E-W vul ♦ Q643
♣ K102

West	North (C)	East	South (A)
pass	pass	1♣	1♦ (1)
pass	pass (2)	pass	

♠ J632	N	♠ A94
♥ A963	W E	♥ 10742
♦ 1098	S	♦ -
♣ 97		♣ AQ8653
	♠ K7	
	♥ KQ5	
	♦ AKJ752	
	♣ J4	

Now 3NT is a fairly comfortable contract for N-S (especially if played by North) but only two tables out of ten managed to reach it, so what went wrong here?

(1) So what did you bid with this South hand A in this week's quiz? You cannot bid 1NT (15-18) with no ♣ stop. You could double and then bid ♦'s over partner's expected major suit response. But I am actually with Austin (South) here and think that 1♦ is fine - if game is on for N-S then partner can surely muster up a bid. Incidentally, a simple overcall at the one level is defined as 8-16 points or 7-17 points or similar (depending upon where you read it).

(2) So what did you bid with this North hand C in this week's quiz? As I said above, partner's overcall may be anything up to about 16 or 17 points and this North hand has improved because of the ♦ fit. I would most certainly bid 1♠. In fact I cannot see any logical reason for passing – perhaps Chuck can enlighten me?

And how should the bidding then go? North should bid 1♠, South would then bid 2♣ (in principal asking for a ♣ stop and inviting 3NT if partner has anything to spare). North, with a decent hand, a good ♣ stop, and the all-important ♦Q then has an easy 3NT bid.

A Sound Sacrifice?

Board 26 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ A4
East ♥ AJ53
Both vul ♦ J107
♣ Q974

♠ J	N	♠ 98753
♥ K1098762	W E	♥ 4
♦ -	S	♦ 986542
♣ KJ863		♣ A
	♠ KQ1062	
	♥ Q	
	♦ AKQ3	
	♣ 1052	

Now N-S have a comfortable 3NT, usually making with overtricks. But E-W have a good save in ♥'s - 3♥ by West was the final contract at four tables. And even when doubled it was a very sound sacrifice as it went just one down for a miserable 200 to N-S. At one table E-W bid to 4♥ and this went two down doubled (so -500) but was still a good save against the opponents 630 or 660 in NT.

But things are obviously different when (Alex and) Jeff (E-W) are in full swing. I don't know the exact bidding at their table but the final contract of 4♣ by West, doubled, went minus 6 for a penalty of 1700. This is not a sound sacrifice. My personal preference is to play in the 7-1 fit rather than the 5-1 fit. I believe that Alex (West) overcalled in ♥'s and then bid ♣'s twice. Jeff (East) said that Alex should simply have bid 4♥. I'm on Alex's side – bid out your shape. West promises more ♥'s than ♣'s and East should give preference back to ♥'s.

Totally automatic?

Board 6 from Monday 31st

There were 4 different contracts and 8 different results on this board from Monday: -

Dealer:	♠ K107	<u>Table A</u>				
East	♥ 1063	West(B)	North	East(D)	South	
Love all	♦ AK9	-	-	pass	pass	
	♣ 10962	1♣	pass	1♦ (1)	pass	
		2♣ (2)	pass	2NT (3)	pass	
		pass (4)	pass			
♠ Q82	N	♠ AJ74	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ KJ7	W E	♥ Q54	West	North	East	South
♦ 63	S	♦ QJ42	-	-	pass	pass
♣ AKJ83		♣ 75	1♣	pass	1♠ (1)	pass
			pass (5)	pass		
	♠ 965		<u>Table C</u>			
	♥ A982		West	North	East	South
	♦ 10875		-	-	pass	pass
	♣ Q4		1♣	pass	1♦ (1)	pass
			1NT (2)	all pass		

- Table A: (1) It's a matter of style if you respond 1♦ or 1♠ here.
(2) But what did you bid with this West hand B in this week's quiz? No less than 3 players chose 2♣, I simply don't understand it! 2♣ is a very poor bid. See Table C for the correct bidding.
(3) What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? Now there are a few members who are confused about what the 2NT bid means. By responder it is usually 11-12 points (whenever it is bid) and that is the case here. This East hand is a mis-fitting 10 count and should pass.
(4) Having chosen this route (I would not have bid 2♣ at (2)) partner's 2NT is invitational and I would bid 3NT. One table bid this way and justly went down, as did this 2NT contract.
- Table B: (1) This East chose the 1♠ response and West can happily pass this at (5) as East is a passed hand.
- Table C: (2) Back to the 1♦ response at (1), but this time West chose the correct rebid – 1NT. This seems totally automatic to me, why on earth anybody would want to rebid a 5 card ♣ suit (as Table A) rather than NT when they have tenaces in both majors is beyond me.

And what happened? Just one table stopped in 1NT and just one in 1♠. These both scored well. All the other tables bid too high and most went down.

The bottom lines: -

- With a balanced hand in the 12-14 point range, rebid 1NT.
- A 2NT bid by responder shows 11-12 points, whether bid on the first or 2nd round.

How to bid the grand?

Board 13 from Monday 31st

Just about every N-S pair reached 6NT on this board from Monday, but I was asked how a grand could confidently be bid?: -

Dealer: ♠ K3
North ♥ AK3
Both vul ♦ A104
 ♣ QJ1098

♠ J10864 N ♠ 9752
♥ 87 W E ♥ J94
♦ J8765 S ♦ K32
♣ 7 ♣ 964

♠ AQ
♥ Q10652
♦ Q9
♣ AK85

Table A

West	North(F)	East	South(E)
-	1NT (1)	pass	2♦
pass	2♥ (2)	pass	4♣ (3)
pass	4♠ (4)	pass	6NT (5)
all pass			

'Expert' Table

West	North (F)	East	South(E)
-	1NT	pass	2♦
pass	2♥ (2)	pass	3♣ (6)
pass	4♣ (7)	pass	4NT (8)
pass	5♠ (9)	pass	5NT (10)
pass	6♥ (11)	pass	7♣ (12)
all pass			

Table A: This auction was fairly typical.

(1) What did you open with this North hand F in this week's quiz? It's a top-of-the-range 1NT opener. Some would consider it too strong (and in that case reaching the grand is easy after a 1♣ opening followed by 2NT).

(2) North simply accepts South's transfer. A super-accept is possible with this max and great ♥'s, but most players (including me) prefer 4 trumps for a super-accept.

(3) Ace ask

(4) Two aces

(5) 32-34 points with no known fit, so 6NT should be just right.

'Expert' Table Let's assume that our 'expert' again opens with a heavyweight 1NT, can a grand slam still be bid with confidence?

(2) With just 3 trumps a normal accept is fine despite the super-max.

(6) What did you bid with this South A in this week's quiz? 3♣, a 2nd suit and game forcing is best – if there is a ♣ fit then 6♣ or 7♣ may be better than 6NT.

(7) Now South's 3♣ bid could just be bidding out the shape with 3NT or 4♥ in mind, or it may be looking for slam. North certainly does not mind playing in 4♥ if South has a minimum hand and so he supports ♣'s just in case slam is in the offing.

(8) Roman Key card Blackwood. Now actually a real expert pair would not use 4NT as the key-card ask when ♣'s are trumps and 4♦ (Kickback) is to be preferred. Anyway, that's a bit advanced so let's assume that 4NT is RKCB.

(9) 2 key cards + the ♣Q.

(10) kings?

(11) two

(12) South knows that all the aces and kings are present, that just one king is missing, and that partner has at least 4 ♣'s including the ♣Q. 7♣ is safer than 7NT if partner has just 4 ♣'s.

Now the ‘experts’ did fairly well, but bidding the grand was a bit of a gamble as South did not know which king was missing - clearly the ♥K is a much better card than the ♦K. So what’s the real solution? There are a few possibilities. Some players play that the 5NT king asks for the suit of the lower ranking king and there are numerous other schemes in use. So what’s really best? It’s all explained in the NT book – use Kickback in conjunction with Double Roman Keycard Blackwood!

‘Real Expert’ Table

West	North	East	South
-	1NT (1)	pass	2♦
pass	2♥ (2)	pass	3♣ (3)
pass	4♣ (4)	pass	4♦ (5)
pass	4♥ (6)	etc to	7♣ (7)

- (3) A 2nd suit after a transfer completion is natural and game forcing. It may just be an attempt to find the best contract between 3NT and 4 of the major or it may be looking for slam (as here).
- (4) Now obviously West will co-operate if East is slam-seeking, and if East is not looking for slam then 4♥ will be fine.
- (5) With ♣’s as trumps you may well get in a tangle if you use 4NT as the ace-ask. The best solution is to use ‘Kickback’ whereby 4 of the suit above trumps is the ace-ask. So here it’s 4♦. But there is also another possible improvement. North is known to be balanced and south has shown a two-suiter, obviously the key cards in both of South’s suits are important and so the 4♦ bid here is in fact Double RKCB, where the kings of both ♣’s and ♥’s are counted in the reply.
- (6) (zero or) three key cards.
- (7) South knows that North has the ♥A, ♥K and ♦A. There are now various options to discover the ♠K and the ♣Q and 7♣ is then reached.

The bottom lines: -

- With a minor suit as trumps then 4NT as Blackwood is often too high and there are various options. Some play that 4 of the agreed minor is Blackwood but my preferred version is to play Kickback, so 4♦ is Blackwood when ♣’s are trumps (and 4♥ is Blackwood when ♦’s are trumps).
- QJ1098 is worth more than 3 points - and so this North hand is too strong for a 1NT opening.

An automatic Squeeze

Board 26 from Wednesday 2nd

Dealer: ♠ AK3
 East ♥ 52
 both vul ♦ J542
 ♣ A854

Table A
 West North East South
 - - 2♥ 2♠
 pass 4♠ all pass

♠ QJ5 N ♠ 97
 ♥ 9 W E ♥ AJ8763
 ♦ AQ87 S ♦ 10963
 ♣ J9632 ♣ 10
 ♠ 109642
 ♥ KQ104
 ♦ K
 ♣ KQ7

Table B
 West North East South
 - - 2♦ (1) pass (2)
 2♥ (3) dbl (4) pass (5) 4♠ (6)
 all pass

Table A: Pretty straightforward. A weak two and an overcall which was raised to game. This was the auction at most tables.

- Table B:
- (1) But the Multi 2♦ really is a formidable weapon – it’s difficult for non-experienced pairs to defend against. Here 2♦ was either a weak two (in either ♥’s or ♠’s) or a strong hand.
 - (2) South’s pass is best here – assuming that East has a weak ♥ or ♠ hand he does not know which suit it is, and he gets another bid anyway.
 - (3) 2♥ is the bid by a responder who has no game ambitions opposite a weak two. Opener will then either pass or correct to 2♠.
 - (4) But North has a reasonable hand and so made a take-out double.
 - (5) And this pass would usually indicate a weak ♥ hand.
 - (6) South’s ♥’s are well-placed and so he bid the ♠ game.

Now the bidding may have been interesting, but the play’s the thing this time. Four South’s played in a 4♠ contract. At Table B the ♥9 was led and East won and returned the ♥8. Obviously West is void and so South played the ♥10 and West trumped. Now come the interesting bits; what should West do? To open up either ♣’s or ♦’s seems foolhardy (what would you play?) and I agree that a trump switch is reasonable. Declarer drew trumps in two rounds, leaving this position with the lead in dummy. How would you continue as declarer?

DUMMY → ♠ 3
 ♥
 ♦ J542
 ♣ A854

Now in this sort of situation with a singleton king in the closed hand it is often best to lead from dummy and hope that if East has the ace he will not play it. However, on this occasion it is unlikely that East has the ♦ ace.

♠ - N ♠ -
 ♥ - W E ♥ J763
 ♦ AQ87 S ♦ 10963
 ♣ J9632 ♣ 10
 ♠ 1096
 ♥ KQ
 ♦ K
 ♣ KQ7

But there is another possibility of getting all of the remaining tricks, have you spotted it? South knows that West now holds 9 cards in the minors and that he probably has the ♦ ace. All declarer has to do now is play three rounds of trumps followed by the two top ♥’s: -

DUMMY → ♠ -
 ♥ -
 ♦ J
 ♣ A854

That leaves this position with the lead in the South hand when declarer leads the ♥Q. What can West discard on the ♥Q? It’s impossible, South makes the remainder of the tricks whatever West does. 4♠ made +1.

♠ - N ♠ -

♥ -	W E	♥ J7
♦ A	S	♦ 109
♣ J963		♣ 10
♠ -		
♥ Q		
♦ K		
♣ KQ7		

This is a very simple ‘automatic’ squeeze. It may well be that South had no idea what he was doing, but he did it very well! A well-earned (or was it just lucky?) top.

And what happened at other tables? Three other N-S pairs were in 4♠ and they all made exactly. One pair stopped in 2♠ (+2) and East was left in peace in 2♥ at the remaining two tables going two or three down for excellent scores to E-W.

The bottom line: -

- When you have all of the remaining tricks except one it’s often best to just keep on playing out your winners. Even if there is not a legitimate squeeze one of the defenders may make a mistake.

A few words about The Multi-2♦

Now most players in the club play 2♥ and 2♠ openings as weak, but there are all sorts of variations of opening two bids and one that a few of our visitors play is the ‘multi 2♦’. Here is a very brief description: -

2♦ means one of a number of things, typically it is: -

- A hand that you (or I) would open 2♥ or ...
- A hand that you (or I) would open 2♠ or ...
- Some sort of strong hand.

The responder usually bids 2♥ which is not natural – it is simply a relay that opener will either pass or correct to 2♠ if he has a weak two type opening.

Defending against the multi

This can be tricky, but the defence has the advantage that the player directly after the 2♦ bidder gets two bids (LHO must bid over 2♦). It’s best to assume that the 2♦ opener has a weak hand (he usually does) but if you are next to bid over the 2♦ opening it’s best not to bid a major suit – wait and see which 6 card major the opener has.

I have witnessed countless mishaps when either the opening side or the defenders end up in totally ridiculous contracts because nobody knew which major the opener had.

How the tables turn - An Outright Psyche

Board 26 from Wednesday 26th

Chuck (justifiably) called me over at the end of this deal a week ago. I'm not sure of the exact bidding but it was something along these lines: -

Dealer:	♠ K876				
East	♥ K63	West	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ A53		(Chuck)		(Austin)
	♣ AKJ	-	-	1♣	pass
		1♠ (1)	pass	1NT (2)	pass
♠ -	N	2♣	2NT	pass	pass
♥ Q975	W E	3♣	3NT	pass	4♥
♦ J8742	S	all pass			
♣ 9532					
	♠ J109543				
	♥ AJ102				
	♦ 96				
	♣ 7				

- (1) An outright psyche, aimed at preventing the opponents from finding their ♠ fit. Note that West knows that N-S have at least an 8 card ♠ fit as his partner did not open 1♠.
- (2) I'm not sure if East rebid 1NT or 2♣ here but that is irrelevant.

And what happened? 4♠ was bid by most N-S pairs and usually made exactly or with an overtrick. This N-S went minus two in 4♥ – the psyche worked like a treat on this occasion. Now psyching is not illegal, but all psyches must be reported and psyching at this club (with a large number of non-experienced players) is *strongly* dissuaded. I did not adjust the score at this table, but a 2nd psyche by a partnership is 'an established pattern' and will be dealt with by an adjusted score. Any subsequent psyche will receive a more harsh punishment (Thorlief, Jeff and Chuck have all psyched more than once and all understand – I hope – that they will receive a suspension if they psyche again).

Some might say it's fitting retribution – Chuck has psyched on previous occasions but now gets a complete zero as a result of an outrageous psyche.

The bottom lines: -

- Please do not psyche at this club.
- Please report all psyches to the director.

The rules concerning Bidding Boxes

A few people have complained to me about people 'fumbling around' and dithering in the bidding boxes. Here's a quote from the rules: -

A call is regarded as made when a bidding card has been taken out of the bidding box with apparent intent. The player is obliged to make up his mind before he touches any bidding card in the box. Hesitation between bids, when touching the bidding cards, is liable to penalty as unauthorised information.

A call may be changed without penalty when all three of the following conditions are fulfilled:

- 1- The player has inadvertently taken out the wrong bidding card and
- 2- the player corrects, or attempts to correct, without pause for thought and
- 3- the player's partner has not called subsequently.

That 4-4 fit again – Part 1

Board 17 from Wednesday 2nd

Dealer: ♠ Q753
North ♥ Q
Love all ♦ AJ8
♣ AKQ52

♠ KJ	N	♠ A108
♥ J976	W E	♥ 852
♦ KQ1065	S	♦ 974
♣ 96		♣ J1073

♠ 9642
♥ AK1043
♦ 32
♣ 84

West	North	East	South(me)
-	1♣	pass	1♥
pass	1♠ (1)	pass	2♠ (2)
pass	2NT (3)	pass	4♠ (4)
all pass			

- (1) 2♠ is a sound alternative here.
- (2) As North's 1♠ is non-forcing, this 2♠ bid shows a non-minimum
- (3) Now South's 2♠ bid could just be 3 card support, but South has shown a non-minimum hand and I would jump to 3NT here, expecting partner to convert to 4♠ if holding 4 ♠'s.
- (4) With 4 ♠'s a 4♠ contract seems obvious to me, but then you all know about me and my 'thing' about 4-4 fits.

Now normally I like to give the bidding at another table but nobody else bid to 4♠! Maybe North bid 2NT at (1)? But then you have to have a mechanism to find the 4-4 ♠ fit. Best is to play some form of Checkback Stayman or New Minor Forcing so that a bid of 3♣ (or 3♦) over the 2NT rebid is artificial and forcing and asks partner to define his major suit holdings (if he holds 3 ♥'s and/or 4 ♠'s).

And what happened? Making 4♠ was fairly easy, one line is to pitch two ♦'s from the North hand on the ♥AK. At this table declarer simply led ♠'s whenever he was in as the opponents did not attack ♦'s and eventually pitched a ♦ on the 5th ♣. All sensible plays lead to 10 tricks, losing just 3 trump tricks. So this N-S scored a clear top for 4♠ making. No less that 4 other tables ended up in 3NT!! Will they never learn? 3NT just made once but went one or two down on the other three occasions. The other two tables were in ♠ partscores.

4♠ making was a clear top.

The bottom lines: -

- Look for the 4-4 major suit fit.
- As this deal shows, the quality of the 4-4 fit is not important – it's numbers that count and 8 trumps divided 4-4 is excellent.
- Sort out with your partner what you do after a 2NT (18-19) rebid. You cannot afford to lose 4-4 fits and I think it's best (and simplest) to play any bid other than pass as game forcing.

That 4-4 fit again – Part 2

Board 20 from Wednesday 2nd

Dealer: ♠ 42
West ♥ KJ106
Both vul ♦ QJ74
♣ 764

West(H)	North	East(G)	South
1NT	pass	2♣	pass
2♥	pass	3NT(1)	pass
4♠ (2)	all pass		

♠ AQ109	N	♠ K873
♥ 7542	W E	♥ A9
♦ K106	S	♦ A32
♣ AK		♣ Q1093
	♠ J65	
	♥ Q82	
	♦ 985	
	♣ J852	

- (1) Now this is how I think that the hand should be bid. What did you bid with this East hand G in this week's quiz? 3NT is correct. East should obviously try Stayman and after the 2♥ response he simply bids the 3NT game.
- (2) But what did you bid with this West hand H in this week's quiz? West knows that East has 4 ♠'s (as he would not have bothered with Stayman otherwise) and should convert to 4♠ at (2).

And what happened? 4♠ was reached at four tables but the other two played in 3NT. As 'always' the 4-4 fit scores an extra trick and so the 3NT bidders deservedly shared the bottom score.

The bottom line: -

- Much the same as I say week after week after week.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1♠. Partner's overcall does not deny a 4 card ♠ suit and with a known ♦ fit this hand has improved and must bid. On a good day there may even be game if partner has a good hand.
- Hand B: 1NT, automatic. No less than 3 players found a poor 2♣ bid on Monday. A 2♣ rebid promises 6 ♣'s in this auction.
- Hand C: 1♦ (or double followed by a ♦ bid). You cannot overcall 1NT (15-18) with no ♣ stop. Marty Bergen defines a one-level overcall as 7-17 points and I prefer 1♦ to double. If it's your side's hand then partner will bid.
- Hand D: Pass. It's a mis-fit. A 2NT bid here shows 11-12 points and this hand is nowhere near good enough.
- Hand E: 3♣. Natural and game forcing – bid out your shape. You make your move towards the best slam after partner's next bid.
- Hand F: 1♣ (with a 2NT rebid in mind). I guess that most of you chose 1NT? This hand is, in my opinion, too good for 1NT. It is 17 hcp but has two tens and that QJ1098 is worth far more than 3 points.
- Hand G: 3NT. Your Stayman bid has promised a 4 card major and you have game values. So bid game (3NT) and partner will convert to 4♠ if he has 4 ♠'s.
- Hand H: 4♠. Partner has 4 ♠'s.

	<u>N-S winners</u>		<u>E-W winners</u>	
Mon 7/2/05	1 st Jan/Jon	58 %	1 st Michael/Ole	60 %
	2 nd Thorlief/Terry	58 %	2 nd Chuck/Ian	59 %
Wed 9/2/05	1 st Chuck/Austin	64 %	1 st Jan/Jean Charles	57 %
	2 nd Ursula/Terry Haddon	58 %	2 nd Kenneth/John	55 %
Fri 11/2/05	1 st Margit/Peter	59 %	1 st Clive/Ken	66 %
	2 nd Mike(Can)/Phil	58 %	2 nd Bob/Dave	63 %

We had another ‘simultaneous’ on Monday and when I refer to ‘Brian’ and the ‘booklet’ it’s Brian Senior’s commentary in the booklet of hands.

Bidding Quiz**Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.**

Hand A	Hand B	(a) What do you open with Hand A? (b) What would you open if you play a weak NT?
♠ J92	♠ QJ543	
♥ K762	♥ 3	(a) What do you open with Hand B?
♦ KQ9	♦ K2	(b) Suppose you choose 1♠ and partner responds 2♦, what do you bid now?
♣ AQ3	♣ AJ1093	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C RHO opens 1♦, what do you do?
♠ K42	♠ AJ953	
♥ AK5	♥ J93	With Hand D you are dealer and pass. LHO opens 1♦ and partner and RHO both pass, (a) what do you do?
♦ 103	♦ 82	(b) what would you bid if partner had doubled?
♣ A10942	♣ QJ6	
Hand E	Hand F	What do you open with Hand E?
♠ K7	♠ KQ3	
♥ KQ5	♥ J107	With Hand F partner opens 1♥, what do you respond?
♦ AKJ752	♦ A985	
♣ J4	♣ 853	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G you open 1♣. LHO doubles (take-out), partner passes and RHO also passes. What do you do?
♠ K87	♠ J4	
♥ A542	♥ J	
♦ Q62	♦ AK	With Hand H LHO opens 1♣ and partner doubles for take-out, what do you do?
♣ A93	♣ KQJ107642	

A fairly comfortable contract?

Board 16 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ Q1085
West ♥ J8
E-W vul ♦ Q643
♣ K102

♠ J632	N	♠ A94
♥ A963	W E	♥ 10742
♦ 1098	S	♦ -
♣ 97		♣ AQ8653
	♠ K7	
	♥ KQ5	
	♦ AKJ752	
	♣ J4	

'Expert' table

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♣	1♦ (1)
pass	1♠ (2)	pass	2♣ (3)
pass	3NT (4)	all pass	

Table B

West	North	East	South (E)
pass	pass	pass (5)	1NT (6)
pass	2♣	dbl (7)	2♦ (8)
pass	3NT	all pass	

Remember this board from last week's news-sheet? I said that '3NT is a fairly comfortable contract for N-S (especially if played by North)'. Well actually, as Joe pointed out, it's not that comfortable and the 3NT contract reached by South at Table B went down and I was asked for comment.

'Expert' (1) As I said last week, I think that 1♦ is quite acceptable here...

Table (2) ... and that North should bid 1♠.

(3) 2♣ is asking for a stop ...

(4) ... and 3NT is then played from the correct hand

Table B: (5) But at this table East chose to pass his 10 count, fine.

(6) So what did you open with this South hand E in this week's quiz? This South player chose 1NT; I asked around and other players also said 'a balanced 17 count, so 1NT'. I disagree, of course. This hand is far too strong for 1NT. That ♦ suit is worth far more than 8 points and I would open 1♦ with a view to rebidding either 2NT or 3NT.

(7) This is a typical hand for a double of Stayman, it says 'please lead a ♣'.

(8) Now the reason that this deal is in print again is not just because of the poor 1NT opening, but the fact that when we were discussing a 'missed double' on another deal this South told me that he had done it (missed a double) just the previous session (i.e. this hand). He did not notice the double at (7) and so bid 2♦ regardless.

And what happened? 3NT at this table went down on the ♣9 lead.

And how should the bidding go if East decides to pass? How about 1♦ - 1♠ - 3NT.

And if East bids 2♣ over the 1♠ bid then South simply bids 3♣ to ask for a ♣ stop.

The bottom lines: -

- ♦ AKJ752 is worth far more than 8 points.
- If you're looking for 3NT and the opponents have bid, then bid their suit to ask for a stop.
- Anybody (even the club champion!) can fail to notice a double card!

And incidentally, how should the bidding go if South had noticed the double? Now this is up to partnership agreement, but there are now two extra bids (pass and redouble). One possibility (with no 4 card major) is that redouble shows very good ♣'s, 2♦ shows a ♣ stop and pass denies a ♣ stop. Pass is forcing of course (same as for a 2♦ transfer; right, Chuck?).

What went wrong? – part 1

Board 5 from Monday 7th

Slam is hopeless on these N-S cards, so where do you think that the bidding went wrong, or was it just unlucky?

Dealer:	♠ J92				
North	♥ K762	West	North(A)	East	South
N-S vul	♦ KQ9	-	1NT (1)	pass	2♣
	♣ AQ3	pass	2♥	pass	4♣ (2)
		pass	4♥	pass	6♥
		all pass			

♠ 1085	N	♠ Q73
♥ Q	W E	♥ 10843
♦ 1076543	S	♦ A8
♣ 654		♣ 10987

♠ AK64
♥ AJ95
♦ J2
♣ KJ2

- (1) 15-17
- (2) ace-ask

Even with a fortunate lie of the ♥’s so that they can be picked up, slam is hopeless. In the booklet, Brian says that ‘It would be no surprise to plenty of pairs getting to the doomed slam, particularly as North will often show a strong NT and now South will need great discipline to stop below six’.

So Brian implies that it’s South’s ‘fault’, I totally disagree. With a great 17 count and a 4-4 fit opposite a strong NT it is obvious to me for South to bid the slam. No, the problem is not with South’s ‘discipline’ but with North’s! What did you open with this North hand A in this week’s quiz? Anyone who regularly reads the news-sheets will know that with it’s 4333 type shape and lack of points in it’s only 4 card suit, this North hand is simply not worth 1NT. 1♣ is best. I am surprised that Brian did not point that out.

Incidentally, Brian also says that playing a weak NT then North will open 1♥ and it’s up to South so try to avoid the slam after North subsequently shows a ‘strong’ hand. I again disagree, it seems that Brian needs to be told about the 4333 type shape; North should open a weak 1NT when playing Acol.

And what happened? 5 out of the 10 pairs on Monday bid slam. Three went down in 6♥ but somehow two pairs made 6NT. Looks impossible to me.

The bottom lines: -

- Deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape.

What went wrong? – part 2

Board 12 from Monday 7th

This time it's a hopeless slam on these E-W cards, so where do you think that the bidding went wrong, or was it just unlucky?

Dealer:	♠ K1062				
West	♥ QJ82	West(B)	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ J86	1♠ (1)	pass	2♦	pass
	♣ 64	3♣ (2)	pass	3♥ (3)	pass
		3NT (4)	pass	etc to 6NT	
♠ QJ543	N	♠ A87			
♥ 3	W E	♥ K10			
♦ K2	S	♦ AQ954			
♣ AJ1093		♣ K85			
	♠ 9				
	♥ A97654				
	♦ 1073				
	♣ Q72				

- (1) What did you open with this West hand B in this week's quiz? Now either 1♣ or 1♠ are fine, it depends upon your style. If you open 1♣ and then rebid ♠'s twice you show the hand, the problem is that you may not be able to bid ♠'s twice. Most players prefer to open 1♠ with this shape, but you then have to be careful!
- (2) Here we see the problem. If partner bids a red suit at the two level then a 3♣ bid is a 'high reverse' – showing a strong hand and forcing to game. Clearly this West hand is not strong and so only 2NT or 2♠ are weak bids. You cannot bid 2NT with a singleton ♥ and so that only leaves 2♠. Now this is not totally satisfactory – is there a better solution? Yes! Play 2/1. As 2♦ is game forcing when playing 2/1 many 2/1 players (including me) play that a reverse no longer shows extra values.
- (3) 4th suit forcing. Quite why East chose to bid this is a mystery. Anyway, if West has a ♥ stop he will bid 3NT
- (4) Promising a ♥ stop, presumably West does not play 4th suit forcing.

And what happened? North found the ♥Q lead and N-S took the first 6 tricks with one more ♣ trick coming later. Three pairs out of ten bid to a hopeless slam on these E-W cards on Monday.

What went wrong? – part 3

Board 10 from Monday 7th

E-W have a comfortable 4♠ here, so where do you think that the bidding went wrong at Table B, or was it just unlucky?

Dealer: ♠ Q1076
East ♥ Q10874
Both vul ♦ A6
♣ 83

Table A

West (C)	North	East	South
-	-	pass	3♦
dbl (1)	pass	4♠ (2)	all pass

♠ K42 N ♠ AJ953
♥ AK5 W E ♥ J93
♦ 103 S ♦ 82
♣ A10942 ♣ QJ6

Table B

West (C)	North	East (D)	South
-	-	pass	3♦
pass (1)	pass	pass (3)	

♠ 8
♥ 62
♦ KQJ9754
♣ K75

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? Either double or pass are reasonable (see Brian's commentary). This West chose to double, fine.
(2) But what did you bid with this East hand D(b) in this week's quiz? 3♠ is not enough; with 9 points and a decent 5 card suit I agree with 4♠.

Table B: (1) Brian says that there is a 'significant case' for passing and I agree.
(3) Brian goes on to say that we will then see South play in 3♦. I disagree!

Now whether or not West makes a take-out double is not the issue. Obviously a double at (1) would work here, but so should pass. If West passes at (1) (quite reasonable) then what did you bid with this East hand D(a) in this week's quiz? East should most certainly bid 3♠ at (3). This is called balancing, since North did not bid over 3♦ that means that West has values but nothing to bid (as in this case) and East must act. As East is a passed hand, West will expect no more than this but with this nice West hand he has an easy raise to 4♠.

And what happened? Only 3 E-W pairs found 4♠ which made every time.

The bottom lines: -

- Understand balancing.

Guess I have to write off to Brian and explain balancing in addition to devaluing 4333 type shapes?

What went wrong? – part 4

Board 9 from Monday 7th

N-S have a comfortable 6♦ here, so where do you think that the bidding went wrong at Table A, or was it just unlucky?

Dealer: ♠ 6
 North ♥ AQ7
 E-W vul ♦ AKQJ10875
 ♣ 4

Table A
 West North(E) East South
 - 2♣ pass 2♦
 2♠ 5♦ (1) all pass

♠ KQJ1082 N ♠ 97
 ♥ J1062 W E ♥ K9843
 ♦ - S ♦ 43
 ♣ AQ8 ♣ K1075
 ♠ A543
 ♥ 5
 ♦ 962
 ♣ J9632

'Expert' Table
 West North East South
 - 2♣ pass 2♦
 2♠ 4♦ (1) pass 4♠ (2)
 pass 6♦ all pass

- Table A: (1) What did you bid with this North hand E in this week's quiz? 5♦ is silly – why take up all of the bidding space when a simple 3♦ is forcing to game?
- 'Expert' Table (1) But actually there is a possibly better bid than 3♦. After a strong 2♣ opening a jump is unnecessary, and so this jump is used to show a solid suit.
- (2) With 3 trumps, an ace and a singleton South must co-operate in the search for slam. A 4♠ cuebid (showing the ace) is best here.

And what happened? Just one pair out of ten reached 6♦ on Monday.

The bottom lines: -

- Once you have opened 2♣ there is no need to leap off to game, any rebid other than 2NT is game forcing in Standard American.
- So if you do make a jump rebid then that shows a solid/self sufficient suit.

What went wrong? – part 5

Board 2 from Friday 11th

The limit for E-W is 2♥, so what went wrong?

Dealer:	♠ AJ1054				
East	♥ 8	West (F)	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ J1072	-	-	1♥	pass
	♣ K104	3♥ (1)	all pass		

♠ KQ3	N	♠ 62
♥ J107	W E	♥ Q9432
♦ A985	S	♦ KQ63
♣ 853		♣ AJ
	♠ 987	
	♥ AK65	
	♦ 4	
	♣ Q9762	

(1) What did you bid with this West hand F in this week's quiz? 3♥ is a bad overbid. It's 10 points but deduct a point for the totally flat shape. With better ♥'s then 2♥ is obvious, with weaker ♥'s then 1NT is probably best. This actual hand is, in my opinion, borderline (between 2♥ and 1NT) but I would bid 2♥.

And what happened? Only two pairs managed to stop in 2♥, one made for the complete top (the only + score in the E-W column) and the other went one down for a near top. Two pairs stopped in 1NT; both went one down but got excellent scores. The other 8 pairs all overbid and went anything from 2 to 4 down in various ♥ contracts.

The bottom lines: -

- Deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape.
- A raise of 1♥/♠ to 3♥/♠ is a good 10 to bad 12 points
- You need to be upper range if holding just 3 trumps, and I prefer to do this via bidding a minor first to show just 3 trumps, so the direct raise to 3 always guarantees 4 trumps.
- Playing 2/1, of course, you go via the forcing NT.

The SOS re-double

Board 11 from Monday 7th

Dealer: ♠ 9632
South ♥ 9876
Love all ♦ J975
♣ 8

♠ AQ105	N	♠ J4
♥ KQ103	W E	♥ J
♦ 10843	S	♦ AK
♣ 5		♣ KQJ107642
	♠ K87	
	♥ A542	
	♦ Q62	
	♣ A93	

Table A

West	North	East (H)	South
-	-	-	1♣
dbl	pass	2♣ (1)	pass
2♥ (2)	pass	4♣ (3)	pass
pass (4)	pass		

Table B

West	North	East (H)	South (G)
-	-	-	1♣
dbl	pass	pass (1)	pass (2)

- Table A: (1) This East did not know how to show his ♣ suit, so he bid 2♣. What did you bid with this East hand H in this week's quiz? Most people would regard this 2♣ bid as a cue bid of the enemy suit, asking partner to bid his best (or cheapest) major.
(2) So West bid his most economical major, fine.
(3) I have no idea
(4)... and neither did West.

- Table B: Now at Table A East did not know how to show a good long ♣ suit. This East shows how it should be done! :-
(1) Pass for penalties! This shows an excellent ♣ suit where you expect 1♣ to go down a few!
(2) But with no ♣ suit, South is obviously in trouble. What did you bid with this South hand G in this week's quiz? The best bid here is redouble – S.O.S. and asking North to bid a suit.

And what happened? 1♣ doubled went minus 5 for 1100 to E-W, that's more than a small slam would score!

The bottom lines: -

- If your 1♣ (or 1♦) opening can be two or 3 cards, play that a re-double in this situation is SOS and asks partner to bid his cheapest 4 card suit.
- A pass of partner's take-out double shows excellent trumps.

Another pass of a double of 1♣

Board 23 from Wednesday 9th

Dealer: ♠ Q102
South ♥ 108742
Both vul ♦ J1086
♣ 3

West	North	East(me)	South
-	-	-	1♣
dbl	pass (1)	pass (2)	pass (3)

♠ K863	N	♠ J975
♥ KQ95	W E	♥ A6
♦ A72	S	♦ 95
♣ J2		♣ AQ1095
	♠ A5	
	♥ J3	
	♦ KQ43	
	♣ K8764	

- (1) It would probably have worked out better as it happens, but it is not obvious that North should bid here.
- (2) And again this is not obvious. East took a view that as N-S were vulnerable then leaving the double would get the best result.
- (3) And this time it's different from the last deal, South has a genuine ♣ suit and so a SOS redouble is not applicable.

And what happened? East's view proved to be correct. E-W have no game and 1♣ went two off for a top to E-W.

The bottom line: -

- Only pass partner's take-out double with excellent trumps.

A pairs double

Board 18 from Wednesday 9th

Dealer: ♠ AK10
East ♥ Q65
N-S vul ♦ KJ975
♣ 85

West	North	East(me)	South
-	-	pass	pass
1♠	2♦	2♠	3♣ (1)
pass	pass	dbl (2)	

♠ J9653	N	♠ Q87
♥ A2	W E	♥ J874
♦ 10842	S	♦ A63
♣ AK		♣ Q72
	♠ 42	
	♥ K1093	
	♦ Q	
	♣ J109643	

Fairly sensible bidding up to (1),

(1) but 3♣ at (1) with a poor holding in partner's suit was unwise.

(2) East knows that E-W probably have the majority of the points and was aware of the vulnerability. At pairs scoring a double here is a good bid. You expect to make 2♠ (+110), possibly with an overtrick(s), but if you can set the opponents just one trick then that's the 'magic' pairs score of +200.

And what happened? Most E-W played in 2♠, scoring between 110 and 170, 3♣ went one down and 200 was a cold top for E-W. Note that if East had not doubled then N-S would have got the cold top.

The bottom lines: -

- Be aware of the vulnerability, especially at pairs scoring. One down doubled is a top/bottom. Look for the 'magic' 200 at pairs scoring.
- If you strongly suspect that you would have made your partscore contract and the opponents overcall then think about a double, especially if they are vulnerable.
- Don't push the boat out when vulnerable, especially against a pair who may double you!
- And just about the type of scoring. At pairs (matchpoint) scoring you can take risks and double the opponents in search of the 'magic' 200. Doubling for a one trick (vul) set is fine at pairs but not at teams, where the loss if you double them into game and they make is horrendous.

What's it all about ...

Board 23 from Friday 11th

Dealer: ♠ 96
South ♥ 10873
both vul ♦ 84
♣ AK982

West	North	East	South(Jeff)
-	-	-	1NT
pass	2♣	pass	2NT (1)
pass	3NT (2)	all pass	

♠ 732	N	♠ J10854
♥ J	W E	♥ KQ64
♦ KJ765	S	♦ A3
♣ 7543		♣ J10
	♠ AKQ	
	♥ A952	
	♦ Q1092	
	♣ Q6	

I was asked by E-W if some sort of penalty/adjusted score was in order on this deal: -

- (1) So what would you bid with this South hand? 2♥ is totally obvious of course, but this is Jeff.
- (2) North hand no idea what was going on. Was 2NT showing a maximum? Was it showing both majors? Had partner found another ace? Having no idea, North simply bid 3NT.

And what happened? N-S missed their ♥ fit but 3NT played very well on this occasion. So should I penalise South? Now South was Jeff (of course) but he was playing with a non-regular partner and so I let the result stand. To avoid any more confusion/controversy in the future it's best that I clearly state now that Jeff simply does not have a clue when it comes to the bidding. Sometimes he lucks out (as here), more often he gets a complete bottom.

The bottom lines: -

- Unless you really know what you are doing (so that obviously excludes Jeff) it's best to restrict answers to 2♣ Stayman to 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠.
- And let's hear it from a couple of real experts: -

Marty Bergen can be quoted as saying '*never, Never, NEVER respond 2NT to Stayman*'.

Ron Klinger states '*the 2NT response doesn't exist. The idea that it should be to show both majors is totally unsound*'.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 1♣. It's not worth a strong NT with this 4333 type shape
(b) 1NT. 12-14, that's all it's worth.
- Hand B: (a) 1♠. Some players prefer 1♣ when 5-5 in the black suits and that is a reasonable alternative.
(b) 2♠. If you open 1♠ the you have to be careful about your rebid if partner responds at the two level. 3♣ promises a far better game forcing hand, you have to rebid this feeble ♠ suit by bidding 2♠ (that's why some players prefer to open 1♣ with this 5-5 shape with a weak hand and a weak ♠ suit).
- Hand C: Double or pass. I would prefer to have at least one 4 card major for a double and prefer pass, especially if partner understands balancing.
- Hand D: (a) 1♠. This is the balancing seat and partner may well have a strong hand without a suitable bid. This nice ♠ suit is well worth a bid in the pass-out seat.
(b) 3♠ or 4♠. It's easily worth 3♠ with a 5 card suit and nothing wasted in ♦'s. 4♠ would also be very reasonable.
- Hand E: 1♦ (with a view to rebidding 2NT or 3NT). It's too strong for a 1NT opening as that ♦ suit is worth far more than 8 points.
- Hand F: 2♥. The hand is not worth 3♥. 1NT is a very reasonable alternative.
- Hand G: Re-double, SOS. You do not have a real ♣ suit and RHO has a stack. Re-double here asks partner to bid his cheapest 4 card suit (or a 5-carder).
- Hand H: Pass. Partner has asked you to bid a suit (other than ♣'s) but you don't have one! Fortunately, your ♣ suit is easily good enough to inflict a huge penalty and so pass here shows a good ♣ suit.



Club News Sheet – No. 120

18/2/2005



N-S winners

E-W winners

Mon 14/2/05	1 st Alex/Thorlief	65 %	1 st Joe/Marten	59 %
	2 nd Bob/Dave	63 %	2 nd Ken/Clive	58 %
Wed 16/2/05	1 st Mr & Mrs Chauveau	66 %	1 st Tom Grovshien/Jan	60 %
	2 nd Bob/Austin	55 %	2 nd = Joe/Marten	53 %
			2 nd = Richard (USA)/Kees	53 %
Fri 18/2/05	1 st Michael/Jeff	62 %	1 st Bob/Dave	67 %
	2 nd Austin/Jean Charles	61 %	2 nd Ken/Clive	62 %

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B	With both sides vulnerable, what do you open in 2 nd seat with Hand A?
♠ J53	♠ 8	
♥ KQJ842	♥ KQJ864	With Hand B you open 1♥ and partner responds 1♠, what is your rebid?
♦ Q742	♦ AQ109	
♣ -	♣ 96	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C partner opens 2♥, what do you do?
♠ A982	♠ K42	
♥ A963	♥ QJ84	With Hand D you open 1♣ and LHO overcalls 1NT (15-18). Partner doubles this, what do you do?
♦ J	♦ K10	
♣ AKJ6	♣ KJ93	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E the opponents bid and support ♠'s and bid strongly to 6♠, what do you do?
♠ QJ102	♠ KJ42	
♥ J6	♥ K	With Hand F partner opens 1♦ and you respond 1♠. Partner then bids 2♦, what do you do?
♦ J83	♦ J954	
♣ 10832	♣ J653	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1♣ and RHO overcalls 1NT, what do you do?
♠ Q107	♠ -	
♥ K72	♥ A965	With Hand H you open 1♦ and partner bids 1♠, what do you rebid?
♦ AJ32	♦ A1087632	
♣ 1087	♣ KQ	
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J LHO opens 1♣ and RHO responds 1♥, what do you do?
♠ A965	♠ A72	
♥ K642	♥ K643	With Hand K partner opens 1NT, what do you do?
♦ J974	♦ 742	
♣ 5	♣ J105	

What went wrong?

Board 4 from Monday 14th

6♥ is a pretty easy contract with these N-S cards, so what went wrong?

Dealer:	♠ J53				
West	♥ KQJ842	West	North(A)	East	South(C)
both vul	♦ Q742	pass	2♥ (1)	pass	4♥ (2)
	♣ -	all pass			

♠ Q64	N	♠ K107
♥ 75	W E	♥ 10
♦ K1065	S	♦ A983
♣ 10952		♣ Q8743
	♠ A982	
	♥ A963	
	♦ J	
	♣ AKJ6	

- (1) Now especially when vulnerable, a pre-empt should be a decent hand with points in the long suit. So what did you open with this North hand A in this week's quiz? 2♥?
- (2) A nice hand, with 4 card trump support, 1st or 2nd round controls in every suit, and a singleton; so is 4♥ enough? What did you bid with this South hand C in this week's quiz?

Interesting. Now this was the bidding by one of our top pairs, and so who am I to comment? But I will anyway. Let's start with the 2♥ opener. It's 9 points – but what a nine! KQJxxx is worth far more than 6 points; the hand has enormous playing strength, solid trumps, three cards in the other major and a void, it's too good for 2♥ in my opinion. I would open 1♥, with 3♥ as a reasonable alternative.

But we all know what this North player thinks of 3 level pre-empt with a 6 card suit! – he even wrote a couple of pages criticising such a 3♣ bid (by me) and an ex world-champion subsequently agreed with me that it was all nonsense and that a *good* 6 card suit is often opened at the three level these days. Anyway, this hand is worth 1♥, especially in 2nd seat when pre-empting is not too attractive, so let's bid 1♥ then.

Now what about South's 4♥? I think it's reasonable. You could ask for aces but that really does not help. You could try a 2NT enquiry, but what you really want to know is if partner is maximum *and* has little wasted values in ♦'s. If you play splinters in this situation then I think that 4♦ is the bid – showing ♦ shortage and seeking slam. 6♥ would then be easy.

So either could have bid better and they can agree to share the blame, although this pair rarely agree about anything; and this North hands it out all the time but rarely accepts criticism (especially from me).

And what happened? Out of 8 tables only one pair bid 6♥.

The bottom lines: -

- KQJxxx is worth far more than 6 points.
- If your partner opens and you have values for at least game, then splinter with a shortage.
- If you hand it out all the time, then you should be able to take it? Right?

Look for the 4-4 fit

Board 23 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer: ♠ J65
South ♥ A5
both vul ♦ 8743
♣ Q1053

♠ 8	N	♠ AKQ1032
♥ KQJ864	W E	♥ -
♦ AQ109	S	♦ KJ62
♣ 96		♣ A84

♠ 974
♥ 109732
♦ 5
♣ KJ72

Table A

West(B)	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
1♥	pass	1♠ (1)	pass
4♥ (2)	pass	6♥ (3)	all pass

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
2♦ (2)	pass	3♣ (4)	pass
3♥ (5)	pass	3♠ (6)	pass
4♥ (7)	pass	4♠ (8)	all pass

Table C

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
2♦ (2)	pass	4NT (4)	pass
5♥	pass	6♦	all pass

Table A: (1) 2♠ (strong, good suit and game forcing is a sound alternative).
(2) But what did you rebid with this West hand B in this week's quiz? 4♥ is an overbid and unnecessarily fixes trumps. If you think that the hand is worth a game force then 3♦ is fine. If you want to emphasise the good ♥'s rather than show the ♦ suit then I suppose that 3♥ is the bid. I would simply rebid 2♦.
(3) And after the 4♥ bid East is totally fixed of course. East's thoughts were that 4NT is really of no use, 4♠ is too rude and pass is too cowardly. I sympathise.

Table B: Now this table started off much better:
(4) The 4th suit, setting up a game forcing auction.
(5) So 3♥ is fine now, promising 6♥'s and 4♦'s.
(6) But East went stray here, I prefer 4♦.
(7) I can't see that West has any other bid now.
(8) And again East failed to support the ♦'s.
A good auction up to (4) but then both parties kept on bidding their own suit instead of concentrating on the 4-4 ♦ fit.

Table C: The sledgehammer approach, often very effective. A good 4-4 fit, so that's where you want to play slam! Quite so.

And how should the hand be bid to 6♦? Obviously the table C approach is OK, but I like the bidding at Table B up to (6) where I would bid 4♦ with the East hand.

And what happened? Just two of the 7 tables bid the easy slam.

The bottom lines: -

- Look for the 4-4 fit, even in a minor if you envisage slam.
- Using 4th suit forcing to set up a forcing sequence is often a good ploy.

Doubling a 1NT overcall

Board 14 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer: ♠ 8653
East ♥ 65
Love all ♦ 8654
♣ 654

Table A

West(G)	North	East	South
-	-	1♣	1NT (1)
pass (2)	pass	pass	

♠ Q107	N	♠ K42
♥ K72	W E	♥ QJ84
♦ AJ32	S	♦ K10
♣ 1087		♣ KJ93
	♠ AJ9	
	♥ A1093	
	♦ Q97	
	♣ AQ2	

Table B

West(G)	North	East(D)	South
-	-	1♣	1NT (1)
dbl (2)	pass	2♣ (3)	all pass

Table A: (1) A 1NT overcall is 15-18 with good stop(s) in the suit bid, this overcall is fine. (2) What did you bid with this West hand G in this week's quiz? Pass is not the answer although more than one player did pass on Wednesday.

Table B: (2) Of course you should double. This is simple, it says that you have 9+ points and that the opponents will not make 1NT (and probably not anything else that they run to).
(3) This is terrible What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? You do not even have to look at your cards again, pass is automatic.

And what happened? Two E-W pairs got it right and collected the 500 penalty for 1NT minus two. 1NT went minus two at three other tables but was not doubled! 2♣ made and scored an undeserved average and there was another partscore.

The bottom lines: -

- If partner opens and there is a 1NT overcall then double shows 9+ points and is for penalties.
- Most other bids are thus weak and non-forcing.

That Multi 2♦ again

Back in news-sheet 118 I warned people about how to defend against the multi – generally wait to find out what opener's long major is before you make any rash decisions. The Multi 2♦ is very popular on mainland Europe and Marten and Joe play it. They told me of yet another case just last week when one of them opened 2♦ with a 6 card ♥ suit and the opponents ended up in a hopeless 4♥ contract!

The bottom line: - Read news-sheet 118.

Don't be greedy

Board 24 from Friday 18th

Dealer: ♠ 4
West ♥ 10542
Love all ♦ Q10542
♣ J96

♠ K765	N	♠ A983
♥ AQ9873	W E	♥ K
♦ 6	S	♦ AK97
♣ A5		♣ KQ74
	♠ QJ102	
	♥ J6	
	♦ J83	
	♣ 10832	

Table A

West	North	East	South (E)
1♥	pass	2♦ (1)	pass
2♠ (2)	pass	4NT	pass
5♥	pass	6♠ (3)	pass (4)
pass	pass		

Table B

West	North	East	South
1♥	pass	1♠ (1)	pass
2♥ (3)	pass	4NT	pass
5♥	pass	6NT	all pass

Table A: (1) Now with a very strong responding hand you can by-pass a 4 card major and then bid the major later, but this generally implies 5+ ♦'s and I would simply bid 1♠ here.

(2) This is a reverse, indicating about 16+ points. A simple 2♥ is correct.

(3) Now East knows that all the aces are present and with points to spare, 6NT may be better than the 4-4 ♠ fit. But there again, West has introduced the suit and so East understandably assumed it was a slam quality suit.

(4) You knows that 6♠ will go one down, so what did you bid with this South hand E in this week's quiz? I hope that you did not double because it may well be that they can run to a making 6NT (they can!). You should pass.

Table B: (1) The simplest, and best, response.

(3) Now this West later went into some length to try to explain to me why 2♥ is a better bid than 2♠ here. It's falling on deaf ears. He claimed that if partner has a weak hand and passes then it's most likely that he is in a 6-3 or 6-2 fit and 2♥ will be fine. There are a number of reasons why this is faulty logic: -

1. If partner has 4 ♠'s and 3 ♥'s and a weak hand then he may well choose to bid 2♥.
2. The a 4-4 fit will usually play better than a 6-2 or 6-3 fit.
3. Partner may have 5 ♠'s and/or just one ♥ and pass; what a silly contract!

And what happened? 6♠ went one off. One South doubled 6♠ at (4) and so let the opponents escape into the easy 6NT. Most pairs ended in 6NT making exactly but two reached 7NT going down.

And how should the hand be bid? Obviously it should start 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♠ and then after a few cue bids and Roman Key Card Blackwood East or West should opt for 6NT rather than 6♠ because of the ample points and poor quality of the ♠'s (especially no ♠Q). The absence of the ♠Q can be discovered using RKCB. The bottom lines: -

- Look for the 4-4 fit.
- But if it's a slam then the suit must be of good quality.
- It's a sign of excellent bidding if you can locate a 4-4 fit and then play in a superior NT contract.
- Don't double the opponents if they have somewhere to run to.
- A reverse promises about 16+ points.
- Play RKCB.

A Silly Take-out Double?

Board 19 from Friday 18th

Dealer: ♠ Q108
South ♥ Q10975
E-W vul ♦ AK3
♣ J4

♠ K7	N	♠ A965
♥ J83	W E	♥ K642
♦ 1082	S	♦ J974
♣ Q10962		♣ 5

♠ J432
♥ A
♦ Q65
♣ AK873

West	North	East(J)	South
-	-	-	1♣
pass	1♥	dbl (1)	pass
2♣ (2)	dbl (3)	2♦ (4)	pass (5)
pass	2NT (6)	pass	3NT
all pass			

- (1) So what did you bid with this East hand J in this week's quiz? With a passed partner and both opponents bidding and unlimited any sort of bid here is extremely foolhardy. Pass is clear. Now I have said in earlier news-sheets that double does not necessarily promise an opening hand, but it does in this situation! Double is a very poor bid.
- (2) I would bid 1NT, 6 points is just enough and bidding the opponent's suit is misleading. Opposite a sound double by partner a pass would also be reasonable (but not opposite this hand/partner).
- (3) I assume that this was for penalties.
- (4) And East is in loads of trouble - at least he would have been if I was sitting either North or South!
- (5) North's double at (3) showed extras (he can hardly have ♣'s), and so at this vulnerability I would double here.
- (6) And with AKx of trumps I would most certainly double here.

And what happened? East should have gone for about 1100 in 3♦ doubled, but 3NT made at this table for a reasonable score to N-S but 3NT failed at some other tables.

The bottom lines: -

- 8 points is not usually enough for a take-out double
- You need a very good hand to bid in 4th seat if LHO opens, partner passes and RHO bids; this is totally the opposite of balancing and you will usually end up in trouble.
- At favourable vulnerability it's often best to double the opponents for penalties when you know that you have the clear majority of the points and they have no fit.
- It's usually best to take the vulnerable money (especially if it's going to be 800 or 1100) rather than play in a dodgy non-vul 3NT.

Who should bid on?

Board 7 from Friday 18th

Most N-S pairs reached 5♦ (or even 6♦!) on this deal, but this pair stopped in a miserable 2♦, who do you think is at fault?

Dealer: ♠ KJ42
South ♥ K
Both vul ♦ J954
♣ J653

West	North(F)	East	South (H)
-	-	-	1♦ (1)
pass (2)	1♠	pass (3)	2♦ (4)
pass	pass (5)	pass	

♠ A9873	N	♠ Q1065
♥ Q1087	W E	♥ J432
♦ Q	S	♦ K
♣ 942		♣ A1087

♠ -
♥ A965
♦ A1087632
♣ KQ

- (1) A clear 1♦ opener.
- (2) Now sometimes 8 points is enough for a take-out double, and double would not be too unreasonable with this West hand.
- (3) But this is a similar situation to the last deal and double by East would be too dangerous.
- (4) So should South make a noise here? What did you bid with this South hand H in this week's quiz? North's 1♠ response has not improved this hand and 2♦ is fine.
- (5) So what did you do with this North hand F in this week's quiz? There are a number of reasons why you should not pass but bid 3♦: -
 - 1 – You have at least 10 combined trumps and so the 3 level is 'safe' (the Law).
 - 2 – This hand is well above minimum and is worth another bid.
 - 3 – It's more difficult for East to come in now if it's their hand.
 - 4 – Partner may have a hand like this one when he will bid and make 5♦! Indeed, North should expect South to have an even stronger hand than this one as E-W have been silent throughout the auction.

That 4333 type shape again

Board 14 from Friday 18th

One member brought this deal to my attention, he reads the news sheets and so devalued a 4333 type hand – with excellent results!

Dealer:	♠ J1043				
East	♥ 87	West	North	East (K)	South
Love all	♦ Q53	-	-	pass	pass
	♣ AKQ6	1NT	pass	pass (1)	pass

♠ Q65	N	♠ A72
♥ AQ	W E	♥ K643
♦ AK986	S	♦ 742
♣ 972		♣ J105
	♠ K98	
	♥ J10952	
	♦ J10	
	♣ 843	

(1) So what did you bid with this East hand K in this week's quiz? With 8 points it's usually enough to invite (so start with 2♣ here) but the 4333 shape is bad - deduct a point. I too would pass.

And what happened? 1NT is about the limit on the hand. Other E-W pairs bid to 2NT (and even 3NT) and mostly went down.

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: 1♥. It's too good for 2♥ even when vulnerable in 2nd seat. 3♥ is the only other bid that I would even consider.

Hand B: 2♦. 2♥ or even 3♥ are reasonable but I prefer to show this good 2nd suit. 4♥ is an overbid that is too unilateral. 3♦ is not too bad but is also a bit of an overbid.

Hand C: 4♥. It's not good enough to go slamming. But, actually, it is good enough for a mild try, and I would bid 4♦ if you play that as a splinter. If partner is max with no wasted values in ♦'s then slam should be there.

Hand D: Pass. Automatic. Partner's double is for penalties and you do not even have to look at your hand again.

Hand E: Pass. They may be able to run to a making 6NT.

Hand F: 3♦. With a non-minimum and 4 trumps it's too good to pass.

Hand G: Double (for penalties). Your side has the balance of power and 1NT will go down.

Hand H: 2♦. It's not good enough for 2♥ (a reverse) nor for 3♦.

Hand J: Pass. It's much too dangerous to double here as partner is a passed hand and both opponents have bid and are unlimited.

Hand K: Pass. Deduct a point for the 4333 type shape and it's not worth a bid.



Club News Sheet – No. 121

25/2/2005

N-S winnersE-W winners

Mon 21/2/05	1 st Austin/Terry	61 %	1 st Bob/Dave	60 %
	2 nd Jo/Martin (Hol)	55 %	2 nd Martin/Rosemary	55 %
Wed 23/2/05	1 st Terry*2/Dave	57 %	1 st Jo/Martin (Hol)	63 %
	2 nd Mike(Can)/Phil(UK)	55 %	2 nd Michael(Ger)/Jeff	58 %
Fri 25/2/05	1 st Richard(IRL)/Terry	61 %	1 st Bob/Dave	58 %
	2 nd Jan/Tom	55 %	2 nd Ken/Clive	53 %

Bidding Quiz**Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.**

Hand A	Hand B	What do you open with Hand A?
♠ A74	♠ AQ6	
♥ QJ2	♥ A2	What do you open with Hand B?
♦ AQ8	♦ KQJ2	
♣ AK76	♣ QJ32	What do you open with Hand C?
Hand C	Hand D	
♠ K743	♠ AJ109	With Hand D LHO opens 1♣, what do you do?
♥ A97652	♥ A42	
♦ 92	♦ KJ	With Hand E partner opens 1♣, do you bid?
♣ 6	♣ 9752	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand F partner opens 1♣, (a) what do you respond? (b) Suppose that you bid 1♠ and partner rebids 1NT, what do you do now?
♠ 86	♠ K9653	
♥ Q875	♥ A763	With Hand G you are South and the bidding goes like this, what do you do at ?
♦ 7642	♦ J7	West North East South
♣ QJ4	♣ 94	- 1♥ 1♠ pass
Hand G	Hand H	1NT 2♣ 2♠ pass
♠ K98	♠ -	pass 3♣ pass ?
♥ 653	♥ A965	With Hand H you open 1♦ and partner bids 1♠, what do you rebid?
♦ 108764	♦ A1087632	
♣ 85	♣ KQ	
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J LHO opens 1♣ which partner doubles. (a) what do you bid? (b) Suppose you choose 1♥ and partner raises to 2♥, what do you do?
♠ A74	♠ K9432	
♥ A1064	♥ KQ983	(a) Would you open Hand K in first seat? (b) Suppose you pass, LHO opens 1♣ and RHO bids 2♣. Do you make a noise now?
♦ 108	♦ J	
♣ 9654	♣ 75	

Editorial

As we all know, we had to leave the Soi 4 premises because they wanted to charge too much for us to play there. The move has worked out very well, but the Diana Inn management are a trifle concerned that we do not spend as much as, say, the drunken golfers who return from a hot day on the links.

Anyway, I conveyed my opinion that we spend a lot more than they actually account for. For instance, numerous people turn up early at the Green Bottle and have one of their (excellent) club sandwiches and a couple of beers. And a number of us always stay behind for a drink or two after the session. So, it has been decided to issue membership cards to all Bridge club players (free of charge) and this card will be accepted throughout the whole Diana group and gives 10% off all food, drinks and rooms etc. that are not already discounted (so nothing off Happy Hour or the buffets). I strongly urge all members to use their card (even if there is no discount) as this will show just how much we all spend at this venue. I think that the Diana Inn is a great place to play and I certainly do not want to increase the playing fee nor go through the hassle of moving again.

An opening 2NT?

Board 24 from Monday 21st

Dealer: ♠ AQ6
West ♥ A2
Love all ♦ KQJ2
♣ QJ32

Table A

West	North(B)	East	South
pass	2NT (1)	all pass	

♠ KJ4	N	♠ 1052
♥ K9854	W E	♥ 10643
♦ 543	S	♦ A86
♣ 96		♣ AK8
	♠ 9873	
	♥ QJ7	
	♦ 109	
	♣ 10754	

Table B

West	North (B)	East	South
pass	1♣ (1)	all pass	

Table A: (1) So what did open with this North hand B in this week's quiz? It's just 19 points and I simply don't like the systems that open at the two level with these hands.

Table B: (1) 1♣ looks fine to me. And then rebid 2NT (18-19) if partner responds.

And what happened? Two North's declared in 2NT, one making and one going down. 1♣ was the top spot, bid 3 times and making 3 overtricks. Two players ignored my continual advice about opening 1♣ when 4-4 in the minors and played in an inferior 1♦.

The bottom lines:-

- With a balanced 18-19 points, open a suit and then jump in NT.
- When equal length (3-3 or 4-4) in the minors, open 1♣.

Cover an honour with an honour?

Board 5 from Friday 18th

Most West's went down in a 2NT contract on Friday 18th, let's have a look: -

Dealer:	♠ KQ82	<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ K1054	West(A)	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ 9	-	pass	pass	pass
	♣ J853	1♣ (1)	all pass		

♠ A74	N	♠ J63	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ QJ2	W E	♥ 96	West(A)	North	East	South
♦ AQ8	S	♦ J10652	-	pass	pass	pass
♣ AK76		♣ 1042	2NT (1)	pass	pass (2)	pass
	♠ 1095					
	♥ A873					
	♦ K743					
	♣ Q9					

Table A: (1) So what did open with this West hand A in this week's quiz? It's 20 points and 3 aces is a plus, but I will still knock off a point for the 4333 type shape and open 1♣. Another way of looking at it is that if partner cannot respond to 1♣ then you are not going to make 2NT.

Table B: (1) This 2NT opening was chosen at 8 out of the nine tables
(2) And most East's passed. Just one pushed on to 3NT.

And what happened? 1♣ made +2 for a very good score to E-W. 3NT went minus three and most of the 2NT contracts went two or three off. Now I say most, but 2NT made with an overtrick at one tables. How?

Most West's played the ♦A followed by the ♦Q and most South's sensibly ducked the ♦Q. Just one made the mistake of covering, giving declarer 4♦ tricks instead of just two. At another table West was slightly more subtle and led the ♦Q initially but South was not fooled and ducked this.

The bottom lines:-

- It's usually best to cover an honour with an honour, but not if it gives declarer an entry to an otherwise dead dummy.
- Deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape.

A Printing Error

♠ - There was an error in the original news-sheet 120. Hand H had 14 cards, the ♣
♥ A965 holding was actually ♣KQ doubleton although that did not detract from what I
♦ A1087632 said about the hand except that the opening bid is now obvious. So you open
♣ KQ 1♦ and should again rebid a simple 2♦ with this revised hand H over partner's 1♠
response.

The dog that did not bark in the night

Board 13 from Monday 21st

Remember that Sherlock Holmes mystery, it believe it was Silver Blaze: -

Sherlock Holmes: 'The key to the mystery was in the dog barking'

Watson: 'But the dog did not bark'

Sherlock Holmes: 'Precisely'

Dealer:	♠ K743				
North	♥ A97652	West	North(C)	East	South
Both vul	♦ 92	-	pass (1)	pass	pass
	♣ 6	1♠	3♥ (2)	pass	pass
		4♠ (3)	all pass		
♠ A9652	N	♠ J8			
♥ K4	W E	♥ J108			
♦ Q	S	♦ K7643			
♣ AKQ9		♣ 753			
	♠ 10				
	♥ Q3				
	♦ AJ1085				
	♣ J10842				

- (1) What did open with this North hand C in this week's quiz? I'll come onto it in a minute.
- (2) A weak jump overcall.
- (3) West has a difficult bid now. Given a freer run he would bid his ♣'s, but that's now at the 4 level. 4♠ is not totally unreasonable, but wait a minute...
... West should be thinking 'why has North pre-empted now when he could have opened with either 2♥ or 3♥?'. It's the dog that did not bark, why not?
The answer is that North did not want to open with a pre-empt because he also has a 4 card ♠ suit.
This should deter West from bidding too high.

And what happened? 4♠ went one down for a near top to N-S.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't pre-empt with a reasonable 4 card major.
- So a subsequent pre-empt from a player who has passed implies a 4 card major.

And why did the dog in the mystery not bark?

Elementary, my dear Watson. The dog did not bark because the 'intruder' was its owner.

5-4 in the majors opposite a 1NT opening.

Board 14 from Monday 21st

Dealer: ♠ J93
East ♥ A763
Love all ♦ AQ108
♣ KJ6

♠ Q1087	N	♠ AK6
♥ KQ854	W E	♥ J2
♦ K543	S	♦ A72
♣ -		♣ Q9843

♠ 542
♥ 109
♦ J96
♣ A10752

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	1NT (1)	pass
2♦ (2)	pass	2♥	pass
3♠ (3)	pass	4♠ (4)	all pass

- (1) I understand that this East mis-counted, believing he had 16 points.
- (2) So how should one show a game-forcing hand with 9 cards in the majors here? I've been over this a number of times (new-sheets 23, 79 and in some detail in no 33). The answer is to bid Stayman and then jump in the 5 carder (forcing) if you get a 2♦ response. This leaves the option of playing in a 5-3 fit or in 3NT.
- (3) This actual sequence of transferring to ♥'s and then bidding ♠'s implies at least 5-5 in the majors (I would take it as 6 ♥'s and 5 ♠'s).
- (4) Anyway, East believed that partner had 5 ♠'s and so bid the ♠ game.

And what happened? Luckily the Moysian fit played quite well as trumps split 3-3. The top score was the E-W pair who reached 3NT making +1. The bottom lines: -

- The modern practice when holding a game-going hand opposite a 1NT opener is to bid Stayman when 5-4 and transfer and bid the other major when 5-5 or better.

The Tripple Crown

Dave, Jan, myself and a few other have been discussing the merits of perhaps giving some sort of prize to anyone who wins all three events in one week. We eventually decided not to give any prize as we wish to play within the letter of the law (no gambling, and so no prize). This week we actually did have a winner of this elusive triple. Well done Dave!

In fact, two separate people achieved the miraculous feat in the same week! But modesty prohibits me from mentioning the other.

Perhaps we should both thank Terry Haddon for this - you will see the humour in this remark when you read the rest of this news-sheet.

I said 'elusive', let's look the odds. Assuming 8 tables per session and all players of equal ability, then the odds of someone winning the 'triple' are 1/8 to the power of two, or one in 64; so you can expect it about every 6 months or so. The odds of two independent people (who only partnered each other on one occasion and obviously play in different directions on the other two occasions) both winning in the same week are 1/8 to the power of three, or one in 512; so once in 5 years.

6NT scores more than 6♥

Board 26 from Monday 21st

Dealer: ♠ 4
East ♥ AKJ10753
Both vul ♦ 85
♣ A85

♠ Q10875	N	♠ 963
♥ 942	W E	♥ 8
♦ 3	S	♦ KQ10743
♣ J1074		♣ 932
	♠ AKJ2	
	♥ Q6	
	♦ A962	
	♣ KQ6	

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	1NT (1)
pass	4♣ (2)	pass	4♥ (3)
pass	6NT (4)	all pass	

'Expert Table'

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	1♦
pass	1♥	pass	2NT (5)
pass	3♥ (6)	pass	4♥ (7)
pass	4NT (8)	pass	5♠ (9)
pass	5NT (10)	pass	6♥ (11)
pass	6NT or 7NT (12)		

- Table A: (1) Again an off-beat 1NT opener, it's a full 19 and I would open 1♦.
- (2) This pair had not agreed exactly what a transfer followed by 4♣ means (I prefer to play it as RKCB with the transfer suit king & queen included in the answers). Anyway, having not agreed it and it being pairs scoring North decided to go for 6NT provided that there were not two aces missing, so 4♣ was simple Gerber.
- (3) One ace!
- (4) With, as North believed, one ace missing 6NT is risky, but it is pairs.
- 'Expert' (5) Most experts will rebid 2NT rather than the ♠ suit here as a 4-4 ♠ fit will
Table subsequently be uncovered using Checkback.
- (6) And it's best to play any bid other than pass as game forcing after a 18-19 2NT rebid, and here we see the advantage. With just a 5 card ♥ suit North would have bid 3♣ (Checkback) and so 3♥ here shows a 6+ card suit...
- (7).. and so South can support with just Qx.
- (8) RKCB for ♥'s.
- (9) 2 key cards + the ♥Q. Note how RKCB uncovers the all-important ♥Q.
- (10) Kings?
- (11) Two
- (12) North can count 12 tricks – 7 ♥'s, his ♣A and the two aces and two kings that partner has shown. 6NT is obviously a safe bid and should score well, but partner has another 2 or 3 points and there could easily be 13 tricks off the top, but I cannot see a safe way for North to discover this other than simply punting 7NT.

And what happened? Three tables bid to 6NT+1 and shared the top, with the other six tables sharing the bottom for 6♥+1.

The bottom lines: -

- You have to agree what 4♣ means in a sequence like 1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 4♣. It is obviously ace asking (4NT is quantitative) but if you play RKCB I prefer to include the king of the transfer suit in the answers (i.e 4♣ is actually RKCB).
- With 12 (or 13) top tricks, NT scores more than a suit; especially at pairs scoring.

The Unusual NT (UNT)

Board 11 from Monday 21st

I have featured this bid a few times in the past – usually when it has been abused by people holding 5-4 or 6-4 in the minors. Let's have a look at a good example: -

Dealer:	♠ -				
South	♥ 5	West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ AQJ1062	-	-		pass
	♣ AJ9764	1♥	2NT (1)	3♠	pass
		4♠	5♣ (2)	dbl	5♦
		all pass			
♠ K6	N	♠ AJ8732			
♥ AQ1076	W E	♥ J42			
♦ K43	S	♦ 8			
♣ 1082		♣ KQ5			
	♠ Q10954				
	♥ K983				
	♦ 975				
	♣ 3				

- (1) The UNT. It is often weaker than this but should be at least 5-5 in the minors. You could overcall 2♦ here with the intention of bidding the ♣ suit later but I prefer the UNT as this implies less in high card points and informs partner of both of your suits at the earliest opportunity.
- (2) With a normal weak UNT you have said it all and must pass. But this is a strong UNT because of the two 6 card suits and 5♣ here asks partner to choose between 5♣ and 5♦.

And what happened? 5♦ was reached at 6 of the 9 tables. One E-W pair found the good 5♠ sacrifice which was only two down doubled.

The bottom lines: -

- Having bid the UNT, do not bid again unless you have a very good hand (like this one).

How about a pass?

- | | |
|----------|--|
| ♠ J53 | Remember this Hand A from last week? I asked what you would open. I |
| ♥ KQJ842 | then went on to say that it's too good for a weak 2♥ and I would open 1♥ |
| ♦ Q742 | and that 3♥ was the only other bid that I would consider. Bob informed that |
| ♣ - | when he held the hand he passed (too good for 2♥ but not good enough for 1♥). |
| | Now this is also very sensible but in my style I do not have a 'gap' between my weak |
| | two openings and a one level opening. With a 6 card major if it's too good for a |
| | pre-empt then I open at the one level. So for me if it's too good for a 2♥ opener then |
| | you must open 1♥, but that's purely my preferred treatment. |

5 ♠'s and 4 ♥'s.

Board 6 from Wednesday 23rd

I was asked how to bid this hand from Wednesday: -

Dealer: ♠ 102
East ♥ K82
E-W vul ♦ KQ86
♣ QJ62

<u>Table A</u>			
West (F)	North	East	South
-	-	1♣	pass
1♠ (1)	pass	1NT	pass
pass (2)	pass		

♠ K9653	N	♠ QJ7
♥ A763	W E	♥ QJ94
♦ J7	S	♦ A92
♣ 94		♣ K106
	♠ A84	
	♥ 105	
	♦ 10543	
	♣ A873	

- (1) So what did you respond with this West hand F(a) in this week's quiz? If equal length in the majors then obviously 1♥ but with 5♠'s it's surely best to bid that suit.
- (2) But does West have enough to bid again? Would 2♥ be forcing? What did you bid with this West hand F(b) in this week's quiz? This West chose to pass and the 4-4♥ fit was lost.

And what happened? Most E-W played in 2♥ or 3♥ making 9 tricks; 1NT went one down.

Checkback Stayman (or New Minor Forcing).

So what's the solution? I did actually cover this in news-sheet 74, but that was a long time ago. The answer is that West should indeed bid his 5 card ♠ suit at (1) but should bid 2♥ at (2). Because of this exact type of situation 2♥ here has to be a weak bid and opener is expected to pass (as with this East hand) or else to convert to 2♠.

So what should West do if he has a stronger hand with the same shape? The answer is that you have to use either 2♣ (Checkback Stayman) or else 2♦ (New Minor Forcing – NMF) to ask opener about his major suit holdings. I went into Checkback/NMF in news-sheet 98.

Let's suppose that West has a stronger hand and that we play 2♣ at (2) as Checkback - this is superior to the more popular NMF as there is more room to be precise in the answers. The response by East to this 2♣ Checkback enquiry is: -

- 2♦ = minimum, not 4♥'s and not 3♠'s
- 2♥ = 4♥'s (maybe also 3♠'s)
- 2♠ = 3♠'s but not 4♥'s
- 2NT = maximum, not 4♥'s and not 3♠'s

Is it forcing?

A similar theme: - With no interference I was asked about the 2♦ bid in this sequence: -

1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♦? Is 2♦ forcing?

Now many experienced players play 2♦ as artificial here (NMF) or some other sort of artificial bid. With no such agreement it's up to partnership understanding; I would recommend that it is weak, showing 5♠'s and 5♦'s. With a stronger hand jump to 3♦ (forcing).

Don't pass partner's 1♣ opening

Board 28 from Wednesday 23rd

I've said it many times, don't pass partner's 1♣ opening if you can possibly scrape up a bid, especially if partner's 1♣ may be short: -

Dealer:	♠ AJ109				
West	♥ A42	West	North(D)	East (E)	South
N-S vul	♦ KJ	1♣ (1)	pass (2)	pass (3)	pass (4)
	♣ 9752				
♠ K543	N	♠ 86			
♥ J1093	W E	♥ Q875			
♦ AQ10	S	♦ 7642			
♣ K8		♣ QJ4			
	♠ Q72				
	♥ K6				
	♦ 9853				
	♣ AJ63				

- (1) E-W were playing a short ♣, so that with this exact distribution (4432) it can be just two cards.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand D in this week's quiz? It's not strong enough for 1NT (15-18) and with length in the bid suit is unsuitable for double, pass is the only bid.
- (3) So what did you bid with this East hand E in this week's quiz? East has 3 decent ♣'s but I would muster up a bid (especially if playing a short ♣). I would bid 1♦ and then pass any response.
- (4) Now in the pass-out (balancing) seat you only need about 7 points to bid, but with length/strength in the suit bid pass will usually work out right here.

And what happened? 1♣ went three down for 150 to N-S. Even though E-W were non-vulnerable this was a complete top to N-S as the most they scored at other tables was 140 (2♠ making +1) or 120 (1NT making +1).

The bottom lines –

- Don't pass partner's 1♣ opening, especially if you play a short ♣, if you can possibly muster up a bid.

A change of partnership – what is Terry*2?

So what's with this Terry*2/Dave in the results table? There was a guy named Terry Haddon who has played at the club a couple of times. Dave played with him last week and described him as being similar to John Gavens (always critical of partner but never right). Anyway, Dave and myself take it in turns to play with odd (without a partner) people on Wednesdays and Dave had the misfortune to play 28 boards with him on Wednesday 16th, they scored around 45%.

So it was my turn to play with him this Wednesday 23rd. Now Dave knew exactly what kind of fireworks to expect and so he kibitzed our table; our Terry*2 partnership lasted just 8 boards and I expect that Dave has never spectated such an amusing couple of sets in his life? I cover four of these boards next; in all of them my partner said that I had bid/played incorrectly and that his bidding/play was fine. Perhaps I am not as subtle/patient/whatever as Dave (?) but when somebody continually (incorrectly) criticises me I tell them exactly what I think and so he walked out after 8 boards.

But don't get me wrong, everybody makes mistakes and people like Austin or Chuck will usually pick up mine (and visa-versa) and tell me about it; if they are correct I appreciate this, we all learn by our mistakes, it's part of growing up.

Anyway, those 8 boards scored about 45% but then Dave took over when Terry H gave up. Dave and I actually scored 62% on the remaining 20 boards but the other Terry's performances brought the total down to a still respectable 57% for the complete session.

Now you know my policy. I will always make up a scratch partnership with anyone left over. If they are not too good I don't say anything unless they ask for my advice/help. But if they believe that they are superior beings and continually criticise me then they can certainly expect it back. The guy should simply have been very grateful that he had the opportunity to play with two of the club's top players (Modesty is not my middle name) - the club champion and the director, who also both happened to thoroughly understand his bidding system (Benjamin Acol) far better than he does. Agreed?

5-5 is worth a noise?

Board 27 from Wednesday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ 765
South ♥ AJ4
Love all ♦ A632
♣ J109

West	North(me)	East	South (K)
-	-	-	pass (1)
1♣	pass	2♣	pass (2)
pass	pass (3)		

♠ AQ8	N	♠ J10
♥ 752	W E	♥ 106
♦ K54	S	♦ Q10987
♣ A432		♣ KQ86
	♠ K9432	
	♥ KQ983	
	♦ J	
	♣ 75	

- (1) Did you open with this South hand K(a) in this week's quiz? It's close, it does not quite conform to the rule of 20 (it's 19) but with 8 points in two long suits I think that 1♠ is fine, especially as you have an easy 2♥ rebid. A rather light opening is attractive when non-vulnerable but I won't argue if you chose to pass.
- (2) And what did you bid with this South hand K(b) in the quiz? This time I certainly will argue with this 2nd pass. I think that double is clear, you are a passed hand and partner will certainly not expect more than this; so you should double and if partner bids 2♦ then you bid 2♥, asking him to give preference to one of the majors (partner will not expect a great hand as you have already passed). Bidding opposite a passed partner when both opponents have bid is dangerous, but here RHO is limited and you have good shape.
- (3) A balancing double would not be unreasonable here, but the hand really is too flat.

And what happened? I was North, my partner passed throughout and we got a near bottom when 2♣ made +2 for 130 and other N-S pairs were generally giving just 50 or 100 away playing in 2♠.

The bottom lines: -

- 5-5 in the majors is good.
- Once you have passed then partner will not expect opening values if you subsequently double.

Simple Preference

Board 1 from Wednesday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ J
North ♥ KQJ94
Love all ♦ A52
♣ AK64

♠ 543	N	♠ AQ10762
♥ A1072	W E	♥ 8
♦ Q9	S	♦ KJ3
♣ Q1093		♣ J72
	♠ K98	
	♥ 653	
	♦ 108764	
	♣ 85	

West	North(me)	East	South (G)
-	1♥	1♠	pass
1NT	2♣	2♠	pass
pass	3♣ (1)	pass	pass (2)
3♠	all pass		

- (1) I had a nice hand and did not want to sell out to 2♠. So I bid 3♣, (3♥ or 3♣ may well make or they may push on to 3♠ which will surely go down).
- (2) So what did you bid with this South hand G in this week's quiz? If you have more ♥'s than ♣'s (or equal length) then you have to give preference back to partner's first bid suit. So bid 3♥, this does not promise anything.

Anyway, they pushed on to 3♠ which went down at most tables, but not at this one, why? Partner led the ♣8 which I won with the ♣K. I then led the ♥K because I 'knew' that declarer had at least two ♥'s. Declarer then took a losing trump finesse and partner led his ♣5. I won with the ♣A and could obviously give partner a ♣ ruff, but I decided to 'cash' my ♥Q first. Declarer ruffed this and drew trumps to make the contract

My partner was irate that I did not give him a ♣ ruff. I explained that I 'knew' that he had more ♣'s than ♥'s and so if he had a doubleton ♣ then he must have at most a singleton ♥ and so I could cash two ♥'s before giving him his ♣ ruff.

He countered that he would never bid at (2) with just three points and that his bidding was fine. Guess he needs to read up on simple preference?

Bid your hand 3 times???

Board 2 from Wednesday 23rd

So let's see what my learned partner did on the very next board: -

Dealer:	♠ 109762				
East	♥ AJ94	West	North(me)	East	South
N-S vul	♦ 953	-	-	1♣	1NT
	♣ 4	2♦ (1)	2♠ (2)	dbl (3)	redbl (4)
		3♣ (5)	pass	pass	3♠ (6)
		dbl (7)	all pass		
♠ AKQ4	N	♠ 85			
♥ 5	W E	♥ K1086			
♦ 107642	S	♦ J			
♣ 1065		♣ AK9872			
	♠ J3				
	♥ Q632				
	♦ AKQ8				
	♣ QJ3				

- (1) You can redouble here, showing the balance of power and expecting 1NT to go down.
- (2) I had no idea if my partner would have taken 2♣ by me as Stayman, but after the 2♦ bid there was no way I could safely show both majors and so I simply bid 2♠, to play.
- (3) Nobody bothered to ask what this dbl meant.
- (4) And heaven only knows what this redouble means. Surely 2♠ doubled would be a nice spot on most distributions? Presumably this shows a super max 1NT overcall (so around 17-18) with 4 ♠'s??
- (5) And West should pass here, don't bid if there is a juicy penalty in the offing.
- (6) And what can we say about this 3♠ bid? Showing even more than the redouble at (3) with superb ♠ support???
- (7) But of course you get an even juicier penalty with an opponent who has no pass cards in his bidding box.

And what happened? 500 away and a bottom for N-S.

The bottom lines: -

- Bid your hand just once, three times really is excessive.

Double and then jump?

Board 3 from Wednesday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ KQ62
South ♥ KJ97
E-W vul ♦ K2
♣ KQ2

♠ J85	N	♠ 1093
♥ Q2	W E	♥ 853
♦ A75	S	♦ QJ9643
♣ AJ1087		♣ 3

♠ A74
♥ A1064
♦ 108
♣ 9654

West	North(me)	East	South (J)
-	-	-	pass
1♣	dbl (1)	pass	1♥ (2)
pass	2♥ (3)	pass	pass (4)
all pass			

The very next board, let's see if partner can make it three 'fine' performances in a row: -

- (1) 1NT is a sound alternative, but with both majors I think that dbl is better, especially with an unfamiliar partner who may not play Stayman over a 1NT overcall.
- (2) What did you bid with this South hand J(a) in this week's quiz? 1♥ is fine. A non-jump here promises 0-9 points and it's not quite good enough for 2♥.
- (3) A decent 17 points, so game should be there if partner has 6 or so, and the way to find this out is to invite with 2♥.
- (4) What did you bid with this South hand J(b) in this week's quiz? You have an absolute maximum and 4♥ is clear. Now my partner passed. He said that I should have jumped to 3♥ at (3). I tried to explain to him that his initial bid promises zero to nine points and that my 2♥ asks him to bid on with a non-minimum. 3♥ would be too high if he was bust.

And what happened? Obviously 4♥ is cold on the ♠ lead that we got (in fact it looks like +1 to me). Anyway, intrepid partner won in dummy and immediately took a losing ♥ finesse into the opening hand. He subsequently failed to pull the last trump and managed exactly 9 tricks for the third miserable result in a row.

He then walked out of the club, guess Dave and I are not the same standard as his regular partner? Dave has told me a number of similar horror tales from his experiences last week.

Responding to partner's take-out double and raise

Consider the bidding sequence above and imagine that you have these South hands. Partner doubles and then raises your 1♥ bid to 2♥, what do you do at (4)?

Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3
♠ 974	♠ J74	♠ A74
♥ 764	♥ A1064	♥ A1064
♦ 108	♦ 108	♦ 108
♣ 96542	♣ 9654	♣ 9654

Hand 1: Pass. See why I didn't bid 3♥ with the North hand above?

Hand 2: 3♥. In the middle of the (0-9) range, so encourage partner.

Hand 3: 4♥. It's maximum, so bid game. Note that this hand improves when partner doubles ♣'s as you have no wasted values there.

So when should you make a jump raise after doubling?

- ♠ KQ62 Let's make the North hand stronger by adding an ace. You again double and
♥ KJ97 get a 1♥ response. Partner's bid is 0-9 and you expect 4♥ to make unless he
♦ AK is completely bust. So you bid 3♥ and expect him to raise to 4♥ if holding
♣ KQ2 about 3+ points. So partner would raise to 4♥ with hand 2&3 from the previous page
but pass holding hand 1.

But when you are opener it's different: -

- ♠ KQ62 Let's just have another look at the actual North hand. As I said, you can
♥ KJ97 double a 1♣ opening with this hand and if partner responds 1♥ then you bid
♦ K2 2♥. But suppose that you are dealer and choose to open 1♣ (suppose you play
♣ KQ2 a weak NT) and partner responds 1♥, do you again bid 2♥?
No! This situation is completely different as partner has promised 6 points and
you are forced to bid. 2♥ would be a weak bid and a jump to 3♥ would be correct in this scenario.
With a couple more points (so around 19-20) jump to 4♥.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1♣. With three aces I guess that 2NT is not too bad but I would still deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape. If game is there partner will bid, and if he cannot bid over 1♣ then 2NT will be very tricky indeed.
- Hand B: 1♣. Make life easy for partner and you have an easy 2NT rebid.
- Hand C: Pass. Do not pre-empt (2♥) with an outside 4 card major.
- Hand D: Pass. Do not double with length in the suit opened, and it's not enough for 1NT.
- Hand E: 1♦. I am loathe to pass 1♣, especially if it can be short.
- Hand F: (a) 1♠. Bid the 5-carder.
(b) 2♥. This is a weak bid which partner either passes or corrects to 2♠.
- Hand G: 3♥. This is simple preference and does not promise any values. You must put partner back into his first bid suit if you have more of them or are equal length.
Pass is terrible, it promises more ♣'s than ♥'s and, as I said, 3♥ promises no more than zero points, it just denies more ♣'s than ♥'s.
- Hand H: 2♦. It's not good enough for 2♥ (a reverse) nor for 3♦.
- Hand J: (a) 1♥. It's not quite good enough for a jump to 2♥.
(b) 4♥. Partner is inviting you and you have a near maximum. Remember, your initial 1♥ response promised nothing (0-9 points).
- Hand K: (a) 1♠. It's just 19 for the rule of 20, but with 8 points in two 5 card majors I would open, especially as you have an easy 2♥ rebid.
(b) Double. If you did not open you have to make a noise now with this great shape. If partner bids ♦'s that's no problem as you can simply bid ♥'s to offer him a choice in the majors. Note that doubling and then bidding another suit usually shows a very strong hand, but not here as you have already passed.

4/3/2005

Club News Sheet – No. 122

		<u>winners</u>		<u>runner-up</u>	
Mon 28/2/05	N-S	1 st Ken/Thorlief	63 %	2 nd Bob/Dave	61 %
	E-W	1 st Jan/Tom	62 %	2 nd John(UK)/Ruth	58 %
Wed 2/3/05		1 st Bob/Dave	70 %	2 nd Jeff/Michael(Ger)	55 %
Fri 4/3/05		1 st Bob/Dave	69 %	2 nd Richard(IRL)/Thorlief	59 %

We had another ‘simultaneous’ on Monday, and when I refer to ‘Brian’ and ‘the booklet’ it is Brian Senior’s commentary on the booklet of the hands that was handed out.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A partner opens 2NT, what do you bid?
♠ 9875 ♥ J643 ♦ KJ ♣ 765	♠ 97 ♥ AK6543 ♦ 3 ♣ 9865	With Hand B partner opens 2NT. You transfer with 3♦ but what do you do after partner’s expected 3♥ response?
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C you open 1♦, LHO overcalls 1♥, partner passes and RHO bids 1♠, what do you do?
♠ QJ63 ♥ K8 ♦ A653 ♣ KJ2	♠ 976 ♥ AKQ65 ♦ K43 ♣ K9	With Hand D RHO opens 1♣, what do you bid?
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1♠ and you bid 2♣. Partner then rebids 2NT (12-14), what do you do?
♠ K85 ♥ K85 ♦ 976 ♣ KQ82	♠ K10842 ♥ A7432 ♦ J9 ♣ 5	With Hand F partner opens 1NT, what do you bid? (and what do you plan to bid next turn?)
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1♦, you pass and LHO overcalls 1♠. Partner then bids 2♥, what do you do?
♠ KJ9 ♥ 98743 ♦ 763 ♣ 86	♠ 8632 ♥ 9 ♦ Q852 ♣ AKQ3	With Hand H partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 1♠, what do you do?
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J you open 1♦, partner passes and RHO bids 1♠. What do you bid?
♠ A65 ♥ KQJ10 ♦ AQ842 ♣ Q	♠ AJ9 ♥ AJ1086 ♦ KJ5 ♣ 109	With Hand K the opponents are vulnerable and you are not. You open 1♥, LHO doubles and partner redoubles. (a) What do you do? (b) Suppose that you pass, LHO bids 1♠ and partner passes, what do you do now?

Editorial Only 24 boards

On Monday we had 8 tables. Now 8 tables is a decent number for a Mitchell (N-S stationary), the recommended movement being 3 boards a round with every N-S meeting every E-W and everybody playing all boards. It is 'perfect' except that it is just 24 boards (and two tables have to share boards). Especially as we now start at 1.00, a couple of people have asked me if we can have a longer movement.

The only two other recognised movements are a 26 board Howell with two boards a round (people prefer a Mitchell if possible as there is less moving about) or a 28 board Mitchell. The problem with this 28 board Mitchell is that every player misses one set of opponents and also one set of boards. Also, if there is a sit-out then it's for 4 boards and 35 minutes really is a bit long.

But I have come up with a solution; I've 'invented' a 30 board Mitchell (27 boards played) where every N-S pair meet every E-W opponent (and meet just one opponent twice). This should work fine and no sharing boards; I'll try it next time we have 8 tables. And if everybody keeps up to speed you can actually play 30 (so all of the) boards with this new movement.

Play Stayman (and transfers) over 2NT

Board 24 from Friday 4th

Dealer: ♠ 9875
West ♥ J643
Love all ♦ KJ
 ♣ 765

Table A
West North(A) East South
- - - 2NT
pass 3NT (1) all pass

♠ J432	N	♠ A10
♥ 105	W E	♥ 872
♦ A98	S	♦ Q107542
♣ K983		♣ 104
	♠ KQ6	
	♥ AKQ9	
	♦ 63	
	♣ AQJ2	

Table B
West North East South
- - - 2NT
pass 3♣ (1) pass 3♥
pass 4♥ all pass

Table A: (1) So what did you bid with this North hand A in this week's quiz? Two 4 card majors, but with only one point between them, should you bid Stayman or 3NT?

Table B: (1) Anyone who reads the news-sheets knows the answer – look for the 4-4 major suit fit.

And what happened? Justice was served in a big way. Two N-S pairs bid like Table A, they both went 3 down for a well deserved -150. Three N-S's bid like Table B and all made 4♥ exactly.

The bottom line. Look for the 4-4 major suit fit; the quality of the suit is totally irrelevant (unless you are thinking about slam). A 4-4 fit will usually score an extra trick in one hand or the other and stops the rot if the opponents have a long suit.

So how do you bid slam?

Board 20 from Monday 28th

Dealer: ♠ AK10
West ♥ J8
Both vul ♦ A875
♣ AKQ4

♠ J8654	N	♠ Q32
♥ 1082	W E	♥ Q7
♦ KQ	S	♦ J109642
♣ J107		♣ 32
	♠ 97	
	♥ AK6543	
	♦ 3	
	♣ 9865	

Table A

West	North	East	South (B)
pass	2NT (1)	pass	3♦ (2)
pass	3♥ (3)	pass	3NT (4)
all pass			

'Expert table'

West	North	East	South (B)
pass	2NT (1)	pass	3♦ (2)
pass	3♥ (3)	pass	4♣ (4)
pass	4NT (5)	pass	5♦
pass	6♣ (6)	pass	pass (7)
pass			

Table A: This was the bidding at most tables.

- (1) 2NT is the best opening, even with a weak doubleton; the hand is far too strong to risk a one level opening.
- (2) Transfer.
- (3) I did witness one player refuse to accept the transfer and bid 3NT here. I cannot see the point, you should bid 3♥ and await developments.
- (4) What did you bid with this South hand B in this week's quiz? With 7 points 3NT is obvious here? I don't think so, think slam.

Brian says that 6♥ and 7♣ are makeable on this deal but does not suggest any bidding. Nobody at our club bid any sort of slam and I was asked how a slam can be sensibly bid. I can't see how to reach 7♣ but here's my suggestion for a small slam: -

- 'Expert Table' (4) AKxxxx is worth far more than 7 points. I would look for slam and as partner has at least 2♥'s the simple 6♥ is not a bad bid. But if you play 4♣ as natural here (it should be) then that is the bid, natural and looking for slam.
- (5) Blackwood. But actually most experts will not use 4NT to ask for aces if ♣'s is the trump suit and 4♦ (Kickback) is the best bid to ask for key cards here.
 - (6) With a known 4-4 fit, 6♣ is safer but a greedy North might bid 6♥ at pairs.
 - (7) Or South may be afraid of the quality of his ♣'s and retreat into 6♥.

Brian goes on to say that in 6♥ declarer should ruff a ♦ in the South hand and lead towards North's ♥J, this is a safety play and may enable declarer to make 12 tricks if there is a 4-1 trump break.

Now I watched Dave play this hand and he did follow Brian's advice of the safety play in ♥'s and led up to the ♥J after ruffing a ♦ in the South hand. Unfortunately, what Brian omitted to mention, and what happened to Dave, is that East won with the ♥Q and led a ♦ to give his partner another ♥ trick, so only 11 tricks were made. Tough luck Dave! However, after West has played the ♦K&Q on the first two rounds of the suit doesn't it look ominous? The simple (technically inferior?) approach (bang down the ♥AK) works on this deal.

And what happened. 4♥ was the most popular contract with some in a rather silly 3NT. Dave's (and Brian's) safety play scored very badly. The bottom lines: -

- Establishing ♣'s as trumps for a slam is often very difficult, especially after a 2NT opening that consumes so much bidding space and where 4♣ may be Gerber.

Understanding Stayman

Board 10 from Monday 28th

Brian says that E-W will do well do make 1NT. Our intrepid E-W pair here bid to 3NT (and deservedly went 3 down), so who would you blame? Apart from the obvious 1NT opener, can you spot the only two sensible bids up to and including when 3NT was bid?

Dealer: ♠ Q10854

East ♥ Q963

both vul ♦ Q3

♣ A2

♠ A972

♥ 8754

♦ J6

♣ 643

N

W E

S

♠ 3

♥ KJ2

♦ K108752

♣ J105

♠ K76

♥ A10

♦ A94

♣ KQ987

West

North

East

South

-

-

1NT

pass

2♣ (1)

2♠ (2)

2NT (3)

pass

3NT (4)

all pass

Answer:

The only two remotely sensible bids were the two passes by South. Everybody else seems to be on another planet.

- (1) This is reckless gambling. You should only bid Stayman if you can cope with any response (including 2♦). You must pass here.
- (2) With a strong 1NT opener on your left and an unlimited responder on your right who has promised at least one 4 card major, bidding here is extremely dangerous. 2♠ doubled would be an expensive excursion.
- (3) But apparently you can bid whatever you like when this East is the opposition. What a silly 2NT bid! Partner's 2♣ bid has not promised any values but he may well have 4 ♠'s and be able to apply the axe. You cannot respond 2NT to partner's 2♣ Stayman bid under any circumstances, and here it's especially silly.
- (4) We might as well make it a total of 4 ludicrous bids. Partner is 15-17 and with this 5, that adds up to a total of 22 max, what was this West thinking?

And what happened? 3NT -3 was a clear top to N-S. Only 3 E-W pairs out of 8 managed to stop at the one level.

The bottom lines: -

- There are only 3 responses to Stayman; 2♦, 2♥ and 2♠. If the next opponent interferes then there are two more (pass and double). 2NT is never an option, but even neverer when the next player bids a major over partner's Stayman bid.
- You need a good hand to overcall a major over Stayman with a strong NT opener sitting over you.

This particular E-W pair have been telling me of their bad run recently – I completely understand. This N-S pair have been doing pretty well, that's also understandable if North is allowed to get away with bids like this.

The dog should not bark!

Board 21 from Monday 28th

Remember last week (the dog that did not bark) when I said about not pre-empting with an outside 4 card major, let's see what can go wrong if you ignore this advice.

Dealer:	♠ Q1098743				
North	♥ J1043	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ 4	-	2♠ (1)	3♣ (2)	pass
	♣ 4	3♥	pass	4♥ (3)	4♠ (4)
		dbl	all pass		
♠ K65	N	♠ J			
♥ KQ752	W E	♥ A98			
♦ 97532	S	♦ AQ106			
♣ -		♣ AK952			
	♠ A2				
	♥ 6				
	♦ KJ8				
	♣ QJ109863				

- (1) Brian says that the combination of vulnerability and the 4 card ♥ suit should prevent most players from opening 3♠. I totally agree of course, but it should also prevent one from opening 2♠!
- (2) Double is an alternative, but most players would expect a 4 card ♥ suit.
- (3) But East is perfectly happy now as he has excellent support for partner's ♥ suit.
- (4) 4♠ is perhaps a dubious decision at this vulnerability, but South most certainly does not expect North to have 4 ♥'s and a certain trick in the suit!

And what happened? 800 to E-W and a clear top.

The bottom line: -

- Do not pre-empt (at either the two or three level) if you have an outside 4 card major.
- Remember the barking dog.

The 1NT rebid after partner does not respond

Board 19 from Monday 28th

Dealer: ♠ QJ63
South ♥ K8
E-W vul ♦ A653
♣ KJ2

West	North (C)	East	South
-	1♦	1♥	pass
1♠	1NT (1)	2♥ (2)	pass
3♣	pass	pass (3)	pass (4)

♠ AK1094	N	♠ -
♥ 4	W E	♥ A109762
♦ K	S	♦ QJ10974
♣ 1076543		♣ A
	♠ 8752	
	♥ QJ53	
	♦ 82	
	♣ Q98	

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand C in this week's quiz? Partner has promised zero points and you need about 18-19 points to bid 1NT here. I believe that this North thought that it still showed 12-14 points. It's simple arithmetic/logic, partner probably has less than 5 points so it's 19 points max, 1NT will not make (and may well go for a number). Maybe a few 800 penalties in the future will change things?
- (2) East cannot introduce his ♦ suit as North has bid that.
- (3) A good pass. Bail out ASAP with a total mis-fit.
- (4) I would double here as I have good ♥'s sitting over the ♥ bidder, but then I would take partner for 18-19 points.

And what happened? 3♣ made with an overtrick and scored around average.

The bottom lines: -

- The 1NT rebid is only 12-14 if partner responds!
- If partner does not bid then a 1NT rebid shows a hand that was too strong to open 1NT.

What's it all about? – you can always ask!

Board 18 from Monday 28th

Dealer:	♠ 976				
East	♥ AKQ65	West	North (D)	East	South
N-S vul	♦ K43	-	-	pass	pass
	♣ K9	1♣	dbl (1)	1♠	pass
		2♠	3♥ (2)	dbl (3)	pass (4)
		pass (5)	pass		
♠ QJ84	N	♠ AK1053			
♥ -	W E	♥ 943			
♦ A752	S	♦ QJ8			
♣ AQ1076		♣ 84			
	♠ 2				
	♥ J10872				
	♦ 1096				
	♣ J532				

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand D in this week's quiz? A simple 1♥ overcall looks fine to me.
- (2) And here we see just one problem with the initial double, mentioning your suit here at the three level, when partner has passed throughout, is asking for trouble. It shows a hand that was too good for a simple 1♥ overcall initially and I would certainly prefer to have a 6th ♥ as well as a bit more in the way of high cards.
- (3) And here East went into a deep think. What was North's bid? Presumably he had missed the relevant news-sheets (saying it's a very strong hand) – but he could always ask South. Double was very silly of course, best to ask if you don't know what a bid means - this N-S are an established pair and South certainly knew that North was very strong. What would you bid with this East hand? With a good 5 card suit that partner has supported and three small ♥'s (that's a good number as partner is probably short – two of the enemy's suit is the worst holding) I would bid 4♠, although a 3♠ bid would also get you there.
- (4) As I said, South knew exactly what was going on and was all set to raise to 4♥, but 3♥ doubled scores more of course so he passed the double.
- (5) West assumed that East had the ♥ stack that South actually had. Looks like this North lucked out again.

And what happened? 3♥ doubled made exactly and was a clear top to N-S. E-W bid and made 4♠ comfortably at most tables.

The bottom lines: -

- A one-level overcall is around 7-16 points
- If you double and then bid a new suit, this shows a hand that was too strong to simply overcall. Generally around 17+ with a 6 card suit.
- If you don't know what an opponent's bid means and you know that they are an established experienced pair, then ask the bidder's partner!

An easy game missed

Board 6 from Monday 28th

Brian dismisses this board as trivial, E-W should always bid to 4♠ and always make 11 tricks – but apparently not in Pattaya.

Dealer:	♠ QJ6				
East	♥ KJ832	West	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ Q98	-	-	pass	pass
	♣ 108	1♣	dbl (1)	1♠	2♦
		2♠ (2)	pass	pass (3)	pass
♠ AK85	N	♠ 109742			
♥ Q	W E	♥ A65			
♦ K754	S	♦ 6			
♣ AJ75		♣ KQ64			
	♠ 3				
	♥ 10974				
	♦ AJ1032				
	♣ 932				

E-W asked me where they went wrong here, who do you think should have bid more?

- (1) I would simply overcall 1♥. To me this is a no-brainer, with a 5 card major and 3 in the other major, do not double but simply bid your suit. Why on earth would you want to possibly end up in a 4-3 fit if you have a 5-3 fit in the other major?
- (2) Now West apparently got confused here. East's one level response still promises 6+ points after an intervening double, although it is generally limited to about 9-10 points as otherwise he might redouble. So with this 17 count and a great fit for partner, he must bid more than 2♠ which is a minimal response. 3♠ or 4♠ would work.
- (3) East is maximum and quackless with 5 ♠'s, 1st round ♥ control, a useful singleton and great support for partner's 1st bid suit. He should bid 3♠ (if not 4♠).

Both East and West grossly underbid and should share the blame.

And what happened? Brian's prediction (4♠ making +1) was true for 5 out of the 8 boards.

The bottom lines: -

- With a 5 card major and 3 in the other major, overcall rather than double.
- 4144 shape with 17 points is worth a noise when partner responds in your 4 card major!
- 9 points with a 5 card major which partner (opener) has supported is worth a noise, especially with a singleton in one of the opponent's suits.

Way overboard

Board 26 from Wednesday 2nd, dealer East

We played this board on Wednesday, and two out of the 6 E-W pairs overbid to a very poor 4♠. Who's fault?

West	East (E)	West	North	East (E)	South
♠ J9762	♠ K85	-	-	pass	pass
♥ 102	♥ K85	1♠	pass	2♣ (1)	pass (?)
♦ AK8	♦ 976	2NT (2)	pass	4♠ (3)	all pass
♣ A109	♣ KQ82				

- (1) East's 2♣ bid is fine as long as your partnership plays that it is forcing (East is a passed hand). If 2♣ is passable then East should simply bid an invitational 3♠. Probably the best solution by a passed hand over a major suit opening is to play (2-way) Drury here. This deal is in the booklet and Brian also says that East should just invite game.
- (2) Not a pretty rebid! But it is East who has pushed up the level and this 2NT rebid simply shows 12-14 points. In fact, if you don't play Drury then 2♣ at (1) should be a 5+ card suit and I would pass with this West hand. If 2♣ is forcing here in your system (not a good idea) then 2NT is probably the best rebid as it's a miserable ♠ suit.
Now I am not totally sure about the bidding and South may have overcalled 2♦ at (?), if that is true then West has another option, he can pass to show a minimum opener and should only bid 2NT when at the top end of the range (so 14) with decent ♦ stops.
- (3) What did you bid with this East hand E in this week's quiz? A jump to game here should be about 12-14 points. Obviously East cannot have that as he's a passed hand and so the action is only warranted with about 11 and a good ♠ suit and excellent shape. This actual hand is 11 but with no shape whatsoever (knock off a point for the 4333 type shape) and with only 3 trumps a 3♠ bid is quite sufficient.

The bottom lines: -

- Deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape.
- If you have this 4333 type shape and partner's major suit opening is one of your 3 carders then this shape is especially bad (only 3 trumps and absolutely no ruffing potential).
- With no agreement to the contrary, the bid of a new suit by a passed hand is not forcing. So with 3 card support for partner's major suit opening you have to make the appropriate support bid straight away.
- The best solution to this passed hand problem is to play (2-way) (reverse) Drury but that is a rather advanced convention.

Stronger than a normal reverse!

Board 10 from Wednesday 2nd

A comfortable 4♥ contract was missed at 5 tables out of 6 on Wednesday, what went wrong?

Dealer:	♠ Q10842				
East	♥ A	West (G)	North	East (J)	South
Both vul	♦ K95	-	-	1♦ (1)	pass
	♣ AJ73	pass	1♠	2♥ (2)	pass
		pass (3)	pass		
♠ KJ9	N	♠ A65			
♥ 98743	W E	♥ KQJ10			
♦ 763	S	♦ AQ842			
♣ 86		♣ Q			
	♠ 73				
	♥ 652				
	♦ J10				
	♣ K109542				

- (1) A strong hand, but 1♦ is the only sensible opening.
- (2) But what did you rebid with this East hand J in this week's quiz? With a couple of points less (say 15-16) then double is fine, but I think that this hand is a bit too good and I go along with this reverse into 2♥. Now normally a reverse shows about 15-17 points when partner has responded, but when partner has passed (so less than 6 points) it must show a very good hand (around 18+).
- (3) And what did you bid with this West hand G in this week's quiz? Partner is expecting 0-5 points from you and inviting (virtually forcing) you to bid. You have 5 card support in his major suit and 4 points (maybe not a great 4, but North need not have both the ♠ A and ♠ Q). I would most certainly bid 3♥, if not 4♥.

And what happened? 2♥ made +3 but still scored well as only one pair bid to 4♥ and made.

The bottom lines: -

- 5 card support for partner's (4 card) major is a big +
- If you open, LHO and partner both pass and RHO overcalls then: -
 - . A double shows a reasonable hand (say 15-17 points)
 - . A reverse shows a very strong hand (say 18+ points)
- So a reverse opposite a passed partner is stronger than a reverse opposite a partner who has responded.

Promising a stop

Board 27 from Wednesday 2nd

Dealer: ♠ KQ975
South ♥ AK42
Love all ♦ J10
♣ 75

West	North	East (H)	South
-	-	-	pass
1♦	1♠ (1)	2NT (2)	pass
3NT	all pass		

♠ A4	N	♠ 8632
♥ Q75	W E	♥ 9
♦ AK9764	S	♦ Q852
♣ J4		♣ AKQ3
	♠ J10	
	♥ J10863	
	♦ 3	
	♣ 109862	

- (1) Double is a reasonable option here with both majors (pray that partner does not bid 2♣).
- (2) What did you bid with this East hand H in this week's quiz? With no overcall you would bid 1♠, but the overcall makes life difficult. You have the values for 2NT but no ♠ stop so that's a very poor bid (if 3NT is the best contract then it has to be played by West if he has a stop – a holding like Kx is only a stop if West is declarer.
- So East has a few options. He has good ♣'s and good ♦ support and so a 2♠ bid, asking partner to bid NT with a ♠ stop is quite reasonable. Another option is to bid 2♣ and hope that partner can rebid NT. And a third option is the simple 3♦, again hoping that partner will bid 3NT.

And what happened? As West had the ♠A it mattered not who declarer was, sometimes there's no justice in this game. This board was left over from Monday's simultaneous and I note that Brian says there's a cold ♦ slam but that most pairs should reach 3NT by West. I agree that 6♦ is difficult to bid.

And what happened? Nobody bid slam. Just three pairs bid to 3NT and I note that just one pair did play it from the West hand (well done Jeff/Michael). Note that the ♥J lead by South defeats 3NT played by East – West really should be declarer; and with no tenace to protect, East should know this.

The bottom lines: -

- A 2NT response after RHO has overcalled promises a stop in the overcalled suit.
- You can always bid the opponent's suit to ask for a stop.
- Especially when playing in NT, the stronger hand and/or the hand with a tenace to protect should be declarer

Which finesse? - part 1

Board 15 from Wednesday 2nd

Dealer: ♠ QJ1085
South ♥ 6
N-S vul ♦ AQ1064
♣ Q7

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♣
pass	1♠	pass	4♠ (1)
pass	pass (2)		

♠ -	N	♠ 76432
♥ J98754	W E	♥ Q3
♦ K9875	S	♦ J3
♣ 84		♣ K952
	♠ AK9	
	♥ AK102	
	♦ 2	
	♣ AJ1063	

- (1) There are more sophisticated bids but this was an unfamiliar partnership
- (2) Partner has shown around 19 points and looking for slam would be very reasonable.

And what happened? One pair bid 6♠ but went down. Most were in 4♠ making just +1 (only one pair made +2). But how should the hand be played for 12 tricks? If you count the top tricks it's 5 ♠'s, 2 ♥'s, 1 ♦ and 1 ♣, so 9. But (at least) two more ♣'s can be developed and a ♦ ruff brings the total to 12 (or 13). The best approach is pull one round of trumps. When West shows out try the ♣ finesse next (lead the ♣Q). When this succeeds (East may cover to promote his ♣9 or duck, it matters not) declarer should spurn the ♦ finesse by cashing the ♦A and ruffing a ♦ high. Then draw trumps and lead ♣'s again. The 4-2 ♣ break means that there are only 3 ♣ tricks but that's still 5 ♠'s, 2 ♥'s, 1 ♦, 1 ♦ ruff and 3 ♣'s – a total of 12. Only one declarer managed 12 tricks – well done Bob/Dave.

Which finesse? - part 2

Board 7 from Wednesday 2nd

And Dave showed his good technique again on this slam: -

Dealer:	♠ Q97				
South	♥ 9865		West	North	East
Both vul	♦ Q74		-	-	-
	♣ 762		1NT	pass	2♣
			2♦	pass	4♣ (1)
			4♠	pass	6NT
					pass
♠ J8	N	♠ K643			
♥ QJ4	W E	♥ AK102			
♦ AJ7	S	♦ K85			
♣ AQJ43		♣ K10			
	♠ A1052				
	♥ 73				
	♦ 10632				
	♣ 985				

(1) Gerber.

This bidding was fairly typical. You need about 17 points to insist upon 6NT opposite a 15-17 1NT, but this East is 16 with two 10's and excellent top cards (no quacks) and I think that 6NT is fine.

So let's look at the play. West has 11 top tricks and the 12th can come from either the ♦Q finesse or playing for the ♠A with North. Which should you try? Of course both happen to fail.

	♠ Q97		
	♥ -		
	♦ Q74	DUMMY	
	♣ -	↓	
♠ J	N	♠ K64	
♥ -	W E	♥ -	
♦ AJ7	S	♦ K85	
♣ QJ		♣ -	
	♠ A1052		
	♥ -		
	♦ 106		
	♣ -		

But Dave knew the answer – you don't try either unless you really have to!
 He reeled off 4 rounds of ♥'s and then started on ♣'s. With 6 cards remaining North appears to be in trouble. Should he unguard his ♠Q or the ♦Q on the ♣Q lead? The answer is that he should have been looking at his partner's discards and, seeing that partner is clinging on to ♠'s, he should keep his ♦'s. In practice he threw ♦'s on the last two rounds of ♣'s and Dave had 12 tricks when the ♦Q fell on the first round when he led up to the ♦K.

And what happened elsewhere? Just one other pair (Irene/Maud) made the slam.

The bottom lines: -

- Watch your partner's discards, and keep a guard in the suit that partner is discarding.
- Don't be in too much of a hurry to make a guess if you can reel off winners and put the defence under pressure.

5-5 in the majors opposite partner's 1NT

Board 21 from Wednesday 2nd, N-S vul.

West	East	West(F)	North	East	South
♠ K10842	♠ Q9	-	pass	1NT	pass
♥ A7432	♥ K64	2♣ (1)	pass	2♦	pass
♦ J9	♦ AK85	2♠ (2)	pass	2NT (3)	pass
♣ 5	♣ K1097	3♥	pass	3NT (4)	all pass

- (1) So what did you bid with this West hand F in this week's quiz? Stayman is not the answer when 5-5 in the majors, I'll come on to the solution shortly.
- (2) And any regular readers of the news-sheet know that this is a weak bid (showing 5 ♠'s and 4 ♥'s) and partner must pass. Maybe this pair play a different version of Stayman?
- (3) But Jeff does not read the news-sheets anyway, and even if you wanted to it's impossible to get Jeff to pass below game if he has 15 points and you have made any sort of bid.
- (4) Jeff reasonably placed partner with just 4 ♥'s and so bid 3NT.

And what happened? 4♥ was bid at most other tables and scored better.

So what's the solution when 5-5 in the majors?

One rather out-dated method with 5-5's is Extended Stayman (1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♦). But the problem is that there is no differentiation between invitational and strong hands. Also, this sequence is far better used as a Quest Transfer (showing 6 ♥'s and 4 ♠'s, with 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♥ showing 6 ♠'s and 4 ♥'s).

Another practice in common use by many (most experienced?) players is: -

- 1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ shows 5-5 in the majors and is invitational
- 1NT - 2♥ - 2♠ - 3♥ shows 5-5 in the majors and is game forcing.

So here you have to agree that with 5-4's in the majors you use Stayman (as I have said many times). This latter solution is probably best unless you want the real ultimate solution and you can read that up in my book on responses to 1NT.

Redouble is for Blood

Board 9 from Friday 4th

Dealer: ♠ AJ9
North ♥ AJ1086
E-W vul ♦ KJ5
♣ 109

♠ 642	N	♠ K1073
♥ 975432	W E	♥ Q
♦ -	S	♦ Q972
♣ Q765		♣ AJ43
	♠ Q85	
	♥ K	
	♦ A108643	
	♣ K82	

Table A

West	North(K)	East	South
-	1♥	dbl	redbl
pass (1)	1NT (2)	pass	3NT (3)
all pass			

Table B

West	North(K)	East	South
-	1♥	dbl	redbl
pass (1)	pass (2)	1♠	pass (4)
pass	2♥ (5)	pass	pass (6)
pass			

Table A: (1) Pass is best here. If partner retreats in ♠'s or ♣'s then that's fine.
(2) But this is wrong. What did you bid with this North hand K(a) in this week's quiz? Partner's redouble expresses an interest in penalising the opponents somewhere and North can only bid with a very shapely hand. 1NT is an impossible bid.

(3) South was all set to jump on anything that East bid, but now settled for 3NT.

Table B: (2) Automatic.

(4) At this vulnerability I would double (penalties) here. N-S have around 25+ points and E-W are probably in a 4-3 fit. They won't make 1♠ and at this vulnerability at pairs scoring a double is surely the best bet. One down will net you the 'magic' 200 and will beat any N-S partscore. If you have game then 1♠ will surely go minus two and 500 beats any N-S game.
(5) So what did you bid with this North hand K(b) in this week's quiz? For exactly the same reasons I would double here.

(6) This pass is feeble with a combined 25+ points.

And what happened. N-S at Table A still got a good score when 3NT made +3. N-S at Table B got a near bottom with 2♥ just making.

The bottom lines: -

- Redouble shows 9+ points and generally a mis-fit for partner. It shows the balance of power and is usually looking for a penalty. Either partner should jump at the chance to penalise the opponents and not bid unless partner has passed an opportunity to double.
- Be aware of the vulnerability. If the opponents are vulnerable then one down doubled will usually get a top score if there's no game. And if you are non-vul with vul opponents then setting them two scores more than your non-vulnerable game.

Play a convention over the opponent's 1NT

Board 23 from Friday 4th

Dealer: ♠ Q7
South ♥ K54
Both vul ♦ K9642
♣ 1084

♠ 98 N ♠ KJ652
♥ J108 W E ♥ AQ743
♦ QJ5 S ♦ 108
♣ QJ752 ♣ 6

♠ A1043
♥ 96
♦ A73
♣ AK93

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1NT
pass	2NT (1)	pass (2)	pass (3)
pass			

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1NT
pass	pass (1)	2♥ (4)	pass
pass	dbl (5)	2♠ (6)	dbl (7)
all pass			

Table A: (1) A reasonable invitational raise.
(2) Which means that East would have to compete at the 3-level and so he wisely passed.
(3) With this minimum South cannot accept.

Table B: (1) This North chose to pass, I guess it's near to borderline.
(4) But now East can compete at the two level. What a shame that they had no system bid to show both majors here! So East reasonably chose 2♥.
(5) With this 8 count (so a combined 23 min) North decided to double.
(6) And East said 'thanks for helping me make the right choice' as he put the 2♠ bidding card on the table.
(7) But South doubled that, and 2♥ would have made!

And what happened? 2♠ doubled was one down, so the 200 for N-S would normally be a complete top. Note that if E-W played a defence to 1NT (say Multi-Landy) then 2♣ would show both major and they would end up in the correct contract of 2♥.

Now I said that +200 was a near top for N-S. I have no idea what went wrong with the defence at Table A, but N-S scored +240 for 2NT making 12 tricks. With the ♥'s wrong, the ♠'s wrong, the ♣'s wrong and an unavoidable ♦ loser it looks like 7, maybe 8 tricks to me. With results like this no wonder this N-S pair score around 70% most of the time! Were E-W on drugs? I'm wondering if maybe the board was mis-boarded?

The bottom lines: -

- Play some sort of defence to a 1NT opening, 'natural' really is not good enough. At the minimum you need to be able to show a hand with both majors.
- I described 'Multi Landy' in news-sheet 15. Cappelletti is very similar but (in my opinion) slightly inferior.
- I also briefly went into DONT in news-sheet 11. Alex is a believer in the DONT convention but both Thorlief and Jeff have told me that they both don't like it. I totally agree, the best defence is Multi Landy. Don't play DONT.
- Don't be mesmerised by the club champion. If he's in a contract that should make just 7 tricks don't let him make 12! Five more than his entitlement on a flat hand really is too generous.

Converting a take-out double into penalties

Board 13 from Friday 4th

Dealer: ♠ A1094
North ♥ 543
Both vul ♦ A52
♣ 1074

♠ 865	N	♠ KJ73
♥ KQ6	W E	♥ J1097
♦ KJ64	S	♦ -
♣ Q52		♣ KJ963
	♠ Q2	
	♥ A82	
	♦ Q109873	
	♣ A8	

West	North	East	South
-	pass	pass	1♦
pass	1NT (1)	dbl (2)	2♦
pass (3)	pass	dbl (4)	pass
pass (5)	pass		

- (1) Obviously any news-sheet reader will bid 1♠ here.
- (2) A take-out double of 1♦.
- (3) I was East and with these ♦'s and partner showing values I wanted to double, especially as I had no 4 card major fit with partner. However, this was a first time partnership and I was not sure that partner would take it as penalties (it should be, sitting over the ♦ bidder when they have no known fit).
- (4) Anyway, good old partner came to the rescue. This 2nd double is again for take-out and is an excellent bid for two reasons: -
 - 1- Both opponents are limited and so partner has some points. With this great shape there must be a fit unless
 - 2- partner has a ♦ stack! In which case he will pass this 2nd double.

And what happened? 2♦ doubled was one down for the magic 200 to E-W. Actually, every single table was playing in ♦'s (often 3♦) but this was the only table where it was doubled. Guess I've got the blood lust?

Actually, 2♦ should make. But declarer led the ♦3 from hand to the ♦A, presumably under the impression that East had the ♦'s? If you are not sure about the meaning of the bidding, declarer can always ask and would have been informed that both of East's doubles were for take-out.

The bottom lines: -

- Look for the 'magic 200' at pairs scoring. One down doubled vulnerable is usually a top/bottom.
- When you make a take-out double, a 2nd double by you is also for take-out.
- But one is always free to pass partner's take-out double for penalties, this is usually only wise when you are sitting over declarer.

Sheep?

Board 2 from Friday 4th

Dealer: ♠ 73
East ♥ 75
N-S vul ♦ 8653
♣ AJ976

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♠	2♦
4NT (1)	pass	5♥	pass
6♠	all pass		

♠ KQ9	N	♠ AJ8542
♥ KQ1084	W E	♥ AJ
♦ A	S	♦ J7
♣ K843		♣ Q102
	♠ 106	
	♥ 9632	
	♦ KQ10942	
	♣ 5	

(1) If you play 2♥ as forcing here (I certainly do) then you could bid 2♥, but what's the point? You have a known 5-3 or better ♠ fit and here you can take a ♦ ruff in the short trump hand. So simply check that there are not two aces missing and bid slam.

The above (or something similar) seems obvious to me but 6♠ was bid only 3 times out of the six tables. And what happened? The sheep in 4♠ won the day as the defence won the first two tricks with the ♣A and a ♣ ruff. Sometimes there is no justice.

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: 3♣, Stayman. Look for the 4-4 major suit fit.

Hand B: 4♣. Look for slam! ♥AKxxxx is worth far more than 7 points, especially as you know that partner has two or three of them. If 4♣ is natural in your system, then bid that. If 4♣ is asking for aces in your system then still bid it, followed by 6♥ if there is no more than 1 ace missing.

Hand C: Pass. Partner has promised nothing and a 1NT bid here would show 18+ points. It is only 12-14 when partner has bid!

Hand D: 1♥. This hand is not good enough to double and then bids ♥'s. A simple overcall is around 7-16 points and this hand simply qualifies.

Hand E: 3♠. This shows just 3 trumps and an invitational hand; perfect.

Hand F: 2♦, transfer, followed by 2♠. This is the way to show an invitational hand 5-5 in the majors. If you consider the hand game forcing then you can bid 2♥ to start with followed by 3♥. These two sequences promise 5-5 and is one reason why I keep on saying that with hands that are 5-4 or 4-5 in the majors that you should use Stayman.

Hand G: 3♥ (or maybe even 4♥). Partner has a very strong hand (around 18-19).

Hand H: 2♣ or 3♦ or 2♠. You cannot bid 2NT with no ♠ stop.

Hand J: 2♥. This reverse promises a very strong hand when partner has passed. Double is an option but promises only a slightly weaker hand (say 15-17 pts.).

Hand K: (a) Pass. Partner's redouble is 9+ points and generally a mis-fit, he is usually out to penalise the opponents.

(b) Double. Partner's pass is forcing and inviting you to double if you possibly can. The opponents are probably in a 4-3 fit (partner probably has 3 ♠'s) and with this non-min opener I think that double is best, especially at this vulnerability.

11/3/2005

Club News Sheet – No. 123

Mon 7/3/05	N-S	1 st Paul(IRL)/Terry	66 %	2 nd Bob/Dave	59 %
	E-W	1 st Kees/Bjorn	55 %	2 nd Jeff/Michael	54 %
Wed 9/3/05		1= John (Can)/Jean Charles		and John(UK)/Kenneth	59 %
Fri 11/3/05		1= John (Can)/Jean Charles		and Jan/Tom	59 %

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A LHO opens 1♣ and this is passed round to you. (a) What do you bid. (b) What would 2♥ mean?
♠ A	♠ AK98	What do you open with Hand B?
♥ AK10742	♥ A63	
♦ KQ2	♦ 1085	
♣ K42	♣ AK4	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 1♥, what do you do?
♠ A53	♠ 94	With Hand D partner opens 1NT, what do you bid?
♥ Q102	♥ 32	
♦ A75	♦ AK86432	
♣ 10852	♣ 87	

That 4333 type shape yet again

Board 3 from Monday 7th

Dealer:	♠ 63				
South	♥ Q104	West	North	East	South (B)
E-W vul	♦ A942	-	-	-	1NT (1)
	♣ 10932	pass	pass	pass	
♠ Q102	N	♠ J754			
♥ J2	W E	♥ K9875			
♦ KQ76	S	♦ J3			
♣ QJ76		♣ 85			
	♠ AK98				
	♥ A63				
	♦ 1085				
	♣ AK4				

(1) So what did you open with this South hand B in this week's quiz? I've said it a few times – deduct a point for the flat 4333 type shape. And I'm glad to see that at least 3 out of the 6 South's on Monday followed my advice as at this table.

And what happened? 1NT is clearly the best spot and the three 1NT bidders scored well. One South opened 1♣ and played there (not as good a spot as 1NT), quite why North passed this 1♣ opening I don't know (bid 1NT). The other two N-S pairs both ended up in 3NT going down. Presumably South opened 1♣ and then jumped in NT – serves him right.

The bottom line: - Same as ever, deduct a point for the 4333 type shape. The message is gradually sinking in as 50% (but one of them was me!) got it right this time.

Too high

Board 10 from Friday 11th

Dealer: ♠ A53
East ♥ Q102
both vul ♦ A75
♣ 10852

West	North(C)	East	South
-	-	pass	1♦
1♥	1NT (1)	pass	pass
pass			

♠ J87	N	♠ Q94
♥ K8653	W E	♥ J4
♦ Q3	S	♦ 10982
♣ KJ3		♣ A974
	♠ K1062	
	♥ A97	
	♦ KJ64	
	♣ Q6	

(1) What did you bid with this North hand C in this week's quiz? 1NT is correct. With no interference, a 1NT response is 6-10. With interference it's best to play it as about 8-10 as there is no need for the 'courtesy' 1NT with a weaker hand as partner gets another bid if he is strong. This 1NT bid should, of course, guarantee a stop in the overcalled suit.

And the rest of the passes seem totally obvious to me.

But what happened? Just 2 out of the 6 tables stopped in 1NT. Every other N-S pair got too high. Now I simply don't understand this. N-S have no fit and have the combined values for 1NT; full stop. If the opponents choose to bid on at the two level then let them – you get 100 for every trick that they go down.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't let the opponents bully you into 2NT when you have the values for just 1NT – prefer to defend, especially if they are vulnerable.

I ran out of space in last few new-sheets, so here are a couple of deals that I've been saving: -

Transfer to a minor?

Board 24 from Wednesday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ A32
 West ♥ AKQ5
 Love all ♦ J105
 ♣ A32

West	North	East	South (D)
pass	1NT (1)	pass	2♠ (2)
pass	3♣ (3)	pass	3♦ (4)
all pass			

♠ KQ8	N	♠ J10765
♥ 984	W E	♥ J1076
♦ Q7	S	♦ 9
♣ K10964		♣ QJ5
	♠ 94	
	♥ 32	
	♦ AK86432	
	♣ 87	

- (1) This North is a firm believer in deducting a point for 4333 type shape. The 3 aces are good but the two 32's are bad. It's borderline and I won't argue with 1NT or with 1♣ followed by 2NT (showing 18-19).
- (2) What did you bid with this South hand D in this week's quiz? A 7 card suit headed by the AK is worth far more than 7 points – a simple 3NT is the best bid. This actual 2♠ bid was a weak transfer to either ♣'s or ♦'s.
- (3) forced, partner will pass or correct.
- (4) long weak ♦'s.

And what happened? 3♦ was not a great success, with 3NT making +3 being the most popular result, so what went wrong?

The problem was that this South hand is far too good for a weak transfer (remove the ♦A and it would be fine). With 7 ♦'s to AK 3NT is the bid as partner must have at least two ♦'s.

OK, but how would you bid a similar South hand that had only 6 ♦'s?

In Standard American the bid is 3♦ - showing a 6 card ♦ suit with two top honours, nothing else, and invitational to 3NT; but some do say that AKxxxx is too strong for this bid.

Another alternative (which I prefer) is to play 4-way transfers (with this scheme a transfer to ♣'s or ♦'s may be either weak or strong, as with major suit transfers). I have a book on responses to 1NT which explains 4-way transfers if you want to borrow it.

Pre-empt in the pass-out seat?

Board 16 from Friday 25th

Dealer: ♠ 87632
West ♥ Q985
E-W vul ♦ 873
♣ J

West	North	East	South
1♣	pass	pass	2♥ (1)
3♣ (2)	3♥ (3)	pass	4♥ (4)
all pass			

♠ KQ54	N	♠ J109
♥ -	W E	♥ J63
♦ A65	S	♦ J1094
♣ AQ10876		♣ 953
♠ A		
♥ AK10742		
♦ KQ2		
♣ K42		

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand A in this week's quiz? I guess that without any agreement you have to double and then bid ♥'s. But actually there is a better method. Since this is the pass-out seat there is no need for a weak jump overcall (with a weak hand you just pass) and so the jump overcall takes on its old-fashioned meaning of strong or intermediate. If you play a strong jump overcall in this situation then 2♥ is the bid, showing a better hand than double followed by bidding ♥'s.
- (2) West enquired about the 2♥ bid and North informed him that it was weak. Now perhaps West should have suspected that something was amiss and passed? But he has a very nice hand and so bid 3♣.
- (3) With 4♥'s North has a clear raise to 3♥
- (4) Now South is not allowed to 'know' that North believed his bid to be weak, it is unauthorised information. But in this situation he has a clear raise to 4♥.

And what happened? Most N-S pairs reached 4♥ and so it scored a little above average.

The bottom lines: -

- There is no such animal as a pre-empt in the pass-out seat.
- So in the pass-out seat: -
 1. You have to decide what openings of 2♥ or 2♠ are.
 2. You have to decide what openings at the three level are, if you play them at all!
 3. You have to decide what jump overcalls are.

Bidding in the pass-out seat in 4th position.

Here is a reasonable scheme: -

- 1- Openings of (2♦), 2♥ and 2♠ are strong, the good old-fashioned 8 playing tricks. If you play strong two's (or Benjamin) then playing 2♥/♠ as a very strong weak two (say 9-12 pts) is an option. But remember that it may be dangerous to open up a 'weak' 2♥ in 4th seat without much in ♠'s.
- 2- If you open 3♣/♦/♥/♠ then this must be some type of strong hand.
- 3- Jump overcalls are strong.

When your hand improves – part 1

Board 24 from Wednesday 9th

Dealer: ♠ J62
West ♥ 542
Love all ♦ KJ832
♣ 52

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♠	2♣
pass (1)	pass	2♥ (2)	pass
3♠ (3)	pass	4♠	all pass

♠ 1098	N	♠ KQ754
♥ 10743	W E	♥ AKQ9
♦ 6	S	♦ 754
♣ AK1076		♣ J
	♠ A3	
	♥ J8	
	♦ AQ109	
	♣ Q9843	

- (1) Now with a ♣ stack like this West would normally prefer to defend 2♣ doubled; but he has ♠ support (so N-S are short in ♠'s). Nether the less, I think it's correct to go for the penalty with these great ♣'s sitting over the overcaller, and as this E-W pair play negative doubles West passed, awaiting partner (semi-automatic) re-opening double.
- (2) I would re-open with a double here, but it's not too unreasonable to show this great ♥ suit. This is most certainly the best move if partner turns out to have a poor hand that was not a penalty pass (quite likely as he passed initially).
- (3) Now E-W have missed the penalty double, but East has promised a shapely hand with both majors. So what would you bid with this West hand now? West's hand has improved (it's a double fit) and it is now well worth a game invitation, so either 3♥ or 3♠. Normally one should always go for the 4-4 fit but West knows here that any ♦ ruffs will be taken in the short ♠ hand so playing in a 5-3 ♠ fit should be equally good.

And what happened? Out of six tables, just one pair managed to clobber South and scored 800 defending 2♣ doubled. Just two tables reached 4♠ which made +1 for the shared 2nd top. The other 3 tables were in ♠ partscores.

The bottom lines: -

- Hand evaluation is an evolving process and your hand improves/degrades throughout the bidding. If you have a double fit with partner, your hand has improved.

When your hand improves – part 2

Board 22 from Wednesday 9th

Dealer: ♠ 86
East ♥ KQ6542
Love all ♦ 75
♣ 973

♠ K109	N	♠ AQJ54
♥ 7	W E	♥ 103
♦ QJ94	S	♦ A862
♣ AKJ84		♣ Q5

♠ 732
♥ AJ98
♦ K103
♣ 1062

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♠	pass
2♣ (1)	2♥	3♥ (2)	pass
4NT (3)	pass	5♠ (4)	pass
6♠	all pass		

- (1) West obviously has the values and shape to know that 4♠ should make, but bidding it directly is not good as that is usually a weaker hand with (usually) 5 trumps. There are other options (such as a 3♥ splinter) but with only 3 card support it's best to bid another suit first and then support partner at the game level (this is called a delayed game raise, and shows a sound raise to game rather than a pre-emptive one). So, West bid 2♣.
- (2) The bid of the opponent's suit may mean one of many things. Partner's first priority is to bid NT if he has a stop. This 3♥ bid here is a good bid as the ♣Q is an excellent card and if NT is the best strain then it must be played by West.
- (3) But of course West is definitely not interested in NT and 4♠ is the 'obvious' bid, isn't it?
I did not think so. I was West and my previous bid at the two level only promised a good 10+ points. East has shown a game forcing hand opposite this (so usually at least a good 14+). Now the opponents have bid ♥'s and a singleton is an excellent holding (in a trump contract) and so my hand has improved immensely. I simply went on a slam hunt, 4NT was RKCB.
- (4) 4♠ here showed 2 key cards + the 'trump' queen. Exactly which suit was trumps (♣'s or ♠'s) was unclear, and in these ambiguous situations it's usually best to assume the last suit that was naturally bid (so ♣'s here). But actually the response was the same as East held both black suit queens!

And what happened? 12 tricks are easy (or should be) – do not take a ♦ finesse, but ruff a ♥ in dummy, draw trumps and toss the 3 losing ♦'s on dummy's ♣'s. Two pairs bid the slam and made. The other 4 tables all just bid game and two made only 11 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- Hand evaluation is an evolving process and your hand improves/degrades throughout the bidding. If the opponents bid a suit in which you are short, your hand improves if you have a fit with partner.

When your hand improves – part 3

Board 12 from Wednesday 9th

I have frequently said not to overcall/double just because you have values, you can always leave it to later (especially if your partner understands balancing). Let's see an example of this from Wednesday: -

Dealer:	♠ K964				
West	♥ K9	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ 98	1♦	pass (1)	1♥	pass (2)
	♣ K10632	2♦	dbl (3)	pass	2♠
		3♦ (4)	pass	pass	3♠ (5)
		all pass			
♠ Q73	N	♠ J2			
♥ 2	W E	♥ AJ54			
♦ KQJ753	S	♦ 642			
♣ AJ9		♣ Q754			
	♠ A1085				
	♥ Q108763				
	♦ A10				
	♣ 8				

- (1) Best to wait.
- (2) And obviously South cannot say anything.
- (3) But now North has a nice bid – double, showing 4 ♠'s and 4 or 5 ♣'s. Incidentally I (South) was asked about this bid and I said that North had 4 ♠'s and probably 5 ♣'s. Why not just 4 ♣'s? Because with a flatter hand he would probably pass. And why not 5 ♠'s? Because he would then have overcalled 1♠ at (1).
- (4) With this great ♦ suit I think that this is a good bid.
- (5) Now this South (me) knows about the Law of Total Tricks, so why bid 3♠ with just a 4-4 fit? Because of shape! – and the knowledge that E-W have probably have at least a 9 card ♦ fit. This is a nice South hand but West bidding ♦'s (three times) and East bidding ♥'s (length/strength over the bidder) has improved this hand immensely, it's now easily worth 3♠.

And what happened? Obviously ♠'s played very nicely and South made 11 tricks. One other South presumably thinks that there are only 13 important cards in the deck (the 13 that he/she is looking at) and deservedly lost 200 playing in 3♥ doubled (I don't know the bidding, I guess it's not printable). Every other E-W was peacefully left to play in a ♦ partscore.

The bottom lines: -

- If your hand is unsuitable for action at your first bid, then pass – you have a partner.
- When the opponents have bid two suits, then a double shows the other two – isn't that easy – why make life difficult with an ambiguous bid earlier?
- Look for the 4-4 fit (it's better than a 6-2 fit!).

Aces are for taking kings

Board 1 from Wednesday 9th

Dealer: ♠ K10764
North ♥ 3
Love all ♦ A642
♣ KJ10

West	North	East	South
-	1♠	pass	2♥ (1)
pass	2NT (2)	all pass	

♠ 2	N	♠ AJ953
♥ Q65	W E	♥ KJ104
♦ K98	S	♦ J103
♣ A76542		♣ 3
	♠ Q8	
	♥ A9872	
	♦ Q75	
	♣ Q98	

- (1) This South hand is just about worth 2♥ playing Standard American (as long as you do not play that a 2-level response promises another bid).
- (2) Partner has pushed the level up to two; either 2♠ or 2NT show a minimum hand here.

Anyway, this particular deal is not in the news-sheet for the bidding, but the play. To start with, what should East lead? It does not look attractive to lead from this ♥ holding and I agree that his choice of the ♦J is reasonable. Declarer won this with the ♦A and led a small ♠. And then East lost it! He inexplicably rose with the ♠A and returned a ♠. This is very poor play (from an 'experienced' player). Obviously he should duck and then await the ♠ return from dummy, taking declarer's ♠K with his ♠A and then continue with ♦'s (or ♥'s if West signalled for a ♥ on this 2nd round of ♠'s).

And what happened? 2NT is a very poor contract, but making it was a great score for N-S. I note that 2NT went minus 4 at one table.

The bottom lines: -

- Ace are for taking kings.
- It is rarely a good idea to lead into declarer's known 5 card suit.

Enough for 6NT?

Board 5 from Wednesday 9th

When partner opens 1NT then responder generally need about 18 points (so 33-35 total) to insist upon 6NT, but things are different with a good long suit: -

Dealer:	♠ KQ62	<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ AJ98	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ K105	-	1NT	pass	6NT (1)
	♣ K8	all pass			

♠ 74	N	♠ J10853	<u>'Expert Table'</u>			
♥ K1032	W E	♥ Q65	West	North	East	South
♦ 862	S	♦ QJ43	-	1NT	pass	2♠ (1)
♣ 10495		♣ 6	pass	3♣	pass	4♦ (2)
	♠ A9		pass	4NT (3)	pass	6NT (4)
	♥ 74		all pass			
	♦ A97					
	♣ AQJ932					

Table A: (1) Rather abrupt, but very effective.

Now I was asked the best way to bid to 6NT. At one table East bid 4♣ (Gerber) but they got into a mess as partner did not understand it. 4♣ here at (1) is Gerber (ace asking) but apart from the aces, South really needs to know if North has the all-important ♣K. The best way to establish this is to play 4-way transfers over 1NT and to play RKCB. And, in addition, it's best to play Kickback (rather than 4NT as the RKCB bid) when a minor suit is trumps: -

- 'Expert' (1) Transfer to ♣'s
Table (2) RKCB. With ♣'s as trumps it's best to play that 4♦ asks for key-cards.
(3) The 3rd step, so showing 2 key cards without the ♣Q.
(4) So North has the key ♣K in addition to the missing ace and so 6NT is the spot.

And what happened? There are obviously 12 tricks on top in 6NT but Table A was the only pair to bid it. 3NT and 4NT were other common contracts.

The bottom lines: -

- AQJxxx is worth far more than 7 points, especially if partner has the king.
- After a 1NT or 2NT opening, a direct 4♣ is ace-asking (Gerber) but it is rarely a good bid unless you know exactly where you are going.
- With a minor suit as trumps, 4NT is often too high as the ace ask. There are options; some experts play that 4 of the minor is the ask but I prefer Kickback (4 of the suit above).

So what does double mean?

Board 15 from Friday 11th

Here we see an example of three appalling doubles in a row!

Dealer:	♠ J1052				
South	♥ AJ4	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ 1087	-	-	-	1♣
	♣ A94	dbl (1)	redbl (2)	1♠ (3)	1NT (4)
		dbl (5)	2NT (6)	pass	pass
		dbl (7)	all pass		
♠ K	N	♠ Q8764			
♥ Q9872	W E	♥ 105			
♦ AJ943	S	♦ K52			
♣ K5		♣ 876			
	♠ A93				
	♥ K63				
	♦ Q3				
	♣ QJ1032				

- (1) I've said it numerous times – a take out double should be short in the suit bid and playable in the other 3 suits (especially the majors). Double here with a singleton ♠ is silly. If you play the UNT then that is a possibility (weak with the lowest two unbid suits) but I would simply overcall 1♥ and maybe hope to get in a ♦ bid later.
- (2) This is fine, 9+ points and no fit.
- (3) Now North's redouble has said that N-S have the majority of the points and are often looking for a penalty. With a 5 card suit East should bid it. This bid is absolutely correct and promises zero points.
- (4) This is incorrect. When partner redoubles he is looking for blood and 1NT is an impossible bid here. Pass is correct.
- (5) Heaven only knows what this double means. I believe it was penalties as he thought that his partner had points for his ♠ bid.
- (6) Why on earth anybody would want to take out 1NT doubled into 2NT baffles me.
- (7) Surely this one is penalties? But, again, East has promised nothing.

And what happened? 2NT doubles made exactly and West got his well deserved frigid bottom. One West got into the good spot of 3♦ and another rested peacefully in 2♥. All other West's got too high and scored badly (but not as badly as this West).

The bottom lines: -

- A take-out double should be playable in all 3 unbid suits. With a two-suited hand either play Michaels/UNT or overcall the higher ranking hopefully followed by the lower ranking.
- When your partner re-doubles then you usually have only two sensible bids, pass or double. Bidding NT can never be right, we had another example of this silly 1NT rebid last week, Hand K (Redouble is out for blood).
- In 4th seat (after an opening bid, double and re-double) bid a 5 card suit – this promises zero points.
- Don't keep on doubling when the opponents have more points than you and partner has promised nothing but a mis-fit!

When your NT sequence is interfered with.

Board 10 from Wednesday 9th

Most of our members understand Stayman and Transfers, But what when the opponents make a noise? Then it's not so easy. Let's see an example of a complete disaster from Wednesday: -

Dealer:	♠ 7643		Table A				
East	♥ 98		West	North	East	South	
Both vul	♦ 94		-	-	1NT (1)	pass	
	♣ QJ842		2♣ (2)	dbl (3)	2♠	3♣ (4)	
			3♥ (5)	pass	3NT (6)	all pass	
♠ 102	N	♠ AKQ5					
♥ KJ1073	W E	♥ A5					
♦ AJ32	S	♦ KQ1076					
♣ 95		♣ 73					
	♠ J98						
	♥ Q642						
	♦ 85						
	♣ AK105						

'Expert' Table

West	North	East	South
-	-	1NT (1)	pass
2♦ (7)	pass	2♥	pass
3♦ (8)	pass	4♥ or 5♦ (9)	all pass

- Table A:
- (1) This hand is too strong for a 1NT opener. Open 1♦ and then either bid a jump in NT or in ♠'s.
 - (2) Stayman. Obviously this is incorrect and West should simply transfer.
 - (3) The double of a 2♣ Stayman bid shows ♣'s and suggests that partner lead that suit if on lead.
 - (4) I too have ♣'s!
 - (5) E-W are in a pickle now because of the failure to transfer.
 - (6) Masochistic, with obviously 5 ♣ losers straight of the top.

And what happened? No surprise, 3NT was one down with 5 ♣ losers off the top.

- 'Expert' Table
- (1) Let's assume that this East again opens the super-heavyweight 1NT.
 - (7) Then West transfers.
 - (8) And bids his 2nd suit, natural and game forcing
 - (9) East knows that partner has only 4 cards at most in the black suits and that ♣'s may be wide open. He has two sensible choices : - 4♥ or 5♦.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) double or 2♥ - see (b).
(b) Strong (or intermediate). There is no point in having weak jumps overcall in this pass-out position as with a weak hand you can simply pass. So a jump overcall should be strong, something like this hand.
- Hand B: 1NT. Deduct a point for the flat 4333 type shape.
- Hand C: 1NT. After an overcall it's about 7½ - 10 with a stop.
- Hand D: 3NT. It's far too good for an invitational 2NT or for a weak transfer into ♦'s.

18/3/2005

Club News Sheet – No. 124

Mon 14/3/05	1 st Ken/Jean Charles	58%	2 nd Bob/Dave	56%
Wed 16/3/05	1 st Jan/Tom	57%	2 nd David(Swe)/Jean Charles	56%
Fri 18/3/05	1 st Jan/Tom	61%	2 nd Bob/Dave	61%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A RHO opens 1♦. (a) what do you bid? (b) Suppose you choose to double, then what do you do when partner jumps to 2♠?
♠ J75 ♥ AK102 ♦ Q62 ♣ KJ7	♠ KQJ43 ♥ 9 ♦ K53 ♣ 10654	
Hand C	Hand D	(a) What do you open with Hand C? (b) Suppose you open 1♣, then what do you bid after partner's 1♠ response?
♠ 6 ♥ KJ75 ♦ A642 ♣ AK97	♠ AK76 ♥ AQ52 ♦ KJ4 ♣ K9	With Hand D RHO opens 1♣. (a) What do you bid? (b) Suppose you double and partner bids 1♦, what now? (c) Suppose you double and partner bids 1♠, what now?
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 2♠ and RHO doubles. What do you do? With Hand F you open 1NT and partner bids 2♣, Stayman. You respond 2♥ (of course) and he then bids 3NT. What do you do?
♠ Q1085 ♥ 10 ♦ K1097 ♣ Q1065	♠ 10863 ♥ AQ53 ♦ KQJ ♣ KJ	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G you open 1♥ and partner responds 1♠. You then bid 2♣ and partner bids 2♥. What do you do now? (a) With Hand H partner opens 1♥, what do you bid? (b) Suppose you bid 1♠ and partner bids 2♣, what now?
♠ AQ8 ♥ Q10632 ♦ - ♣ KQ832	♠ KJ106 ♥ 85 ♦ AJ1074 ♣ 106	
Hand J	Hand K	What do you open with Hand J? With Hand K partner opens 1♣, what do you bid?
♠ AKQJ6432 ♥ 4 ♦ Q5 ♣ 98	♠ KQ2 ♥ J93 ♦ AQ107 ♣ 953	
Hand L	Hand M	What do you open with Hand L? What do you open with Hand M?
♠ AKQJ764 ♥ KQ ♦ Q4 ♣ 95	♠ AJ92 ♥ AK987 ♦ A ♣ KQ10	

Lead partner's suit (if declarer has yours)

Board 6 from Monday 14th

Dealer:	♠ KQ2				
East	♥ J93	West	North(K)	East	South
E-W vul	♦ AQ107	-	-	pass (1)	1♣ (2)
	♣ 953	pass	2NT (3)	all pass	
♠ J53	N	♠ A86			
♥ A10875	W E	♥ 42			
♦ J95	S	♦ K6432			
♣ 82		♣ AJ6			
	♠ 10974				
	♥ KQ6				
	♦ 8				
	♣ KQ1074				

- (1) A borderline opener, but with nice top cards I would open with 1♦ as it conforms with the rule of 20 and has good top cards.
- (2) Another borderline opener, but with nice shape, touching honours (good), two useful 10's and an easy rebid I too would open this hand although it's only 19 (for the rule of 20).
- (3) What did you bid with this North hand K in this week's quiz? A balanced 11-12 points and (of course) no 4 card major and so it's 2NT. Equally good is to bid 1♦ and probably later bid 2NT. Now this brings up an interesting point, in SAYC the direct 2NT response is apparently 13-15, but I have only found one player who plays this. Chuck, Austin, Clive, Dave, and everybody else that I asked all said that 2NT by responder should be 11-12 whenever it is bid, and I totally agree. Keep it simple!

But now we come to the real point – the play. What would you lead from this East hand? North's 2NT bid is very revealing – he has denied a 4 card major and most certainly has a good ♦ suit. I would not lead a ♦ away from the king in this situation.

So what's the alternative? You know that partner has at least 4 ♥'s and I would lead the ♥4. If you can't lead your suit, then lead partner's (presumed) suit. With this actual layout this lead will not gain anything – but it will not give a trick away!

And what happened? West led the ♦3 and North made 10 tricks. This was a good score for N-S but was beaten by the N-S pair who defended 1NT by East and got just 8 tricks. Isn't the scoring unfair! This 2nd N-S pair made 8 tricks and scored 200 but the 1st N-S pair made 10 tricks but scored just 180!

The bottom line: -
Sometimes the opponent's bidding will reveal partner's suit.

The second double is also take-out – pt 1

Board 13 from Monday 14th

Dealer: ♠ 6
North ♥ 73
both vul ♦ QJ1092
♣ AQ542

♠ AQJ75	N	♠ 10942
♥ KQ42	W E	♥ A98
♦ 8	S	♦ 73
♣ K87		♣ J1063
	♠ K85	
	♥ J1065	
	♦ AK654	
	♣ 9	

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	pass (1)	pass	1♦
dbl	3♦ (2)	pass	pass
dbl	pass	pass (3)	pass

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	1♦ (1)	pass	1♥
1♠	2♣	2♠	2NT
pass	3♣	pass	3♦
3♠	pass	pass	dbl (4)
all pass			

Table A: (1) Yet another borderline opener. This ♦ suit is worth more than 3 points and opening certainly is not wrong. But I was North at this table and with this hand type it's usually very easy to describe it later (the infamous UNT) and so I chose to pass.

(2) This 3♦ bid is pre-emptive after an intervening double.

(3) East should bid 3♠ here. Partner's 2nd double is also for take-out.

Table B: (1) This North chose to open, fine.

(4) But here we see the problem with North opening. South expected a little more from North and made a penalty double. Mind you, North has shown a 5+ card ♦ suit and so the ♦ AK are not standing up - 4♦ may be a better bid than double.

And what happened? 3♦ doubled made two overtricks at Table A for the N-S top. And 3♠ doubled made an overtrick at Table B for the E-W top.

The bottom lines: -

- If you double and then double again when LHO raises the suit, the 2nd double is again for take-out.
- In most situations where the opponents have bid and agreed a suit, a double is for take-out.
- If you have a big fit for partner (5-5 or better) then don't expect to make tricks in this suit if you end up defending.

The second double is also take-out – pt 2

Board 15 from Friday 18th

And we had a similar bidding sequence with this deal from Friday.

Dealer:	♠ 92					
South	♥ 9		West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ A7532		-	-	-	1♦
	♣ KJ652		pass	3♦ (1)	dbl	4♦
			pass	pass	dbl (2)	pass
			pass (3)	pass		
♠ J764	N	♠ AK1083				
♥ 10432	W E	♥ AKJ876				
♦ 8	S	♦ 64				
♣ Q984		♣ -				
	♠ Q5					
	♥ Q5					
	♦ KQJ109					
	♣ A1073					

- (1) With this great support and a good 2nd suit, this hand is well worth 3♦.
- (2) And as we now all know, this 2nd double is also for take-out.
- (3) But obviously West was sleeping.

And what happened? 4♦ doubled went just one down for 200 away and a top to N-S. One other E-W pair actually let N-S play in 4♦ undoubled (probably just as well as their defence was consistent with their bidding when they let South make 10 tricks). E-W are cold for 12 tricks in either major (if they have read the news-sheets about playing for the drop with 4 out including the queen). E-W played in ♥'s at the other 4 tables but only two of them managed 12 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- A 2nd double is also for take-out, especially when the opponents have bid and supported the suit.
- A singleton trump is not a good enough holding to convert partner's take-out double into penalties!
- With 9 cards in a suit missing the queen, it's usually best to play for the drop.

Which ace?

Board 9 from Monday 14th

Dealer: ♠ J87642
North ♥ 102
E-W vul ♦ 85
♣ A65

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	2♠ (1)	pass (2)	pass
dbl	pass	2NT (3)	pass
3♥	pass	4♥	all pass

♠ K	N	♠ A95
♥ KJ985	W E	♥ AQ74
♦ KQJ10	S	♦ A32
♣ KQ2		♣ J93
	♠ Q103	
	♥ 63	
	♦ 9764	
	♣ 10874	

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	pass (1)	1NT (4)	pass
2♦	pass	2♥ (5)	pass
4♣	pass	4NT	pass
6NT (6)	all pass		

- Table A: (1) So would you open this North hand with a weak 2♠? I guess I would not be able to print what Chuck would say (miserable suit, an outside ace etc. etc) but at this vulnerability I think it's OK.
(2) Obviously East should bid here, and either 2NT or double are reasonable. I would double as it's not quite good enough for 2NT.
(3) And this is also wrong as it's not forcing.

- Table B: (1) This North chose to pass, fine
(4) And this auction was fairly typical after North passed. But, of course. I would deduct a point for the flat shape and so not open 1NT.
(5) With 4 good trumps, a super-accept is an alternative option.
(6) A bit of a gamble (which ace is missing). At pairs scoring I guess 6NT is best but at teams then obviously 6♥.

Anyway, most tables reached 6NT but I was asked by one West player if it was possible to establish if East had the ♠ A (he was worried about the singleton king). Let's see how my 'experts' might bid it and also find out if East has the ♥ Q (we'll assume that North passes): -

West	North	East	South
-	pass	1♦ (7)	pass
1♥	pass	2♥	pass
3♠ (8)	pass	4♦ (9)	pass
4NT (10)	pass	5♣ (11)	pass
5♦ (12)	pass	5NT (13)	pass
6NT (14)	all pass		

- (7) 15 points, but knock off a point for 4333 type shape and it's not good enough for 1NT.
(8) A splinter, game forcing. Now normally it is not a good idea to splinter with a singleton king, but West wants to establish exactly which aces partner has and the best way to do that is by cue bidding, and an easy way to initiate a cue bidding sequence is to splinter.
(9) A cue bid (♦A). Now one always cue bids the cheapest ace and so this bid denies the ♣A.
(10) RKCB. (11) (zero) or 3 key cards. (12) trump queen?
(13) Yes, but no king (a bid of 5♥ would deny the ♥Q and any other suit bid would show that king + the ♥Q).
(14) Now West knows that the ♥'s are running and that the missing ace is the ♣A and so he can go for the higher scoring 6NT slam.

Nice One Dave!Board 7 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer:	♠ QJ9	West	North	East	South
South	♥ Q10	-	-	-	1NT
both vul	♦ 1054	pass	3NT	all pass	
	♣ AK1087				

♠ K62	N	♠ 8754
♥ K62	W E	♥ 87543
♦ KJ632	S	♦ Q7
♣ 93		♣ 52
	♠ A103	
	♥ AJ9	
	♦ A98	
	♣ QJ64	

This deal appeared in a Swedish news-paper and I included it in Wednesday's hands. The bidding is uninteresting but it's all about the play. West should lead a low ♦ and South takes the 2nd round. Now I could not read the Swedish commentary but I assume the deal is all about a squeeze and/or endplay. South has 8 tricks and needs to safely establish a 9th. Now he could take either major suit finesse, but both fail and he's then down when West cashes his ♦'s.

DUMMY → ♠ QJ9
♥ Q10
♦ 10
♣ A

♠ K6	N	♠ 8754
♥ K6	W E	♥ 875
♦ KJ6	S	♦ -
♣ -		♣ -
	♠ A103	
	♥ AJ9	
	♦ 9	
	♣ -	

South wins the 2nd round of ♦'s and then leads four rounds of ♣'s and we are left with this position. The last ♣ from dummy then puts West under pressure.

Now he does not want to unguard either major suit king and so 'has to' throw a ♦. Declarer then leads a ♦ to West and after cashing the 13th ♦ West is end-played. South does not care who has either of the major suit kings as West's lead must give him his 9th trick. So that all seems foolproof, eh? But not when Dave (West) is defending!

Dave did not want to throw a winning ♦ and he is also not so keen on being end-played. So in this position he bared his ♠ K by throwing the ♠ 6. Declarer had seen Dave discard two ♠'s and so quite reasonably finessed the ♠ K. Down one and a well deserved near top for Dave!

Who would blame South for not taking the 'obvious' ♠ finesse and going for the overtrick! And what happened at the other tables? In Pattaya we got the usual mixed bag of results of course (a difference of 4 tricks in the same contract). Everybody was in 3NT: - making +2 twice, exactly once, down one once and somehow managing to go down two once.

A 4441 type shape (any order) is a problem opening hand in most natural systems. Let's have a look at one that came up on Wednesday which generated considerable debate: -

Dealer:	♠ 6	<u>Table A</u>				
South	♥ KJ75	West	North(C)	East	South	
E-W vul	♦ A642	-	-	-	pass	
	♣ AK97	pass	1♣ (1)	pass	1♠	
		pass	2NT (2)	pass	3♠ (3)	
		pass	pass (4)	pass		
♠ A98	N	♠ 10752				
♥ A862	W E	♥ Q1043				
♦ 1087	S	♦ QJ9	<u>Table B</u>			
♣ Q8		♣ J3	West	North	East	South (B)
	♠ KQJ43		-	-	-	pass
	♥ 9		pass	1♦ (1)	pass	1♠
	♦ K53		pass	2♣ (5)	pass	4♣ (6)
	♣ 10654		etc. to 5♣			

- Table A: (1) And here's the first problem, what do you open? What did you open with this North hand C(a) in this week's quiz? The 4441 type shape is notoriously difficult – that's why some systems adopt a convention (Roman 2♦, or Mini Roman 2♦) specifically for this hand type. Anyway, with no such convention, what do you open? There are all sorts of theories; some say the suit below the singleton (but you cannot here as we play 5 card majors); some say the lowest suit; and others say the 2nd lowest suit. So here it's between 1♣ and 1♦. Neither is perfect but I prefer 1♣.
- (2) And here we see the problem; we have no rebid. What did you rebid with this North hand C(b) in this week's quiz? After the 1♣ opening, 2♣ here is generally a 6 card suit (could be 5), 2♦ would be a reverse promising 5+ ♣'s, 1NT is 12-14 and 2NT is 18-19. So what's the solution? There is none! You have to lie, and if you have to lie it's best to lie about your length in a minor suit and so I would rebid 2♣. But with this particular 15-pointer Dave pointed out that 1NT (12-14) would also be a decent bid as it's only lying by one point and a singleton in partner's suit is a downgrade. I agree. Anyway, this North mistakenly thought that 2NT shows 15-17 (it is 18-19).
- (3) I prefer to play that any bid after an 18-19 2NT is game forcing, and I would expect partner to bid again.
- (4) But N-S landed on their feet when North passed as 3♠ is a decent spot.
- Table B: (1) This North chose 1♦.
- (5) But this time the 2♣ rebid now promises 5+ ♦'s – there's no getting away from the lying!
- (6) What did you bid with this South hand B in this week's quiz? I would bid 2♠; this is generally played as weakish but slightly encouraging. That sums this hand up in a nutshell. I don't understand this South's 4♣ bid (as it's gone past 3NT I would take it as strong, agreeing ♣'s, and looking for slam).

And what happened? 3♠ made exactly and took the top spot. 5♣ went one down and scored badly. Various other contracts (such as 2NT and 3NT) also went down.

And how would I bid the hand? 1♣ - 1♠ - 2♣ - 2♠ - pass;
 and Dave's suggestion would work equally well: 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♠ - pass.

Roman 2♦ or Mini Roman 2♦?

As I mentioned earlier there are numerous variations of a 2♦ opening bid that show a 4441 type hand. Now you need to define the point range and two popular variations are:

the Roman 2♦ any 4441 type shape, 15-17 points
or the Mini Roman 2♦ any 4441 type shape, 12-14 points

I won't go into the details, but responder can sign off in 2 of a major (2♥ is pass or correct) or can enquire about opener's shortage – there are numerous variations. Anyway, one member asked me which is the best point range to use.

Now I know of at least one very experienced player who plays a strong NT and also likes to play Mini-Roman; this, in my opinion, is wrong: -

The main problem with this type of shape, as I mentioned on the previous page, is no good rebid (because you have no 5 card suit) and one problem often that occurs is when you cannot rebid 1NT because that would show an incorrect point range.

So the answer is now 'obvious'. If you want to play some sort of Roman 2♦ system, then you should play the Roman 2♦ system that is the same point range as your opening 1NT. Then if you have a 4441 type hand that is outside your opening 1NT you can open your lowest ranking suit and then comfortably rebid NT at the lowest level if partner is inconsiderate enough to bid your singleton.

What to do with a monster when the opponents open?

Board 21 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer: ♠ Q3
North ♥ K98
N-S vul ♦ 1073
♣ AQJ76

Table A

West	North	East(D)	South
-	1♣	2NT (1)	pass
pass (2)	pass		

♠ J1094	N	♠ AK76
♥ 74	W E	♥ AQ52
♦ A85	S	♦ KJ4
♣ 8542		♣ K9
	♠ 853	
	♥ J1063	
	♦ Q962	
	♣ 103	

'Expert' Table

West	North	East(D)	South
-	1♣	dbl (1)	pass
1♠ (3)	pass	3♠ (4)	pass
4♠ (5)	all pass		

Table A: (1) So what did you bid with East hand D(a) in this week's quiz? Now we all know (I hope) that a 1NT overcall is 15-18 points, so that's out. So what do you do with a stronger hand? In the 17th century one would bid 2NT; but these days most players play that as conventional (UNT) and so what you do is double and subsequently bid NT – this shows a hand that was too strong to overcall 1NT.

And, of course, there are additional benefits with this approach: - if partner is bust and responds at the one level then you only have to bid 1NT (instead of 2NT). But another major benefit of doubling rather than the sledgehammer 2NT direct approach is that you learn a little about partner's hand.

(2) Anyway, this West apparently did not understand 2NT or else thought his hand too weak to bid and so passed.

Now 4♠ is a fine contract, so how should it be bid in the 20th century? Actually, I've been all through this recently (news-sheet 121) but it apparently did not sink in everywhere (or else people choose to ignore my writings and then ask me again later where they went wrong in the same situation?). So let's repeat myself yet again: -

'Expert' Table (1) So we should start off with a double with hand D. Fine (with a follow-up bid of 1NT if partner responds 1♦).
(3) 0-8 points, 4+ ♠'s.
(4) But partner's 1♠ response is music to our ears. So what did you bid now with this East hand D(c) in this week's quiz? Now when we were discussing the hand one of our local 'cavemen' said simply 4♠. Now I guess that this might have been right in the in the stone age (or 17th century or in Belgium) but it certainly is not right if you simply apply a little logic. Your double has forced partner to bid and his 1♠ response promises around 0-8 points. You do not want to play in 4♠ if he has zero points; but fortunately you have loads of room to invite game: -
2♠ = invitational and partner should bid 4♠ with 7-8 pts and 3♠ with 5-6 pts.
3♠ = highly invitational and partner bids 4♠ with 3+ pts should only pass with 2-
(5) So West had oodles to spare for a raise to 4♠ here.

The bottom lines: -

- Read new-sheet 121 again if you got the answers here wrong.
- Am I wasting my time when people ask me where they went wrong when I explained it fully in the news-sheets just three weeks earlier?

Everyone sacrificing in a slam!

Board 19 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer: ♠ Q432

South ♥ 8

E-W vul ♦ 107532

♣ K97

♠ K985

N

♠ AJ76

♥ A10942

W E

♥ KJ765

♦ K8

S

♦ 4

♣ 43

♣ 852

♠ 10

♥ Q3

♦ AQJ96

♣ AQJ106

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♦
1♥	3♦ (1)	4♥ (2)	5♦ (3)
pass	pass	5♥ (4)	6♦ (5)
6♥ (6)	pass	pass	dbl
all pass			

Now this auction may seem ridiculous (indeed it is) but it was not the beginner's table; even the club champion joined in the fun: -

- (1) Now some do play that this jump is weak after an overcall (but it is most certainly not standard and I would play it as the normal 10-12 points). I play 'standard' after an overcall but that a jump is weak after a double.
- (2) Good bid! That's what the Law says.
- (3) Now this South believed that his partner had the normal 11ish points and so bid 5♦ to make, fine.
- (4) But that's the end of the 'fine' bidding! So far it's just North who has made a 'silly' bid (unless he's agreed that 3♦ was weak), so why not have everybody else join in? East's last bid was correct (the Law) and this overreads the Law but is not too bad.
- (5) But this really is bad. Now South tried to explain to me afterwards that he thought that 5♥ was making. If he really believed that when partner is supposed to have 11 points who is he kidding?
- (6) Well, since everybody else has made a stupid bid, let's make it a full house. 6♥ is totally ridiculous of course when both sides have tried to sign off at a lower level. No wonder Bob and Dave (N-S) do well when people bid like this against them.

And what happened? If it was within my powers I would give everybody what they deserve (a zero) on the board. But unfortunately one is not always rewarded for good bidding nor always penalised for being silly and the total of the N-S and E-W points should add up to 100%. So N-S (Bob and Dave) won out on the 'silliness' battle and got the top when 6♥ went minus 3 for 800. Every other table seemed to bid this hand quite calmly and the maximum score to N-S was 110 (2♦+1) and the maximum for E-W was 170 (3♥+1). So nobody else even thought about game (let alone both sides sacrificing in slam!).

The bottom lines: -

- A very experienced established partnership should know what a raise to the 3 level after an overcall means.
- If the opponents try to sign off at (say) the 5 level, then don't sacrifice when they go one level higher!
- If the opponents sacrifice (6♦ here) then double them (don't sacrifice yourself).

A 2♣ opener?

Board 23 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer: ♠ AJ92
 South ♥ AK987
 both vul ♦ A
 ♣ KQ10

♠ 6	N	♠ KQ875
♥ 104	W E	♥ 65
♦ Q842	S	♦ K1053
♣ AJ9862		♣ 53
	♠ 1043	
	♥ QJ32	
	♦ J976	
	♣ 74	

Table A

West	North(M)	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	2♣ (1)	pass (2)	2♦ (3)
pass	2♥ (4)	pass	4♥ (5)
pass	pass	pass	

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	2♣ (1)	2♠ (2)	pass
pass	3♥ (3)	pass	4♥
all pass			

'Expert' Table

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	1♥ (1)	1♠	2♥ (5)
pass	3♣ (6)	pass	3♥ (7)
pass	4♥ (8)	all pass	

Table C

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	1♥ (1)	1♠ (4)	pass (5)
pass	2NT (6)	pass	pass (7)
pass			

- Table A (1) So what did you open with this North hand M in this week's quiz? A decent 21 points, so 2NT? Actually, I think that that's not a totally unreasonable option, but because of the two good majors I would open 1♥. And opening 2♣ (even if you play Benjamin) is not really a good move on two (or three) suiters. If you open 2♣ then there is little room to explore for a fit. And I sure don't like this North's choice of 2♣ in Standard American a 2♣ opening followed by a suit bid is game forcing and this North hand has nowhere near the required playing strength.
- (2) And 'obviously', especially vulnerable, East should pass here.
- (3) Negative.
- (4) Game forcing. I am just short of a 4♥ game in my hand (ho ho).
- (5) So let's play in 4♥ (fast arrival).

- Table B (1) Now this did pair play Benjamin twos, so 2♣ was either an 8 playing trick hand in an unspecified suit (dubious by my standards) or a 'balanced' 20-21.
- (2) Now most would pass here (especially opposite a passed partner), but this East was Jeff, give Jeff ½ a dozen points and a 5 card suit and not even a 2♣ opening by the opponents and being vulnerable can stop him from bidding.
- (3) So North considers this hand to be 8 playing tricks in ♥'s; and what's more he's now up at the 3 level opposite a potentially bust partner. As I said above, I would have opened the hand with 1♥, but having chosen 2♣ I would double (penalties) here, especially as East was Jeff. But North chose not to double, and (as Jeff would doubtless say), he missed the big boat - 2♠ doubled would probably be about 1100 for N-S.

- Table C (1) Finally somebody found the correct opening bid.
 (4) So this time the overcall is reasonable at the one level over a normal opening.
 (5) I would bid 2♥ here
 (6) 1NT here would show 18+ pts, so I guess that this bid means an enormous hand?
 (7) But presumably South did not realise this. But he should bid 3♥ anyway of course.
- 'Expert'
 Table (1) 1♥ is the best opening.
 (2) And with 4 trumps I think that 2♥ is fine.
 (6) A help-suit game try. Now North is always bidding game of course so this is actually to find out if South has a maximal 2♥ bid (then slam may be on).
 (7) Minimum.
 (8) So let's just play in game.

And what happened? One pair overbid to 6♥ and went down. Two pairs bid 4♥ (making or making +1) and at one table 1♥ was passed out. Even with no intervention I would bid 2♥ with the South hand because it's 4 trumps with points in the trump suit.

The bottom lines: -

- In Standard American a 2♣ opening should be within 1 trick of game.
- If you open a Benjamin 2♣ and the opponents overcall 2♠ then you do not have to rebid at the 3 level if dbl is a realistic bid.
- Do not overcall a Benjamin 2♣ bid with rubbish against opponents who know that there is a double card in the bidding box.

3NT or 5♦?

Board 20 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer: ♠ K1085
West ♥ 84
both vul ♦ A762
♣ Q83

♠ Q72	N	♠ A96
♥ A976	W E	♥ 10532
♦ 8	S	♦ 95
♣ J9642		♣ K1075
	♠ J43	
	♥ KQJ	
	♦ KQJ1043	
	♣ A	

Table A

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	1♦
pass	1♠	pass	3♦
pass	4♦ (1)	pass	5♦
all pass			

Table B

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	1♦
pass	1♠	pass	3♦
pass	3NT (1)	all pass	

So what would you bid at (1)? You probably know my views by now – if 3NT is a sensible option, then bid it.

And what happened? The top spot was 3NT+2. 5♦ made exactly for an average but 3NT went –3 and –1 at other tables .

Now this provoked an interesting discussion between Dave and myself as to which is the best contract for N-S. I believe that 3NT is the best contract looking just at the N-S cards. Dave pointed out that 3NT goes down on a ♣ lead as both the ♥A and ♣K are wrong; 5♦ makes because the ♠Q is onside. So which is best?

For me it's no contest. 3NT makes (probably with overtricks) unless you get a ♣ lead and the ♣K is offside and West has the ♥A (or East finds a ♠ switch to partner's ♠A), so it's much better than 50%. 5♦ can never score overtricks and goes down if the ♠Q is offside, so it's simply 50%. And if the cards lie favourably for both contracts then 3NT (with an overtrick or two) will score more. As usual, 9 tricks are usually easier than 11.

When the Moysian (4-3) fit is better than 5-2

Board 16 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer: ♠ 943
West ♥ AJ74
E-W vul ♦ KQ2
♣ 754

West (G)	North	East (H)	South
1♥	pass	1♠ (1)	pass
2♣	pass	2♥ (2)	pass
2♠ (3)	all pass	pass	

♠ AQ8	N	♠ KJ106
♥ Q10632	W E	♥ 85
♦ -	S	♦ AJ1074
♣ KQ832		♣ 106
	♠ 752	
	♥ K9	
	♦ 98653	
	♣ AJ9	

- (1) What did you respond with this East hand H(a) in this week's quiz? 1♠ is correct, this hand is not strong enough to bid 2♦ and then bid a (game forcing) ♠ bid.
- (2) And what did you bid with this East hand H(b) in the quiz? Even if you ply a 4th suit bid of 2♦ here as natural the hand is not strong enough. You should bid 2♥, this is simple preference and usually shows exactly 2♥'s.
- (3) What did you bid here with this West hand G in the quiz? You know that partner probably has 2♥'s and 4♠'s, but with a void (so you can ruff with the hand short in trumps) the Moysian 4-3 ♠ fit should play better than the 5-2 ♥ fit.

And what happened? 2♠ was the best spot (it made +2 once and exactly once) at the two tables where it was bid. One pair overbid to 4♠ and went two down.

Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit - 1

Board 18 from Friday 18th

Dealer: ♠ A63
East ♥ Q987
N-S vul ♦ AJ54
♣ J8

♠ Q1085	N	♠ KJ9874
♥ 10	W E	♥ KJ6
♦ K1097	S	♦ 86
♣ Q1065		♣ 94
	♠ -	
	♥ AJ543	
	♦ Q32	
	♣ AK732	

Table A

West(E)	North	East	South
-	-	2♠	dbl
3♠ (1)	4♥ (2)	pass	pass
pass (3)			

Table B

West(E)	North	East	South
-	-	2♠	dbl
4♠ (1)	pass (4)	pass	pass (5)

Table A: (1) So what did you bid with this West hand (E) in this week's quiz? Clearly you should raise partner but 3♠ really is not enough. ...

(2) ... as North has an easy 4♥ bid.

(3) And it's too late for West to do any good by bidding 4♠ now – N-S have found their fit.

Table B: (1) This West got it right. Partner has 6 ♠'s and so that's 10 combined ♠'s. The Law says to bid 4♠ and that's what you should do.

(4) And that often makes life difficult for the opponents. But with this particular North hand I think that 5♥ is fairly clear, even 4NT looking for slam is reasonable

(5) But South now really has a problem. West's 4♠ bid is double-edged. Does he have a good hand (and North nothing) or was 4♠ just pre-emptive? Only West knows. 5♣ is probably worth a shot.

And what happened? Three N-S pairs were allowed to play in 4♥ and two pairs were pushed into 5♥; 11 or 12 tricks were always made. One E-W pair (Table B) got the top their way by playing in 4♠ going down just one.

The bottom lines: -

- When your partner pre-empts, add up the total number of combined trumps and raise him to the limit of The Law (but be sensible about it and look at the vulnerability).

Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit - 2

Board 22 from Friday 18th

When you pre-empt then you have told your hand, partner is in charge (the 'captain'). You should never bid again unless partner makes an invitational or forcing bid, and a simple raise of your suit is certainly neither. Let's see what went wrong when an experienced player ignored this 'rule'.

Dealer: ♠ AQ10974

East ♥ A4

E-W vul ♦ 64

♣ A83

West North East South

- - pass pass

2♥ (1) dbl (2) 3♥ (3) 4♠

5♥ (4) dbl all pass

♠ 5 N ♠ 6

♥ KQ653 W E ♥ J102

♦ Q85 S ♦ AJ1073

♣ KQ65 ♣ J1092

♠ KJ852

♥ 987

♦ K92

♣ 74

The 'non-silly' Tables

West North East South

- - pass pass

1♥ 1♠ 2♥ 3♠ (5)

pass 4♠ all pass

- (1) I did not put this West hand in the quiz because I hope that everybody realises that this is extremely bad bidding. Now a third seat opener may be light, but to open this hand with 2♥ seems ridiculous to me. A simple 1♥ is obviously correct.
- (2) I would overcall 2♠ here.
- (3) With 3 trumps, a simple raise to 3♥ is correct here (The Law).
- (4) With just 5♥'s and vulnerable against not, this is simply 'very silly'.
- (5) With 5♠'s I would bid 4♠ here, but I guess 3♠ is OK.

And what happened? 5♥ went two down for 500 away and a complete bottom. Most N-S pairs were scoring 420 in 4♠. Now West tried to justify his bidding – but it's falling on deaf ears. He explained that he was 'unlucky' that the ♦K was not in the doubling hand and that if it was then he would only be one down. True, but in that case 4♠ would also be going down – there's no getting away from 'The Law'.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't pre-empt with 12 points and a 5 card suit! The fact that partner is a passed hand is absolutely no excuse.
- Don't bid again when partner raises your pre-empt, he is the captain.
- Look at the vulnerability. Two down doubled is a bottom against non-vul opponents if there's no slam.

A balanced 25+ points

Board 27 from Friday 18th

So how do *you* bid a balanced hand with 25+ points?

Dealer: ♠ 108532
South ♥ -
Love all ♦ 953
♣ KJ732

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	3NT (1)
pass	pass (2)	pass	

♠ 976	N	♠ J4
♥ Q2	W E	♥ J98743
♦ 10864	S	♦ Q72
♣ A854		♣ 106
	♠ AKQ	
	♥ AK1065	
	♦ AKJ	
	♣ Q9	

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	2♣
pass	2♦	pass	3NT (3)
pass	pass (4)	pass	

The Benji Table

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	2♦ (5)
pass	2♥ (6)	pass	2NT (7)
pass	3♥ (8)	pass	3♠
pass	4♣ (9)	pass	4♠ (10)

Table A: (1) This is the way to show a huge balanced hand if you don't play the gambling 3NT.

(2) But there is an enormous amount of bidding space consumed and North has no idea if 4♠ is better than 3NT. A silly 'system'.

Table B: (3) And this is the alternative approach in Standard American. What more can I say? You're again at the 3NT level and partner does not have a clue what to do.

(4) With this actual North hand he should probably bid (or transfer into) 4♠, but it could well be wrong. And if North had a 4 card major should he go past 3NT to bid a 4♣ Stayman??

So, either approach in Standard America simply does not work; agreed? So what's the solution? It was 'invented' by a Scotsman, Albert Benjamin. He simply stated that just one strong artificial bid (i.e. 2♣) was not sufficient, and that both 2♣ and 2♦ should be used as strong artificial bids. Unfortunately this splendid scheme has not yet made it across the big pond and, indeed, it is only commonly played in the UK.

Now I covered Benjamin twos in some detail in News-sheet 95, but let's see how the system copes with this deal: -

(5) Artificial and absolutely game forcing.

(6) (automatic) relay.

(7) 25+, balanced.

(8) transfer

(9) 2nd suit.

(10) Now South could settle for 4♠ or perhaps investigate slam. See how much more room this Benji system gives you! N-S got a top without even having to bid the slam.

And what happened? 4 out of the 6 pairs on Friday ended up in the inferior 3NT contract. The bottom line? Play Benjamin twos!

Obey the Law

Board 11 from Friday 18th

A recurring theme in the news-sheets, let's have another example of what awaits you if you disregard 'The Law'.

Dealer:	♠ J9654					
South	♥ 54		West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ AK7543		-	-	-	1♣
	♣ -		1♥	1♠ (1)	2♥	2♠
			3♥ (2)	4♠ (3)	pass	pass
			5♥ (4)	dbl (5)	all pass	
♠ 10	N	♠ AQ2				
♥ AK10982	W E	♥ Q76				
♦ QJ9	S	♦ 82				
♣ 1093		♣ K8742				
	♠ K873					
	♥ J3					
	♦ 106					
	♣ AQJ65					

- (1) This hand is not strong enough to bid 2♦.
- (2) Partner has promised just 3♥'s, and in this competitive situation the Law most certainly applies. West has 6♥'s and that is why 3♥ is the correct bid here.
- (3) Now North knows that there are only 9♠'s between them (especially if N-S play Support doubles, but that's another story); but with this great shape 4♠ may well stand a chance.
- (4) But here's the transgression. West has no way of knowing if North has made a speculative 4♠ bid or not and he should obey the Law. Partner has just 3♥'s and a total of 9 trumps is two less than 'the Law' dictates for the 5 level.
- (5) And North, knowing that 4♠ was by no means a secure contract, was more than happy to double.

And what happened? N-S mis-defended but the contract was still three down for a joint top to N-S (it was exactly the same at one other table). 4♠ was the final contract at three other tables but it made only once.

The bottom lines: -

- Obey the Law. To step over it by one is acceptable, but not two.
- It really is silly to give away 500 (should have been more) when the opponents may or may not make game which is only 420 if it makes.

Play in the 4-4 fit!

Board 13 from Friday 18th

One of the club's leading players chose to ignore this advice on Friday. He got exactly what he deserved (a bottom): -

Dealer:	♠ 10863				
North	♥ AQ53	West	North(F)	East	South
Both vul	♦ KQJ	-	1NT	pass	2♣
	♣ KJ	pass	2♥ (1)	pass	3NT (2)
		pass	pass (3)	pass	
♠ A7	N	♠ 954			
♥ J108642	W E	♥ 7			
♦ 54	S	♦ 9732			
♣ 963		♣ AQ742			
	♠ KQJ2				
	♥ K9				
	♦ A1086				
	♣ 1085				

- (1) Always reply 2♥ with both majors.
- (2) This guarantees a 4 card ♠ suit (other wise East would not have bothered with Stayman).
- (3) So what did you bid with this North hand F in this week's quiz? You should bid 4♠. The fact that you have no points in ♠'s really is irrelevant; partner has 4 ♠'s and the 4-4 fit will usually generate an extra trick and/or stop opponent's from running a suit.

And what happened? 3NT was deservedly one down, with 4♠ either making or making +1 at other tables. Actually, only two pairs managed to find the 4-4 ♠ fit. Guess that I simply have not said enough about it in the news-sheets??

The bottom lines: -

- When the 1NT bidder's partner bids Stayman followed by 3NT, that guarantees a 4 card major.
- Play in the 4-4 fit.

Too High

Board 4 from Monday 14th

4♠ was way too high on this deal, so who do you think overbid?

Dealer: ♠ K9862
West ♥ Q98
both vul ♦ A94
♣ 102

West	North	East	South (A)
pass	pass	1♦	dbl (1)
pass	2♠ (2)	pass	3♠ (3)
pass	4♠ (4)	all pass	

♠ Q1043	N	♠ A
♥ 764	W E	♥ J53
♦ 3	S	♦ KJ10875
♣ Q9865		♣ A43

♠ J75
♥ AK102
♦ Q62
♣ KJ7

To answer the question, both
North and South overbid.

- (1) So what did you bid with this South hand A(a) in this week's quiz? I bet that most of you made some sort of noise (probably double)? To me it's a clear pass. It is a couple of points shy of a 1NT overcall and with this totally flat shape is unsuitable for a take-out double. If your partner understands balancing then you should certainly not bid here.
- (2) A jump here shows around 9-11 points and is non-forcing.
- (3) And what did you bid with this South hand A(b) in this week's quiz? With this flat shape and just 3 poor ♠'s it's not worth another bid. Pass is best.
- (4) Now South has invited game and North has five ♠'s, but accepting the invitation with just 9 points is dubious.

A 4♠ opener? – part 1

Board 20 from Friday 18th

Dealer: ♠ 9875
West ♥ 53
both vul ♦ 9832
♣ AK4

West(J)	North	East	South
4♠ (1)	all pass		

♠ AKQJ6432	N	♠ 10
♥ 4	W E	♥ KJ9862
♦ Q5	S	♦ A107
♣ 98		♣ J1063

♠ -
♥ AQJ107
♦ KJ64
♣ Q752

- (1) What did you open with this West hand J in this week's quiz? This is a typical 4♠ opener – 8 ♠'s and not much else. Pre-emptive.

And what happened? 4♠ was bid at 5 out of the 6 tables, making twice.

A 4♠ opener? – part 2

Board 7 from Friday 18th

There was a fair bit of discussion over this board from Friday: -

Dealer:	♠ 9	<u>Table A</u>			
South	♥ AJ10986	West	North	East	South (L)
Both vul	♦ A109753	-	-	-	4♠ (1)
	♣ -	all pass			

♠ 853	N	♠ 102	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ 52	W E	♥ 743	West	North	East	South
♦ J86	S	♦ K2	-	-	-	1♠ (1)
♣ AK762		♣ QJ10843	pass	2♥	pass	4♠
	♠ AKQJ764		all pass			

♥ KQ

♦ Q4

♣ 95

The 'expert' Benji Table

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	2♣ (1)
pass	2♦ (2)	pass	2♠ (3)
pass	3♥	pass	3♠
pass	4♦	pass	4♠
pass	5♠ (4)	pass	6♠ (5)
all pass			

Table A: (1) What did you open with this South hand L in this week's quiz? This hand really is too good for a 4♠ opening.

Table B: (1) And playing Standard American I would open 1♠ and then jump to 4♠.

But if you play strong twos (or Benjamin) then you have more chance to reach a slam (7♥ and 7♠ are cold, but difficult to bid – even Chuck acknowledged this).

'Expert' (1) Playing Benjamin twos you open 2♣ to show an 8 playing trick hand.

Benji (2) Automatic relay.

Table (3) 8 playing tricks with ♠'s as trumps.

(4) Now North knows that South has a strong hand with ♠'s and that there are certainly at least 10 tricks (South's promised 8 plus North's two aces). What's more, he knows that South has some values outside ♠'s (otherwise South would have opened 4♠). Since he has shown both of his suits, I think that North, with the ♣ void, should try 5♠ here.

(5) Since North's 5♠ bid is a slam try, South knows that his ♥KQ are golden cards and he should accept. Don't ask me how 7♠ can be bid.

And what happened? Two tables bid 6♠ and four tables rested in 4♠. Everybody made 13 tricks.

Incidentally, I discussed Namyats (a 4♦ opening is a good 4♠ opening) in news-sheet 106 and I think that Namyats players should also easily reach the small slam.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) Pass. It's not good enough for 1NT and this flat shape is totally unsuitable for a take-out double. Remember that you have a partner and you will get another chance to bid if you wish (assuming partner knows about balancing).
(b) Pass. Partner's 2♠ shows about 9-11 points and this flat hand with just 3 trumps is not worth another noise.
- Hand B: 2♠ or pass. 2♠ is a weak bid but mildly encouraging – as you have excellent ♣ support you don't mind if partner bids on. Pass is very reasonable of course (and probably best at teams) but at pairs scoring 2♠ scores more (if it makes!).
- Hand C: (a) 1♣ or 1♦. Opinions differ here but you know me, open 1♣ if equal length in the minors as it leaves more bidding (for both partner and your rebid).
(b) 1NT or 2♣. And here we see the problem – you have no sensible rebid. You would have a similar problem if you had opened 1♦. You could rebid 2♣ (and thus lie about the ♣ length) or 1NT (and thus lie about the point range). With this actual hand 1NT (12-14 points) may be best as partner bidding your singleton degrades the hand.
- Hand D: (a) Double.
(b) 1NT. Showing 19-21 points (i.e. a hand too strong to overcall 1NT)
(c) 3♠. This is highly invitational and partner will only pass if he is totally bust (about 0-2 points). 4♠ is incorrect because partner has promised nothing and may have zero points.
- Hand E: 4♠. Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit.
- Hand F: 4♠. Play in the 4-4 ♠ fit. Partner has promised 4 ♠'s as otherwise he would not have bid Stayman.
- Hand G: 2♠. Pass is reasonable (play in the 5-2 ♥ fit) but with a ♦ void (so you can ruff with the hand with short trumps) I would prefer to play in the 4-3 ♠ fit.
- Hand H: 2♥. Give partner preference back to his 1st bid suit.
- Hand J: 4♠. Showing a weak(ish) hand with 8 ♠'s.
- Hand K: 2NT or 1♦. Now just about everybody I know plays 2NT here as 11-12 points and I agree that that's the simplest method. You could bid 1♦ and probably bid 2NT later (also showing 11-12), but what's the point?
- Hand L: 1♠. It's too good for 4♠. If you play Benjamin twos then 2♣ followed by 2♠ (8 playing tricks) is fine, and if you play Namyats then 4♦ (a good 4♠) is probably the best bid.
- Hand M: 1♥. The hand is not good enough for 2♣. 2NT is a reasonable alternative.

25/3/2005

Club News Sheet – No. 125

Mon 21/3/05	1 st Bob/Dave	57%	2 nd Chuck/Jean Charles	57%
Wed 23/3/05	1 st Phil/Mike(Can)	57%	2 nd Michael(Ger)/Jeff	56%
Fri 25/3/05	1 st Dinic/Sheila	65%	2 nd Bob/Dave	53%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A partner opens 1♥ and RHO overcalls 2♣, what do you bid?
♠ KQ75	♠ K874	
♥ A6	♥ Q10	With Hand B partner opens 1♥ and you bid 1♠. Partner then jumps to 3♥, what do you do?
♦ J542	♦ K432	
♣ 754	♣ 1095	(a) What do you open with Hand C? (b) Suppose that you open 1♣ and this is passed round to RHO who doubles, what would you bid?
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand D partner deals and passes. RHO and you both pass and LHO opens 1♠. Partner overcalls 2♥ and RHO bids 2♠, what do you do?
♠ AJ32	♠ 86	
♥ Q83	♥ 9632	
♦ AQ6	♦ AQ63	
♣ AQ7	♣ A94	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1NT and you transfer with 2♦. (a) What do you do when partner obediently bids 2♥? (b) How many points is Hand E worth?
♠ K6	♠ K6	
♥ KJ543	♥ KJ1093	
♦ 43	♦ 107	With Hand F partner opens 1NT and you transfer with 2♦. (a) What do you do when partner obediently bids 2♥? (b) How many points is Hand F worth?
♣ 5432	♣ 10872	

Editorial

Jan is helping me out at the moment by setting up a web site for the club. Now my computer knowledge is pretty minimal but Jan is arranging things so that even I will hopefully be able to put the news-sheet on the web soon. It's www.pattayabridge.com.

And on a similar topic, I would like to thank Jim (Canada) who managed to install a bridge scoring program on my computer. I've had a 'play' with it, but it only works with a Mitchell (7+ tables) so it will get going next high season (when I really need it). It takes me about 1 hour to score a 6 table (Howell) movement by hand, but the 13 or 14 table movements we had in Jan/Feb took me 3-4 hours. With this program it should be just about 1 hour or so to just enter the pairs and results and then press 'go'. And, incidentally, this scoring program is designed to work with a web site, so I should be able to put the complete results on the web when everything gets going.

Bridge Lessons

I've had a number of people interested and I now run a beginner's class every Wednesday and Friday. We start at 10.30 and finish at 12.00, at the Diana Inn. And if the numbers are OK (i.e. 4 or more) then the students can play alongside us from 1.00 to 4.45 ish, hopefully with some supervision if the numbers dictate.

It's different in Pattaya Board 11 from Monday 21st

Dealer:	♠ A54	West	North	East	South
South	♥ KJ7	-	-	-	1♣
Love all	♦ A876	pass	1♦	pass	1NT
	♣ J54	pass	3NT	all pass	

♠ K9732	N	♠ J8
♥ 963	W E	♥ 8542
♦ 105	S	♦ QJ43
♣ K87		♣ A62
	♠ Q106	
	♥ AQ10	
	♦ K92	
	♣ Q1093	

Bjorn gave me this deal from a Swedish news-paper and I included it in Monday's hands. The bidding is uninteresting and it's all about the play. West should lead a low ♠ and South plays a low ♠ from dummy, East playing the ♠J.

Now, of course, South must count his tricks. The lead has given him 2 ♠ tricks and with 3 ♥'s and 2 ♦'s that's a total of just 7. Now he can develop two more tricks in ♣'s but if he wins the first trick in hand and leads a ♣ then West will play low, East win and return a ♠. That establishes West's ♠ suit and when West subsequently gets in with the ♣K then he cashes 3 ♠ tricks for one down.

Can you see how South can ensure the contract?

He should duck East's ♠J at trick one!

It does not matter what E-W then do. East will probably return a ♠ but declarer has two stops. He wins this trick and attacks ♣'s and when East gets in with his ♣A he has no ♠ left to lead.

And what happened in Pattaya? Of course everything is completely different here. I somehow doubt that anybody found the play of ducking the opening ♠ lead but 3 tables made 3NT exactly and two tables even made +1. At my table South won the opening lead with the ♠Q and then led a ♣. West correctly ducked this and East won with the ♣A. He then went into a 'think' and produced the ♣2, donating the contract to South. I can only assume that the play was somewhat similar at all of the other tables? Or maybe West rose prematurely with ♣K (he must preserve his entry so that he has it when the ♠'s are set up). Also, of course, it's no good for West to win the first ♣ trick as a ♠ from him gives declarer another ♠ trick (he knows that declarer has the ♠10) – the ♠ lead must come from East. This would probably explain the two 3NT+1 results.

The bottom lines: -

- I guess that I have to give more attention to the play of the hand in the news sheets?
- Unless you have a good reason to do otherwise, return partner's suit.
- It is often a good idea to duck in order to sever the opponent's communications.
- Many contracts are won or lost at trick one!

Good technique

OK, so I'll start this week with a bit more about the play of the hand. With this deal everybody was again in 3NT, but the results ranged from minus one to plus two; let's investigate: -

Dealer:	♠ J852				
West	♥ QJ952	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ QJ5	pass	pass	1♣	pass
	♣ J	1♦	pass	2♥	(1) pass
		3NT	all pass		

♠ KQ6	N	♠ 1094
♥ 86	W E	♥ AK104
♦ K8762	S	♦ A4
♣ Q76		♣ AK95
	♠ A73	
	♥ 73	↑
	♦ 1093	DUMMY
	♣ 108432	

(1) East can rebid either 2♥ or 2NT here, depending upon your partnership and ability to find a possible 4-4 major suit fit if you bid 2NT. Anyway, this time it's all about the play.

All six tables were in 3NT by E-W. This particular West (me) got the ♠2 lead, ♠9, ♠A and ♠6. West won the ♠ return perforce, but what should West do now?

Count the winners first, of course. 2 ♠'s, 2 ♥'s, 2 ♦'s and 3 ♣'s; so the contract is secure and so it's all about overtricks. If the ♣'s split there's one there, but there is no need to do anything with ♣'s yet. Another chance for overtrick(s) is the ♦ suit. If they split 3-3 then you give up just one ♦ trick and gain two; if it's a 4-2 split then you lose 2 ♦'s but still make the contract (+1); if ♦'s are 5-1 then you still make the contract exactly.

But actually you can combine your chances (♦'s splitting or ♣'s splitting). This declarer led the ♦A from dummy and then the ♦4 but ducked (not playing the ♦K), allowing North to win the trick. Now West is in control; whatever North leads West simply cashes his winners and when the ♦'s split he made 11 tricks without the ♣'s splitting: he made 2 ♠'s, 2 ♥'s, 4 ♦'s and 3 ♣'s, so +2.

And what happened with the rest of the field? 8 tricks, 9 tricks, 10 tricks (twice) and just one other distinguished declarer matched this play with 11 tricks.

Now when 3NT went minus 1 it was declared by East, but declarer should put up the ♠Q on the ♠3 lead and subsequently attack ♦'s as above and he certainly makes at least +1.

The bottom lines.

- We saw in the last deal that it is sometimes beneficial to duck a round of a suit in order to sever the opponent's communications. This time it's different, we ducked a round of ♦'s in order to keep control of all our options.
- If you know that you must lose at least one trick in a suit (♦'s here) then think about ducking a round.

The negative double

Board 24 from Monday 21st, love all

I was asked to comment on this bidding from Monday - well actually I made up this bidding, I was asked to comment on the 2♦ bid that one East chose at (1): -

West	East (A)	West	North	East	South
♠ A643	♠ KQ75	1♥	2♣	dbl (1)	pass
♥ KQ985	♥ A6	2♠ (2)	pass	3♦ (3)	pass
♦ 6	♦ J542	4♠ (4)	all pass		
♣ K93	♣ 754				

- (1) So what did you bid with this East hand A in this week's quiz? At one table East bid 2♠ - that's not a good bid as it promises 5 ♠'s. At another table East bid 2♦ and the ♠ fit was lost (West cannot bid 2♠ over 2♦ as that would be a reverse – showing a much stronger hand). Actually, the hand (and a multiple of other ones) is impossible to bid unless you play negative (sometimes called Sputnik in the UK) doubles. East's best (only sensible) bid at (1) is a negative double. This simply promises 4 ♠'s and values to compete to 2♠.
- (2) This 2♠ bid is not now a reverse, it is simply supporting partner at the lowest level.
- (3) ♠'s are agreed and this is a help-suit game try.
- (4) And despite his minimum point count West should accept because of his singleton ♦ and the great ♥'s.

And what happened? 4♠ by West should be a good contract on these cards but only 3 out of the 6 tables even found the 4-4 ♠ fit and nobody was in game.

The bottom lines: -

- Play negative doubles.
- There are a multitude of different variations of the use of negative doubles but for me there is only one sensible method:
 - 1- If one major has been bid (by either partner or the overcaller) then a negative double promises the 4+ cards in the unbid major and values to compete to the cheapest call in that suit.
 - 2- If no major has been bid (say 1♦ - 2♣(overcall) – dbl) then only one 4 card major is promised.
 - 3- If both majors have been bid (say 1♥ - 1♠(overcall) – dbl) then that promises 4+ cards in both minors and generally denies 3 card support for partner.

Incidentally, when you play negative doubles then you can obviously not double directly for penalties. That is no problem: if you open and LHO overcalls and partner passes then you (opener) should bend over backwards to double in this situation just in case partner has a stack in the LHO's suit and so could not bid (because a double would be negative). Partner will, of course, pass if he had a penalty hand and any other bid by him is weak (not enough values to make a forcing bid directly over the overcall).

Beware of mis-fits – part 1

Board 18 from Friday 25th

Dealer:	♠ 1073				
East	♥ 108	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ 8643	-	-	1♠ (1)	pass
	♣ J543	2♥	pass	3♣ (2)	pass
		3♥ (3)	pass	3♠ (4)	pass
♠ -	N	4♥ (5)	pass	pass (6)	pass
♥ AQ9743	W E	♠ KQ98542			
♦ AKJ97	S	♥ K			
♣ K9		♦ -			
		♣ AQ107			
	♠ AJ6				
	♥ J652				
	♦ Q1052				
	♣ 82				

- (1) A powerful hand, but a 1♠ opening is quite sufficient.
- (2) This is game forcing.
- (3) Now West could introduce his ♦ suit, but that would be the 4th suit and may confuse the issue, I think that 3♥ is fine (remember, the auction is already game forcing).
- (4) Bidding out the shape.
- (5) Now West was dealt a great hand, but it has got worse with every bid that his partner has made! In my opinion West should give up on even thinking about slam (it's a total mis-fit) but with oodles of points to spare and the 4th suit well stopped, I would bid 3NT here.
- (6) And East's hand has also obviously got worse as time went by. Pass is certainly best here.

And what happened? Nobody managed to put on the brakes in time to stop in 3NT, but 4♥ is an equally good (perhaps better) contract. The hand was played six times and four times it was in slam. The two 6NT contracts both went justifiably down, as did 6♠. Jeff was in 6♥ of course, and for Jeff there is no such thing as a hand getting worse when partner bids suits that you don't have; the only thing that surprises me about Jeff's bidding 6♥ is that, with 1st and 2nd round controls in every suit, he did not bid 7♥! Anyway, the defence somehow allowed the hopeless slam to make.

The bottom lines: -

- Downgrade your hand if partner bids suits that you are short in.
- Bail out ASAP with mis-fits.
- 31 points may be enough for slam if you have a long self-sufficient suit or if you have a fit; it's nowhere near on a total mis-fit.
- Play mis-fits in a suit, not NT, unless you have oodles of points to spare. So with this particular deal 3NT (or 4♥ or 4♠) would be OK, but not any sort of slam.

Beware of mis-fits – part 2

Board 14 from Wednesday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ 10964
East ♥ AJ64
Love all ♦ 865
♣ K6

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♣ (1)	pass
1♠	pass	2♣ (2)	pass
3♠ (3)	pass	3NT (4)	all pass

♠ KQJ753	N	♠ A
♥ Q97	W E	♥ 1053
♦ Q	S	♦ A943
♣ J82		♣ A10753
	♠ 82	
	♥ K82	
	♦ KJ1072	
	♣ Q94	

- (1) Now with this particular minor suit distribution *some* experts do say to open 1♦ as you then have an ‘easy’ 2♣ rebid. What I think about that philosophy is probably unprintable and 1♣ is the obvious opening to me.
- (2) And here we see the ‘problem’ – no good rebid (2♦ would be a reverse showing a good hand). But actually there are two quite reasonable options - 2♣ or 1NT. Now a 2♣ rebid generally shows a 6 card suit but I prefer that to rebidding 1NT with a singleton. Anyway, either option is far better than opening 1♦ and rebidding 2♣ as that lies about the length of two suits!
- (3) Highly invitational but not forcing.
- (4) Anyway, East got over the first two hurdles fine, but now went astray. Partner has invited you but this is a completely minimal opening and with a singleton in partner’s suit I would pass. 3NT is a very poor bid with this minimal misfit – there will be communication difficulties.

And what happened? Two out of the 5 E-W pairs bid the terrible 3NT, I’m glad to see that at least one of them got exactly what they deserved – minus five and 250 away for the undisputed bottom. Other results were mixed but a ♠ partscore is the best contract, 3♠ being fairly comfortable.

The bottom lines: -

- Bail out ASAP with mis-fits.
- Play mis-fits in a suit, **not NT**, unless you have oodles of points to spare.

Highly Invitational

Board 5 from Friday 25th

I was asked about the bidding at Table A where an easy 4♥ was missed. West said that his 3♥ bid at (3) was forcing and East said that it was only invitational. Who's right?

Dealer:	♠ 1052	<u>Table A</u>				
North	♥ 75	West	North	East(B)	South	
N-S vul	♦ 96	-	pass	pass	pass	
	♣ AK8732	1♥	pass (1)	1♠ (2)	pass	
		3♥ (3)	pass	pass (4)	pass	
♠ AJ6	N	♠ K874	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ KJ9842	W E	♥ Q10	West	North	East	South
♦ AQ	S	♦ K432	-	pass	pass	pass
♣ Q4		♣ 1095	1♥	2♣ (1)	dbl (5)	pass
	♠ Q93		3♥ (6)	pass	4♥ (7)	all pass
	♥ A63					
	♦ J10875					
	♣ J6					

To answer the question, East was right (the 3♥ bid is invitational) but East's hand is certainly good enough to go on to 4♥.

Table A: (1) Especially at this vulnerability, one probably needs a little more for a 2 level overcall, but many would bid 2♣ these days and I won't argue. But a weak jump overcall (3♣) would obviously be asking for trouble.

(2) An easy bid.

(3) (Highly) invitational.

(4) So what did you bid with this East hand B in this week's quiz? West has promised 6♥'s and has invited a♥ game knowing that East probably has at most two♥'s. East is way above minimum and with these two very good♥'s a 4♥ bid is in order.

Table B: (1) This North chose to overcall, a bit light but acceptable for some.

(2) Now with traditional methods East would be stuck here, he does not have the values for a two level response. It is precisely because of these sort of unbiddable hands that negative doubles were invented. You would have responded 1♠ if there was no overcall and a double of 2♣ here means just that – that you would have bid 1♠ if allowed to. Note that you do not need any more than 6 points for a negative double in this situation (but exactly the same requirements as a 1♠ bid) because partner can sign off at the two level.

(6) West is now in exactly the same position as at (3) at Table A and again bid the invitational 3♥.

(7) But this East correctly bid game.

The bottom lines: -

- Negative doubles solve many 'impossible' bidding problems.
- A bid of 3 of a major having bid the suit earlier is invitational in most auctions.

(a) Bid(e) by the Law

Board 6 from Friday 25th

In a competitive auction with the points evenly matched, how high should you go?

Dealer: ♠ KQJ54

East ♥ KJ

E-W vul ♦ 10987

♣ 82

♠ 86

N

♠ 73

♥ 9632

W E

♥ A10754

♦ AQ63

S

♦ K42

♣ A94

♣ KJ5

♠ A1092

♥ Q8

♦ J5

♣ Q10763

West(D)	North	East	South
-	-	pass (1)	pass
pass	1♠ (2)	2♥ (3)	2♠ (4)
3♥ (5)	pass	pass	3♠ (6)
all pass			

Answer: As high as the Law says.

Now none of these hands are really worth an opening bid, but it was not passed out at a single table on Friday (people did not battle through the rain to pass hands out), so let's have a look: -

- (1) This East hand looks like the closest to an opener to me. It's only 19 (for the rule of 20) but with a useful 10 and all the points in the longer suits a 1♥ opening is acceptable.
- (2) With a marginal opener in the pass-out seat, look at the ♠ suit (rule of 15), this hand just about qualifies (I suppose).
- (3) I would much prefer to have opened than to overcall here at the 2 level.
- (4) 6-9, so 2♠ is fine here.
- (5) Now West does not have the values (I mean high cards) to go to the 3 level opposite a passed partner, but that is not the issue in this situation. West knows that the points are divided about 20-20 and this is a classic situation for applying 'the Law' – bid to the level of the total number of trumps. East has promised 5♥'s and West, with a total of 9 trumps, should raise to the three level pretty much regardless of his point count. This does not invite partner to bid game (with a game invitational hand West would bid anything but 3♥).
- (6) And it's exactly the same here. South knows that N-S have 9♠'s between them and so should compete to 3♠. It may go down, but in that case 3♥ will be making.

And what happened? 3♠ went one down so 50 to E-W. But this is the 'par' result because E-W can make 3♥. And at other tables? I'm ashamed to say that two E-W pairs obviously do not understand the Law and let N-S play in a comfortable 2♠.

Incidentally, it's much the same if East decided to open 1♥. West would raise to 2♥ (to show his values) but should then compete to 3♥ if necessary because of the known 9 card fit.

The bottom lines: -

- The law of Total Tricks (in a very simplified form) states that in a competitive auction where the points are roughly even that you should compete to the level of the total number of trumps held by your side.
- 'I fought the Law,... and the Law won'

Open 1♣?

Board 1 from Friday 25th

One of my students told me that at the ladies club in Bangkok they play that a 1♣ opening is forcing – it may be natural or a big hand or the equivalent of a weak 1NT (12-14). Now I have actually played this system (a rubber bridge session with three Scandinavians). It is very playable but it is not standard. Playing Standard you probably know by views, don't pass partner's 1♣ opening if you are short in ♣'s and can scrape up a bid, but pass with a miserable hand containing ♣'s. All sorts of horrible things happened on this deal from Friday:

Dealer:	♠ AJ32	<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ Q83	West	North(C)	East	South
Love all	♦ AQ6	-	1NT (1)	pass	pass
	♣ AQ7	pass			

♠ K86	N	♠ 10974	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ AK54	W E	♥ 1097	West	North	East	South
♦ J1083	S	♦ K94	-	1♣ (1)	pass	pass (2)
♣ 62		♣ K53	pass (3)			

♠ Q5

♥ J62

♦ 752

♣ J10984

Table C

???? to 3NT by North

Table A: (1) So what did you open with this North hand C(a) in this week's quiz? Now this was the student's table and North asked me if a 1NT opening was acceptable. Now sometimes you can upgrade a hand (see next deal for a 7 count that's worth 8 or 9) but this is the total opposite. To start with it's totally flat (4333) so knock off a point. Then it has no intermediates and no touching honours (it's totally full of holes). I said that normally 19 'points' is too much for a 1NT opener but this hand really was an exception. 1NT is just about acceptable in my opinion.

Table B: (1) Now everybody else presumably thought that this was a great hand and they all opened 1♣, presumably with the intention of leaping about next go.
(2) But luckily at this table South knew how to stop partner from leaping about.
(3) With no ♣ length I would not pass here, but double.

Table C: I don't know the bidding, but at two tables North reached an impossible 3NT. If West doubled at (3) then North should bid 1NT – what did you bid with this North hand C(b) in this week's quiz? 1NT shows about 18-19 points and this deal shows exactly why North should not bid any more opposite a passed partner. South could (should) convert to 2♣ (provided partner realises that there's a pass card in the box). I simply do not understand how North can bid anything more than 1NT, let alone 3NT, can somebody enlighten me? Now upon checking the pair numbers I realised that one North was Jeff, so that explains one table (Jeff only takes account of the 13 cards staring him in the face and partner's inability to bid is totally irrelevant) but that does not explain the other table.

And what happened? 1♣ was the final contract twice and made +1. 1NT made exactly and so also scored +90. The silly 3NT contracts went 2 or 3 down.

The bottom line.

- Bridge is a partnership game, a flat 19 opposite zero does not make game.

Coffee Housing?

Board 20 from Friday 25th, love all

One very experienced pair complained to me about what they considered to be an unjustified long pause on this deal, they may well not agree with my conclusion: -

West	East (F)	West	North	East(F)	South
♠ Q103	♠ K6	1NT	pass	2♦	pass
♥ Q8	♥ KJ1093	2♥	pass	pass (1)	pass
♦ AQJ	♦ 107				
♣ KQ653	♣ 10872				

(1) East eventually passed after a long pause. What did you bid with this East hand F in this week's quiz? Now to invite (with 2NT of course) you need about 8-9 points and N-S complained to me that East, with 'only 7 points', has nothing to think about and that his pause was unethical and against the rules.

I totally disagree.

Now most of you know my preachings; points in long suits are good, tens are worth more than zero points (and 3 tens are certainly worth a point or more opposite a NT opener), a J109 combination in a 5 card suit with another honour is most certainly excellent. And combined with the other good intermediates I believe that this East hand is a perfectly acceptable 2NT bid and would make game opposite most non minimal 1NT openers.

Even opposite this average 1NT opener game is a reasonable prospect, and actually game was bid at *every* table except this one. Indeed, one of our top pairs bid and made 4♥ with these E-W cards. So it looks like Bob/Dave (and the rest of the club) agree with me (or were they all also coffee housing – anonymous (guess who!) complainer comment please?). I guess I'll have to lend the 'experienced' complainers a book on hand evaluation?

N-S think that I should reprimand East for pausing and then passing, when they believe that pass is automatic. The only thing I have to say to East is 'having thought about it, why did you not bid on?'.

And don't ask me what 'coffee housing' is, I suppose it's some sort of uncomplimentary American term?

The bottom lines: -

- Anybody who looks at this East hand F and tries to tell me that it is 'only 7 points' really needs to take some lessons or read a decent modern book. I give free lessons every Wednesday and Friday and always bring along books/magazines to the club for people to borrow. I have also written a decent modern book!

Hand E But if East had this hand E then I agree that he should transfer and then pass without thinking; this hand really is 'only 7 points'.

♠ K6
♥ KJ543
♦ 43
♣ 5432

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: Double. A negative double promising 4 ♠'s. If you play negative doubles then a 2♦ bid here would deny 4 ♠'s.
If you do not play negative doubles (why not?) then you would have to bid 2♦ as a 2♠ bid promises a 5 card suit. But this really is not very satisfactory as partner cannot bid ♠'s with a minimal hand (because it's a reverse) and the ♠ fit may get lost.
- Hand B: 4♥. You are not minimum and have two great ♥'s for partner.
- Hand C: (a) 1NT or 1♣. Borderline. Yes, you are not seeing things, 1NT is acceptable in my opinion. This is a really miserable 19 count. With it's totally flat shape, no intermediates and no touching honours to downgrade to 1NT is certainly reasonable. Of course I expect that most of you opened 1♣ with the intention of rebidding 2NT (18-19). Fine.
(b) 1NT. 18-19, anything more is way overboard. When partner has passed your opening bid then you need a good hand to bid 1NT.
- Hand D: 3♥. The points are obviously fairly evenly matched and you have 9 ♥'s between you and partner; the Law says to compete to 3♥.
- Hand E: (a) Pass, in tempo. Hand E is a poor 7 count and there is no need to think. Indeed, one distinguished member says that it against the rules for an experienced player, and as he has probably called the director more times than I have had hot meals then he is probably right.
(b) 7.
- Hand F: (a) 2NT. An invitational 2NT should be around 8-9 points but this hand has a good 5 card suit, three 10's and bundles of intermediates and I think that an invitational 2NT is fine. 2NT is preferred as 3♥ should show 6 ♥'s and an invitational hand. Anybody who thinks that pass is 'automatic' here really needs to have a word with me and I'll put them straight.
(b) 8 or 9. If you think that hands E and F are worth the same then you really need to read up on hand evaluation.

1/4/2005

Club News Sheet – No. 126

Mon 28/3/05	1 st Bob/Dave	68%	2 nd Chuck/Paul	55%
Wed 30/3/05	1 st = Tomas/Bjorn	59%	1 st = Bob/Thorlief	59%
Fri 1/4/05	1 st Tomas/Philip	70%	2 nd Richard(USA)/Richaed(IRL)	61%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A

With Hand A LHO opens 1♦ and RHO bids 1NT, what do you do?

- ♠ A104
- ♥ AJ32
- ♦ K94
- ♣ Q109

So that explains it

Board 1 from Friday 25th

North

South

- | | |
|--------|----------|
| ♠ AJ32 | ♠ Q5 |
| ♥ Q83 | ♥ J62 |
| ♦ AQ6 | ♦ 752 |
| ♣ AQ7 | ♣ J10984 |

Remember this board from last week? Two tables reached a silly 3NT and I said I could not understand how. Apparently one North opened this hand with 2NT. Now there is a variation of Benjamin twos that allows a 2-level opening on a balanced 19-20 (and, indeed, our Australian visitors Gerard/Derek played something similar) but I simply don't like it. Playing Standard

American the way to bid a balanced 18-19 points is to open a suit and then jump in NT. A 2NT opener should be 20-21 and this flat hand is nowhere near a 2NT (or equivalent) opener. As I said last week, this hand is worth 18 at most and I would not argue if you downgraded to open a 15-17 1NT. South's raise to 3NT opposite what he believed to be 20-21 was perfectly OK of course but the contract was hopeless.

Have a good look before you complain

Board from Friday 25th

Hand E

Hand F

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| ♠ K6 | ♠ K6 |
| ♥ KJ543 | ♥ KJ1093 |
| ♦ 43 | ♦ 107 |
| ♣ 5432 | ♣ 10872 |

And remember these two hands E & F from last week's quiz? One pair complained when the holder transferred after partner had opened 1NT and then had a long pause before eventually passing partner's 2♥ response. The main protagonist later agreed with me that bidding 2NT (or having a think) with hand F was quite reasonable.

Don't go bananas just because you're non-vul.Board 19 from Monday 28th

Dealer: ♠ 97
 South ♥ 1072
 E-W vul ♦ J3
 ♣ AQ9765

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
1♠ (1)	3♣ (2)	3♠ (3)	4♣ (4)
4♠	pass	pass	pass (5)

♠ AKQJ1062	N	♠ 843
♥ Q9	W E	♥ A83
♦ K752	S	♦ Q984
♣ -		♣ KJ3
	♠ 5	
	♥ KJ654	
	♦ A106	
	♣ 10842	

This was the auction (supervised by me) at the beginner's table: -

- (1) A nice hand, but 1♠ is sufficient playing Standard American. Playing Benjamin twos it's close to a 2♣ opener and playing Namyats then 4♦ (a good 4♠) is OK. The hand is too good for a traditional 4♠ which should be weaker with 8♠'s.
- (2) A weak jump overcall. It would be nice to have a 7 card suit at the 3 level but at this vulnerability I think it's just about OK. But this really is up to partnership style; if I were partnering Chuck then I would pass and if I was partnering Bob then it's a clear 3♣ bid.
- (3) Now even this mild pre-emptive action has made life awkward for East; 3♠ is probably a slight overbid but there really is no other sensible choice.
- (4) South asked me here; I did not look at his hand as I was East, but suggested that with 3♣'s he should bid 4♣ and with 4 decent ♣'s then 5♣ was OK. He chose 4♣ which I think is probably best with no ♣ honour.
- (5) And he asked if he should bid again here; I said definitely not. When one raises partner's pre-empt, do so to the limit at the first opportunity. So 5♣ would be acceptable at (4) but not now. I explained that the previous pre-emptive action had already probably caused sufficient disruption so that nobody really knew what was going on; maybe 4♠ goes down, maybe E-W have missed a slam. Bidding again here would simply give E-W another bite at the cherry and may be costly if it's doubled.

And what happened? 5♣ doubled would have been costly. The comfortable 4♠ was bid at 3 of the six tables and scored 620 or 650. One N-S pair decided upon a not too unreasonable 5♣ but this went for 800. But this turned out to be an average score as two N-S pairs went bananas! 6♣ doubled down 5 for 1100 away, and 5♥ doubled down 6 for 1400 away.

The bottom lines.

- Don't go bananas?
- If your partnership did, then re-read the advice that I gave the beginners above.

Pass 1NT with a flat hand

Board 18 from Monday 28th

Dealer: ♠ A104
East ♥ AJ32
N-S vul ♦ K94
♣ Q109

♠ J98	N	♠ Q76
♥ Q105	W E	♥ K64
♦ 832	S	♦ AJ765
♣ AJ75		♣ K8
	♠ K532	
	♥ 987	
	♦ Q10	
	♣ 6432	

Table A

West	North(A)	East	South
-	-	1♦	pass
1NT	dbl (1)	pass	2♠
pass	pass (2)	pass	

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♦	pass
1NT	pass (1)	pass	pass

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this North hand A in this week's quiz? A double (take-out of ♦'s) is a very poor bid with this flat hand, especially vulnerable.

(2) And North has landed partner in a miserable 4-3 fit.

Table B: (1) This North chose the 'obvious' pass.

And what happened? 1NT was passed out at 3 tables and made exactly 3 times. Other contracts were 2♥, 2♠ and 3♠ by N-S and these all went down (vulnerable) for poor scores.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't double the opponent's 1NT with a mediocre and/or flat hand.
- You need a very good hand to double in this position (opposite a passed partner when opener may be strong).

Bidding Quiz Answer

Hand A: Pass. A double would be take-out of ♦'s but with this flat hand it is a very poor bid. And double is also very dangerous here: partner has passed and LHO (opener) is unlimited with a balanced partner, if opener has anything more than a minimum opener you will find a redouble very uncomfortable.

8/4/05

Club News Sheet – No. 127

Mon	4/4/05	1 st Chuck/Paul	70%	2 nd John G/Emil	61%
Wed	6/4/05	1 st Dave/Gene	57%	2 nd Ian/Mike	53%
Fri	8/4/05	1 st Alex/Thorlief	71%	2 nd = Tomas/Philip	58%
				2 nd = Bob/Dave	58%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B	What do you open with Hand A (1 st seat, both vul)?
♠ Q8	♠ KQ10532	With Hand B you bid ♠'s, partner bids ♥'s which you support and the opponents bid ♦'s. Partner bids 4NT (normal Blackwood) but the next hand bids 5♦, what do you do?
♥ Q104	♥ AQ93	
♦ KQJ1097	♦ 3	
♣ 65	♣ J3	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C RHO opens 1♣, what do you do?
♠ K1097	♠ J974	What do you open with Hand D (1 st seat, just you vul)?
♥ KQ62	♥ AJ8	
♦ 953	♦ AJ3	
♣ K10	♣ J74	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E LHO opens 1♣ and partner doubles. RHO then bids 1NT, what do you do?
♠ Q64	♠ Q	With Hand F partner opens 1♣. (a) What do you bid? Suppose that you choose to bid 1♥ and partner rebids 1♠, then (b) what do you bid now?
♥ 1074	♥ A1086432	
♦ KJ72	♦ Q875	
♣ 865	♣ K	

The play's the thing – quiz Board 19 from Friday 8th

<u>You</u>		<u>Dummy</u>	You are West in a 4♥ contract. You get the ♦10 lead and win. You then play ♠AK and ruff the 3 rd round. You play a low ♥ from dummy and your ♥Q wins. You then play the ♥8 in this position: -
♠ AK94	N	♠ 52	
♥ Q8	W E	♥ K97532	
♦ AKQ	S	♦ 82	
♣ Q1096		♣ K84	
♠ 9	N	♠ -	So here you lead the ♥8 and North covers with the ♥J, what card do you play from dummy?
♥ 8	W E	♥ K975	
♦ AK	S	♦ 8	
♣ Q1096		♣ K84	

The play's the thing - answer

Board 19 from Friday 8th

Dealer:	♠ Q108						
South	♥ J106			West	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ 10964	DUMMY		-	-	-	pass
	♣ J73	↓		2NT	pass	3♦ (1)	pass
				3♥	pass	4♥	all pass
♠ AK94	N	♠ 52					
♥ Q8	W E	♥ K97532		(1) transfer			
♦ AKQ	S	♦ 82					
♣ Q1096		♣ K84					
	♠ J743						
	♥ A4						
	♦ J753						
	♣ A52						

This bidding is pretty standard (but I note that only two out of the six tables reached the good 4♥ contract). Anyway, this time it's about the play.

North leads the ♦10 and West wins. He correctly leads ♠AK and ruffs the 3rd round in dummy. The ♥2 was led from dummy and the ♥Q won the trick. He then played the ♥8 up to dummy and North played the ♥J:

♠ 9	N	♠ -
♥ 8	W E	♥ K975
♦ AK	S	♦ 8
♣ Q1096		♣ K84

So in this position you lead the ♥8 and North covers with the ♥J. What card did you play from dummy in the play quiz? You know that South has the ♥A (North would have taken your ♥Q if he had it) and

so must play low and hope that South's ♥A is now singleton. It's a 50% chance, but far better than the 0% chance of playing the ♥K.

At this table West played the ♥K and muttered something about how unlucky he was when this lost to the ♥A. Quite so, he was unlucky in that he had a partner good enough to point out his zero % play.

And what happened? 4♥ should still make exactly of course (and would have scored a 2nd top) but this declarer somehow managed the seemingly impossible and went one down.

And at other tables? Chuck/Paul presumably had the same auction and obviously made 4♥+1, following the line of play I suggested above I guess. The 4 other tables were all in silly contracts: 5♥ (-1), 5NT (-3), 3NT (♣) and 2♠ (+1).

The bottom line: -

- If you know that one opponent has a particular card, then don't play his partner for it!
- Don't continually grumble about never being able to find a decent partner if you routinely go down in contracts that are cold for +1.

It's not forcing

Board 18 from Monday 4th

4♥ is where E-W want to be on this deal, but how should it be bid?

Dealer: ♠ A87642
East ♥ Q5
N-S vul ♦ 109
♣ J84

♠ Q N ♠ J1093
♥ A1086432 W E ♥ 97
♦ Q875 S ♦ AK
♣ K ♣ A7652
♠ K5
♥ KJ
♦ J6432
♣ Q1093

Table A

West(F)	North	East	South
-	-	1♣	pass
1♥ (1)	pass	1♠	pass
3♥ (2)	pass	4♥ (3)	all pass

Expert Table

West(F)	North	East	South
-	-	1♣	pass
1♥ (1)	pass	1♠	pass
2♦ (2)	pass	2NT (4)	pass
3♥ (5)	pass	4♥ (6)	all pass

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this West hand F(a) in this week's quiz? The simplest solution is a strong (game forcing) jump to 2♥. 1♥ is fine as long as you know how to keep the bidding forcing and show partner that you have long ♥'s.
- (2) What did you bid with this West hand F(b) in this week's quiz? If you do not play strong jump shifts at (1) then you have a slight problem here - 3♥ is not forcing and 4♥ is too unilateral.
- (3) Lucky for this West that I was not East, with a minimum opener and poor ♥ support I would have passed.

- Table B (2) This is how to bid the hand if you chose not to make a strong jump shift at (1). Set up a forcing situation by using the 4th suit.
- (4) With a ♦ stop 2NT is correct here.
- (5) And now, having invoked the 4th suit, this 3♥ bid is forcing
- (6) And East knows that two trumps are good enough for partner.

The bottom lines: -

- The jump rebid like 3♥ at (2) is strong but not forcing.
- You can use 4th suit forcing to set up a forcing situation.
- Of course it's so much easier if you simply bid a strong (game forcing) jump shift at (1).
A typical sequence might be 1♣ - 2♥ - 2♠ - 3♥ - 4♥.

Overbidding?

Board 5 from Monday 4th

N-S cannot make anything, so did anybody overbid here or was it just unlucky?

Dealer: ♠ J974
North ♥ AJ8
N-S vul ♦ AJ3
♣ J74

Table A

West	North(D)	East	South
-	1♣ (1)	pass	1♥
pass	1NT	all pass	

♠ KQ105	N	♠ 63
♥ 3	W E	♥ KQ107
♦ Q76	S	♦ K954
♣ Q8532		♣ A109
	♠ A82	
	♥ 96542	
	♦ 1082	
	♣ K6	

Table B

West	North(D)	East	South
-	pass (1)	1♦	1♥ (2)
pass	3♥ (3)	all pass	

To answer the question, North overbid at every table on Friday.

Table A (1) So did you open with this North hand D in this week's quiz? If you did then you need to read up on hand evaluation. If you opened it and then later tried to justify the bid (as one unnamed 'distinguished' player did) then you really need some lessons. This North hand is garbage, totally flat (4333), four isolated jacks (the most overvalued card in the deck), the only 4 card suit headed by the jack, and vulnerable to boot; to say nothing of the rule of 20. As an American might say, if you still think it's an opener then I guess you took the short bus to school?

Table B (1) Now this North player was the only one (I believe) to get it right and pass.
(2) It would be nice to have some points in the suit, but this overcall is just about acceptable these days when the emphasis is always on finding a major suit fit.
(3) But then North undid his good initial pass and got it all wrong here! Partner has simply overcalled (so 7-16 points) and a ♥ suit opposite does not particularly improve this North hand. 2♥ is quite sufficient with this flat heap.

And what happened? Every North overvalued their hand and all N-S's went down in whatever they ended up in when they declared the hand, and especially since they were vulnerable that's a poor score.

The bottom lines: -

- Deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape.
- Jacks are overvalued. They are not worth one point, especially if not accompanied by the ten or queen nor in a long suit.
- 4 such jacks are an *enormous* minus!
- An overcall does not promise opening values.

Just one final point. Some players do say that an opening hand should contain two 'quick tricks'. I don't adhere to this policy myself but even if you do the reverse is not true: i.e. just because a hand contains two quick tricks that does not make it an opener.

Pass opponent's 1NT with a flat handBoard 11 from Friday 8th

Remember this title from last week's news-sheet? It went wrong again here when one player simply did not want to let the opponents play (un)peacefully in 1NT. Was East or West to blame?

Dealer:	♠ 852				
South	♥ AJ853		West(C)	North	East(E)
Love all	♦ Q4		-	-	-
	♣ Q97		dbl (1)	1NT (2)	2♦ (3)
					dbl
					all pass
♠ K1097	N	♠ Q64			
♥ KQ62	W E	♥ 1074			
♦ 953	S	♦ KJ72			
♣ K10		♣ 865			
	♠ AJ3				
	♥ 9				
	♦ A1086				
	♣ AJ432				

- (1) So what did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? A take-out double should be playable in the other 3 suits. This hand just about is and most experienced players put the emphasis on the majors these days. Swap the ♦ suit with one of the major suits and I would pass but with this actual hand I think that double is fine.
- (2) Redouble (9+ points) is a reasonable alternative.
- (3) What did you bid with this East hand E in this week's quiz? Pass is the only sensible action; E-W would have been in trouble if North had redoubled, but East has been let off the hook and no longer needs to respond to partner's take-out double. To bid freely at the two level here shows a much better hand and a much better suit.
- (4) South knew that East's bidding skills were comparable with his playing skills and so doubled.

And what happened? 2♦ doubled went minus 3 for 500 away and a clear top to N-S. Other scores were all over the place and 1NT may or may not have made.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't remove the opponent's 1NT with a mediocre and/or flat hand.
- A free bid (i.e. responding to partner's double after the next opponent has bid) should be about 6-10 points with a reasonable suit. At the two level it needs to be around 8-10.

When they interfere with Blackwood

Board 3 from Friday 8th

Dealer:	♠ -					
South	♥ 8		West(B)	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ AJ1075		-	-	-	pass (1)
	♣ AQ108542		1♠	2♣	2♥ (2)	3♦
			3♥	4♦ (3)	4NT (4)	5♦
♠ KQ10532	N	♠ AJ984	5♥ (5)	pass	6♠ (6)	pass
♥ AQ93	W E	♥ K7654	pass	double	all pass	
♦ 3	S	♦ 2				
♣ J3		♣ K9				
	♠ 76					
	♥ J102					
	♦ KQ9864					
	♣ 76					

- (1) Obviously a weak 2♦ would be spot on, but this North does not play weak two's.
- (2) Any ♠ bid would be non-forcing, so with a possible 6♠ in mind, East chose a (forcing) 2♥ bid.
- (3) 5♦ would be a far better bid here.
- (4) North's feeble 4♦ has enabled East to get in Blackwood.
- (5) But unfortunately the last time that I mentioned DOPI was way back in news-sheet 35 and this West player 'forgot'. What did you bid with this West hand B in this week's quiz? 5♥ here shows 2 aces. Pass (one ace) is correct.
- (6) 6♠ is obvious opposite partner's advertised two aces.

Since 4 out of the 7 tables on Friday reached slam we need to repeat **DOPI (Double 0 Pass 1)**

It does not matter if you play 4♣ or 4NT to ask for aces (or key cards), if the opponents bid over your asking bid then obviously things change.

Let's assume you are playing simple Blackwood, you have 2 aces and partner bids 4NT to ask. Your response is 5♥, but what if RHO sticks in a bid of 5♦? The answer is the DOPI convention: -

Double	=	1 st step	(0 aces)
Pass	=	2 nd step	(1 ace)
Next bid (so 5♥ here)	=	3 rd step	(2 aces)
Next but 1 bid (5♠)	=	4 th step	etc.

The same principle applies if you play RKCB, Gerber or whatever. Note that the lower responses (double or pass) allow for a possibility of defending against a doubled contract by opponents. Often a good idea if you are short of aces/key cards!

If RHO doubles the asking bid, then there is a similar convention (ROPI): -

Redouble	=	1 st step	(0 aces)
Pass	=	2 nd step	(1 ace)
Next bid (so 5♣ here)	=	3 rd step	(2 aces) etc.

Now I have said aces here. If you play standard RKCB then 1st step = 0 or 3 key cards, 2nd step = 1 or 4 key cards etc.

A little agro?

Board 13 from Monday 4th

Dealer: ♠ 1072
North ♥ -
Both vul ♦ KQJ1083
♣ J943

♠ K9	N	♠ 864
♥ AJ1072	W E	♥ Q9654
♦ -	S	♦ 7654
♣ KQ10765		♣ A

♠ AQJ53
♥ K83
♦ A92
♣ 82

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	3♦ (1)	pass (2)	3♠ (3)
pass (4)	pass (5)	all pass	

- (1) What would you open with this North hand? This North does not play a weak 2♦ and so opened 3♦. Even if playing a weak 2♦ I think that 3♦ is OK with such a good solid suit.
- (2) I believe it was East at this stage who asked South what the opening 3♦ bid was.
- (3) And South said that he thought that it was strong.
- (4) West has an obvious double here, but perhaps he was put off by the suggestion that North had a strong hand?
- (5) Now this pass caused a problem. North is not allowed to take notice of what his partner tells the opposition and South's 3♠ bid is forcing opposite a weak 3♦ opening. North freely admitted that he passed because he heard his partner say that he thought he had a strong hand.

Now North has blatantly acted against the rules, so should I give an adjusted score? E-W have obviously missed game or slam in ♥'s. I did think about it but the damage had already been done by South's incorrect explanation and it mattered little if North bid or not at (5) as they have presumably bought the contract. The real problem was caused by East asking a silly question. He should assume that the opponents play standard and if it turns out to be otherwise and there was no alert then he *will* then get an adjusted score.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't ask silly questions.
- Don't ask the opponents a question if the answer is not going to affect your bid – you can always ask at the end of the auction.
- You are not allowed to let your partner's explanation to the opponent's question affect your bidding. You must always respond as if you had heard nothing and must always assume that partner knows the system.
- This North now knows, I hope, the rules. If there is another similar infraction in the future then there will be a suitable penalty imposed.
- If you pre-empt and partner bids a new suit below the game level, then it's forcing.

A little more agro

Board 27 from Monday 4th

Dealer: ♠ J4
South ♥ 9865
Love all ♦ 432
♣ K872

♠ Q8 N ♠ K972
♥ Q104 W E ♥ AKJ7
♦ KQJ1097 S ♦ A5
♣ 65 ♣ Q109
♠ A10653
♥ 32
♦ 86
♣ AJ43

Table A

West(A)	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
2♦ (1)	pass	3NT	all pass

Table B

West(A)	North	East	South
-	pass (2)	1NT (2)	pass
3♦ (1)	pass	3NT	all pass

Table A: (1) What did you open with this West hand A in this week's quiz? I feel that the West hand is possibly a bit strong for a weak 2♦ at (1) but that's up to you and I won't argue. 3♦ anyone? Anyway, this hand is not in print because of the bidding, but what happened at Table B.

Table B: (2) This North passed out of turn and the director was called. I explained the situation and East sportingly said that it was no problem, he would simply accept the pass out of turn and opened 1NT himself.

(3) You have to agree what 3♦ here means. In Standard American it is a 6 card suit and invitational to game. This hand is too good and should simply bid 3NT.

South led a small ♠, West put down the dummy and then left the table (for a smoke?). This left East playing both his hand and the dummy's and he unfortunately revoked at trick one, winning the ♠Q but unfortunately discarding a ♣ from hand and play continued with nothing said. I was wandering around as usual and noticed that there was no dummy at this table and so came over at about trick 8 and played the rest of dummy's cards. East made 11 tricks but then North and South simultaneously told East that he had revoked at trick one and they wanted their two trick penalty. East said to take what they want and walked off in a huff. N-S suggested to me that East had behaved as if they had done something wrong. I'm with East, what do you think?

First of all, I'll tell you a little story about the finals of the World Championship last year between Italy and USA. It was extremely close and the outcome hinged on the last board: - Italy were playing in a doubled contract; if they made it they were World champions, if it went down then USA were the champions. What happened? The USA defence slipped up and gave declarer a chance, but declarer was left playing both his hand and the dummy's because dummy 'could not stand the pressure' and had left the table. Declarer played an incorrect card from dummy and USA were the World champions. Who would you blame? I put the blame squarely on the shoulders of the dummy – he should have been there for partner.

Anyway, back to my thoughts on what happened at our club, let me know what you think:

- 1- Most players are here to play bridge and I believe it is impolite for dummy to repeatedly leave the table. Dummy could have pointed out the revoke to declarer if he was present.
- 2- This is a friendly club, isn't it? If I was either North or South and knew that East had revoked at trick one then I, especially as East is not that experienced, would have told him so immediately and let him play the correct card from hand.
- 3- It seems that winning is all important to some people. One individual in particular knows the rules off by heart and knows exactly how to extract his pound of flesh.
- 4- Dave and I discussed this incident and Dave totally agrees with me, N-S were unsportsmanlike. If it were a club of equals then OK, but?
- 5- I realise that the only reason for this particular North player and his gendre to play any game is to win, but I really am disappointed with his partner.

And what happened? The score was adjusted to 3NT making exactly, but this was still a near top for East as only one other player bid and made 3NT (+2).

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: Pass, 1♦, 2♦ or 3♦. I'm an easy goin' guy and think that any is acceptable and it probably depends upon your partner. I personally feel it's a bit good for 2♦ but others would expect a hand this good when vulnerable.

Hand B: Pass. You need some convention to answer partner when the opponents interfere with your Blackwood. The most popular is DOPI – Double = 0; pass = 1, next bid = 2 etc. So with just one ace here pass is correct playing DOPI.

Hand C: Double. With both majors I think that double is better than passing.

Hand D: Pass. This is a terrible opener and does not conform with the rule of 20. It is totally flat (4333 shape). Jacks are bad cards, especially if not backed up by the queen or ten; four such jacks are four terrible cards. Anybody who says that you should open this hand because 'it contains two quick tricks' really needs to have some lessons in hand evaluation.

Hand E: Pass. Nowhere near enough for a free bid at the two level.

Hand F: (a) 2♥, a strong jump shift. 1♥ is OK as long as you get the next answer right.
(b) 2♦, 4th suit forcing. 3♥ is wrong as it's not forcing and 4♥ may turn out badly if partner has no ♥'s. It really is better for players who are not totally happy with 4th suit forcing (i.e. if you did not bid it here) to play strong jump shifts at (a).

Play Quiz A low ♥, you know that South has the ♥A and you must hope that it is now singleton.

Club News Sheet – No. 128

Mon	11/4/05	1 st Tomas/Jim	62%	2 nd Jan/Ian	60%
Wed	13/4/05	1 st Richard(IRL)/Thorlief	61%	2 nd Terry/Monte	60%
Fri	15/4/05	1 st Bob/Dave	64%	2 nd Terry/Monte	60%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A

Hand B

♠ A2
♥ J9
♦ AKQ754
♣ AQ5

♠ A876
♥ J32
♦ Q854
♣ 82

(a) What do you open with Hand A?
(b) Suppose you choose to open 1♦. The next hand doubles, partner bids 2♦ and RHO bid 2♥, what would you bid now?

With Hand B partner opens 1NT and RHO overcalls 2♣, what do you do?

Hand C

Hand D

♠ KQ853
♥ Q9852
♦ 85
♣ A

♠ AK952
♥ AQ7
♦ 92
♣ KJ7

With Hand C partner opens 1NT. What do you bid and what do you plan to bid next go?

With Hand D you decide to open 1NT, I would open 1♠ but that's not the issue here. So you open 1NT and LHO overcalls 2♦ which partner doubles, what do you do?

Hand E

Hand F

♠ A76
♥ Q10
♦ AQ8
♣ AK542

♠ A10
♥ A95
♦ A3
♣ AKJ953

With Hand E RHO opens 1♣, what do you bid?

(a) What do you open with Hand F? (b) Suppose you open 1♣ and partner bids 1♠, what is your rebid? (c) Suppose RHO opened 2♥ in front of you, what would you bid?

Hand G

Hand H

♠ A
♥ AK54
♦ Q9873
♣ Q76

♠ AQ
♥ J32
♦ AQJ4
♣ QJ64

With Hand G partner opens 1NT and you bid 2♣ Stayman. Partner responds 2♦, what do you do next?

With Hand H partner opens 1♥. (a) What do you bid? (b) Suppose to choose 2♣ and partner bids 3♣, what do you do now?

Hand J

Hand K

♠ 32
♥ AQ743
♦ Q10873
♣ 4

♠ 54
♥ KJ63
♦ 98
♣ KQ542

With Hand J partner opens 1♠, (a) what do you bid? (b) suppose you choose 1NT and partner rebids 2♥, what do you do now?

With Hand K LHO opens 1♠ and partner overcalls 2♣. RHO doubles (negative, showing 4♥'s), what do you bid?

Editorial

We now have a 'committee' to assist me in the running of the club. Chuck asked who is on it (and why). It's quite simple; people who are 'resident' and are prepared to put themselves out (perhaps not play or play with a weaker player on Wednesdays) have a say and thus a strong influence on club policy and direct control of the Wednesday club. Dave, Jan, Bob and myself are the only qualifiers to date. People who automatically expect to play and do nothing to aid in the running of the Wednesday club do not. People who have been 'on notice' or suspended from the club will never be allowed on the committee. At least, that's the way I see it, agreed?

Now Jan (a member of the committee) suggested (I guess after complaints from Paul and Chuck) that editorials like this one and articles like the 'a little more agro' featuring Paul/Chuck's unsportsmanlike behaviour do not belong in the news sheet. I disagree and am not going to let people like Chuck and Paul affect the way the club is run. I let everybody in the club know what's going on (via the news-sheet) and they can then inform me or the committee if they have any opinions. The news sheet is primarily for club members but I agree with Jan that he is free to delete editorials etc from the news-sheet before they appear on the web site if he wishes. And I am always prepared to reproduce any sensible input from anybody in the news sheet.

Anyway, I remain in control of the Monday/Friday clubs but will negotiate over policy etc with the committee if necessary.

Now there was considerable friction between myself and Paul (IRL) last week over the definition of the term 'unsportsmanlike' used in news-sheet 127 and his mis-quoting Law 61B, but luckily he left for Ireland before I took any disciplinary measures over his totally unjustified and appalling abusive behaviour towards both Dave and myself. Chuck (Paul's partner in 'crime') was sensible enough to say very little and did not react like Paul.

Just for reference, Law 61B clearly states that a defender may ask declarer if he has revoked. At our club anybody can ask anybody if they have revoked and the over-riding majority of the club think that this is the 'sporting' thing to do if you suspect/know of a revoke. The other allowable 'unsporting?' action is to say nothing and thus be able to claim a two trick penalty at the end of play. I don't know what the Irish opposite of 'sportsmanlike' is, one suggestion from my thesaurus is 'unstable'.

Now most people realise that I put a lot of work into this club (for little reward). In particular, I now run (free) classes for beginners and also an article in the Pattaya Mail (no payment) in an attempt to attract new members and my actions have resulted in well over a dozen new players to date. Unfortunately one new player was apparently driven off a couple of week's ago by Ian's attitude (I don't know the full details and so can take no action, I guess that Jan, who was at the table, would not tell me the details because he knew I would confront Ian?). If people like Chuck, Paul, Ian (or anyone else) behave in such a way as to drive off less capable players then, as Chuck fully knows, I will have to suspend/expel them. I urge everybody to be sympathetic and helpful towards beginners and less experienced players, then hopefully we will soon have enough to run a separate division for the less aggressive and thus shield them from the unruly/rude individuals in the club – the alternative, as I see it, is to simply eliminate the unruly/rude individuals. So can we all try the more sensible approach first (be tolerant/polite to beginners), please? Hopefully Gerry will be arriving soon with the new set of boards and cards etc that I've ordered so we'll have the equipment to run two separate sections when numbers allow it.

Finally, some people dislike any controversies (I agree) and believe that I should not be so 'heavy-handed' (I disagree). It is clear to most people that if I just sat back and said/wrote nothing then anarchy would rule with the unruly elements left to their own devices and the quieter people simply leaving the club. A sure example of why my philosophy is best is the players that I have previously suspended from the club that are now much better behaved.

Don't pre-empt twice! – part 1

Board 1 from Wednesday 13th

Now most of you know not to bid again having pre-empted. One un-named charismatic individual got it wrong on this deal at Table B: -

Dealer: ♠ A10962
North ♥ -
Love all ♦ J107653
♣ 53

♠ Q75	N	♠ K
♥ 1075	W E	♥ KQJ86432
♦ KQ94	S	♦ 82
♣ 1084		♣ Q9
	♠ J843	
	♥ A9	
	♦ A	
	♣ AKJ762	

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	pass	3♥ (1)	dbl (2)
pass	4♠ (3)	pass (4)	pass
pass			

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	pass	4♥ (1)	dbl (5)
pass	4♠ (6)	5♥ (7)	dbl (8)
all pass			

Table A: (1) With a good 8 card suit, I would open 4♥.

(2) With 4 ♠'s double is most certainly better than bidding ♣'s.

(1) And with 5 ♠'s and a ♥ void, I bid 4♠ here.

(2) And this East knew better than to bid again having pre-empted.

Table B: (1) Correct.

(3) This is much the same as the double in the previous sequence. It generally shows 4 ♠'s but can be passed (so converted into penalties) more often.

(4) And this North has an easy 4♠ bid.

(5) I shan't name him this time, but this distinguished member chose to bid again here. This is extremely silly for two reasons: -

a- It violates the principle of not bidding again having pre-empted.

b- The ♠ K may well score a trick in defence, it won't if declaring.

(8) This time it's penalties.

And what happened? 5♥ was bid at two tables and it went 3 down for 500 away at Table B where it was doubled. 4♠ made +2 the two times it was bid but the resultant 480 did not beat the silly 500.

The bottom lines: -

- When you pre-empt you have said your hand, do not bid again unless partner asks.

- 4♥ was a perfect opening for this East hand and described it exactly. Bidding again here is?

Maybe this experienced East can complete the sentence for me?

Don't pre-empt twice! – part 2

Board 20 from Wednesday 13th

Dealer: ♠ A986
West ♥ AQJ954
Both vul ♦ 654
♣ -

♠ 104 N ♠ KJ2
♥ K108 W E ♥ 7
♦ K10 S ♦ Q83
♣ AK9872 ♣ QJ10543
♠ Q753
♥ 632
♦ AJ972
♣ 6

West	North	East	South
1♣	dbl	3♣ (1)	3♠ (2)
pass	pass (3)	4♣ (4)	pass
pass	4♠	pass	pass
5♣ (5)	pass	pass	dbl
all pass			

- (1) After a double, this raise should be pre-emptive and is fine here.
- (2) After some thought. With 7 points and a 4 card ♠ suit a free bid of 3♠ is fine here.
- (3) A bit feeble opposite a free bid, I would bid 4♠.
- (4) This is a poor bid – don't bid again having pre-empted, especially with these decent ♠'s and the knowledge that the opponents probably have a fit in both majors.
- (5) 4♠ is an easy make on a ♣ lead so West did well to salvage a few points by bidding 5♣.

And what happened? 5♣ was one down for 200 away. Nobody actually ended up in 4♠ but it looks like a fairly easy make to me on the obvious ♣ lead.

The bottom lines: -

- When you pre-empt you have said your hand, do not bid again unless partner asks.
- This time the opponents had stopped short of game and 4♣ by East really was silly.

Play quiz 1

♠ J943 N
♥ A8542 W E
♦ 3 S
♣ J84

DUMMY → ♠ Q105
♥ 3
♦ J1062
♣ K10932

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
pass	2NT	pass	3NT
pass			

You are West, defending 3NT and partner leads the ♥K, what card do you play.

Play Quiz 1 answer

Board 26 from Monday 11th

Dealer: ♠ A2
East ♥ J9
Both vul ♦ AKQ754
♣ AQ5

♠ J943	N	♠ K876
♥ A8542	W E	♥ KQ1076
♦ 3	S	♦ 98
♣ J84		♣ 76

♠ Q105
♥ 3
♦ J1062
♣ K10932

Table A

West	North(A)	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
pass	2NT (1)	pass	3NT
all pass			

Table B

West	North(A)	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
pass	1♦ (1)	dbl	2♦
2♥	? (2)		

Table A (1) So what did you open with this North hand A(a) in this week's quiz? It's not quite good enough for 2♣ and it's a toss-up between 1♦ or 2NT. Obviously 1♦ will work out better if it's not passed out. This sort of hand is a problem if you don't play strong twos or Benjamin twos. Playing Benjamin twos it's easy to avoid the silly 3NT and arrive in 5♦ or 6♦.

Table B (1) This North chose to open 1♦, fine.
(2) But what did you bid at (2) with this North hand A(b) in this week's quiz? The best bid is 3♥ - asking partner to bid 3NT if he has a ♥ stop.

And what happened? The silly 3NT was bid at 3 out of the 6 tables on Monday. But it made twice!

Which card did you play in the play quiz 1 from the West hand after partner led the ♥K? Partner's lead promises the ♥Q and you have to encourage. You could play the ♥A and return a ♥ but that would not work if partner started with just 4 ♥'s like KQJ9 as the suit is then blocked. No, the best card for west to play is the ♥8, encouraging (play the ♥2 if you play inverted attitude). The attitude signal in this situation makes life easy for East.

So what went wrong in the defence at two tables? East led the ♥K and West lazily played a small ♥, assuming that East would place him with the ♥A. Of course East thought that declarer had the ♥AJ left and so correctly did not continue the suit.

The sensible 5♦ was bid twice but nobody reached the 6♦ slam.

The bottom lines: -

- It does not matter if you play standard (high to encourage) or inverted (low to encourage) attitude signals, but a signal is sometimes very important.

Don't be bullied into 2NT

Board 24 from Monday 11th

Dealer: ♠ A876
West ♥ J32
Love all ♦ Q854
♣ 82

West	North(B)	East	South
pass	pass	pass	1NT
2♣ (1)	2NT (2)	all pass	

♠ K95	N	♠ J4
♥ 10954	W E	♥ A6
♦ 9	S	♦ J10763
♣ KJ764		♣ A1053
	♠ Q1032	
	♥ KQ87	
	♦ AK2	
	♣ Q9	

(1) A very poor overcall of a strong NT

(2) So what did you bid with this North hand B in this week's quiz? With no overcall I think that 2♣ Stayman is just about reasonable. When West has advertised a ♣ suit it seems even more likely that to compete in another suit is favourite, but what do you bid? It's difficult if you don't play a double of the 2♣ overcall as Stayman and this North chose 2NT and the ♠ fit was lost. I definitely don't like the 2NT bid and would prefer to pass; a re-opening double by South would then be for take-out (it is not penalties as the ♣'s are sitting over him and partner has promised no values) and then the excellent 2♠ contract will be found.

And what happened? 2NT justifiably went down, as did all N-S contracts except the one pair who found 2♠. Even 2♥ (probably down just one) would be a reasonable spot for N-S.

Count your cards.

Now one of the very first things I teach my students is that Bridge is a game where 4 players have 13 card each. I also tell them that the first thing one should do when you pick up your hand is to count your cards (without looking at them).

There was an incident on Wednesday when the director (me) was called (no prizes for guessing by whom) when play was in progress and somebody noticed that dummy was a card short (and declarer had started with 14 cards). Now normally I gloss over an incident like this – I give the offending partie(s) a zero score and try to sort it out. And normally I would not mention this (or names) in the news-sheet. But in this rather controversial week I will make an exception – the offending parties were none other than our infamous Chuck and Paul duo!

Now when Paul was 'laying into me' about the 'unsportsmanlike' comment of mine, he indicated that he was some sort of referee or whatever in Ireland. I guess their standard must be pretty low (or was it all baloney?). He was ignorant of Law 61.B and Law 7.B.1 clearly states that each player should count his cards before looking at them. And for two 'superior' players to conduct an auction and arrive at a contract and start playing when one has 14 cards and the other 12 is....? Well, my thesaurus suggests the word 'stupid'. Perhaps Paul also objects to this word and has another?

Anyway, it is most certainly wasting everybody's time, as is playing out a hand when both defenders know that declarer has revoked at trick one.

Natural or transfer?

Board 12 from Monday 11th

Now in the last deal we saw that one can play that a double of a 2♣ overcall of partner's 1NT is Stayman and bids of 2♦ and 2♥ are thus transfers. And you can, by agreement, continue this theme just one step further – i.e. when there is a 2♦ overcall: -

Dealer:	♠ 8643				
West	♥ 83	West	North	East(D)	South
N-S vul	♦ A54	pass	pass	1NT	2♦ (1)
	♣ Q543	dbl (2)	pass	2♠ (3)	etc .. (4)

♠ J	N	♠ AK952
♥ KJ942	W E	♥ AQ7
♦ K1086	S	♦ 92
♣ 1098		♣ KJ7
	♠ Q107	
	♥ 1065	
	♦ QJ73	
	♣ A62	

- (1) In the last hand we saw a very poor overcall of a strong 1NT, but this is surely the most terrible overcall of a strong NT that I have ever seen.
- (2) This player considered this to be a transfer. That is a very playable system but it has to be agreed and is not standard. Playing standard I would also double – penalties – N-S are vulnerable against not and 2♦ doubled will net an enormous score for E-W.
- (3) What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? Now I recall that some time ago this very same East player pulled my penalty double in exactly this situation when partnering me. It was nonsense then (and I told him so) and it's nonsense now (so I suppose his memory is not as good as mine?). When you open 1NT then your partner is the captain, if he doubles for penalties then a pass by the 1NT opener is mandatory. There is no such thing as a take-out or negative double by the partner of a 1NT opener – it's penalties unless you agree to a double of 2♦ as a transfer.
- (4) I don't really know or care how the auction continued but they ended up in a silly 3♠. It seems that this East continues to make the same mistakes and continues to blame partner.

And what happened? 3♠ made but was a near bottom. 3NT or 4♥ were making at other tables. Obviously 2♦ doubled would have been a great score for E-W.

The bottom lines: -

- Unless you agree anything to the contrary, if you open 1NT and the next hand overcalls anything then a double from partner is for penalties and a pass from you is **mandatory**.

5-5 in the majors opposite partner's 1NTBoard 17 from Monday 11th

I went through this in news-sheet 114 and very thoroughly in 122, but it looks like none of the 6 tables got it right on Monday.

Dealer:	♠ 10742			<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ 10743			West(C)	North	East	South
Love all	♦ 96			-	pass	1NT	pass
	♣ KQ9			2♣ (1)	pass	2♦	pass
				3♥ (2)	pass	3NT	pass
				4♠	all pass		
♠ KQ853	N	♠ AJ9					
♥ Q9852	W E	♥ J6					
♦ 85	S	♦ AKQJ3		<u>'Expert' Table</u>			
♣ A		♣ J52		West(C)	North	East	South
	♠ 8			-	pass	1NT	pass
	♥ AK			2♥ (3)	pass	2♠	pass
	♦ 10742			3♥ (4)	pass	4♠	all pass
	♣ 1087642						

- Table A (1) So what did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? Stayman is not the answer.
 (2) This bid is game forcing and promises exactly 5 ♥'s and 5 ♠'s in standard methods.
 'Expert' (3) With 5-5 in the majors you start with a transfer as I explain below.
 Table (4) And this 3♥ bid is now natural (thus showing 5-5 in the majors) and game forcing.

And what happened? 4 out of the 6 tables reached the 4♠ contract, but obviously none of them remembered the recommended method as West was declarer on every occasion. On this particular layout the two 3NT declarers unfortunately lucked out as there are just 2 losers in any contract. Swap the ♣A and ♣K and it's a totally different outcome in a silly 3NT!

Let's repeat the section from news-sheet 122: So what's the solution when 5-5 in the majors?

One rather out-dated method with 5-5's is Extended Stayman (1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♦). But the problem is that there is no differentiation between invitational and strong hands. Also, this sequence is far better used as a Quest Transfer (showing 6 ♥'s and 4 ♠'s, with 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♥ showing 6 ♠'s and 4 ♥'s).

Another practice in common use by many (most experienced?) players is: -

- 1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ shows 5-5 in the majors and is invitational
 1NT - 2♥ - 2♠ - 3♥ shows 5-5 in the majors and is game forcing.

So here you have to agree that with 5-4's in the majors you use Stayman (as I have said many times). This latter solution is probably best unless you want the real ultimate solution and you can read that up in my book on responses to 1NT.

A couple of amusing contracts (3-2 fits!)

Board 16 from Monday 11th

Dealer: ♠ J1098
West ♥ K975
E-W vul ♦ 102
♣ 863

♠ K42 N ♠ Q53
♥ J86 W E ♥ A432
♦ J9763 S ♦ K54
♣ 107 ♣ QJ9

♠ A76
♥ Q10
♦ AQ8
♣ AK542

Table A

West	North	East	South(E)
pass	pass	1♣(1)	1NT (2)
pass	2♣ (3)	pass	2♦
pass	pass (4)	pass	

Table B

West	North	East	South(E)
pass	pass	1♣(1)	dbl (2)
pass	1♥	pass	2NT (5)
pass	3NT	all pass	

- Table A: (1) This hand does not qualify as a real opener of course, but anything goes in 3rd seat. Some USA players even recommend opening a 4 card major in this position but that's probably best left to the experts or to those who play Drury.
(2) So what did you bid with this South hand E in this week's quiz? 1NT here is 15-18 and so it's a bit strong but not too bad a bid.
(3) Stayman. Now you should only bid Stayman with a weak hand if you can cope with any response. This is simply gambling, sometimes it works and you luck into a 4-4 major suit fit...
(4)... but sometimes it's a complete disaster! (luckily South was not 3325).

- Table B: (2) This player started off with double, excellent.
(5) But since 1NT here would show about 19-20 points 2NT is an unnecessary overbid, but at least the decent 3NT was reached.

And what happened? There were other silly contracts; one South actually overcalled 1♦ because he was a bit peeved that East had bid his suit – he was left to play there! 3NT was bid twice and made exactly (note the power of the intermediates in the North hand).

3NT of course, but how do you bid it?

Board 8 from Monday 11th

Dealer: ♠ K4
West ♥ QJ10876
Love all ♦ 1097
♣ 84

♠ QJ832	N	♠ A10
♥ 43	W E	♥ A95
♦ Q65	S	♦ A3
♣ Q106		♣ AKJ953

♠ 9765
♥ K2
♦ KJ842
♣ 72

Table A

West	North	East(F)	South
pass	pass (1)	1♣ (2)	pass (3)
1♠	pass	3♣ (4)	pass
pass (5)	pass		

Table B

West	North	East(F)	South
pass	2♥	3NT (6)	

- Table A: (1) I would open a weak 2♥
(2) What did you open with this East hand F(a) in this week's quiz? It's close between 1♣ and 2NT and either are acceptable (but I prefer 2NT).
(3) A 1♦ overcall would be just about acceptable with this hand.
(4) What did you bid with this East hand F(b) in this week's quiz? 3♣ is wrong – it is not forcing in Standard American. Also, you make it very difficult for partner and he may go past 3NT (say with 4♣) or even pass! I would rebid 3NT.
(5) I would also think about passing here and it's not too unreasonable. The 7 points are quacks, it's true, but hasn't partner made it difficult! The ♣Q10x are golden cards and I would probably gamble with 3NT but life would be so much easier if partner had taken the pressure off and bid 3NT himself.
- Table B: (6) Did you bid 3NT in this week's quiz? There's no need to mess about as you want to play in 3NT and have a solid ♥ stop and can hold up if necessary.

And what happened? It was played in 3♣ just once and 3NT or 4♠ all made (usually with overtricks) at other tables.

The bottom line. A jump rebid of the same suit is not forcing in Standard American (or Acol).

Don't remove 3NT to 5♣/♦!!

Board 16 from Wednesday 13th

Now most of you know my opinions by now – 3NT is usually easier than 5♣/♦. And if partner has advertised a good stop in the enemy suit and then bids 3NT then you really should not remove him: -

Dealer:	♠ QJ32				
West	♥ -	West	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ AKJ108	pass	1♦	pass	1♥
	♣ J954	1♠	dbl (1)	pass	3♣ (2)
		pass	3NT (3)	pass	4♣ (4)
		pass	5♣	all pass	
♠ AK876	N	♠ 104			
♥ Q8642	W E	♥ A7			
♦ 72	S	♦ Q96543			
♣ 8		♣ K62			
	♠ 95				
	♥ KJ10953				
	♦ -				
	♣ AQ1073				

- (1) In standard methods this simply means that North has 4 ♠'s and would have rebid 1♠ himself. There is another option for the bid (the support double) but that has to be agreed. This double is most definitely not some sort of take-our or negative double as 3 suits have been bid, it shows 4♠'s and presumably a stop or two.
- (2) Natural and game forcing.
- (3) To play. Since North has already shown ♠'s he most definitely has them stopped. As the sequence is game forcing then a 3NT bid here is definitely to play.
- (4) Now to be fair, this South player is new to the club and is not yet familiar with my doctrines – 3NT is usually easier than 5 of a minor.

And what happened? 3NT was bid at one table and made exactly. 5♣ was bid at two tables and went one down on both occasions.

The bottom lines: -

- When partner bids 3NT to play then you need a really good reason to remove it.

5-3 fit or 3NT ?

Board 15 from Friday 15th

Now we all know my views on a 4-4 major suit fit – it’s virtually always better than NT. But a 5-3 major suit fit is different. It is sometimes best to go for the NT contract, especially if the other suits are well guarded and the right man (the one with a tenace to protect) is then declarer: -

Dealer:	♠ J9				
South	♥ 96	West	North	East(H)	South
N-S vul	♦ K1093	-	-	-	pass (1)
	♣ 98732	1♥	pass	2♣ (2)	pass
		3♣ (3)	pass	3NT (4)	all pass
		all pass			

♠ 872	N	♠ AQ
♥ AK1087	W E	♥ J32
♦ 76	S	♦ AQJ4
♣ A105		♣ QJ64

♠ K106543
♥ Q54
♦ 842
♣ K

- (1) A weak 2♠ is a reasonable alternative.
- (2) What did you bid with this East hand H(a) in this week’s quiz? This pair play 2/1 and so this 2♣ bid is forcing to game. It’s best in my view whatever you play.
- (3) Life is so much easier in situations like this when you play 2/1. 3♣ is still forcing and so there’s no need to worry about being left in a silly 3♣ contract.
- (4) What did you bid with this East hand H(b) in this week’s quiz? I prefer 3NT to 4♥ with these weak ♥’s and the opening lead coming round to the East hand. And note the advantage of taking it slowly – east now knows that West has only 5 ♥’s and ♣ support, so 3NT is clear.

And what happened? 3 pairs were in 3NT. With a ♠ lead from South and everything right, 13 tricks rolled home. 4♥ by West did not score so well.

The bottom lines: -

- Always go for the 4-4 fit.
- But the 5-3 fit is different and it’s sometimes correct to play in NT.

Not enough for slam

Board 13 from Wednesday 13th

Let's go back to the beginner's class. You need around 25 points for game in a major or NT and you need around 33 points for a small slam (a little less if you have a fit or a good long suit). So how did two of my students fare compared with more experienced pairs on this deal? –

Dealer:	♠ Q86	<u>Table A</u>				
North	♥ Q87	West	North	East	South (G)	
Both vul	♦ A5	-	1NT	pass	2♣	
	♣ AK953	pass	2♦	pass	4NT (1)	
		pass	5♥	pass	6♦ (2)	
		all pass				
♠ KJ42	N	♠ 109753	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ J109	W E	♥ 632	West	North	East	South (G)
♦ J2	S	♦ K1064	-	1NT	pass	2♣
♣ J1042		♣ 8	pass	2♦	pass	3NT
			all pass			
	♠ A					
	♥ AK54					
	♦ Q9873					
	♣ Q76					

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this South hand G in this week's quiz? For me it's a toss up between 3NT and a slam try (I would settle for 3NT). But what does 4NT mean here? It is best played as quantitative (I go into that on the next page but I believe that this scratch partnership had agreed to play 4NT as Blackwood in all situations).
(2) South took a wild gamble here. Knowing that partner had no 4 card major he hoped that partner had ♦'s – tough luck!

Table B: This was the only table to stop below a hopeless slam. Well done Gene/Steven – I guess you have a good teacher?

And what happened? Slam was bid 4 times, (either 6♦ or 6NT) and all went one or two down. 3NT made +1 and scored a well deserved top. Well, not so much that it deserved a top, but everybody else certainly deserved a bottom!

The bottom lines: -

- 15 points opposite partner's 1NT opening may be just about worth a slam invitation, but that's all. Forcing to slam is too optimistic without a known fit.
- There is a mechanism to find out if you have a minor suit fit having bid Stayman (SARS, Shape Asking Relays after Stayman) but it is perhaps a bit advanced for most members of this club. I'll lend you an advanced book on responses to 1NT if you really want to know.

Quantitative, Normal Blackwood, RKCB, Gerber, Splinter or what?

West East

1 ♠ 2 ♥ 4 ♣ is a splinter, agreeing ♥'s. It is could be either a singleton or void.
 4 ♣ 4NT 4NT is RKCB. Some play exclusion RKCB here.

1 ♠ 1NT What is 4 ♣ over the strong 3 ♥? If East had a weak hand he would simply
 3 ♥ 4 ♣ bid game. Thus 4 ♣ can only be a cue bid agreeing ♥'s. Responder has a good ♥ suit
 with insufficient values for an initial two level response. A bid of 4NT here or a
 subsequent 4NT bid by either is thus RKCB for ♥'s

1 ♥ 4 ♣ A splinter or Swiss, according to partnership agreement.

1 ♥ 4NT Normal Blackwood. This cannot be RKCB for ♥'s as then East would
 first bid a forcing raise (Jacoby 2NT). It is not quantitative, as East would first bid a suit at
 the two level. It must be a strange hand.

3NT 4NT 3NT is gambling. This 4NT is not Blackwood, opener has exactly 1 ace. East has a good
 hand and simply requests opener to bid 5 of his suit.

3NT 4 ♣ 3NT is gambling and 4 ♣ is pass or correct

2 ♣ 2 ♦ RKCB for ♦'s. With a big hand in support of ♥'s, East would have
 2 ♥ 2NT splintered, cue bid, bid 3 ♥ or bid RKCB on the previous round.
 3 ♦ 4NT

1NT 3 ♠ East's 3 ♠ is a slam try. West's 4 ♣ is a cue bid agreeing ♠'s.
 4 ♣ 4NT East's 4NT is RKCB for ♠'s.

1NT 4 ♣ Gerber 1NT 4NT Quantitative.

1 ♠ 2 ♦ 1 ♠ 2 ♦
 2NT 4 ♣ Gerber 2NT 4NT Quantitative.

Transfer Sequences

Stayman Sequences

1NT 2 ♥ Gerber (RKC?). Partner's 1NT 2 ♣ Gerber (RKC?)
 2 ♠ 4 ♣ last natural bid was 1NT. 2 ♥ 4 ♣

1NT 2 ♥ Quantitative (5 ♠'s) 1NT 2 ♣ Quantitative.

2 ♠ 4NT 2 ♥ 4NT (4 ♠'s)

1NT 2 ♥ This time, 4NT is RKCB for ♠'s. West's super accept of the transfer has
 2NT 3 ♥ set ♠'s as trumps. East re-transfers to get West as declarer and then uses
 3 ♠ 4NT RKCB.

1NT 2 ♦ 4NT is not RKCB for ♥'s here (4 ♣ would be), it must be quantitative. If East
 2 ♥ 4NT had a hand where he can investigate slam in ♥'s with minimal support from
 partner, he could have started with a slam interest bid of 3 ♥ over 1NT.

Play Quiz 2

Board 4 (modified) from Wednesday 13th

This problem is based on board 4 from Wednesday, I have changed the hands very slightly to make it an interesting play problem (I saw somebody get it wrong on Wednesday).

Dealer: ♠ K1094
North ♥ KJ754
Both vul ♦ 64
♣ J9

West	North	East	South
-	pass	3♣	dbl
pass	4♣ (1)	pass	4♥ (2)
pass	all pass		

N
W E
S

(1) I made up the bidding, North's 4♣ simply asks South to pick a suit.

♠ AQ63
♥ Q1083
♦ AK9
♣ 62

So onto the play. West leads the ♣A followed by the ♣5. East wins and returns a low ♦ which South wins. South pulls trumps with West winning the 2nd round (they split 2-2). West sensibly leads a ♦ (he does not want to open up the ♠'s for declarer) which South wins. South now needs to tackle the ♠'s for no loser. He plays the ♠A and everybody follows low. South then eliminates the minor suits (by ruffing them out) but which card should he (South) play next from this resulting position?

Dealer: ♠ K109
North ♥ J
Both vul ♦ -
♣ -

N
W E
S

♠ Q63
♥ 10
♦ -
♣ -

Play Quiz 2 answer

Dealer: ♠ K1094
North ♥ KJ754
Both vul ♦ 64
♣ J9

♠ J875	N	♠ 2
♥ A6	W E	♥ 92
♦ 107532	S	♦ QJ8
♣ A5		♣ KQ108743
	♠ AQ63	
	♥ Q1083	
	♦ AK9	
	♣ 62	

Board 4 (modified) from Wednesday 13th

This was the full deal (modified). If the ♠'s split 3-2 there is no problem so declarer only has to worry about a possible 4-1 ♠ split and since East has promised 7 ♣'s for his vulnerable 3♣ opening then he should play East for a possible ♠ shortage.

Thus declarer should lead ♠ Q at the 2nd round of ♠'s in the position on the previous page. When East shows out there is no need to guess and declarer picks up the ♠'s for no loss.

Make a try for game?

Dealer: ♠ QJ954
East ♥ 2
Love all ♦ KJ5
♣ K753

♠ AK1086	N	♠ 32
♥ K986	W E	♥ AQ743
♦ A6	S	♦ Q10873
♣ 109		♣ 4
	♠ 7	
	♥ J105	
	♦ 942	
	♣ AQJ862	

Board 14 from Friday 15th

West	North	East (J)	South
-	-	pass	pass
1♠	pass	1NT (1)	pass
2♥ (2)	pass	3♥ (3)	pass
4♥ (4)	all pass		

- (1) What did you bid with this East hand J(a) in this week's quiz? Playing a strong NT the hand is not good enough for a 2-level response and 1NT is correct.
- (2) 2♥ is clear here, it's nowhere good enough for 3♥.
- (3) What did you bid with this East hand J(b) in this week's quiz? Partner's 2♥ rebid has improved the hand enormously and I bid 3♥.
- (4) And West has a clear raise to 4♥.

And what happened? Two pairs reached 4♥ and two pairs stopped short, 10 or eleven tricks usually being made. My partner Monte played it very nicely and made 12 tricks.

The bottom line. A fit is all important, with a 5-4 fit you don't need the usual 25 points to make game in a major.

Nice one Monte!

Board 7 from Friday 15th

Monte is new to this club, he is a gold life master but has not played bridge for 30 years! He even 'corrected' me when I wrote down a score of 800 for somebody going 4 down doubled non-vulnerable (the 'new' scoring changed it from 700 to 800 and this came in about 25 years ago!) Anyway, we can all learn from a master and he still has a few tricks up his sleeve: -

Dealer:	♠ QJ97	West	North	East	South (K)
South	♥ A		(me)		(Monte)
Both vul	♦ J74	-	-	-	pass
	♣ A10863	1♠	2♣ (1)	dbl (2)	4♣ (3)
		4♥ (4)	pass	pass	dbl (5)
		all pass			
♠ AK1062	N	♠ 83			
♥ Q1087	W E	♥ 9542			
♦ Q3	S	♦ AK10652			
♣ J7		♣ 9			
	♠ 54				
	♥ KJ63				
	♦ 98				
	♣ KQ542				

- (1) I would normally like a better hand (say a better or longer ♣ suit) but these ♠'s sitting over opener are an asset and I think that 2♣ here is OK.
- (2) Now the overcall has actually made East's life easier! With no intervention he would have to bid 1NT (not enough for a 2-level response) but now a negative double shows the 4 card ♥ suit. It only promises 6+ points.
- (3) What did you bid with this South hand K in this week's quiz? South knew the situation exactly and the 4♣ bid here may really put the pressure on West. The more I look at it, the more I like this 4♣ bid.
- (4) And West is fixed! Should he meekly pass or should he show his 4 card ♥ support? I'm glad it was not me in this position. Anyway, West chose to bid and has my sympathy.
- (5) Gotcha!

And what happened? 4♥ doubled went two down for a clear top to N-S.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 1♦ or 2NT. The hand is not good enough for 2♣ playing Standard American. This is a very difficult hand for Standard American. If you open 2NT then you may end up in a silly 3NT when 5♦ or 6♦ are cold. If you open 1♦ then it may be passed out. The only real solution is to play Benjamin twos (or strong twos) and then you should always reach a sensible contract.
(b) 3♥. Asking partner to bid 3NT with a ♥ stop.
- Hand B: Pass. I don't like 2NT as it's a point light with no ♣ stop and you may miss a 4-4 ♠ fit. If you play double as Stayman here then that is a reasonable alternative.
- Hand C: 2♥, a transfer to ♠'s and then bid 3♥. This is the standard way to show a game forcing 5-5 in the majors opposite partner's 1NT.
- Hand D: Pass, mandatory. Partner had doubled 2♦ for penalties and he is the captain. If you feel compelled to remove the penalty double to 2♠ then you should have opened 1♠! Of course if you have both agreed that a double of 2♦ here is a transfer to ♥'s (a very playable system) then you should bid 2♥.
- Hand E: Double, followed by 1NT over partner's expected 1 level suit response. This shows a hand that is too good for an immediate 1NT overcall (15-18) and as this is a very respectable 19 count I think that it's best. A direct 1NT is 15-18 and not too bad an alternative.
- Hand F: (a) 1♣ or 2NT, either may work out best.
(b) 3NT. 3♣ is wrong because it's not forcing and you want to play in 3NT anyway.
(c) 3NT.
- Hand G: 3NT. With no known fit and no good long suit you need about 33 points to make slam. A quantitative 4NT is just about reasonable but I would settle for 3NT. Note that 4NT is quantitative (invitational) here and that 4♣ is Gerber because partner's last natural bid was NT.
- Hand H: (a) 2♣. 2♦ is possibly equally good, but you know my opinions about bidding 4 cards suits up the line. I would like a weaker hand and 5♥'s for a direct 4♥. I guess 3NT is reasonable, but what's the rush?
(b) 3NT. Did you choose 3NT or 4♥? Choosing the 5-3 ♥ fit cannot be defined as wrong; but with the points outside ♥'s, no weak suit and this ♠ tenace I prefer the opening lead to come up to this hand. Change the ♠Q so the hand is something like ♠A2 ♥K32 ♦AQJ4 ♣QJ64 then 4♥ would be best.
- Hand J: (a) 1NT. It's not good enough for a 2 level response.
(b) 3♥. After partner's ♥ bid it's worth a try for game. Pass is too feeble for me and I would not even argue too much if you chose 4♥.
- Hand K: 4♣. The Law easily allows this bid, and you certainly don't mind if LHO bids 4♥.

Club News Sheet – No. 129

Mon	18/4/05	1 st	Kenneth/David	62%	2 nd	Coenraad/Albert	57%
Wed	20/4/05	1 st	Terry/John G	68%	2 nd	Mike/Phil	59%
Fri	22/4/05	1 st	Alex/Thorlief	68%	2 nd	Chuck/Monte	63%

That's it for this week folks – the new-look news sheet? The rest is not part of the news sheet, but an explanation for everybody as to why I have not been my usual cheerful self recently. I believe that the whole club should be allowed to know what's going on and have a say in how the club should be run and what should or should not be in the news-sheets: -

What should be in the news-sheets?

There were a number of interesting hands this week, especially on Friday, and I was asked numerous questions. But there is unfortunately on-going disagreement amongst the hierarchy of the club and I have decided not to write up any more hands unless the overwhelming majority of the club make their opinions clear (to the committee) – more of this in a minute.

Basically, the problems have been caused by two unruly players (I am choosing my words very carefully here and mean every word I say). The incident was fully reported in the last article of news-sheet 127 and I absolutely stand by every word I said. Paul (and I believe Chuck also) objected and I wrote my opinions again in detail with names in news-sheet 128. If you have not read these two news sheets, please do; I have made a few extra copies.

Now to start with, let's consider these two trouble-makers, Chuck and Paul(Irl). Chuck has already been suspended from the club twice and the last time he was thrown out (on a Friday) I politely told him that I had enjoyed partnering him but that he could not play at the club anymore - he had been abusive to two long-standing less experienced players (Don and Syd) and they refused to play at the club if Chuck was present.

Chuck's reaction was to storm into the room where all the other players were and give a speech full of 4 letter words about what sort of a person I was. And it did not end there! The following Monday he arrived at the club (despite being banned) and handed out leaflets to everybody in which he called me a sneak, cheat, tyrant and blatant liar. My reaction? In the next news-sheet I called him a cad. I also later went out of my way (once tempers has cooled a little) to have a word with Don and Syd to see if they were prepared to let Chuck back in. I guess we all make mistakes and I won't make that one again.

And Paul(Irl)? I said in news sheet 127 that I was 'disappointed' that he had behaved in this 'unsportsmanlike' manner for this club. That is my opinion (and the opinion of the vast majority of the club). He went ballistic and started shouting at me the next Monday. He had also previously been very abusive to Dave.

Anyway, these two troublemakers then went off to the committee and I received a lot of slack. I was even handed two A4 sheets of paper with a list of suggestions of things that I should not say in the news sheet. There were a number of points that I disagreed with, but in particular it was suggested that if somebody behaved badly or disobeyed the rules then I should write nothing but talk to them privately. I do take people aside repeatedly, but when it is something that may easily be repeated by another player (such as the failure to call attention to the revoke or the failure to correct partner's incorrect explanation at the right time (the two 'incidents' in the 'agro' articles of news sheet 127) - then I will mention the incident in the news sheet (no names – and note that there were no names in news sheet 127).

The news sheets are my personal opinions and if I say anything uncomplimentary about anyone you can rest assured it is one of our ½ dozen or so people 'on notice' (that is people who know that they will be suspended if they disregard a previous warning that I have given them). If people behave in a manner that I feel is not fitting for our club then I will say so in the news-sheet (but usually now not name them). That's what I've been doing for the last 2½ years and we have never had a problem like this before.

Anyway. I have had an enormous amount of support from numerous people - thank you Ursula, Stephen, Phil, Richard(USA), Mike, Jim and all the rest. But unfortunately it has not really affected anything. I am also repeatedly being congratulated by visitors for the news-sheets and the way the club is

run - Michael, Ole, Garry, Anne, Eileen, Lis & Finn, Gerard & Derek to name but a few that have *specifically* thanked me before they left.

If you feel that news-sheets 127/128 are acceptable (or not) then please have a word with a committee member and give your opinion.

Let's all hope that an opinion expressed by the vast majority of the club may be more influential and have more of an effect on the committee than that of two trouble-makers. And these two players are hardly in a position to tell me how to run a club - when they cannot even obey a simple Law like counting your cards and can complete a bidding sequence and start play with one holding 14 cards and the other 12!

So, that's it. I'm having a break (before I have a nervous breakdown?) and will not write any more meaningful news-sheets unless the majority of the club suggest to the committee that I should continue as normal and that the opinions of a minority of two should be totally ignored. I can only write a news-sheet if I am free to express my opinions; numerous restrictions would be like asking VanGough to paint a sunflower without using yellow paint. All news-sheet, news papers etc express the opinion of the reporters/editor. If you read the New York Times you will get a different view of the news that that given in a French or German newspaper – it's up to you who you believe is telling the 'truth'. And if you don't like my opinions in the news-sheet – then don't read it! I write the news-sheet; anybody else is free to write another and I have absolutely no objection. I will even publish any sensible article from anyone in my news sheet if they wish (I even received flack for doing just that when somebody *insisted* that I reproduce his article).

I agree with Jan that some articles that I believe belong in the news-sheet do not necessarily need to appear on the web site. Jan is obviously free to delete articles like this one before news-sheets go on the web.

Please let your opinion be heard and count - *Terry*

29/4/05

Club News Sheet – No. 130

Mon 25 th N/S	1 st Chuck/Hans	58%	2 nd Kenneth/David	52%
Mon 25 th E-W	1 st Ursula/Jean-Marc	57%	2 nd Dave/Kees	52%
Wed 27 th N/S	1 st Clive/Ken	64%	2 nd Dave/Gene	57%
Wed 27 th E-W	1 st Monte/Richard (USA)	65%	2 nd Kenneth/John	52%
Fri 29/4/05	1 st John Gavens/Terry	63%	2 nd Clive/Ken	59%

Everything is back to normal now, I hope; thanks (nearly) everybody for your continual support. I have re-started 'the beginner's page(s)' and it will be issued as a separate document on Mondays with the same number as the accompanying news-sheet.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A Hand B With Hand A partner opens 1♣, what do you do?

♠ 982	♠ Q53	With Hand B LHO opens 2♥, what do you bid?
♥ KJ865	♥ KQJ984	
♦ 6543	♦ A3	
♣ 3	♣ A2	

Hand C (a) Would you open with Hand C (if so, with what?)?
Suppose that you choose to open 1♣, then what is your rebid if ...

♠ Q	(b) Partner bids 1♦?	(c) Partner bids 1♥?
♥ Q109	(d) Partner bids 1♠?	(e) Partner bids 1NT?
♦ KJ83		
♣ KJ1052		

Hand D With Hand D partner opens 1♣

	(a) What do you respond?
♠ AJ10764	(b) Suppose you bid 1♠, then what do you bid after partner's 2♣ rebid?
♥ K4	
♦ AJ654	
♣ -	

Hand E Finally a tricky problem that occurred at the table on Friday.
LHO opens 2♥ and both partner and RHO pass, what's going on?
Before you answer the final question (e) (what do you bid), think about the following questions: -

♠ A9742	(a) Opener has about 8 points, where are the missing 26 points?
♥ -	(b) Opener has 6♥'s, where are the other 7♥'s?
♦ Q10952	(c) Why did RHO not bid or raise♥'s?
♣ 863	(d) Why did partner not bid?
	If you work out all of the above then you should know the answer to ...
	(e) ...what do you bid?

A 'quickie' question. With no opposition bidding, how many♣'s does opener promise in this auction?
1♣ - 1NT - 2♣.

Don't pass partner's 1♣ with a singleton

Board 11 from Monday 25th

Dealer: ♠ 982
South ♥ KJ865
Love all ♦ 6543
♣ 3

West	North(A)	East	South
-	-	-	1♣ (1)
pass	pass (2)	pass (3)	

♠ K74	N	♠ Q1065
♥ Q10	W E	♥ 9743
♦ K109	S	♦ J2
♣ KQ652		♣ AJ7
	♠ AJ3	
	♥ A2	
	♦ AQ97	
	♣ 10984	

- (1) N-S were playing Acol and so South could not open 1NT.
- (2) What did you do with this North hand A in this week's quiz? I would never pass a 1♣ opening with a singleton if I can muster up a bid. 1♥ looks best to me.
- (3) East could make a balancing bid here, but pass may well work out best.

And what happened? The 4-1 fit did not play that well and went two down for a joint bottom.

The bottom line: -

- I've said it many times before – don't pass partner's 1♣ opening with shortage if you can possibly scrape up a bid.

Lead quiz

Jean-Marc gave me this hand from an internet game. You are West with this bidding. What card should you lead after partner's double?

West

♠ Qxx
♥ 109xx
♦ 8
♣ 98xxx

West	North	East	South
-	1♦	pass	1♥
pass	2♣	pass	3♣
pass	3♠ (a)	pass	3NT (b)
pass	pass	dbl	all pass

- (a) 4th suit, asking for a ♠ stop.
- (b) Promising a ♠ stop

Partner has been silent throughout the auction but then doubles the freely bid 3NT contract. Why? Answer next page.

Lead quiz answer

Jean-Marc's hand from the internet: -

West	East	West	North	East	South
♠ Qxx	♠ Axx	-	1♦	pass (1)	1♥
♥ 109xx	♥ Qx	pass	2♣	pass	3♣
♦ 8	♦ AKQ10x	pass	3♠	pass	3NT
♣ 98xxx	♣ QJx	pass	pass	dbl (2)	all pass

I won't go into the bidding in detail as it's a lead problem. East decided upon a 'trap' pass at (1); a 1NT overcall or double followed by 1NT are alternatives but the pass should have worked out well if partner had understood the double at (2).

So what did you lead in the quiz? Actually, it's text-book stuff but you can work it out logically. Partner has been silent throughout the auction but then doubles the freely bid 3NT contract. Why?

Because he has an excellent ♦ suit. It's similar to the Lightner double of a slam and demands that partner lead dummy's first bid suit. So the answer is the ♦8.

Don't make a weak bid with a strong hand

Board 22 from Friday 29th

Dealer:	♠ 3	West(D)	North	East	South
East	♥ J97652	-	-	1♣	pass
E-W vul	♦ Q82	1♠ (1)	pass	2♣	pass
	♣ Q63	2♦ (2)	pass	3♣	pass
		3♠	pass	pass (3)	pass
♠ AJ10764	N	♠ K8			
♥ K4	W E	♥ Q3			
♦ AJ654	S	♦ 73			
♣ -		♣ AK109874			
	♠ Q952				
	♥ A108				
	♦ K109				
	♣ J52				

- (1) What did you bid with this West hand D (a) in this week's quiz? 1♦ is correct when 4-4 (bid 4-4's up the line) or if you have more ♦'s than ♠'s. But with 5-5's you bid the higher ranking first, so bid 1♠ here.
- (2) So what did you bid with this West hand D(b) in this week's quiz? 2♦ here is not enough because it is not forcing, 3♦ is correct. A jump to 4♦ is wrong because as it's an unnecessary jump (3♦ is forcing), it would be a splinter agreeing ♣'s!
- (3) East thought that West was weak and so passed.

And what happened? The comfortable 4♠ game was bid at just one table out of 5. I note that one pair reached 5♦, presumably because West bid 1♦ at (1) and East correctly gave preference to the first bid suit. The bottom lines: -

- Don't make a non-forcing bid if you know you have game values and partner does not.
- Bid the higher ranking of two 5 card suits in most situations.

Why no slam?

Board 8 from Wednesday 27th

Dealer: ♠ 865
West ♥ J8543
Love all ♦ 64
♣ J43

♠ AK3	N	♠ QJ7
♥ A1097	W E	♥ KQ2
♦ A87	S	♦ KQ105
♣ 1062		♣ AQ8

♠ 10942
♥ 6
♦ J932
♣ K975

Table A

West	North	East	South
1NT (1)	pass	2♣ (2)	pass
2♥	pass	4♣ (3)	pass
4♦ (4)	pass	4♥ (5)	pass
pass (6)	pass		

'Expert' Table

West	North	East	South
1NT	pass	4NT (2)	pass
pass (7)	pass		

- Table A
- (1) A balanced 15 count, so open 1NT? You all know me, I'll deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape. But the great top cards, the good intermediates and the two 10's offset this and so for me a 1NT opener is OK.
 - (2) Unless you play a sophisticated system you should only bid Stayman if you have a 4 card major
 - (3) This pair had agreed the 4♣ was ace-asking, I'll go into the correct 'standard' responses on the next page.
 - (4) This player believed that 4♦ showed 0 or 3 aces. I guess that you could agree to play that (I can't see the point myself unless it's Roman Keycard with the ♥K included in the responses).
 - (5) When you use 4♣ as an ace ask, then 4NT is a sign off; quite why this East chose 4♥ is a mystery. Anyway, East should have realised that a few wheels had come off as it's impossible for West to have zero aces and have a 1NT opener.
 - (6) And perhaps West should have realised that those wheels were rolling – East has asked for aces (so looking for slam) but has backed off with a 3 ace response! That must be impossible and so clearly East has not taken the 4♦ bid as 0 or 3 aces.

- 'Expert' Table
- (2) So I'm not too impressed with the auction at Table A, but how would our 'experts' bid it? Now there are mechanisms to locate a 4-4 (or better) minor suit fit after a 1NT opening but they are beyond the scope of this news-sheet. So today our 'experts' are simple souls. What did you bid at (2) with this East hand B in this week's quiz? With no 4 card major 2♣ is pointless/misleading. If you have no mechanism to locate a possible ♦ fit then the hand is maybe worth a slam force and I think that with this totally flat hand it's a toss-up between 6NT or a very pessimistic quantitative 4NT. This expert East was a pessimist and lucked out. I believe that most expert pairs would reach 6NT.
 - (7) And East has an easy pass with his minimal 1NT opener if East chooses 4NT.

And what happened? Our E-W pair at Table A lucked out for an average out as 4♥ made and two pairs bid the hopeless 6NT slam.

But why is 6NT a poor contract with a combined 34 points? It basically needs two out of 3 suits behaving to make – so it's probably against the odds.

34 pts will normally be enough for slam, but the problem here is that both hands are totally flat with no fit. If either hand had a 5 card suit then 6NT would be odds-on. It boils down to what I am continually saying, you cannot over-emphasise how poor the 4333 type shape is (in either NT or a suit contract). When you both have it, it's hopeless!

The bottom lines: -

- You need a 4 card major to bid 2♣ Stayman.
- Know/agree your responses to Blackwood and Gerber.
- Deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape.

Standard Responses to Gerber and Blackwood: -

If 4♣ asks for aces: -

- 4♦ = 0/4 aces
- 4♥ = 1 ace
- 4♠ = 2 aces
- 4NT = 3 aces

If 4NT asks for aces: -

- 5♣ = 0/4 aces
- 5♦ = 1 ace
- 5♥ = 2 aces
- 5♠ = 3 aces

Now there are the 'Roman' response whereby the first step is 0/3 but this only really makes sense if there are 5 'aces'. And it most certainly has to be agreed and is not commonly used over a 4♣ ask.

Discarding – Suit preference.

Lavinthal (aka McKenney)

It's time for a repeat of an article from news-sheet 99: - When you are defending and can not follow suit then you have to discard something. It is often best to convey information to your partner with this discard and there are various schemes. One of the best and most commonly used is Lavinthal, also known as McKenney. The most important point is that you DO NOT discard in a suit that you like, but discard from one of the other suits. There are two remaining suits and the size of your discard indicates which of these remaining two suits you like, a high/middle card indicates the higher ranking and a low card the lower ranking.

For example, you are discarding on ♥'s and would like partner to lead a ♦. Discard either a low club (so asks for the lowest ranking of ♠'s and ♦'s) or discard a high ♠ (so asks for the highest ranking of ♣'s and ♦'s). Note that you always have a choice of two suits to discard from and can usually make the signal clear. When you are defending it is important to take special note of partner's *first* discard – that will tell you which suit he likes.

I have witnessed countless occurrences of people throwing away a trick in defence (especially in NT contracts) by discarding in a suit to indicate that they like that suit – that system really sucks. Don't discard from a suit you like, play McKenney.

♠ A1063 Lavinthal Suit preference is also used in other situations. Suppose that you
 ♥ 74 are on lead defending a ♥ contract. You lead the ♦A and get an encouraging
 ♦ AK83 ♦9 from partner. So you continue with the ♦K and he plays the ♦2. So he
 ♣ 873 encouraged. Suppose that you know from the bidding that partner is probably
 ruffing the next ♦; which ♦ do you lead? The answer is the ♦8. This is Lavinthal
 and asks partner to lead back a ♠ (the ♦3 would ask for a ♣).

What's going on ...?

Board 15 from Friday 29th

Dealer: ♠ Q53
South ♥ KQJ984
N-S vul ♦ A3
♣ A2

♠ 8	N	♠ KJ106
♥ A107532	W E	♥ 6
♦ K87	S	♦ J64
♣ J94		♣ KQ1075
	♠ A9742	
	♥ -	
	♦ Q10952	
	♣ 863	

Table A

West	North(B)	East	South(E)
-	-	-	pass
2♥ (1)	pass (2)	pass	dbl (3)
all pass			

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass (1)	1♥	dbl	(4) pass
pass (4)	pass		

- Table A (1) This looks like a classic weak two opener to me. And, especially at favourable vulnerability, I'm sure that most people would open 2♥.
- (2) But unfortunately for West, North has a monster ♥ hand sitting over him! But how can North possibly penalise West? A double would be for take-out! So what did you bid with this North hand B in this week's quiz? I guess that you could bid 2NT, but if your partner has his wits about him then it's surely best to pass and hope that partner has the guts to double?
- (3) So what did you bid with this South hand E in this week's quiz? Actually I was South at Table A and I admit that it took me a little while to work it out! Where are the ♥'s? Where are the points? Why have neither North nor East bid? If you take the Spock (Star-Trek) approach there is only one logical conclusion. Partner has a big hand with a ♥ stack! Thus you should double here. It is, in principle, a take-out double but in this situation you 'know' that partner is going to pass.
- Table B (1) This West chose not to open, I guess they don't play weak twos?
- (4) An obvious take-out double.
- (5) And can you really blame West for passing here? This sort of hand is one of the very rare exceptions to the rule of never passing partner's one-level take out double. 1NT is the alternative.

And what happened? 1♥ doubled at Table B made +1 for a good score of 360 to N-S. But this was beaten by the N-S at Table A where 2♥ doubled went 3 down for 500. One N-S pair bid 4♠ but that looks like a dodgy contract to me. I guess that most West's opened 2♥, but no other N-S managed to manipulate the double.

The bottom lines: -

- When RHO bids your suit, pass is usually the best bid.
- In situations where a double by partner would have been for take-out, you can sometimes work out that he has passed because he has a penalty hand.
- This latter scenario occurs frequently if you play negative doubles.

Obey the Law

Board 6 from Friday 29th

Dealer: ♠ 6432
East ♥ A763
E-W vul ♦ A5
♣ 974

♠ AJ	N	♠ Q
♥ KJ842	W E	♥ Q109
♦ 10764	S	♦ KJ83
♣ Q6		♣ KJ1052

♠ K109875
♥ 5
♦ Q92
♣ A83

Table A

West	North	East(C)	South
-	-	1♣ (1)	1♠ (2)
2♥ (3)	2♠	3♥ (4)	3♠ (5)
4♥ (6)	dbl (7)	all pass	

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass (1)	2♠ (8)
all pass			

- Table A (1) So did you open this East hand C in this week's quiz? It's just 12 points and the singleton Q is not worth two points. Still, with a reasonable 5 card suit, two 10's and excellent intermediates I would open 1♣.
- (2) I would prefer a weak 2♠ here but North plays strong jump overcalls.
- (3) With a 5 card ♥ suit and a good card in partner's ♣'s, 2♥ is fine here.
- (4) But I don't really like this. This is a minimal opener with only 3 card support – I would like 4 card support to freely bid at the 3-level here, I would pass. Incidentally, there is a convention (the support double) to indicate just 3 card support in this situation but that's probably best left to more experienced players.
- (5) This is where the Law takes over. It's a competitive situation and South has only promised 5 ♠'s. With a 6 card suit the 'Law' says it's 'safe' to go one more.
- (6) But this is wrong! West has just the 5 ♥'s and 11 points that he has already promised and so should not go beyond the level of the Law.
- (7) Now North has 4 ♠'s (he has only promised 3) but this is where the 'adjustments' to the Law come into play. If North's points were mainly in ♠'s then he should press on, but with all of the points outside ♠'s the double here is good judgement at pairs scoring. 4♠ is reasonable at teams where you cannot afford the opponents to possibly make a vulnerable game.
- Table B (1) This East chose to pass.
- (8) And this looks like a classic weak 2♠ opener in any seat to me, although not everybody may agree?

And what happened? 4♥ doubled went one down (declarer got the ♦'s wrong) and the resultant 200 gave N-S the top. 2♠ passed out made for a good score. All the other N-S's got too high in 4♠ and all went down. The bottom lines: -

- Obey the Law.
- But if the opponents are too high, you can double them!
- Be aware of pairs scoring. One down doubled vulnerable is 200 and a top/bottom on a partscore hand. At teams scoring I would simply pass at (6) – you think it's probably one down but that's a poor double at teams (but correct at pairs).

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: 1♥. Don't leave partner floundering in a 4-1 or whatever fit if you can possibly muster up a bid.

Hand B: Pass. Double would be for take-out. 2NT is a possibility but surely it's best to pass and hope to get a penalty (hopefully doubled if partner has his thinking cap on and understands balancing). You know that partner has at most a singleton ♥ and on a good day he may make a take-out double in 4th seat or the bidding may progress in another way and you may then get a chance to make a penalty double.

Hand C: (a) I would open 1♣ but I guess that pass is reasonable.
(b) If partner responds 1♦ then I bid 2♦.
(c) If partner responds 1♥ then I bid 2♥.
(d) If partner responds 1♠ then I bid 1NT (one of the very few occasions where I bid 1NT with a singleton in partner's suit – I prefer it to the alternative of 2♣).
(e) If partner responds 1NT then I bid 2♣ - we have a ♣ fit (probably 5-4 but possibly just 5-3 – work it out, or look at the 'quickie' answer). This 2♣ bid most definitely does not promise a 6 card suit in this situation.

Hand D: (a) 1♠. One bids 5 card suits from the top down in most situations. If you respond 1♦ and then later bid ♠'s then that shows either 4♦'s and 4♠'s or longer ♦'s than ♠'s (and usually only 4♠'s).
I don't like a game forcing 2♠ jump shift response here as it implies a better suit and there's not so much room to show the 2nd ♦ suit.
(b) 3♦. Natural and forcing. 2♦ would be non-forcing and 4♦ is a splinter agreeing ♣'s and looking for a ♣ slam. 3♠ is not a good option as it's generally played as not forcing (but highly encouraging) and it leaves ♦'s out of the picture.

Hand E: (a) Partner probably has the lion's share.
(b) Partner probably has most of them.
(c) Because he has a mediocre hand with less than 3♥'s.
(d) Because he has a big hand with a ♥ stack but could not double because that would be for take-out.
(e) Double! Well done if you got this one right. Pass and 2♠ are somewhat less good alternatives – note my toned-down language, in former days I would state a stronger opinion about pass or 2♠.

'Quickie' answer: The sequence 1♣ - 1NT - 2♣ promises only 5♣'s. Partner has denied a 4 card major and must have at least 3♣'s and so there's a ♣ fit.
If your partnership style is to always respond 1♦ with 3343, 2344 or 3244 shape then there's a guaranteed 5-4 ♣ fit. Opener probably has a singleton in a major suit and so does not want to play in 1NT.

Let's hope that everybody is happy with this news-sheet?

Terry

6/5//05

Club News Sheet – No. 131

Mon 2/5/05	1 st Clive/Ken	64%	2 nd Chuck/Terry	55%
Wed 4/5/05	1 st Gerard/Derek	58%	2 nd Jim/Tomas	58%
Fri N-S	1 st Jim/Tomas	58%	2 nd Gerard/Derek	56%
Fri E-W	1 st Monte/Alan	58%	2 nd Mike/Phil	56%

Don't forget that there's an accompanying 'beginner's' news sheet – no. 131. This week it covers 1NT overcalls and hands that are too good for a 1NT overcall (so 19+).

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A Hand B With Hand A partner opens 1♠, (a) what do you bid?
(b) What would you do if RHO had doubled?

♠ 843	♠ K1042
♥ QJ53	♥ K9653
♦ Q10	♦ AQ
♣ Q542	♣ Q6

With Hand B you open 1♥ and partner responds 1♠.
What do you do?

Hand C Hand D With Hand C partner opens 1NT, what do you bid?

♠ 984	♠ 5
♥ A743	♥ K1087
♦ J76	♦ KJ109653
♣ AK4	♣ Q

What, if anything, do you open with Hand D?

Nice 'n Easy

Board 7 from Friday 6th

Dealer: ♠ Q865
South ♥ A107
Both vul ♦ 873
 ♣ K84

West	North	East	South (B)
-	-	-	1♥
pass	1♠	pass	2♠ (1)
all pass			

♠ 93	N	♠ AJ7
♥ Q42	W E	♥ J8
♦ K954	S	♦ J1062
♣ J1053		♣ A972
	♠ K1042	
	♥ K9653	
	♦ AQ	
	♣ Q6	

I noticed this auction on Friday. It's nothing special but a few pairs did overbid. What did you bid at (1) with this South hand B in this week's quiz? Partner has bid your 4 card suit and so the hand has improved, but it's still a poor 14 count (AQ doubleton is a bad holding) and 2♠ is quite sufficient.

And what happened? 2♠ made +1 but one N-S pair overbid to 4♠ (minus one).

The bottom line: -

With a minimal (12-14) hand, a simple raise of partner's 1♠ response is quite sufficient.

Raise partner if RHO doubles

Board 1 from Monday 2nd

Dealer: ♠ QJ765
North ♥ 96
Love all ♦ A83
♣ K97

West(A)	North	East	South
-	pass	1♠	dbl (1)
2♠ (2)	pass (3)	pass	dbl (4)
pass (4)	pass (5)		

♠ 843	N	♠ AK1092
♥ QJ53	W E	♥ K2
♦ Q10	S	♦ J954
♣ Q542		♣ 108
	♠ -	
	♥ A10874	
	♦ K762	
	♣ AJ63	

- (9) It's playable in all 3 suits and so double is reasonable, but with a 5 card major I would prefer a 2♥ overcall.
- (10) What did you do with this West hand A(a) in this week's quiz? Without the double I would choose 1NT rather than 2♠ because all the points are outside ♠'s and there may be a ♥ fit. But what did you bid in the actual situation with West hand A(b) after the double? Now you could pass with this miserable hand and a free bid of 1NT here should show a reasonable hand. After the double you know that RHO has ♥'s and with this poor West hand (all quacks) the deal may belong to the opposition, so I now prefer 2♠ rather than pass - make it difficult for the opposition - maybe they will get too high in a ♥ contract? Who knows - make life difficult for them.
- (11) And here we are - it's difficult for North! If West had passed then North would have an easy 1NT bid and that would keep South silent. But North has no option now other than to pass - double would be a poor bid and it's for take-out anyway.
- (12) E-W have come to a halt in the bidding and so South knows that North must have some values, so a 2nd double (also for take-out) is very reasonable.
- (13) And it's again difficult for North! Didn't that 2♠ bid at (2) cause him a headache! Anyway, he chose to pass and thus convert the double into penalties and it looks like the best option to me.

And what happened? The ♠ situation was marked by the bidding and East made the contract exactly. That was a top for E-W. The other results were mixed and I note that one N-S pair did bid 4♥ (and somehow make !). The bottom lines: -

- With a 5 card major, I prefer to overcall rather than double.
- If partner opens 1♥/♠ promising a 5 card suit then I personally will only support with 3 cards if I have an honour in the suit or have a weak suit elsewhere (else I choose 1NT).
- But when RHO doubles then things are different. There is no need to make a 'courtesy' bid of 1NT with around 6-7 points as partner gets another go if he has a good hand, so I prefer a 1NT response after an intervening double to be about 8 with a stop (re-double with more).
- And after a double I will always raise partner with any 3 card support and a weak hand (less than 9) - it may make life more difficult for the opposition.

The Michaels cue bid

Board 24 from Monday 2nd

When you bid the opponent's suit it is hardly ever natural. One common convention is that an immediate bid of two of opener's one level opening shows a weakish two-suited hand with about 6-11 points. 5-5 shape is ideal.

Dealer:	♠ 8753				
West	♥ K	West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ 98	pass	pass	pass (1)	1♠
	♣ J108754	2♠ (2)	pass	3♥ (3)	3♠
		pass	pass (4)	4♥ (5)	pass
♠ 964	N	♠ K	pass	4♠ (6)	5♥ (7) dbl
♥ QJ653	W E	♥ A10984	all pass		
♦ QJ1063	S	♦ 754			
♣ -		♣ K932			
	♠ AQJ102				
	♥ 72				
	♦ AK2				
	♣ AQ6				

- (1) In 3rd seat a 1♥ opening is a reasonable alternative to pass.
- (2) A Michaels cue bid. In this situation promising ♥'s and a minor.
- (3) East knows there is a ♥ fit, 4♥ is an alternative. I don't know for sure, but I suspect that East was being somewhat devious here (perfectly acceptable). He is pretty sure that South is going to bid again and is angling at being doubled later in 4♥?
- (4) With 4♠'s opposite a strong partner I would raise to 4♠.
- (5) Now East knows that N-S have missed 4♠, so why on earth would he want to bid on here? He's still hoping to be doubled in 4♥?
- (6) At last.
- (7) But East was not bothered, he knows that there is a double fit (a ♥ fit and a fit in one minor) and was quite happy to 'sacrifice' in 5♥. If it goes one down doubled then that's 100 away and better than them scoring 140 or 170 in a 3♠ contract if he had passed at (5). And who knows, if West is not minimum for his bid then 5♥ may even make.

And what happened? The defence slipped up and 5♥ actually made for a clear top. 4♠ was making at other tables and those pushed into 5♠ went down (but 5♠ looks like a make to me, with just the ♥A and one ♣ ruff to lose?).

The bottom lines: -

- Michaels cue bids (and the associated UNT) are excellent conventions if not abused – I really do like to be 5-5 in the two suits, especially if at the minimum point range.

The Unusual NT (UNT)

Board 21 from Monday 2nd

We've just seen that a Michael's cue bid is used with some weak two suited hand types. The other half of the convention is the UNT, which always shows the lowest two unbid suits. I have given many examples in the past of the convention being abused (when not 5-5) but there was a pretty good example on Monday.

Dealer:	♠ A63	<u>Table A</u>				
North	♥ KQJ7643	West	North	East	South	
N-S vul	♦ 87	-	1♥	2NT(1)	3♥ (2)	
	♣ 4	3NT(3)	4♥	dbl (4)	pass	
		6♣	dbl	all pass		
♠ KJ7	N	♠ 9	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ A10	W E	♥ 2	West	North	East	South
♦ J3	S	♦ AKQ1042	-	1♥	2NT(1)	pass (2)
♣ AKQJ82		♣ 107653	5♣ (5)	all pass		
	♠ Q108752					
	♥ 985					
	♦ 965					
	♣ 9					

Table A (1) The Unusual NT, 6-11 pts and 5-5 (at least) in the two lowest unbid suits (so the minors minors here). Some may consider this hand a bit too strong for the UNT. If you don't play the UNT (or think it's too good) then 1♦ followed by a ♣ bid is an excellent alternative.

(2) A bold bid by South.

(3) But this West knew what to do. He obviously had read somewhere that if 3NT is a reasonable option – then bid it. 4NT (ace ask) is an excellent alternative.

(4) Now when you have pre-empted (the UNT is a pre-empt) a subsequent double shows a good hand for the pre-empt (and hopefully a couple of quick tricks).

(5) That's all West needed to know, one ace is good enough for the slam.

Table B (2) This South decided to pass, fine.

(5) But for some reason this West was mesmerised. He knew partner was weak with both minors but found a pathetic 5♣ bid. 3NT would be reasonable but

all he really has to do is ask for aces with 4NT (4♣ would be to play and simply pre-emptive as partner has shown ♣'s) and then bid 6♣.

And what happened? 5♣ made +1 on the lead of the ♠ A and scored a cold bottom. One other pair languished in 5♣ but scored better when the ♠ A was not led and 13 tricks rolled in. 6♣ doubled scored the top with 6♦ and 3NT being bid at the other tables.

The bottom lines: -

- If you need just one ace for slam, then why not ask partner if he has it?

Now this really was a very poor show by the West at Table B, but luckily for me we don't usually mention names in the news sheets any more.

A Penalty double!

Board 10 from Friday 6th

This hand generated considerable discussion after the Friday session: -

Dealer:	♠ AQ92				
East	♥ 4	West	North	East (D)	South
Both vul	♦ 7	-	-	1♦ (1)	pass
	♣ AKJ9742	1♥	dbl (2)	2♥	2♠ (3)
		pass	3♣ (4)	3♦	dbl (5)
		pass	pass (6)	pass	
♠ 8743	N	♠ 5			
♥ Q952	W E	♥ K1087			
♦ AQ4	S	♦ KJ109653			
♣ 106		♣ Q			
	♠ KJ106				
	♥ AJ63				
	♦ 82				
	♣ 853				

- (1) Did you open with this East hand D? It's not usually a good idea to pre-empt (3♦ here) with a 4 card major and the 1♦ opening seems reasonable to me. Pass is the alternative.
- (2) Now I've mentioned this before; a double in this position (with a passed partner and both opponents unlimited) needs to be a strong/shapely hand, and this North hand qualifies. In principle it shows both black suits.
- (3) Since RHO has bid this is now a 'free bid' and shows values (about 6-9).
- (4) North intended this as forcing. Whether it is or not is not really relevant here but it certainly shows a very good hand with a good ♣ suit – and with two red singletons it's unlikely to be passed out. Whether it denies 4♠'s or not is another moot point which I won't go into. The hand is too good for 3♠, 4♣ is forcing as is a cue bid of 3♦/♥ but that may promise 1st round control.
- (5) But here's the point, what does this double mean?
What would you bid with this South hand at this stage?
First of all, let's discuss what double means. Partner has advertised a big hand, the opponents have not agreed this suit, you are sitting over the bidder – it is penalties!
Presumably this South did not think so, 82 is not normally considered a good enough trump holding for a penalty double.
So what should South bid? Even if double was not for penalties it would be pretty meaningless. Pass is obviously quite sensible – you're not quite sure what hand type partner has so let him bid. But I would bid 3♥ - a cue bid showing the ♥A – as you have support for both black suits this seems to be clearly the best bid to me.
- (6) I would pull partner's penalty double with this hand – but then some partners can sometimes get very touchy if you pull their 'penalty' double and so I do have some sympathy with North.

And what happened? E-W made 3♦ doubled exactly. N-S have a comfortable slam in either black suit; nobody found 6♠ but two pairs did bid to 6♣.

The bottom line. If you are not sure what a double means (or how partner will read it) then don't bid it – especially if you have other better alternatives.

A 10 is sometimes worth a lot !

Board 5 from Friday 6th

Dealer: ♠ AJ
North ♥ KJ92
N-S vul ♦ AQ84
♣ Q108

Table A

West	North	East	South (C)
-	1NT	pass	3NT (1)
all pass			

♠ K73	N	♠ Q8652
♥ Q1085	W E	♥ 6
♦ 103	S	♦ K952
♣ J652		♣ 973
	♠ 984	
	♥ A743	
	♦ J76	
	♣ AK4	

Table B

West	North	East	South (C)
-	1NT	pass	2♣ (1)
pass	2♥	pass	4♥ (2)
all pass			

Table A (1) What did you bid with this South hand C in this week's quiz? Now you all know me, never deny a 4 card major. I would bid 2♣, Stayman. And if partner responded 2♦ or 2♠ then bid 3NT.

Table B (1) This South knows about 4-4 fits.
(2) And once a 4-4 ♥ fit is uncovered then that is where you normally want to play, so bid 4♥. Now there is a convention (SID – Stayman in Doubt) whereby a bid of 3♦ here says that we have a 4-4 ♥ fit but are totally flat and asks partner to define his hand further. In particular he can bid 3NT if he too is 3433. It's a quite useful convention, especially with recent improvements (Advanced SID, or ASID), but hardly anybody has heard of it.

And what happened? 3NT makes exactly if declarer takes a deep ♥ finesse and does not try the ♦ finesse (1♠, 4♥'s, 1♦ and 3♣'s). But 4♥ is a far better contract and made 10 tricks. The 4-4 fit is still usually superior to NT even when trumps split 4-1!

But, unfortunately, there is a little white lie. South actually has the ♠ 10 and not the ♠ 8 and so there was a 2nd ♠ stop and 3NT also made 10 tricks. Presumably the two South's who majestically jumped to 3NT ignoring a possible ♥ fit fully realised what a powerful card the ♠ 10 was? The bottom line: -
- 10's are often worth more than zero points.

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: (a) 1NT or 2♠. Both are reasonable in my opinion, but with all of the points outside ♠'s I prefer 1NT. Unlike a 4-4 fit, a 5-3 fit does not always usually play better than NT (is that English? – but you know what I mean).
(b) 2♠. After the intervening double there is another option – pass. But I always like to make life difficult for the opposition and will raise ♠'s with any 3 small after a take-out double.

Hand B: 2♠. Quite sufficient, 3♠ would be an overbid. If game is on then partner will make a noise.

Hand C: 2♣, Stayman. Look for the 4-4 ♥ fit and bid 3NT only if there isn't one.

Hand D: 1♦ or pass. 3♦ is not recommended when you have a 4 card major.

13/5/05

Club News Sheet – No. 132

Mon N-S	1 st Bob/Dave	58%	2 nd Phil/Mike	53%
Mon E-W	1 st Chuck/Hans	65%	2 nd Jim/Tomas	57%
Wed N-S	1 st Jim/Tomas	55%	2 nd = Dave/Allan	55%
			2 nd = Chuck/Lewis	55%
Wed E-W	1 st Monte/Terry	63%	2 nd = Clive/Ken	56%
Fri 13/5/05	1 st Clive/Ken	65%	2 nd Jan/Tom	57%

Don't forget that there's an accompanying 'beginner's' news sheet – no. 132. This week it covers big hands when RHO opens.

Bidding Quiz**Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated**

Hand A	Hand B	
♠ Q	♠ 6	With Hand A partner opens 1♠. (a) What do you bid?
♥ 954	♥ Q10964	(b) Suppose you bid 1NT, what do you do if partner bids 2♣?
♦ AJ10863	♦ 10	With Hand B partner opens 2NT (20-21), (a) what do you bid?
♣ 108	♣ AKQ1072	(b) And what do you plan to bid next go?
Hand C	Hand D	
♠ KJ93	♠ A1052	With Hand C partner opens 1NT but the next hand overcalls 2♥. That's put a spanner in the works – your 2♣ Stayman bid has disappeared. So what do you do?
♥ K83	♥ AQ54	
♦ 7	♦ K5	With Hand D you open 1NT and partner bids 2♣, Stayman.
♣ Q10852	♣ Q102	You reply 2♥ and partner bids 3NT. What do you do?
Hand E	Hand F	
♠ Q93	♠ AQ854	With Hand E RHO opens 1♦, you pass and LHO bids 1♠. Partner overcalls 3♣ (weak) and RHO passes, what do you do?
♥ 10542	♥ K	
♦ 87	♦ AJ106	With Hand F you open 1♠ and partner responds 2♦, what do you bid? – assuming that 3♦ is not forcing.
♣ AQ32	♣ A87	
Hand G	Hand H	
♠ AJ108	♠ J943	(a) What do you open with Hand G? (b) Suppose you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♦, what is your rebid?
♥ A32	♥ Q2	
♦ K8	♦ A5432	With Hand H you open 1♦ and partner responds 1♥, what is your rebid?
♣ AQ76	♣ AJ	
Hand J	Hand K	
		With Hand J partner opens 1♠, what do you bid?
♠ K3	♠ J876	With Hand K partner opens 1NT. (a) what do you bid?
♥ AJ42	♥ K10	(b) Suppose that you bid 2♣, then what do you bid after partner responds 2♦?
♦ K952	♦ AQ1074	
♣ 1054	♣ K7	

Editorial.

I was asked a few months back (it was not my idea) if we could have a 'committee'. It failed at the very first hurdle and has been disbanded. Basically 'the committee' could come to no agreement; the resulting ill-feeling has caused me considerable expense and caused enormous problems in the running of the club; the individual who initially asked for it to be set up has resigned. I don't think that this sort of club can sensibly accommodate a committee (most members agree) and I am most certainly not going to be messed about like this again. So the Director's decision (mine) will generally be final and I'm in charge on Mondays and Fridays. Full stop. The vast majority of the club think that that's fine and that I do a difficult 'job' fairly well and fully back me.

The Wednesday club is very slightly different. Dave and I basically run it together, but as we totally agree on just about everything there has never been a problem there. The club's general policies (encouraging new players, always guaranteeing a game etc.) also apply to Wednesdays. If a Wednesday problem should occur then we can always have a vote amongst Wednesday regulars. There has been talk amongst some members of changing the format of the Wednesday club and I have written a separate sheet on that for those who are interested; I'm happy with the current format as, I believe, are the majority.

Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit

Board 21 from Wednesday 11th

Dealer:	♠ K6				
North	♥ J986	West	North	East(E)	South
N-S vul	♦ AK106432	-	1♦	pass	1♠
	♣ -	3♣ (1)	pass	5♣ (2)	5♦ (3)
		pass (4)	pass	pass (4)	
♠ 10	N	♠ Q93			
♥ AK7	W E	♥ 10542			
♦ Q9	S	♦ 87			
♣ K1098754		♣ AQ32			
	♠ AJ87542				
	♥ Q3				
	♦ J5				
	♣ J6				

- (1) This hand is a bit too good for a pre-empt, but fine opposite a passed partner.
- (2) What did you bid with this East hand E in this week's quiz? Partner has promised 7 ♣'s and the 'Law' says to compete to 5 ♣, so that's what I did.
- (3) And so South is in a spot.
- (4) And this E-W pair know better than to bid again having pre-empted (or raised partner's pre-empt). A further bid by East or West would be very poor.

And what happened? 5♦ was minus one for a joint top to E-W. At other tables I note that two N-S pairs were allowed to play peacefully in 4♠ and just one was pushed up into 5♠ (also -1). But the interesting result was one table where E-W bid on to 6♣ and lost 500 for a bottom. I don't know the bidding but presumably one of them broke the cardinal rule of not bidding again after pre-empting? The bottom lines: -

- Do not bid again having pre-empted (pre-empt to the limit first go).
- Do not bid again having raised partner's pre-empt (raise to the limit first go).

Nobody landed in the best contract with these E-W hands from Monday: -

Dealer:	♠ A4		<u>Table A</u>			
West	♥ QJ762		West	North	East(A)	South
N-S vul	♦ 54		1♠	pass	2♦ (1)	pass
	♣ J973		3♣ (2)	pass	3♦	pass
			3NT (3)	all pass		
♠ K8632	N	♠ Q	<u>'Expert' Table</u>			
♥ 103	W E	♥ 954	West	North	East(A)	South
♦ K9	S	♦ AJ10863	1♠	pass	1NT (1)	pass
♣ AKQ10		♣ 865	2♣ (4)	pass	2♦ (5)	pass
	♠ J10975		pass (6)	pass		
	♥ AK8					
	♦ Q72					
	♣ 42					

Table A (1) What did you bid with this East hand A(a) in this week's quiz? It's a mis-fit for partner but with 7 points and two tens it really is too good to pass (just one East passed on Monday). But then it's not good enough to bid a new suit (2♦) at the two level unless you play Acol. The solution is that you have to bid 1NT. Over a major suit opening this shows the expected 6-10 points but may be virtually any shape – just indicating not enough points to go to the two level.

(2) After a 2-level response from partner this is game forcing in Standard American.

(3) Now West was expecting more from partner, but even so you cannot simply bid 3NT without a stop in the unbid suit (opponents are obviously going to lead that suit). The answer is 4th suit forcing. A 3♥ bid from West here is the 4th suit and not natural – it would ask East to bid 3NT with a ♥ stop, otherwise bid something else. Of course in this actual situation E-W are way too high already.

'Expert' (1) So with the East hand A(a) we bid 1NT.

Table (4) With 5-4 distribution it's usually best to bid the 4 card suit here as long as it's not a reverse (i.e. it's lower ranking than the suit opened).

(5) And what did you bid with the East hand A(b) in this week's quiz? This is the point - in an auction like this when responder has a poor hand with a long suit, if he bid 1NT to start with then a new suit here shows a weak hand with a 6 card suit and opener is expected to pass.

(6) And opener is happy to have located a 6-2 fit. Note also that in situations where both partners have a long suit it's usually best to play in the suit of the weaker hand – East playing in ♦'s is the best spot as he has entries to West. Playing in ♠'s (or ♣'s or NT) there is only 1 entry to the East hand.

And what happened? 1♠ passed out was the only + score in the E-W column, every other E-W pair got too high and nobody found a ♦ contract.

The bottom line: - Generally in natural systems you bid your suit first and then show your points. This is a very important exception – a 1NT response to a 1♥/♠ opening followed by a new suit at the two level is weak.

Transfers really make life easy ...

Board 4 from Monday 9th

Dealer: ♠ J975
West ♥ 852
Both vul ♦ K84
♣ J84

Table A
West North East(B) South
2NT pass 4♥ (1) pass
pass (2) pass

♠ AQ10 N ♠ 6
♥ AKJ7 W E ♥ Q10964
♦ AQJ3 S ♦ 10
♣ 53 ♣ AKQ1072
♠ K8432
♥ 4
♦ 97652
♣ 96

'Expert' Table
West North East(B) South
2NT pass 3♦ (1) pass
4♥ (3) pass 4NT (4) pass
5♦ (5) pass 7♥ (6) all pass

Table A (1) I believe that this pair do not play transfers; thus 3♥ would be a weak bid and so East bid 4♥.

(2) Now West has a very good hand for ♥'s and did think for a while, but I totally agree with the pass (and the opening bid). You have said your hand (a balanced 20-22) and partner has bid game – so be it.

'Expert' (1) Our 'experts' play transfers of course.

Table (3) Now East's 3♦ transfer may be very weak, but West does not care; any 5♥'s opposite and West wants to play in 4♥ (and note that transfers enable the contract to be played by the stronger hand with the tenaces). So West super-accepts; there are various options as to what to bid for the super-accept but let's keep it simple here.

(4) Now that East knows that West has 4♥'s he is certainly in slam mode. Our 'experts' play RKCB (Roman Key-Card Blackwood) of course, the normal 0314 variety.

(5) (1 or) 4 keycards.

(6) Playing RKCB East now knows that partner has the 3 missing aces and also the ♥K, 7♥ must be lay-down. East even knows that if ♥'s are 4-0 with the ♥J missing it can always be picked up from either hand! What a lovely contract (7NT may fail with a bad ♣ break). Shame nobody at our club bid 7♥ - that certainly would have received a good write-up.

And what happened? 3 pairs settled for game and the other 3 pairs bid a small slam. So everybody missed 'the big boat'.

The bottom lines: -

- Play transfers, and also over 2NT.
- Play super-accepts, especially after a 2NT opening.
- Play RKCB – we have a booklet on RKCB.

When they overcall our 1NT opening...

Board 16 from Monday 9th

What do you do if you want to bid Stayman 2♣ but can't? :-

Dealer:	♠ AQ64	<u>Table A</u>			
West	♥ 107	West	North	East	South (C)
E-W vul	♦ AK52	pass	1NT	2♥	3NT (1)
	♣ K63	all pass			

♠ 872	N	♠ 105	<u>'Expert' Table</u>			
♥ 963	W E	♥ AQJ54	West	North	East	South
♦ QJ109	S	♦ 8643	pass	1NT	2♥	2NT (1)
♣ 974		♣ AJ	pass	3♣ (2)	pass	3♥ (3)
	♠ KJ93		pass	4♠ (4)	all pass	
	♥ K83					
	♦ 7					
	♣ Q10852					

Table A (1) So what did you bid with this South hand C in this week's quiz? There is no sensible answer unless you have some agreements. It's probably best to play that a cue bid of the overcalled suit (so 3♥ here) is (game forcing) Stayman.

But you also need to be able to show/ask about stops in the overcalled suit. But surely you can't do everything, can you? The answer is yes (just about)!

The only real solution is to play Lebensohl. It is perhaps a rather complex convention but well worth mastering, as far as I know only Chuck, Clive and myself play it at our club. I believe that this situation occurred 3 times on Monday. I wrote a few pages on Lebensohl and they are available if you want a copy. Anyway, let's see how our 'experts' handle the problem playing Lebensohl: -

- 'Expert' (1) A 'puppet' bid, opener **must** respond 3♣.
Table (2) Forced.
(3) Stayman, but since responder went via 2NT/3♣ (Lebensohl) this also shows a ♥ stop in addition to 4♠'s. (A direct 3♥ would still be Stayman but would deny a ♥ stop).
(4) And the correct contract is easily reached.

And what happened? 3NT was bid twice and went down on both occasions. The other four tables played in 4♠ by North (making 11 or 12 tricks) and so I guess there was no 2♥ overcall?

The bottom lines: -

- Sort out with partner how you can bid Stayman after interference. I recommend Lebensohl, there is a booklet around.

Don't miss that 4-4 fit – part 1

Board 13 from Wednesday 11th

Dealer: ♠ A1052
North ♥ AQ54
Both vul ♦ K5
♣ Q102

♠ KQ3	N	♠ 94
♥ 98762	W E	♥ J3
♦ 9	S	♦ J8632
♣ A963		♣ J854
	♠ J876	
	♥ K10	
	♦ AQ1074	
	♣ K7	

Table A

West	North(D)	East	South(K)
-	1NT	pass	2♣
pass	2♥ (1)	pass	3NT (2)
pass	pass (3)		

Table B

West	North(D)	East	South(K)
-	1NT	pass	2♣
pass	2♥	pass	3NT
pass	4♠ (3)	all pass	

- Table A (1) Always bid 2♥ in response to Stayman when holding both majors.
(2) What did you bid with this South hand K in this week's quiz? With no ♥ fit and game values, South correctly bid 3NT. There is no need to mention the ♠ suit as 2♣ promises a 4 card major.
(3) But this is wrong. Partner's 2♣ Stayman promised a 4-card major....
- Table B (3) ... and so North should correct to the known 4-4 ♠ fit.

And what happened? 4♠ was bid at 3 tables and they all scored 450 to share the top. The other three tables all played in 3NT and all scored less.

The bottom lines: -

- Look for the 4-4 fit.
- A Stayman bid always promises a 4 card major, so if it's not ♥'s then it must be ♠'s.

There are more advanced systems (such as 4-way transfers) when a 2♣ Stayman bid does not guarantee a 4 card major, but in my opinion the 2♣ bid should then be alerted. But hardly anyone plays 4-way transfers in our club.

Only one pair (Jim/Tomas) out of 5 tables found the correct contract on this deal from Friday: -

Dealer:	♠ K9			<u>Table A</u>				
West	♥ 1075			West	North	East(G)	South	
Both vul	♦ QJ9642			pass	pass	1NT(1)	pass	
	♣ 53			2♣	pass	2♠	pass	
				3♠	pass	4♠	all pass	
♠ Q543	N	♠ AJ108						
♥ K98	W E	♥ A32		<u>Table B</u>				
♦ 10753	S	♦ K8		West	North	East(G)	South	
♣ K4		♣ AQ76		pass	pass	1♣ (1)	pass	
	♠ 762			1♦ (2)	pass	2NT (3)	pass	
	♥ QJ64			3NT (4)	all pass			
	♦ A							
	♣ J10982							

Table A Now actually this is the bidding from the beginner's table, where they also reached the correct contract.

(1) East asked me if he could open 1NT. I said that it was probably a slight overbid but with these tenaces to protect it may well work out best.

And our beginners then easily reached the best contract with no further assistance from me.

Table B (1) What did you open with this East hand G(a) in this week's quiz? Most people would consider the hand too strong for a 1NT opening (so jump rebid in NT to show 18-19) and I am certainly not arguing.

(2) Now whether you bid ♦'s (so up the line) or ♠'s in this situation is partnership agreement. Up the line, so 1♦, is standard here. My personal preference is to play 'Walsh' (bypass a ♦ suit to bid a major with a weak hand) but as far as I know Clive is the only other member who has even heard of this.

(3) But now we come to the point. What did you bid with this East hand G(b) in this week's quiz? 2NT shows a balanced 18-19, but does it deny a 4 card major?

It's up to you, but I prefer to be able to bid 2NT in this situation.

(4) And here's the problem. This West thought that 2NT denied a 4 card major and the best contract of 4♠ was missed. What's the solution?

In my opinion 2NT does not deny a 4 card major. There are various ways of finding a major suit fit after the 2NT jump. You can play 3♣ as (Checkback)

Stayman; in some situations you can play new minor forcing; but I prefer to keep it simple – any bid after the 2NT jump is natural and game forcing. Isn't that simple!

And what happened? In the main competition only one pair found 4♠, scoring 650 (I don't know their bidding). 3NT was bid and made twice but scored just 600. The two other pairs failed to reach game.

The bottom lines: -

- The jump rebid to 2NT shows 18-19 points and does not deny a 4 card major.
- So you need to decide how to bid on to locate a possible major suit fit.

Don't miss that 4-4 fit – part 3

Board 6 from Friday 13th

And a couple of pairs somehow failed to locate the 4-4 fit on this board: -

Dealer: ♠ Q652
 East ♥ K74
 E-W vul ♦ QJ6
 ♣ 752

<u>Table A</u>				
West	North	East(H)	South	
-	-	1♦	pass	
1♥	pass	1♠ (1)	pass	
4♠	all pass			

♠ AK108	N	♠ J943
♥ J1083	W E	♥ Q2
♦ K9	S	♦ A5432
♣ K109		♣ AJ
	♠ 7	
	♥ A96	
	♦ 1087	
	♣ Q8643	

(1) What did you bid with this East hand H in this week's quiz? Unlike with the 2NT jump rebid of the previous deal, a 1NT rebid here (12-14) by East would be denying a 4 card major. 1♠ is the correct rebid – never deny a 4 card major.

Now the above auction seems automatic to me, and even if East elected to pass initially then 4♠ should also easily be reached after a 1NT opening by West (it's worth 1NT) and Stayman (pass - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♥ - 3NT - 4♠). And even if East passes initially and West just opens 1♣ then 4♠ should still be reached (possibly pass - 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♠ - 4♠). Quite how two pairs landed in the inferior 3NT is a mystery to me.

And what happened? 3NT was bid twice and made 600. 4♠ was bid twice and made 420 or 450. Note that 4♠ scored better even though there was a 4-1 trump split.

The bottom lines: -

- You've heard it all before numerous times and I want to save ink.

No rebid?

Board 7 from Wednesday 11th

Dealer: ♠ K3
South ♥ AJ42
Both vul ♦ K952
 ♣ 1054

♠ 1072	N	♠ J96
♥ Q73	W E	♥ 109865
♦ Q43	S	♦ 87
♣ J962		♣ KQ3
	♠ AQ854	
	♥ K	
	♦ AJ106	
	♣ A87	

West	North(J)	East	South (F)
-	-	-	1 ♠
pass	2♦ (1)	pass	3♦ (2)
pass	3NT (3)	pass	pass (4)
pass			

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand J in this week's quiz? 2♦ is the correct response with this hand. 2NT would show the points and balanced nature of the hand but it denies a 4 card ♥ suit. 2♥ would be incorrect because it shows a 5 card suit.
- (2) But what did you bid with this South hand F in this week's quiz? This South chose 3♦ but I have my doubts if that is forcing. It is certainly not forcing in Acol and I'm sure that many of our members would consider it as non forcing in their 'Standard American' style. Playing 2/1 it is forcing of course. Anyway, assuming that 3♦ is not forcing, what should South bid? See answers to the bidding quiz for my recommendation.
- (3) Anyway, North really has no option here but to bid 3NT and hope that there's a ♣ stop opposite or that ♣'s are not led.
- (4) As South has not yet shown his power he should make a move here.

And what happened? Two pairs bid the slam and three stopped in 3NT making 12 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- When you have a monster, don't make a weak (passable) bid.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 1NT. 6-10 points. You cannot bid 2♦ as that would promise 11+ points. Acol players can bid 2♦ here – that is one of the advantages of playing a weak NT.
(b) 2♦. This should be a 6 card suit and you expect partner to pass.
- Hand B: (a) 3♦, a transfer.
(b) If partner super-accepts then it's easy; 4NT (RKC) Blackwood and onto slam. But if partner simply bids 3♥ there is a slight problem. Is 4♣ a 2nd suit or Gerber? Is 4NT quantitative or Blackwood? Now I've been checking through my library and Sally Horton ("Responding to 2NT") explicitly states that 4NT is quantitative and that a 2nd suit is natural and a slam try. Looks like a problem to me, no ace ask available? I have written off to Bridge magazine to ask their opinion.
- Hand C: 3♥. 2♠ would be weakish (to play) and 3♠ is forcing but both should be a 5 card suit. You have to agree that a cue bid of 3♥ is Stayman. But how do you let partner know that you have a ♥ stop if there is no 4-4 ♠ fit? There is a solution if you are prepared to read up on Lebensohl.
- Hand D: 4♠. Partner's 2♣ bid promises a 4 card major. Since it's not ♥'s it must be ♠'s, so play in the 4-4 fit.
- Hand E: 5♣. Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit straight away *and do not bid again*.
- Hand F: 3♣. This is (in principle) natural and definitely game forcing. It's only a 3 card suit but it's the only possibility; with this monster you have to make a forcing bid (or bid game). When you rule out the impossible
3♦ or 2♠ are not forcing. 3♠ promises better ♠'s. You cannot bid NT or ♥'s with a singleton – so that only leaves ♣'s!
- Hand G: (a) 1♣ or 1NT. It a trifle too strong for 1NT but with these tenaces it may turn out to be the best opening and I certainly would not argue with 1NT on this occasion. But most will prefer to open 1♣ ...
(b) ... and rebid 2NT. This shows 18-19 points. I prefer this to a ♠ rebid. I play that the jump to 2NT does not deny a 4 card major and that a jump to 2♠ here would show a more shapely hand with 5 or 6 ♣'s.
- Hand H: 1♠. 1NT is incorrect as it denies 4 ♠'s.
- Hand J: 2♦. The hand has the values (11-12) for 2NT but that would deny a 4 card ♥ suit. You cannot bid 2♥ as that promises 5 card suit. So you bid your longest minor and if partner has 4 ♥'s he will bid them.
- Hand K: (a) 2♣. If you don't play 4-way transfers then bid 2♣ Stayman.
(b) 3NT (or 3♦). If you play that 3♦ is natural and forcing here (so showing 4 ♠'s and 5+ ♦'s) then you can bid that. But the simpler option is to just bid 3NT. That shows game values and 4 ♠'s.

			<u>Winners</u>		<u>Runners-up</u>		
Mon 16 th	N-S	1 st	Chuck/Lewis	64%	2 nd	Bob/Dave	62%
Mon	E-W	1 st	Clive/Ken	61%	2 nd	Gerry/Terry	55%
Wed 18 th	N-S	1 st	Chuck/Lewis	68%	2 nd	Bill/Emil	59%
Wed	E-W	1 st	Tom/Jan	65%	2 nd	Clive/Ken	58%
Fri 20 th	N-S	1 st	Bob/Dave	60%	2 nd	Chuck/Hans	59%
Fri	E-W	1 st	Derek/Gerard	64%	2 nd	Clive/Ken	59%

Don't forget that there's an accompanying 'beginner's' news sheet – no. 133. This week it covers what you do when partner makes a take-out double.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A Hand B

- ♠ 10 ♠ A10
- ♥ 9875 ♥ AJ5
- ♦ KJ10752 ♦ A92
- ♣ J8 ♣ AJ963

With Hand A you pass as dealer and partner opens 1 ♠ .
What, if anything, do you bid?

With Hand B you open 1 ♣ and partner responds 1 ♠ , what do you bid now?

Hand C Hand D

- ♠ AK54 ♠ K82
- ♥ 652 ♥ J43
- ♦ AQ86 ♦ A32
- ♣ A5 ♣ Q652

With Hand C you open 1NT and partner transfers with 2 ♦ .
You bid 2 ♥ and partner then bids 3NT, what do you do?

With Hand D partner opens 1 ♣ , what do you bid?

Hand E Hand F

- ♠ Q95 ♠ KJ72
- ♥ 2 ♥ 103
- ♦ J104 ♦ 1065
- ♣ A108754 ♣ AK65

With Hand E partner opens 1NT, what do you bid?

With Hand F everybody is vulnerable. Partner opens 1 ♦ and RHO overcalls 1 ♠ , what do you do?

Lead Quiz

Dealer:	♠ 10943	West	North	East	South
West	♥ J2	pass	1 ♠	pass	2 ♦ (1)
Both vul	♦ 974	pass	3NT	all pass	
	♣ KJ94				

You are East, what do you lead against 3NT by North?

Lead Problem - solution

Board 20 from Monday 16th

Dealer: ♠ AKJ62
 West ♥ A75
 Both vul ♦ K2
 ♣ A75

West	North	East	South
pass	1 ♠	pass	2 ♦ (1)
pass	3NT	all pass	

♠ Q75	N	♠ 10943
♥ K10864	W E	♥ J2
♦ Q105	S	♦ 974
♣ 102		♣ KJ94
	♠ 8	
	♥ Q93	
	♦ AJ863	
	♣ Q863	

The bidding is fairly straightforward but I would bid 1NT at (1) as the South hand is not good enough for a new suit at the two level. Anyway, 3NT was reached at the majority of tables on Monday, but what did you lead as East in this week's lead quiz?

The opponents have bid ♠'s and ♦'s and so either ♣'s or ♥'s are indicated. You may be lucky and find partner with a ♣ honour if you lead a ♣, but more than likely a ♣ lead from this holding will help declarer. You know from the bidding that partner has at least 4 ♥'s and quite likely 5, so lead that suit. I led the ♥J.

And didn't that work out well!

What happened? My partner was very happy (I always try to keep my partner happy). 3NT went three down on the ♥J lead but made overtricks at other tables.

The bottom lines: -

- If you don't want to lead your suit, then lead partner's.
- You can often make an educated guess about partner's suit by listening to the bidding.

With a weak responding hand

Board 13 from Monday 16th

We had the same heading on a very similar deal in last week's news-sheet, but one very experienced North went astray in a virtually identical situation on Monday (having just read the news-sheet?): -

Dealer: ♠ 10
North ♥ 9875
Both vul ♦ KJ10752
 ♣ J8

<u>Table A</u>			
West	North(A)	East	South
-	pass	pass	1 ♠
pass	2♦ (1)	pass	3♣ (2)
pass	pass (3)	pass	

♠ Q8764	N	♠ 95
♥ AKJ	W E	♥ Q1042
♦ 86	S	♦ A43
♣ 962		♣ A1075
	♠ AKJ32	
	♥ 63	
	♦ Q9	
	♣ KQ43	

<u>'Expert' Table</u>			
West	North(A)	East	South
-	pass	pass	1 ♠
pass	1NT (1)	pass	2♣
pass	2♦ (4)	all pass	

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this North hand A(a) in this week's quiz? It's a mis-fit for partner and passing 1 ♠ is certainly a very reasonable option. But there may well be a fit in a red suit and I certainly would not argue if you chose to bid – but only if you chose the right thing to bid! You cannot bid 2♦ as that promises 11 points – passed hand or not!
- (2) This 'high reverse' is, of course, absolutely game forcing....
- (3) and so North passed.
- 'Expert' Table (1) With 5 points and good intermediates I would bid 1NT with this North hand.
- Table It makes no difference if you play 1NT by a passed hand as forcing, semi-forcing, natural or whatever, it is the only possible bid here.
- (4) And isn't it wonderful how sensible bidding lands you in the best spot. It's just the same as last week, a 1NT response followed by a suit is a weak bid – to play.

And what happened. 3♣ went minus 3 for a very poor score.

The bottom line: - Generally in natural systems you bid your suit first and then show your points. This is a very important exception – a 1NT response to a 1♥/♠ opening followed by a new suit is weak, just the same as it was last week and will be next week.

The 2NT response = 11-12

Board 15 from Friday 16th

Dealer: ♠ Q765
South ♥ AK86
N-S vul ♦ J6
♣ K74

West	North	East	South(D)
-	-	-	pass
pass	1♣	pass	2NT (1)
all pass			

♠ AJ103	N	♠ 94
♥ Q5	W E	♥ 10972
♦ Q10985	S	♦ K74
♣ 83		♣ AJ109
	♠ K82	
	♥ J43	
	♦ A32	
	♣ Q652	

(1) What did you bid with this South hand D in this week's quiz? A 1NT response is 6-9 and 2NT is 11-12. 10 points is in the middle and it's usually best to be cautious and bid just 1NT unless it's an *exceptionally* good 10 points. And how good a 10 points is this South hand D? With its totally flat 3334 (so deduct a point) shape and lack of intermediates it's about as miserable as it gets. 2NT is a gross overbid with this hand.

And what happened? 2NT went one down. 1NT making by N-S would have been a complete top. But even 1NT should not make – that shows just how miserable this South hand is.

The bottom lines –

- The 2NT response is 11-12 points
- Knock a point off for the 4333 type shape.
- Devalue a hand with no intermediates.

'I would have doubled' ?

Board 8 from Friday 16th

Dealer: ♠ J864
West ♥ K84
Love all ♦ 65
♣ Q962

West	North	East (E)	South
1NT	pass	3NT (1)	all pass

♠ K107	N	♠ Q95
♥ QJ1063	W E	♥ 2
♦ AQ2	S	♦ J104
♣ KJ		♣ A108754
	♠ A32	
	♥ A975	
	♦ K9873	
	♣ 3	

(1) What did you bid with this East hand E in this week's quiz? Playing SAYC then 3♣ would show an invitational (to 3NT) hand with a good ♣ suit. We had not agreed that (and had also not agreed 4-way transfers) and I think that the East hand is worth a shot at 3NT anyway, so that's what I bid.

When dummy hit the table North commented that if he knew that I would raise to 3NT 'with only 7 points' then he would have doubled!

So obviously we have a difference of opinion about hand evaluation. This East hand has a good 6 card suit and excellent intermediates. Anyone who thinks that 'it is only 7 points' really needs to read up on hand evaluation.

And what happened? Even with the ♣Q not dropping my partner had no problem making 9 tricks. Two other tables bid and made 3NT for the shared top.

The bottom lines.

- Upgrade a hand with a 6 card suit, especially if partner has opened 1NT (and so promises at least two cards in the suit).
- Upgrade a hand with good intermediates.

And as a special note for those of you who are unfamiliar with my preachings, note the difference between this East hand E and the South hand D of the previous hand. This East hand is worth two extra points, the previous South hand should deduct two points. High card point are not the whole story, shape and intermediates are very important.

5-3 fit or NT?

Board 15 from Wednesday 18th

I was asked in one of my classes when to go for the 5-3 fit and when to play in NT (Say 4♥ or 3NT). The answer often depends upon the shape and point distribution in the hand with just 3 'trumps'. Here's an example from Wednesday: -

Dealer:	♠ J2		<u>Table A</u>			
South	♥ AJ8		West	North	East(C)	South
N-S vul	♦ J107		-	-	-	pass
	♣ J10642		pass	pass	1NT	pass
			2♦	pass	2♥	pass
♠ 876	N	♠ AK54	3NT	pass	pass (1)	pass
♥ KQ973	W E	♥ 652				
♦ K2	S	♦ AQ86	<u>Table B</u>			
♣ Q73		♣ A5	West	North	East	South
	♠ Q1093		-	-	-	pass
	♥ 104		pass	pass	1NT	pass
	♦ 9543		2♦	pass	2♥	pass
	♣ K98		3NT	pass	4♥ (1)	all pass

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this East hand C in this week's quiz? With 4♥'s it's easy – bid 4♥. With just 2♥'s it's also easy – pass 3NT. But with 3 trumps you have to decide which contract is going to play best, and it's not always 4 of the major. The 5-3 fit may sometimes play better in 3NT and the guidelines I use are (a) if I have 3 decent trumps, Qxx or better, then I will bid 4 of the major.
 (b) if I have a doubleton then I will normally bid 4 of the major (you will often get a ruff in the short hand.
 (c) with 3 weak trumps and no doubleton (so 3433 if it's ♥'s) then I pass 3NT.
- Table B (1) So with this East hand C I would bid 4♥ because of the doubleton ♣.

And what happened? I'm pleased to say that 5 out of the 6 tables found the superior 4♥ contract.

A penalty 'double' at the one level ?

Board 7 from Friday 16th

Dealer: ♠ AQ1054
South ♥ KQJ8
Both vul ♦ 7
♣ 872

♠ 63	N	♠ KJ72
♥ A754	W E	♥ 103
♦ AJ932	S	♦ 1065
♣ Q10		♣ AK65

♠ 98
♥ 962
♦ KQ84
♣ J943

West	North	East(F)	South
-	-	-	pass
1♦	1♠ (1)	pass (2)	pass
dbl (3)	pass	pass (4)	

- (1) It's debatable whether North should overcall 1♠ or double. I certainly will not argue with the 1♠ overcall, and double would have met a similar fate anyway (East would re-double)
- (2) But what did you do with this East hand F in this week's quiz? You have the values (and ♠ stops) for 2NT but there is no guarantee that you have game (indeed, partner is minimum and would pass 2NT). In these situations when I know that we have the majority of the points, have good trumps sitting over the overcaller and they are vulnerable I usually go for the penalty. So I would double if playing penalty doubles here; but my partner on this occasion plays negative doubles (a far better system) and so I passed...
- (3) ... awaiting his 'automatic' re-opening double...
- (4) ... which I then passed for penalties.

And what happened? 2♠ went -2 and the resultant 500 gave E-W a 2nd top. This was only beaten by Derek/Gerard who will have to tell me sometime how they bid to 3NT with these E-W cards (and made +2!). Other results were mixed but I note that one N-S pair got away with 2♠ (going 3 down but undoubled). Obviously that East does not have my blood lust.

The bottom lines: -

- Sometimes you can get a profitable penalty even at the one level (especially if the opponents are vulnerable).
- And you don't necessarily need 5 trumps.
- I will only play negative doubles with a partner who virtually always re-opens with a double.
- And remember that if you play negative doubles then you have to pass with a penalty hand.

A Jump rebid shows a good long suit

Board 17 from Monday 16th

Dealer: ♠ QJ653
North ♥ Q42
Love all ♦ Q104
♣ Q4

West	North	East	South(B)
-	pass	pass	1♣
pass	1♠	pass	3♣ (1)
pass	3NT	all pass	

♠ K982	N	♠ 74
♥ 10973	W E	♥ K86
♦ 63	S	♦ KJ875
♣ K87		♣ 1052
	♠ A10	
	♥ AJ5	
	♦ A92	
	♣ AJ963	

(1) What did you rebid with this South hand B in this week's quiz? I don't like 3♣. To start with I would like a longer and better suit. Also the hand is a bit too good for an invitational 3♣. 2NT is 18-19 here and seems to fit the bill perfectly.

And what happened? 3NT went one down on a ♦ lead. At most tables South was declarer in 3NT and so escaped the ♦ lead and made or made +1 or even +2 (I guess that West failed to find a ♦ switch when he got in with his first black king?).

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1NT. It's a point shy but the decent 6 card suit and good intermediates make it worth a bid. You cannot bid 2♦ as that promises 11 points; being a passed hand is totally irrelevant.
- Hand B: 2NT. 18-19. 3♣ is incorrect because it does not show such a powerful hand and indicates longer and better ♣'s.
- Hand C: 4♥. With 3 trumps you have to decide whether 3NT or 4♥ will play better. With a doubleton I will generally go for the 5-3 fit.
- Hand D: 1NT. This hand is nowhere near worth 2NT (deduct a point for the 4333 type shape and the lack of intermediated make it a miserable hand). And note that 1NT is a better bid than 2♣ as partner may have only 3 ♣'s.
- Hand E: 3NT. It's only '7' points, but with the good 6 card suit and good intermediates I would (did) upgrade the hand enough to bid 3NT. If you play 3♣ as a decent hand with a ♣ suit (invitational to 3NT) then that's a rather less aggressive but acceptable alternative (and better than 2NT which is also an option).
- Hand F: Pass (or double if you play that as penalties). I play negative doubles and expect partner to re-open with a double which I will pass. Obviously 2NT is a reasonable alternative but I think that 'effectively doubling' will usually work out best with this hand type if the opponents are vulnerable. 3NT is an optimistic alternative.

Lead Quiz: Lead the ♥J, partner probably has that suit and leading away from these ♣'s may give a trick away.

Club News Sheet – No. 134

Winners

Runners-up

Mon	23 rd	N-S	1 st Chuck/Lewis	56%	2 nd Tomas/Phil	55%
Mon		E-W	1 st Derek/Gerard	69%	2 nd Clive/Ken	53%
Wed	25 th		1 st Bill/Emil	61%	2 nd Jo/Kenneth	61%
Fri	27 th		1 st Chuck/Walter	73%	2 nd Clive/Ken	55%

Don't forget that there's an accompanying 'beginner's' news sheet – no. 134. This week it covers what you do after partner has responded to your take-out double. It will be the last in the series as I have now obtained a teacher's manual for Standard American.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	(a) Would you open Hand A in 1 st or 2 nd seat? (b) Would you open Hand A in 3 rd seat?
♠ KQJ7 ♥ K8762 ♦ 43 ♣ J6	♠ 864 ♥ AJ5 ♦ AK7 ♣ 10954	(a) Would you open Hand B in 1 st or 2 nd seat? (b) Would you open Hand B in 3 rd seat?
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C partner opens 1♣ and RHO overcalls 1♥. What do you bid?
♠ A86 ♥ Q108 ♦ A82 ♣ J962	♠ A753 ♥ AKJ8 ♦ 2 ♣ KQ93	With Hand D you open 1♣, partner bids 1♦, you bid 1♥ and partner bids 1NT. What do you do?
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E you open 1♣, LHO overcalls 1♥ and partner bids 1NT. What do you do?
♠ KJ ♥ K74 ♦ Q943 ♣ KQ53	♠ AK74 ♥ K93 ♦ 1087 ♣ 1082	With Hand F partner opens 1♦ and you respond 1♠. Partner then bid 2♥ (a reverse, showing around 16-18 points), what do you bid?
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 2♠, what do you do? (if you have an asking method such as 2NT Ogust you find out that partner is max with poor ♠'s).
♠ Q ♥ 10642 ♦ AK109 ♣ AK42	♠ 109 ♥ K98 ♦ AK85 ♣ Q932	(a) What do you open with Hand H? (b) Suppose that you choose 1♦, partner bids 1♥ and RHO overcalls 1♠. What now?
Hand J	Hand K	(a) What do you open with Hand J? (b) Suppose that you open 1♦, the what is your rebid when partner bids 1♠?
♠ Q3 ♥ AQ42 ♦ A9542 ♣ A4	♠ AJ10 ♥ K984 ♦ Q542 ♣ 86	With Hand K partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 1♠, what do you bid?

What does the double mean?

	West North	East	South
1 ♠	2 ♥	pass	pass
dbl (1)	3 ♥	pass	pass
dbl (2)			

I was asked what these two doubles (in particular the 2nd one) meant. So what do you think? There is a (very slight) difference if you play negative doubles and I give the answers for both styles in the solutions.

Passed out

Board 11 from Monday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ 864
 South ♥ AJ5
 Love all ♦ AK7
 ♣ 10954

West	North(A)	East	South(B)
-	-	-	pass (1)
pass	pass (2)	pass	

♠ 92	N	♠ A1053
♥ Q94	W E	♥ 103
♦ J865	S	♦ Q1092
♣ KQ73		♣ A82
	♠ KQJ7	
	♥ K8762	
	♦ 43	
	♣ J6	

(1) Did you open with this South hand A(a) in this week's quiz? It's one short of the rule of 20 but the points are in the long suits. If the ♠'s and the ♥'s were reversed then I would open 1 ♠ as it's then an easy 2 ♥ rebid. This shape (4-5 in the majors) is sometimes a problem and that's why the Flannery 2 ♦ was invented. But that is rather a waste of the 2 ♦ bid in my view. Anyway, pass is fine; 1 ♥ is acceptable I suppose but there is no good rebid in some situations, especially if you play 2/1 and partner bids a forcing NT.

But in answer to question A(b) in the quiz, I would open 1 ♥ in 3rd seat.

(2) And what did you do with this North hand B in this week's quiz? It's a very miserable 12 count and I would definitely pass in 1st, 2nd or 4th seat. But 3rd seat is different and anything goes; so I would open 1 ♣.

And what happened? The hand was passed out twice. 2 ♥ + 2 for N-S was the top spot on the four occasions when the hand was opened by somebody.

The bottom lines –

- Knock a point off for the 4333 type shape.
- You can open light in 3rd seat.

Raising partner's 1NT response to 2NT – part 1

Board 5 from Wednesday 25th

Dealer: ♠ 10964

North ♥ Q75

N-S vul ♦ 984

♣ AJ4

♠ QJ2

N

♥ 10

W E

♦ KQJ106

S

♣ 7652

♠ K8

♥ 96432

♦ A753

♣ 108

♠ A753

♥ AKJ8

♦ 2

♣ KQ93

West

North

East(D)

South

-

pass

1♣

pass

1♦

pass

1♥

pass

1NT (1)

pass

2NT (2)

pass

pass (3)

pass

(1) 1NT here is exactly the same as if it were bid one round earlier, i.e. 6-9 points.

This is a great♦ suit and so it's top of the range but probably not quite worth 2NT.

(2) But what did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? Now partner's 1NT bid is 6-9(10) and you need a decent hand to raise to 2NT as partner may be as weak as 6 points. The norm is a good 16 to a poor 18. This East hand clearly fits the bill exactly and 2NT is correct.

(3) But this is terrible. This West hand is super max for it's 1NT bid at (1) and should obviously raise to 3NT here.

And what happened? 3NT was bid at every other table and made 10 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- If you open and partner bids 1NT (either directly or at his 2nd turn) then that shows 6-9 (poor 10) points.
- And you need a good hand (16-18) to raise to 2NT. With more, bid 3NT.
- Note that this scenario does not come up that often playing standard American as many suitable hands would have opened 1NT to start with.
- But it's much more common if you play Acol.

Raising partner's 1NT response to 2NT – part 2

Board 10 from Wednesday 25th

Dealer: ♠ Q9743
East ♥ 9
Both vul ♦ KJ1076
♣ 107

West(C)	North	East(E)	South
-	-	1♣	1♥ (1)
1NT (2)	pass	2NT (3)	pass
3NT (4)	all pass		

♠ A86	N	♠ KJ
♥ Q108	W E	♥ K74
♦ A82	S	♦ Q943
♣ J962		♣ KQ53
	♠ 1052	
	♥ AJ6532	
	♦ 5	
	♣ A84	

- (1) A weak jump overall of 2♥ is an alternative.
- (2) What did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? A 1NT response is 6-9 and a 2NT response is 11-12. As I said just last week, you have to decide what to do with 10 and it has to be a very good 10 to bid 2NT. So what's this West hand C worth? It's 11 face value but knock off a point for the 3334 shape and so it's 10. But then you have to consider other factors; the hand has excellent intermediates and two aces: + factors. But the deciding factor for me is the ♥ 10. The ♥ holding of Q108 has improved when RHO bids ♥'s and so I would evaluate the hand at a very good 10 to 11 points and bid 2NT.
- (3) And what did you bid with this East hand E in this week's quiz? As I said for the last deal, a raise of partner's 1NT response should be a good 16 - poor 18; this hand is nowhere near and should pass 1NT.
- (4) But I guess that if one partner underbids and one overbids then they cancel each other out and arrive at a decent contract?

And what happened? The cards sat well for E-W; 3NT was bid and made (or made +1) at most tables.

A Reverse shows a strong hand

Board 23 from Friday 27th

A reverse shows a strong hand and is usually played as forcing. There are a few definitions of a reverse (but they amount to the same thing) – the one that my students seem to like is that if you bid a suit that partner has denied (i.e. by-passed) then it's a reverse.

A reverse by responder should always be considered as game forcing. A reverse by opener is game forcing if partner has responded at two level but if partner's response was at the one level and his rebid after opener's reverse is a simple bid of his own suit or partner's first bid suit or 2NT then this shows a minimal hand and opener may pass. There was an example of this going wrong on Friday.

Dealer:	♠ J109				
South	♥ 106	West(F)	North	East(J)	South
Both vul	♦ KJ3	-	-	-	pass
	♣ Q9763	pass	pass	1♦ (1)	pass
		1♠	pass	2♥ (2)	pass
♠ AK74	N	3♦ (3)	pass	pass (4)	pass
♥ K93	W E				
♦ 1087	S				
♣ 1082					
	♠ 9652				
	♥ J875				
	♦ Q6				
	♣ KJ5				
	♠ Q3				
	♥ AQ42				
	♦ A9542				
	♣ A4				

- (1) I prefer this 1♦ opening to a somewhat off-beat 1NT.
- (2) What did you bid with this East hand J(b) in this week's quiz? 2♥ is correct. It is a reverse, and promises around 16-18 points and is forcing in Standard American.
- (3) What did you bid with this West hand F in this week's quiz? East's reverse here does not promise another bid as West may have only 6 points. With far more than a minimum West must make a noise (2♠, 2NT or 3♦ are minimal bids and are not noises). West said that he did not bid 3NT because he had no ♣ stop. Quite so, so the correct bid here is 3♣ - the 4th suit and asking partner to bid 3NT with a ♣ stop.
- (4) The East hand is absolutely minimal for the reverse and pass here is certainly correct.

And what happened? 3♦ made 11 tricks. Just one pair bid 3NT (making) and other results were a mixed bunch of partscores. I note that 2♥ made 10 tricks and 1NT made 11 tricks. 3NT is not that good a contact of course, but will often make at our club.

The bottom lines: -

- A reverse by opener opposite a 1-level response is around 16-18 points.
- If responder then has enough for game, then he should say so (no minimal limit bid of 2NT or a simple raise of his own suit or partner's first bid suit).

Raise to 4♥/♠ with a singleton?

Board 17 from Friday 27th

I often have to repeat myself in the news-sheets as some people continue to make the same mistakes. So here we go again – if partner pre-empts in a major and you have sufficient values for a shot at game, do not bid 3NT with a singleton in partner's suit – you will have problems getting to his hand!

Dealer: ♠ 764
West ♥ AJ983
Both vul ♦ 5
♣ 9653

Table A

West	North	East(G)	South
2♠	pass	3NT (1)	all pass

♠ KJ9852	N	♠ Q
♥ Q	W E	♥ 10642
♦ J84	S	♦ AK109
♣ QJ8		♣ AK42
	♠ A103	
	♥ K75	
	♦ Q7632	
	♣ 107	

'Expert' table

West	North	East(G)	South
2♠	pass	2NT (1)	all pass
3♥ (2)	pass	4♠ (3)	all pass

Table A: (1) So what did you bid with this East hand G in this week's quiz? I would not bid 3NT as there may well be entry difficulties in setting up partner's ♠'s. I prefer 4♠, but the best solution is probably that of our 'experts'.

'Expert' (1) The East hand is probably not quite good enough to go to game opposite a table: minimal weak two and the answer is to play the Ogust convention. 2NT asks how good West's pre-empt was
(2) and the 3♥ reply says top-of-the range but with poorish ♠'s
(3) top of the range is good enough for East and he chooses the best game.

And what happened? 2♠ was passed out once and scored average. 3NT was bid 3 times and went down twice. Only one pair (Tom/Tomas) found the top spot and made 4♠+1.

The bottom lines: -

- When partner pre-empts in a major suit, it is usually unwise to bid 3NT with a singleton in his suit, prefer 4 of the major.

Ogust

The Ogust convention is an artificial bid of 2NT after partner's weak two opening; it asks how good partner's hand is. The responses are in logical steps: -

3♣ = lower point range, weak suit
3♦ = lower point range, good suit
3♥ = upper point range, poor suit
3♠ = upper point range, good suit
3NT = AKQxxx

Does partner have 3 or 4 card support?

Board 13 from Friday 27th

In competitive situations it is often essential to know how many trumps partner has (especially if you are a follower of 'the LAW'); an ideal example occurred on Friday: -

Dealer: ♠ KJ863
North ♥ 53
Both vul ♦ 72
♣ AK75

♠ AQ N ♠ 109
♥ 107642 W E ♥ K98
♦ J1063 S ♦ AK85
♣ 108 ♣ Q932
♠ 7542
♥ AQJ
♦ Q94
♣ J64

Table A

West	North	East(H)	South
-	pass	1♦ (1)	pass
1♥	1♠	2♣ (2)	2♠
3♦ (3)	pass	3♥ (4)	all pass

Table B

West	North	East(H)	South
-	pass	1♦ (1)	pass
1♥	1♠	2♥ (2)	2♠
? (3)			

'Expert' Table

West	North	East()	South
-	pass	1♣ (1)	pass
1♥	1♠	dbl (2)	2♠
pass (3)	pass	pass	

Table A: (1) So what did you open with this East hand H(a) in this week's quiz? I would always open 1♣ with equal length but 1♦ is not 'wrong' and is what some authors recommend for some reason that I have not yet fathomed out.

(2) But what did you bid with the east hand H(b)? I don't like 2♣ as that promises a 5+ card ♦ suit. With these decent ♥'s I would bid 2♥ (but see the 'expert' table for the very best solution).

(3) And here we see the problem. West assumes that it's a 5-4 ♦ fit and correctly competes to the 3 level.

(4) And East tries to rectify his 'lie' by converting to ♥'s.

Table B: (1) This East also chose 1♦ but that is not really the point here...

(2) .. the point is to support ♥'s at the 2nd turn.

(3) But unfortunately West is now in a predicament. If he is sure that East has supported with 4 card support then 3♥ is correct (the Law) but if it's only a 5-3 ♥ fit then he should defend 2♠.

'Expert' table: (1) Our experts open 1♣ of course

(2) But here's where a conventional bid comes in handy. 'Obviously' East should support ♥'s; but, as we saw at (3) at Table B, West may need to know if partner has 3 or 4 card support. Our experts play 'Support Doubles' and a double in this situation promises exactly 3 ♥'s.

(3) And so West knows to pass.

And what happened? 3♥ was bid at two tables and both went 2 down for 200 away and a joint bottom for E-W when ♠ contracts made just 140 or 170 the other way.

The Support Double

When playing Support doubles; then if you open, partner responds and the next hand overcalls then:
 A raise of partner's suit promises 4 card support.
 A double promises exactly 3 card support.

Note that Support Doubles are not standard – they have to be agreed and also alerted. I prefer to play them only when partner has responded in a major. As far as I know Chuck is the only club regular who plays them.

The negative double

Board 17 from Friday 27th

If RHO overcall partner's 1♣/♦ opening with 1♠ then it may be difficult to locate a possible ♥ fit; an ideal example occurred on Friday: -

Dealer: ♠ K8652
 North ♥ 2
 Both vul ♦ 106
 ♣ KQ1093

♠ Q7	N	♠ AJ10
♥ AJ75	W E	♥ K984
♦ KJ873	S	♦ Q542
♣ 54		♣ 86
	♠ 943	
	♥ Q1063	
	♦ A9	
	♣ AJ72	

Table A

West	North	East(K)	South
-	pass	pass	pass (1)
1♦(2)	1♠	1NT(3)	2♠
pass	pass	3♦(4)	all pass

Table B

West	North	East(K)	South
-	pass	pass	pass
1♦	1♠	dbl(3)	2♠
3♥(5)	all pass		

- Table A (1) I would be tempted to open this hand in 3rd seat.
 (2) And I would be equally tempted to pass this hand in 4th seat (where are the ♠'s?). But then there would be no story, so West opens 1♦.
 (3) What did you bid with this East hand K in this week's quiz. Now 1NT would be fine except that you have a 4 card ♥ suit. In traditional methods that's just tough; but these days there's a way to cope with this (see Table B).
 (4) East knows that there is some sort of ♦ fit and so reasonably bid 3♦.
- Table B (3) But this E-W pair play negative doubles. Double here simply says that East would have bid 1♥ without the overcall. It promises 4 ♥'s and no more than responding values (so 6+ pts).
 (5) West now knows of the 4-4 ♥ fit and reasonably bids 3♥.

And what happened? 3♦ made +1 but 3♥ also made +1 for a better score.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) Pass. 1♥ is also just about reasonable.
(b) 1♥. A clear 3rd seat opener.
- Hand B: (a) Pass. This is a very miserable hand (deduct a point for the 4333 type shape) and is nowhere near an opener in 1st, 2nd or 4th seat.
(b) But 3rd seat is different and you should open 1♣.
- Hand C: 2NT. (good 10)/11-12 points. You should knock off a point for the 3334 shape but the good intermediates and Q108 sitting over the overcaller are sufficient compensation and it's worth 2NT.
- Hand D: 2NT. This shows a hand with a good 16 – poor 18 points.
- Hand E: Pass. You need a good 16+ to raise to 2NT as we mentioned with Hand D.
- Hand F: 3♣, 4th suit forcing. First of all, partner has about 16-18 points and has limited his hand, you are now in charge (the captain) and if you make a minimal bid (2♠, 2NT or 3♦) then partner will pass with a mere 16 points. So you have to 'make a noise'. You cannot bid 3♠ with just a 4 card suit and 4♦ goes past 3NT. 3♥ would not be that good as it's a known 4-3 fit and you have no ruffing values. 3NT is out because you have no ♣ stop. So it's unbidable?
Fortunately not if you play 4th suit forcing. This is where 4th suit forcing comes to the rescue – it's the only alternative here. So bid 3♣ and await developments.
- Hand G: 4♠. With this type of hand (a singleton in partner's long suit) it's best to play in partner's major suit rather than 3NT when he's pre-empted as entries may be short.
- Hand H: (a) 1♣. I prefer 1♣ but many experts recommend 1♦ (I can't understand why) so I won't argue with 1♦.
(b) 2♥. Now the point of opening 1♦ is (I think) that you can rebid 2♣, but that promises 5♦'s. Anyway, whatever I had opened I will support partner here with this decent 3-carder and a doubleton ♠. If you play Support Doubles then you double here to show 3 card support.
- Hand J: (a) 1♦. I will occasionally open 1NT with 2245 and decent doubletons, but usually only with the suits precisely in that order (4♦'s and 5♣'s) as then there is no easy rebid unless it's good enough for a reverse.
(b) 2♥. This is a reverse and you need about 16-18 points for the bid. 2♥ is certainly correct here but it's minimal for the bid.
- Hand K: Double, a negative double promising 4♥'s. If you do not play negative doubles then you should bid 1NT and a possible ♥ fit may be lost.

What does the double mean? - answers

If you play negative doubles then:

- (1) is semi-automatic and simply means that you have an opening hand without exceptional distribution and can stand defending 2♥ doubled if partner has a ♥ stack.
- (2) is for take-out. Obviously North has a good hand with ♥'s and West has a good hand without ♥'s.

If you don't play negative doubles then:

- (1) is for take-out, West has a good hand without ♥'s.
- (2) is again for take-out. Obviously North has a good hand with ♥'s and West has a very good hand without ♥'s.

Fri 3/6/05

Club News Sheet – No. 135

Mon 30 th	N-S	1 st	Jo/Kenneth	61%	2 nd	Bill/Emil	60%
Mon	E-W	1 st	Derek/Gerard	59%	2 nd	Hans/Ian	55%
Wed 1 st		1 st	Derek/Gerard	61%	2 nd	Hans/Ian	59%
Fri 3 rd		1 st	= Jim/Richard (US)	56%	1 st	= Jo/Ian	56%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A you open 1♣ and LHO overcalls 1♦ and partner bids 1♥. (a) What do you bid? (b) Suppose you choose 1♠ and partner bids 2♥, what now?
♠ A964 ♥ K ♦ J62 ♣ AKJ76	♠ A107 ♥ A9 ♦ AJ95 ♣ KJ53	With Hand B you open 1NT and partner bids 2♣. You respond 2♦ which LHO overcalls with 2♥. Partner now bids 2NT, what do you do now?
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C you open 1♦ and partner responds 1♠, what do you bid? With Hand D partner opens 2♦, what do you do?
♠ J ♥ AJ ♦ A10954 ♣ AQJ97	♠ K7432 ♥ 764 ♦ Q32 ♣ 64	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E you are in 3 rd seat at favourable vulnerability, what do you do? (a) What do you open as dealer with Hand F? (b) Suppose you pass and partner opens 2♥. RHO doubles this, what do you do now?
♠ 104 ♥ Q108632 ♦ Q874 ♣ 6	♠ KQ9853 ♥ J975 ♦ 63 ♣ 2	

Editorial

There seems to be confusion about 'our' Bridge 'club'. So let's clear it up, *once and for all*. Many moons ago 'The Pattaya Bridge Club' was set up by Barry Kenyon. It was a **private enterprise** and he ran it for a number of years. Barry put a lot of work into affiliating it to the Contract Bridge League of Thailand, registering it, and making sure that everything was legal etc. He sold 'the club' to **me** and the very reasonable price **I** paid was not just for a bag full of used cards and broken boards, but mainly for the name and the permission to play. I have since expanded the club and made a number of improvements. Just to mention a few: -

- (a) Barry would always play and had a regular partner. Anybody without a partner stood a 50% chance of being sent home. When I took over I changed the policy so that single individuals were encouraged to turn up and were never turned away (I don't play if there's an odd number and frequently play with a beginner).
- (b) We now play twice a week (Mon & Fri).
- (c) I also assist in the running of a Wednesday club.
- (e) We now have a news sheet (a lot of work), most 'members' really appreciate this.
- (f) We now have bidding boxes (very expensive and they need replacing periodically).
- (g) We regularly have a change of (high quality) playing cards as they also wear out. These cards certainly cost far more than the \$1 a pack I heard quoted for inferior ACBL cards.
- (h) We now have far better boards, the original set were *all* broken.
- (i) I have made up movement cards for all movements to make it easier for everybody.
- (j) In the peak season we regularly have events where you get a free copy of all the hands at the end of the session. This involves considerable extra work (and cost) for me.
- (k) I have just obtained some fairly expensive software (Dealmaster-Pro) that will print out the hands and also indicate makeable contracts so you will soon get a printout at the end.
- (l) We have a web site (also very expensive) and will hopefully soon have the results (and full hands) put on the web the same evening and the news-sheet put up each week.
- (m) I give free lessons twice a week (10.30 – 12.00 on Wednesdays and Fridays) for players with some basic knowledge of the game.
- (n) I always bring along a few books and magazines that (almost) anybody can borrow.
- (m) We now have a far better, central location for all 3 clubs.

The club is **run by me**. Is that clear enough to everybody? If anybody has a problem with that then they know what they can do. Please don't waste my time by harping on about a committee etc. It has *proven* not to work. And don't send me nasty e-mails, I will reply to comments (e-mail or whatever) in the news sheet, everybody is entitled to know what's going on. And note that when the club first started the playing fee was 50 bht. 15 years later we have had numerous improvements but it's still the same fee! About time it went up?

Dave runs the Wednesday club with my help. If anybody else is interested in helping to run that club (and maybe have a committee for just that club) then have a word with Dave. I have written a separate sheet about the Wednesday club with which Dave is in total agreement; anybody interested should read it. Currently the Wednesday club is under the 'umbrella' of 'The Pattaya Bridge Club' and is afforded the same privileges (legality, location etc.) and has the same 'rules' – single player are encouraged and virtually always guaranteed a partner. That necessarily means that anybody wishing to share in the running of that club would have to stand down and not play or play with a beginner when necessary.

If people don't like the current situation (or don't like me) then they have options. There is a 'Dutch' club that plays on Thursdays – I believe that you have to 'book up' and have a partner. There is also, I believe, a gathering on most Thursdays that is run by a woman in Jomtien; playing there is by invitation only and the woman has made a **big** point of not inviting me. Neither of these has any association with our club and they are probably illegal.

A weak jump shift?

Board 24 from Monday 30th

Dealer: ♠ A964
West ♥ K
Love all ♦ J62
♣ AKJ76

♠ KJ3	N	♠ Q1075
♥ 9875	W E	♥ A2
♦ A5	S	♦ KQ1085
♣ 9852		♣ 104

♠ 82
♥ QJ10643
♦ 973
♣ Q3

West	North(A)	East	South
pass	1♣	1♦	1♥ (1)
pass	1♠ (2)	pass	2♥ (3)
pass	pass (3)	all pass	

- (1) A weak jump shift (2♥) is an option here – but only if you have agreed it! Standard is that a jump (with or without an overcall) shows a good hand and a good suit.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand A(a) in this week's quiz? It's not good enough for a forcing 2♠ in my view and I bid 1♠.
- (3) And 2♥ is best here, it show a weak hand with good ♥'s.
- (4) And what did you bid with the North hand A(b)? You have 16 points but it's a mis-fit. Pass is correct.

And what happened? 3 pairs stopped in 2♥ making exactly for the shared top. 3♥ and 4♥ contracts were doubled and went down.

The bottom lines: -

- Stop a.s.a.p. with a known mis-fit.

Which contract?

West	East
♠ KQ85	♠ A107
♥ 864	♥ A9
♦ Q874	♦ AJ95
♣ Q8	♣ KJ53

Given the information that South has overcalled in ♥'s, what contract would you like to be in with these cards?

Which contract – the complete deal

Board 3 from Wednesday 1st

Looking at just the E-W cards and knowing that South has 5 ♥'s then 4♠ looks like the best try at game to me. Let's see what happened at two tables: -

Dealer:	♠ 32	<u>Table A</u>			
South	♥ Q53	West	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ 1063	-	-	-	pass
	♣ A9764	pass	pass	1NT	pass (1)
		2♣	dbl (2)	pass (3)	pass
♠ KQ85	N	2NT	pass	3NT	all pass
♥ 864	W E	<u>Table B</u>			
♦ Q874	S	West	North	East(B)	South
♣ Q8		-	-	-	pass
	♠ J964	pass	pass	1NT	pass (1)
	♥ KJ1072	2♣	pass	2♦	2♥ (4)
	♦ K2	2NT (5)	pass	3♥ (6)	pass
	♣ 102	3♠ (7)	pass	4♠ (8)	all pass

Table A: (1) This hand is not good enough to make a noise.

(2) This double shows ♣'s and asks partner to lead a ♣ if he is on lead (most likely) against the final contract. I would like to have a much better suit for this action.

(3) East has two extra bids available now (pass and redouble) and it's up to your partnership how you use them.

Table B: (4) Bidding here really is foolhardy. RHO has 15-17 and LHO has promised values (or at least 4 ♥'s). If South really wanted to bid with this hand then he should have done so at (1).

(5) Anyway, West now has a slight problem. He has the values for 2NT but no ♥ stop. So should he bid 2NT anyway? I think it's OK as there really is no other option other than a rather dubious penalty double. And 2NT by West probably shows weakish ♥'s as otherwise he would double.

(6) But what did you bid with this East hand B in this week's quiz? East has the values for 3NT but has only one ♥ stop. He needs help from partner in ♥'s and the thing to do in this sort of situation is to consult partner. 3♥ is the best bid here and asks partner for a (½) stop in ♥'s.

(7) West knows that East has something in ♥'s (he would not ask if he himself had nothing) and so West should bid 3NT with as little as ♥Qx, but he does not have that and so correctly bid 3♠.

(8) And East has a shot at the only reasonable game, in the full knowledge that it was a Moysian fit.

And what happened? 3NT made at table A when a club was led. It went down at tables where the otherwise obvious ♥ was led. Unfortunately the ♦K was offside and the trumps broke 4-2 so the best contract of 4♠ was also defeated. The bottom lines: -

- Axxxx is not good enough to double for a lead.

- The bid of the opponent's suit generally asks for a stop (sometimes a ½ stop).

What's your discard?

Board 20 from Wednesday 1st

Dealer: ♠ AK10
South ♥ A109543
E-W vul ♦ -
♣ 10754

West	North	East	South
pass (1)	1♥	3♦	4♥ (2)
all pass			

♠ Q8	N	♠ J52
♥ 76	W E	♥ 82
♦ J85	S	♦ KQ1076432
♣ AKJ832		♣ -
	♠ 97643	
	♥ KQJ	
DUMMY→	♦ A9	
	♣ Q96	

- (1) A 1♣ opening is a reasonable alternative.
- (2) South is in a bit of a spot here. Should he bid his 5 card ♠ suit? It's a known 5-3 (at least) ♥ fit and I think that 4♥ is fine.

But this deal is not in print because of the bidding, but the play. 4 out of the 5 tables ended up in 4♥ or 5♥ by North, but only two managed 11 tricks. Fortunately for declarer East has no ♣ to lead and so led the ♦K. So (a) how should North play in order to avoid 3 ♣ losers, and what should he discard on the ♦A? And (b) how should he plan the subsequent play to make 11 tricks?

The answer (a) is that Declarer should discard the ♠10 from hand on the ♦A. Your plan is to subsequently discard 2 losing ♣'s on the ♠ suit – you can set up 2 ♠ winners in dummy if they split 3-2 (most likely). But you do have to think ahead a little bit. If you draw 2 rounds of trumps, bang down the ♠AK and then cross to dummy with the last trump and ruff a ♠, you have set up the ♠'s but will not succeed as you have no entry back to dummy to cash the two remaining high ♠'s.

The answer (b) is to draw just one round of trumps before setting about the ♠ suit.

The bottom lines: - Plan out your play and preserve entries, even to the point of not drawing trumps if the trump suit is the only entry to dummy.

Enough is Enough

Board 10 from Wednesday 1st

Dealer: ♠ A6543
East ♥ K8
Both vul ♦ 863
♣ K54

♠ Q87	N	♠ K1092
♥ 10762	W E	♥ Q9543
♦ K7	S	♦ QJ2
♣ 10632		♣ 8

♠ J
♥ AJ
♦ A10954
♣ AQJ97

West	North	East	South(C)
Kenneth	Emil	me	Bill
-	-	pass	1♦
pass	1♠	pass	2♣ (1)
pass	2♦ (2)	2♥ (3)	2NT (4)
pass	3♣ (5)	pass	pass (6)
pass (7)			

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand C in this week's quiz? This is a 17 count and some would prefer to jump to 3♣ (game forcing in Standard American). But with partner bidding the singleton and with points in the short ♥ suit I think that 2♣ is fine, this is rarely passed as partner will usually give preference (or false preference) and you can then make a move that is non game forcing.
- (2) This is simple preference and simply still shows 6+ points. I think it's OK.
- (3) Now East does not really have the values to come in here vulnerable, but both opponents have limited their hands, the ♠K looks good and partner must surely also have ♥'s.
- (4) And I like this bid. This most definitely shows a good hand with a ♥ stop.
- (5) But this is terrible. Partner has more ♦'s than ♣'s (or equal length) and North should convert to 3♦ holding a weak hand. But he is not holding a weak hand! – it's a monster and he should clearly bid 3NT.
- (6) Pass is clear here as partner has promised a minimum of only 6 or 7 points.
- (7) And West knew that East was bidding West's hand at (3) and so wisely did not compete. Also, of course, he knows that North's 3♣ bid is probably very silly.

Now I don't usually mention names but I'll make an exception here as I cannot see that this North player will be playing here much longer. Before my partner had even led a card Emil was criticising Bill for not doubling 2♥. Saying loads of rubbish like after a ♠ lead then they score 3 trump tricks so it's a glorious massacre. I can't see that 200 is sufficient compensation for the 600 available in 3NT. And Emil continued to harp on about it during the play – his own appalling bid was not mentioned of course.

And what happened? 3NT was bid and made at most tables.

Bill came up to me later and said he had finally had enough and could take it no more - I had told him a few weeks earlier that he did not need to put up with the abusive comments from Emil and that I could easily find him another partner.

The same cannot be said of Emil. I somewhat doubt that anybody in the club would wish to partner him. Any offers?

I will amend the club 'rules' to say that single players will 'usually' be found a suitable partner. Sometimes it may simply not be possible.

Return Partner's Suit

Board 24 from Friday 3rd

I was asked to write up this deal as declarer played it well and other pairs went down. Upon investigation it appears that all declarers probably played it well, but the defence slipped up at the table where 3NT made with an overtrick.

Dealer:	♠ 104	West	North	East	South
West	♥ K843	pass	pass	2NT (1)	pass
Love all	♦ Q63	3NT (2)	all pass		
	♣ K865				

♠ Q32	N	♠ A85
♥ 7	W E	♥ AJ102
♦ J10842	S	♦ AK5
♣ J932		♣ A74
	♠ KJ976	
	♥ Q965	
↑	♦ 97	
DUMMY	♣ Q10	

- (1) This East hand is totally flat, but the excellent top cards and the J10 combination in a 4 card suit make it well worth a 2NT (20-21) opener.
- (2) And in this situation (and most others) you don't mention a minor suit – simply bid 3NT.

But this deal is another that is not in print for the bidding but the play. South led the ♠ 7 (4th highest), how should East play the hand?

You could try the ♠ Q from dummy and then the ♦ J. If North covers then you have an easy 9 tricks. But most players at this club know (I hope) not to cover touching honours and if North correctly holds up with the ♦ Q then East is cut off from the ♦ 's and will go down as he gets just 3 ♦ tricks.

	♠ 4	
	♥ K843	
	♦ -	
	♣ K865	
♠ Q3	N	♠ 85
♥ 7	W E	♥ AJ102
♦ J10	S	♦ -
♣ J932		♣ A74
	♠ KJ96	
	♥ Q65	
↑	♦ -	
DUMMY	♣ Q10	

Declarer's best shot is to preserve the ♠ Q in dummy and play low at trick one. North plays the ♠ 10 and East's ♠ A wins. Declarer now bangs down the ♦ AK and North wins the 3rd round with the ♦ Q.

Now comes crunch time. What should North lead? He knows that dummy's ♦ 's are good and that the ♠ Q is probably an entry (unless partner started with 6 ♠ 's). So at one table he looked at dummy's singleton ♥ and led one. Declarer then comfortably made his contract (+1). There are various clues for North to work out that a ♠ return is necessary. First of all, the ♠ 7 lead promises 3 higher cards and so a ♠

return will set up at least two ♠ 's for South. But probably even more important is that N-S must have a signalling system. South discarded the ♥ 9 and that demanded a ♠ return when you play Lavinthal (McKenny).

Raise Partner's Pre-empt – part 1

Board 2 from Friday 3rd

Dealer: ♠ A2
East ♥ A
N-S vul ♦ AKJ102
♣ AKJ87

♠ 104	N	♠ KQ9853
♥ Q108632	W E	♥ J975
♦ Q874	S	♦ 63
♣ 6		♣ 2

♠ J76
♥ K4
♦ 95
♣ Q109543

West(E)	North	East(F)	South
-	-	pass (1)	pass
2♥ (2)	dbl (3)	4♥ (4)	pass (5)
pass	dbl (6)	pass	pass (7)
pass			

- (1) What did you do with this East hand F(a) in this week's quiz? Of course East should not open a weak 2♠ when holding a 4 card ♥ suit and pass is correct.
- (2) What did you do with this West hand E in this week's quiz? In 3rd seat at favourable vulnerability 'anything goes' and I would certainly (did) open 2♥ here.
- (3) Normally one should have 4 ♠'s for a double of 2♥. The exception is when you have a very good hand, and this certainly is a very good hand.
- (4) What did you do with this East hand F(b) in this week's quiz? There is absolutely no point in mentioning the ♠'s as you have a known 6-4 ♥ fit. So raise partner to the limit so that it's difficult for the opponents to find their level/fit.
- (5) And see what I mean, it would be a bold (reckless?) South who bid 5♣ here.
- (6) And North is now in a spot. Double is again for take-out but since it's at the 4 level it's quite likely to be passed out. 5♥ may be better than double here?
- (7) South should probably bid 5♣, but that's easy to say when looking at all 4 hands.

And what happened? 4♥ doubled went 3 down for 500 away. But this was little compensation for the 6♣ (+1 = 1390) bid at two other tables. The 4th table even bid a somewhat speculative 7♣ for 2140.

The bottom lines: -

- You can shade your pre-empts in 3rd seat, especially with favourable vulnerability.
- Always raise partner's pre-empt to the limit at you first opportunity.

Raise Partner's Pre-empt – part 2

Board 22 from Friday 3rd

Dealer: ♠ 965
East ♥ KQ52
E-W vul ♦ A4
♣ AK93

West(D)	North	East	South
-	-	2♦ (1)	pass
3♦ (2)	dbl	pass	pass (3)
pass			

♠ K7432	N	♠ AJ
♥ 764	W E	♥ 9
♦ Q32	S	♦ KJ10985
♣ 64		♣ 107
	♠ Q108	
	♥ AJ8	
	♦ 76	
	♣ QJ852	

- (1) At this vulnerability (unfavourable) this East hand is about right for a weak two. Note the difference between this good hand/suit and the rubbish hand that opened a weak two non-vul in 3rd seat on the previous page.
- (2) What did you bid with this West hand D in this week's quiz? With 3 ♦'s (and so 9 combined trumps) the Law says to compete do the 3 level, so that's what I did.
- (3) And the 3 level now poses a problem for North. Should he bid 3NT or double and risk going past 3NT?
- (4) And a bid at the 3 level posed a problem for this South after North's double. With no 4 card major the only real choice is 4♣, but that goes past 3NT. In the end he chose to pass.

And what happened? 3♦ doubled made, but even one down would have been a bottom for N-S as one pair were in the top spot of 3NT (+1) and the other two were in 5♣ making.

The bottom lines: - Always raise partner's pre-empt to the limit at you first opportunity. Even a small nudge from 2♦ to 3♦ may be enough to make it difficult for the opposition.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 1♠. It's not good enough for a forcing 2♠.
(b) Pass. It's a mis-fit so stay low.
- Hand B: 3♥. Partner has invitational values with 4 ♠'s. What's more you know that he does not have great ♥'s (he would have doubled for penalties) but he may have something like ♥Kx or ♥Qx. So bid 3♥ to ask him. If he denies a ♥ feature then the known 4-3 ♠ fit may well play very nicely and you can bid 4♠.
- Hand C: 2♣. Some may prefer a (game forcing) 3♣ but I prefer a simple 2♣. This is rarely passed and so you can often make an effort later.
- Hand D: 3♦. With 9 combined trumps raise the pre-empt immediately.
- Hand E: 2♥. In 3rd seat, non-vul against vul opponents I would open a (very) weak 2♥. Hand F:
(a) Pass. Do not pre-empt with a 4 card major.
(b) 4♥. Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit immediately - before the opponents have a chance to exchange information.

Mon 6 th	1 st	Jo/Terry	62%	2 nd	Chuck/Ken	55%
Wed 8 th	1 st	Tonni/Richard (US)	65%	2 nd	Chuck/Ken	58%
Fri 10 th	1 st	Chuck/Ken	64%	2 nd	Mike /Phil	55%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A it's favourable vulnerability and partner opens 1♥ in 4 th seat. RHO overcalls 1♠, what do you do?
♠ KJ94	♠ AKQ	
♥ 75	♥ K3	
♦ 6542	♦ J64	What do you open with Hand B?
♣ AJ6	♣ AKQ105	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C you open 1♥, LHO overcalls 1♠ and this is passed round to you. You play negative doubles, what do you do?
♠ Q83	♠ KJ43	
♥ AKJ97	♥ AQJ109	
♦ QJ	♦ AJ4	With Hand D you open 1♥ and partner responds 1NT. What do you do?
♣ K98	♣ 5	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E you open 1♥ and partner responds 1♠, what do you bid?
♠ K2	♠ Q6	
♥ J96543	♥ K7	With Hand F partner opens 1♥ and you respond 1NT. Partner raises this to 2NT, what do you do?
♦ AK7	♦ 98753	
♣ AQ	♣ Q1094	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1♥ and you respond 1♠
♠ J1098	♠ K765	(a) What do you bid if partner rebids 2♥
♥ KQ	♥ Q7653	(b) What do you bid if partner rebids 3♥
♦ J109	♦ QJ5	(c) What do you bid if partner rebids 2NT
♣ J974	♣ J	With Hand H LHO opens 2♦ and this is passed to you, what do you do?
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J you open 2♣, partner bids 2♦ (-ve) and you bid 2NT (showing 22-24 balanced). Partner then bids 3♦, transfer, and you obediently bid 3♥. Partner then bids 3NT, what now?
♠ AK	♠ QJ7	
♥ AK7	♥ A7	
♦ A763	♦ K8762	With hand K partner opens 1♣ and you bid 1♦. Partner then bids 1♥, what do you bid (1NT or 2NT)?
♣ KQ92	♣ 1032	

A one-level penalty double?

Board 20 from Monday 6th

Dealer: ♠ A1062
South ♥ Q432
N-S vul ♦ K3
♣ 753

♠ Q83	N	♠ KJ94
♥ AKJ97	W E	♥ 75
♦ QJ	S	♦ 6542
♣ K98		♣ AJ6

♠ 75
♥ 106
♦ A10987
♣ Q1042

West(C)	North	East(A)	South
-	pass	pass	pass
1♥	1♠ (1)	pass (2)	pass
dbl (3)	pass	pass (4)	pass

- (1) This is silly of course, especially at unfavourable vulnerability and against reasonably good opposition. Some experts do advocate occasionally overcalling with a 4 card suit at the one level – but that is only with a *much* better hand and with a *much* better suit – it's best left to the experts.
- (2) What did you do with this East hand A in this week's quiz? E-W play negative doubles and so East passed (at this vulnerability defending 1♠ doubled looked attractive to him).
- (3) What did you do with this West hand C in this week's quiz? West re-opens with a double of course when playing negative doubles.
- (4) And East carried through his plan of defending 1♠ doubled.

And what happened? 1♠ doubled should have been a complete massacre (if West returns the ♠Q at trick 2 when in with the ♥K), but West was unwilling to believe that North had overcalled on a 4 card suit! Or perhaps he thought that his partner was day-dreaming? (unlikely). Even with the resultant mis-defence the contract was one down, so 200 away for a complete top to E-W.

The bottom lines: -

- Do not overcall with 4 card suits, especially as poor as Axxx.
- Do not make rubbish overcalls when vulnerable.
- Do not make rubbish overcalls if the opponents know how to double you for penalties.
- If you play negative doubles, then it's usually correct for opener to re-open with a double.
- Even a good 4 card suit can be enough for a lucrative 'penalty double' at the one level.
- Look for the 'golden 200' at pairs scoring.
- Trust partner rather than an opponent. In this auction East is guaranteeing 4+ ♠'s as otherwise he would have bid NT.

Don't use Blackwood to gauge strength

Board 24 from Monday 6th

Dealer: ♠ 108732
West ♥ 42
Love all ♦ AKQ32
♣ 6

♠ J96	N	♠ 54
♥ Q975	W E	♥ AJ1086
♦ 95	S	♦ 1087
♣ J743		♣ 982

♠ AKQ
♥ K3
♦ J64
♣ AKQ105

West	North	East	South(B)
pass	pass	pass	2♣ (1)
pass	2♠ (2)	pass	4NT (3)
pass	5♦	pass	5♠ (4)
all pass			

- (1) What did you open with this South hand B in this week's quiz? I too would open 2♣.
- (2) And what you respond here is up to your partnership style. Some people always bid 2♦ (waiting), others demand an honour or two in a positive suit response. Anyway, I'm not arguing with 2♠ as it's up to you.
- (3) But this is premature, what's the hurry? 2NT, showing a balanced 22-24 is game forcing after a +ve response and is quite sufficient.
- (4) And now we come to the point that I'm trying to make. Blackwood should be used as a tool to check on aces once you have decided that there are values enough for slam. If you bid Blackwood and then back down when there is just one ace missing then you have mis-used Blackwood.

And what happened? Just one pair bid slam (6♠). Nobody bid the laydown 6NT by South.

The bottom lines: -

- There is usually no rush to leap into Blackwood, especially when you are in a game forcing sequence.
- If you bid Blackwood and find just one ace missing then you should bid slam; Blackwood is not a tool to gauge partner's strength, you should know you have values for slam before invoking Blackwood and only back off if there are two aces missing.

How many times should one bid one's hand?

Board 6 from Monday 6th

Dealer: ♠ QJ985
 East ♥ 7632
 E-W vul ♦ K932
 ♣ -

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♦	1♥
1NT	2♥ (1)	3♣ (2)	pass
pass (3)	3♥ (4)	pass	pass
4♣ (5)	4♥ (6)	dbl (7)	all pass

♠ 1043	N	♠ AK
♥ KJ9	W E	♥ 4
♦ 84	S	♦ AQ1064
♣ AJ1052		♣ K8743
	♠ 762	
	♥ AQ1085	
	♦ J7	
	♣ Q96	

- (1) I would raise to 3♥ here. Bid your hand to the limit at the first opportunity. A 3♥ bid should be pre-emptive as with a sound raise to 3♥ you cuebid.
- (2) East's hand has improved with the opponents bidding his singleton. He intended 3♣ as forcing here....
- (3) ... but obviously partner did not appreciate this. With this super maximum and superb ♣'s I would bid 3NT.
- (4) What can I say? I would not be in this position as I would have bid 3♥ last go.
- (5) Partner has shown a big hand (but I guess that West did not appreciate this). I would bid 3NT here (actually I would have bid 3NT at (3) of course).
- (6) Talk about bidding your hand twice, here we have it bid three times!
- (7) Since nobody at the table seemed to care that East had a huge hand, he tossed the double card onto the table.

And what happened? Nobody found the 'best' contract of 3NT, maybe even 6♣ can make (although everybody in ♣'s made just 11 tricks). Anyway, at our club we expect a few varied results: - 4♥* went minus 4 for 800 away and the top to E-W. Other results were 4♥*-3, 4♣+1 (twice) and 5♣ making exactly.

The bottom lines: -

- Bid your hand to the limit at the first opportunity.
- Bid your hand just once (and certainly not 3 times).
- I guess that a regular partnership would have to agree if 3♣ at (2) is forcing or not.

Intermediates count – part 1Board 23 from Wednesday 8th

Dealer: ♠ 10952
 South ♥ 532
 Both vul ♦ K6
 ♣ A872

♠ Q6	N	♠ KJ43
♥ K7	W E	♥ AQJ109
♦ 98753	S	♦ AJ4
♣ Q1094		♣ 5
	♠ A87	
	♥ 964	
	♦ Q102	
	♣ KJ63	

West(F)	North	East(D)	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	pass	1♥	pass
1NT	pass	2NT(1)	pass
3NT (2)	all pass		

- (1) What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? There are two very reasonable options. The hand is a very good 16 points (that ♥109 are worth far more than their 'allocated' zero points). So it's really too good to pass and the two options are 2NT or a reverse into 2♠. Now partner's 1NT has denied 4♠'s but there may be a good Moysian fit there; however, partner has denied a major and is very likely to have decent ♣'s and I certainly won't argue with my partner's choice of 2NT (showing a good 16-17). Even though this is a very robust ♥ suit I would not jump to 3♥ as I would like a 6 card suit for that bid and 2♥ is a bit feeble (and usually implies a 6 card suit).
- (2) And what did you bid with this West hand F in this week's quiz? Partner has invited game and so with 6-7 (poor 8) you pass and with a good 8-10 you bid 3NT. So how good is this West hand? It's 7 points, but then look at the shape and intermediates. With a 5 and a 4 card suit that's good, the ♣109 are also very good and those intermediates in the 5 card ♦ suit are obviously worth more than their 'allocated' zero points. Add this together with the king in partner's suit and I think it's worth a shot at 3NT.

And what happened? 3NT received the 'obvious' ♣ lead and comfortably made with an overtrick – that ♣109 were golden cards! Two pairs somehow reached 4♥ (if East reversed into 2♠ I would bid 3NT with the West hand). The two other contracts were 1NT and 3♥ and they both scored relatively well as 4♥ went down on both occasions.

The bottom lines: -

- Upgrade a hand with good intermediates, especially combinations like 109 or 987 in long suits.

Intermediates count – part 2

Board 16 from Wednesday 8th

Dealer: ♠ K1064
West ♥ 2
E-W vul ♦ K8652
♣ QJ7

West	North(me)	East	South
1♣ (1)	pass	1♥	pass
1NT	dbl (2)	pass	2♦
2♥ (3)	3♦ (4)	3♥ (5)	all pass

♠ AQ8	N	♠ J972
♥ AJ9	W E	♥ KQ863
♦ 1043	S	♦ J
♣ A1052		♣ 843
	♠ 53	
	♥ 10754	
	♦ AQ97	
	♣ K96	

- (1) Would you open 1NT with this West hand or downgrade because of the flat shape? It's 15 points but knock off a point for the 3334 shape. But then the hand contains good intermediates and two tens and that may be just enough to swing the balance back to make it just about good enough for 1NT, but it's close. Either is fine by me.
- (2) Take-out for ♠'s or ♦'s.
- (3) Obviously OK with 3 good trumps and weak ♦'s.
- (4) North's double only promised 4 ♦'s and so he can push on here.
- (5) East knows that partner has just 3 ♥'s and that this is one above the Law, but with a singleton ♦ it looks best to me.

And what happened? 3♥ went one down and would have scored badly for E-W but I did not count my scores on Wednesday as I only played ½ a dozen boards.

Now at the end of the hand East suggested to West that he should have opened 1NT as then that would have kept the opposition quiet. Now I've said that I think it's marginal and I would not criticise the decision to downgrade to 14 pts; but what about the 2nd part of the argument? I don't think that it would keep N-S silent.

Suppose West opens 1NT and North passes, then what does East do? I would bid Stayman but many would bid a 2♦ transfer. Either way N-S will enter the auction and find their ♦ fit:

- (a) 1NT - p - 2♣ - p - 2♦ - dbl
- (b) 1NT - p - 2♦ - dbl

The bottom lines: -

- Even the most experienced of players are not necessarily correct in their criticism of partner (but no names).
- It takes a lot to keep me quiet?

Intermediates count – part 3

Board 10 from Friday 10th

Dealer: ♠ J1098
East ♥ KQ
Both vul ♦ J109
♣ J974

West	North(G)	East	South(E)
-	-	pass	1♥
pass	1♠	pass	3♥ (1)
pass	4♥ (2)	all pass	

♠ A764	N	♠ Q53
♥ 10	W E	♥ A872
♦ Q86	S	♦ 5432
♣ K10853		♣ 62
	♠ K2	
	♥ J96543	
	♦ AK7	
	♣ AQ	

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand E in this week's quiz? It's 17 points with a 6 card major suit. It would be nice to have more points in ♥'s but the hand is well worth a try for game. I think that 3♥ is best (2NT is the alternative).
- (2) And what did you do with this North hand G? Partner is inviting you and you should pass with around 6-7 or else bid game. This is a good 8 (look at all of those intermediates) and the ♥KQ are now good cards after partner has shown a good hand with 6 ♥'s. I would not argue with 3NT but I prefer my partner's choice of 4♥.

Now that all seems very simple, so why is this hand in print? Because 2 out of the 5 tables missed game on Friday. 4♥ made exactly once; 3NT made exactly once and 3NT somehow went down once. 2♥ and 3♥ were the other two contracts.

The bottom lines: -

- With 17 points it's best to make an invitational bid after partner has responded in a new suit at the 1 level to your opening if you can. You can jump to 3 of your suit if it's 6 cards, otherwise 2NT (18-19) if it's a good 17 or else jump support partner. Sometimes a reverse is an option with the correct shape.
- 10's and 9's are often valuable, especially if not isolated. This North hand has 3 jacks (usually poor cards) but they are good when backed up by 10's and 9's. This North hand is worth far more than its face value of 8 points.
- An isolated KQ are usually poor cards, but they are OK if partner bids the suit and excellent if partner shows 5 or 6 cards in the suit.

Taking a gamble

Board 20 from Friday 10th

Dealer: ♠ 1083
West ♥ K98
Both vul ♦ K8
♣ K9875

♠ 2	N	♠ AQJ94
♥ J102	W E	♥ A4
♦ A109432	S	♦ 76
♣ Q62		♣ A1043
	♠ K765	
	♥ Q7653	
	♦ QJ5	
	♣ J	

Table A

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2NT (1)	pass
3♣ (2)	pass	3♦ (3)	al pass

Table B

West	North	East	South(H)
2♦	pass	pass (1)	dbl (4)
pass	3♣	pass	3♥ (5)
pass	4♥ (6)	dbl (7)	all pass

Table A: (1) What would you bid with this East hand? You could try 2♠ (forcing) but I believe that this pair play Ogust and 2NT asked how good the 2♦ opener was.

(2) And this showed a poor opener with a poor suit.

(3) So West signed off.

Table B: (1) This East, with very poor ♦'s, did not make a try for game. Who knows, the bidding is not over and something interesting may happen!

(4) What did you bid with this South hand H in this week's quiz? You're in the balancing seat and don't really want to sell out to 2♦, but you don't want to excite partner when holding just 9 points. 2♥ looks about right to me (pass is reasonable but I too would not like to sell out). Now double is simply a gamble, it would be excellent if partner responds in a major – but....

(5) ... what can South do when partner bids 3♣? He chose to bid his ♥ suit...

(6) ... and North assumed that South had a very good hand....

(7) ... but East already had the axe out.

So what went wrong with this auction? The basic problem is that a take-out double means just that – short in the suit bid and playable in the other three suits. The problem is not really that South has few points (double would be acceptable in the pass-out seat holding something like ♠K765 ♥Q7653 ♦J ♣QJ3 – i.e. the same hand but with the ♣'s and ♦'s reversed). No, the problem is that South is not playable in ♣'s and if he removes a ♣ bid from partner then that shows a good hand.

The bottom lines: -

- A take-out double is approximately opening values in the direct seat; it is playable in the other 3 suits.
- Such a double can be less in the pass-out seat, but it still has to be playable in the other 3 suits.
- If you double and bid again then that shows a good hand wherever you are sitting.

Nobody found the excellent 5-3 fitBoard 14 from Friday 10th

This deal was played 5 times on Friday and nobody found the best contract of 4♥ :-

Dealer:	♠ 6432			<u>Table A</u>				
East	♥ 108			West	North	East(J)	South	
Love all	♦ K9			-	-	2♣	pass	
	♣ AJ1043			2♦	pass	2NT	pass	
				3♦ (1)	pass	3NT (2)	all pass	
♠ J109	N	♠ AK						
♥ QJ943	W E	♥ AK7		<u>'Expert' Table</u>				
♦ J8	S	♦ A763		West	North	East(J)	South	
♣ 765		♣ KQ92		-	-	2♣	pass	
	♠ Q875			2♦	pass	2NT	pass	
	♥ 652			3♦ (1)	pass	3♥ (2)	pass	
	♦ Q10542			3NT (3)	pass	4♥ (4)	all pass	
	♣ 8							

Table A (1) Now after the sequence 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT you should play exactly the same as if the bidding had started with a 2NT opener. If you play Stayman and transfers after a 2NT opening then it's exactly the same after this sequence; so 3♦ here is a transfer.

(2) But this East did not realise this and thought that 3♦ was natural.

'Expert' (2) Our experts know to complete transfers, and only super-accept with 4 trumps.

Table (3) And with just 5♥'s West rebids 3NT of course.

(4) But what did you bid with this East hand J in this week's quiz? Passing 3NT is a poor bid in my opinion (see bottom lines below for the whole list of reasons). I would go for the 5-3 major suit fit and bid 4♥.

And what happened? 3NT was bid and either made or made +1. It looks like a fairly easy 11 tricks to me (so a top) when playing in ♥'s. If South had the ♣A then 3NT would even go down!

The bottom lines: -

- If you play Stayman and transfers over 2NT then it's the same after 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT.
- Go for the 5-3 major suit fit if you have a doubleton (you score an extra trick with a ruff).
- Go for the 5-3 major suit fit if you have a weak suit.
- Go for the 5-3 major suit fit if you have very good trumps (like AKx).
- Go for the 5-3 major suit fit if you have a very strong hand and partner has the weak hand with 5 trumps (you then have entries to dummy).
- Most certainly go for the 5-3 major suit fit if all of the above apply!

Unwarranted stick?

Board 11 from Friday 10th

My bidding partner (Bob) was criticised (in his absence) on this deal from Friday when I was choosing random bidding partners; I totally agree with his bidding: -

Dealer:	♠ AK93				
South	♥ Q98	West	North(me)	East	South(Bob)
Love all	♦ AKQJ4	-	1♦	1♥ (1)	pass (2)
	♣ 2	2♥ (3)	2♠ (4)	pass	pass (5)
		pass			
♠ 104	N	♠ Q652			
♥ K752	W E	♥ A10643			
♦ 753	S	♦ 98			
♣ Q1074		♣ K6			
	♠ J87				
	♥ J				
	♦ 1062				
	♣ AJ9853				

- (1) With this type of shape, as we saw earlier, an overcall of 1♥ is far better than double.
- (2) Now South would have responded 1NT without the overcall but he has to pass now.
- (3) With 4 trumps, West has an obvious raise. A weak 3♥ is an alternative.
- (4) Opposite a passed partner this shows a good hand
- (5) South knows that partner has a good hand, but his major feature is a 'useless' ♣ suit and so I think that settling for the 4-3 ♠ fit is fine as he has no ♥ stop.

And what happened? N-S made 2♠ but it scored a zero as 3NT was making or making +1 at other tables. One opponent said the South should have bid on. I don't see it, once E-W have bid (and agreed ♥'s) there is no game after the 'obvious' ♥ lead. 2♠ making should have scored well.

But at other tables ♥'s were apparently not bid and so 3NT by South makes. My partner and I were always going to get a poor score if 3NT is allowed to make at other tables. Once East overcalled 1♥ (and so prevented South from bidding 1NT) it was all over. N-S have a ♥ stop only if South is declarer in NT and this is impossible if East overcalls in ♥'s. 3NT by South would also go down if West chose the ♥K as his lead (unlikely if South bids NT).

The bottom line: -

- The only real question is – why didn't every East overcall 1♥?
- With a 4 card major and a 5 card major, overcall rather than double unless you have 3 decent cards in the other minor.

Play Quiz

DUMMY ↓

♠ QJ7	N	♠ A82
♥ A7	W E	♥ 10865
♦ K8762	S	♦ AQ3
♣ 1032		♣ A76

You are declarer in 3NT and North leads the ♣K, how many times, if any, should you hold up? p.s., I got it wrong at the table!
The full deal is on the next page.

How good a 10 count?

Board 2 from Friday 10th

When partner opens and you have 6-9 points then you bid 1NT (not by-passing a major of course); with 11-12 it's 2NT. With 10 points you have to determine 'how good' a 10 count it is, my bidding partner (Tom) got this spot on: -

Dealer:	♠ 64				
East	♥ KQ3	West(K)	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ J94	-	-	1♣	pass
	♣ KQJ85	1♦	pass	1♥	pass
		2NT (1)	pass	3NT (2)	all pass
♠ QJ7	N	♠ A82			
♥ A7	W E	♥ 10865			
♦ K8762	S	♦ AQ3			
♣ 1032		♣ A76			
	♠ K10953				
	♥ J942				
	♦ 105				
	♣ 94				

- (1) What did you bid with this West hand K in this weeks quiz? Ten points in on the border between 1NT and 2NT, but for me the 5 card suit swings it – shape is all important – and I agree with the 2NT bid.
- (2) East also has a decision, he is max but the 3433 shape is bad. The deciding factor for me here is the AQx in partner's suit.

And what happened? Only 2 out of the 5 tables bid 3NT but one went down. Other contracts were 1NT and 2NT.

Now with West as declarer you get the ♣K lead, how should West play the hand? I'm not really an expert here but I think that West should duck just one round of ♣'s, win the 2nd round and then try the ♠Q. I think that, although I made the contract, I misplayed it. I ducked two rounds of ♣'s and won the 3rd round. Of course I'm then making after North leads a 3rd round of ♣'s (who can blame him) but a ♥K switch at trick 3 would have set me I think. But who would find that? – please don't answer that Chuck. The point is that West can cope with a 4-3 ♣ split and so only needs to duck once as if South get in with the ♠K and has a 3rd ♣ to return then it's a 4-3 split and so no problem (West then loses just 3 ♣'s and one ♠).

The bottom lines: -

- When playing in NT it's usually best to hold up with just one stop in an opponent's suit, (this cut off communication between defenders). The good players know exactly how many rounds to hold up, the rest of us get it right sometimes.
- If my memory serves me right there is some sort of 'rule', something like subtract the number of cards you and dummy have in the suit from 7 and hold up that many times.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: Pass (or double if you do not play negative doubles). 1♠ is going down and defending 1♠ doubled will net an excellent score at this vulnerability, especially as you know that overcaller does not have an opening hand.
- Hand B: 2♣. Now some players play an opening bid of 2NT as 20-21 and others play it as 20-22; I prefer 20-21 but that is not important here as that great ♣ suit makes the hand worth 23-24 points (so open 2♣ with a 2NT rebid, 23-24 or 23-24 resp.).
- Hand C: Double. A (semi) automatic re-opening double in case partner has a penalty pass hand.
- Hand D: 2♠ (a reverse) or 2NT. The hand really is a bit too good to pass and I don't like 3♥ with just a 5 card suit.
- Hand E: 3♥. Invitational with a 6 card suit. Seems perfect to me but I guess that 2NT is a reasonable alternative.
- Hand F: 3NT. The excellent intermediates and good shape make it worth a shot at game.
- Hand G: (a) Pass, not quite good enough to make a move.
(b) 4♥, partner is inviting game and has 6♥'s. This hand has excellent ♥'s (partner knows that you probably have at most two) and has excellent intermediates.
(c) 3NT. Easily enough to raise 2NT (18-19) to game.
- Hand H: 2♥. You are in the balancing seat and so can bid with a minimal hand. Double will work out well if partner responds in a major but you are completely fixed if he bids 3♣, so it really is a big gamble.
- Hand J: 4♥. Go for the 5-3 major suit fit (I give a very comprehensive list of all the reasons why where this deal is described in this news-sheet).
- Hand K: 2NT. 10 points is on the borderline between 1NT and 2NT, but a 5 card suit is a big + and so it's worth 2NT. With 2344 type shape I would settle for 1NT.
- Play Quiz: You should hold up just one time. If you duck two rounds of ♣'s then you are sunk if they find a ♥ switch.

Fri 17/6/05

Club News Sheet – No. 137

Mon 13 th	1 st	Chuck/Louis	62%	2 nd	Ian & Gilli	60%
Wed 15 th	1 st	Monte/Richard	63%	2 nd	Gilli & Kenneth	58%
Fri 17 th	1 st	Ian/Terry	63%	2 nd	Noreen & Kevin	56%

What a Friendly Club!

Our Irish visitors (Kevin and Noreen) remarked to Richard what a nice, quiet, friendly club this is! Richard told them that that's the way the director tries to keep it (and has to put in a lot of effort just to do that). I could give a list of ½ a dozen or so players who are noticeably absent at the moment – but no names!

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A RHO opens 1♣, what do you do?
♠ A54	♠ AK2	With Hand B you open 1♦, partner bids 1♠ and you correctly rebid 2NT (18-19).
♥ K653	♥ Q10	(a) What do you do if partner bids 3♠?
♦ AJ4	♦ AQJ84	(b) What do you do if partner bids 3NT?
♣ Q87	♣ Q102	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C RHO opens 1♣ and this is passed round to partner who doubles. (a) what do you bid?
♠ K1074	♠ AK10862	(b) what do you bid if RHO bids 2♣?
♥ 63	♥ 4	With Hand D you open 1♠ and partner responds 2♣, what do you bid?
♦ Q1095	♦ AKQ5	
♣ A107	♣ J7	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E you open 1♠ and partner responds 2♥, what do you rebid?
♠ AK1062	♠ 9	With Hand F partner opens 1♠, what do you respond?
♥ 74	♥ Q987	
♦ KJ532	♦ J862	
♣ 4	♣ AK106	

Don't double with a flat hand

Board 27 from Friday 15th

E-W got way too high here, why?

Dealer:	♠ 10					
South	♥ J972		West(A)	North	East	South
Love all	♦ Q62		-	-	-	1♣
	♣ J10654		dbl (1)	4♣ (2)	4♠ (3)	dbl
			all pass			
♠ A54	N	♠ 87632				
♥ K653	W E	♥ AQ94				
♦ AJ4	S	♦ 1093				
♣ Q87		♣ 2				
	♠ KQJ9					
	♥ 10					
	♦ K874					
	♣ AK93					

- (1) What did you bid with this West hand A in this week's quiz? It's a totally flat 14 count, and when you knock off the point for the 3433 shape it's a miserable 13 count. So it's nowhere near a 1NT overcall and is totally the wrong shape for a take-out double. Pass is correct.
- (2) Now this pre-emptive raise really put the pressure on East.
- (3) What should East bid here? It's only 6 points but there could easily be a game opposite a normal take-out double. Double (asking partner to pick a major) is probably best but this was an unfamiliar partnership and so East went for the game in his 5 card suit.

And what happened? 4♠* went down two for a bottom. The bottom lines: -

- A take-out double should be short in the suit opened.
- Keep quiet (pass) with flat hands with less than 15 points when RHO opens.

Responding to a take-out double

Board 17 from Friday 15th

Now we all know, I hope, to bid 4 card suits up the line; but there are always exceptions: -

Dealer:	♠ -				
North	♥ 54	West	North	East(C)	South
Love all	♦ AK2	-	1♣ (1)	pass	pass (2)
	♣ K9865432	dbl (3)	2♣ (4)	2♦ (5)	pass
		2♠ (6)	pass	4♠	all pass
♠ AQJ82	N	♠ K1074			
♥ KQJ2	W E	♥ 63			
♦ J87	S	♦ Q1095			
♣ J		♣ A107			
	♠ 9653				
	♥ A10987				
	♦ 643				
	♣ Q				

- (1) This is fine, the hand really is too good for a pre-empt.
- (2) I would bid 1♥ here.
- (3) It's a toss up here between 1♠ or double, with ♣ shortage I slightly prefer the double.
- (4) 3♣ or 4♣ or even 5♣ here would be more effective.
- (5) Now what did you bid with this East hand C(b) in this week's quiz? East does not have to bid after North has bid and so any bid here shows some values. But unfortunately 2♦ here is not forcing and the ♠ fit will be lost if partner passes. If North had passed at (4) – so case C(a) in this week's quiz - then I would jump to 2♠. In this actual situation where North has bid it's close between a free bid of 2♠ or a jump to 3♠. This is a good 9 points with excellent intermediates and I would bid 3♠, that ♣ A looks very useful.
- (6) It's debatable if West should bid on here, but I think it's good enough after a free bid and it all worked out OK in the end. Note that if West has a weaker double (say 11-12 points) then he would pass and 2♦ would be a poor final contract.

And what happened? 4♠ made exactly and scored a top. Two N-S pairs found the sound 5♣ sacrifice (only two down) and one E-W pair stopped in 3♠.

The bottom lines: -

- One normally responds 'up-the-line' to partner's opening bid...
- ... but it's different when responding to partner's take-out double as a simple suit bid is not forcing, so it's important to bid a major.
- So bid a 4 card major in preference to ♦'s if partner doubles a ♣ opening.
- With a long suit in a hand that is too good to pre-empt, you should pre-empt next go if partner passes your 1 level opening and RHO doubles

Bid a new suit or rebid a 6-carder?

Board 22 from Friday 15th

Dealer: ♠ 7
East ♥ K532
E-W vul ♦ 9743
♣ Q542

♠ AK10862	N	♠ 9
♥ 4	W E	♥ Q987
♦ AKQ5	S	♦ J862
♣ J7		♣ AK106
	♠ QJ543	
	♥ AJ106	
	♦ 10	
	♣ 983	

Table A

West(D)	North	East(F)	South
-	-	pass	pass
1♠	pass	2♣ (1)	pass
3♦ (2)	pass	3NT (3)	all pass

Table B

West(D)	North	East(F)	South
-	-	pass	pass
1♠	pass	2♣ (1)	pass
4♠ (3)	all pass		

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this East hand F in this week's quiz? This 2♣ bid is the correct response. You need 5 ♥'s to bid 2♥ and a 2NT response (+- 11 points) would deny a 4 card ♥ suit.
- (2) And what did you bid rebid with this West hand D in this week's quiz? You have game going values after the two level response so have to bid game or make a forcing bid. I guess that 3♦ is technically correct but I prefer the bidding at Table B.
- (3) East has a choice now between 3NT or pushing on to 5♦.

- Table B (3) Now I guess that many people bid 3♦ here and I won't argue. But this is a really good ♠ suit and I prefer to emphasise that rather than bidding a minor. Many players play that 3♠ is not forcing here and so I think that 4♠ is best. This suit is virtually self-sufficient – I would not bid 4♠ (but 3♦) if the ♠ suit were not headed by the AK.

And what happened? The bidding was similar to Table A at two tables, with 3NT and 5♦ being reached and making exactly. At the other two tables 4♠ was bid and made exactly so shared the top (see what I mean about this ♠ suit being self-sufficient – it could even cope with this horrendous trump split. The bottom lines:-

- Rebid a good 6 card major in preference to a 4 card minor.
- Six card suits headed by the AK are excellent.

Always a 6 card suit?

Incidentally, I was asked if opening and re-bidding a major always promises a 6 card suit. I was given the auction 1♠ - 2♥ - 2♠. The answer playing Standard American is usually!

- ♠ AK1062 With a hand like this (Hand E) I would open 1♠ but partner's 2♥ response
♥ 74 gives me a headache. To support with 74 seems silly and 2NT seems equally
♦ KJ532 silly with a singleton ♣. 3♦ is game forcing and this hand is obviously not good
♣ 4 enough. So 2♠ really is the only alternative. Is there a 'real' solution?
Yes! Play 2/1 – then a 3♦ bid here is perfect as it does not show extra values.

How many ♠'s?

Board 22 from Monday 11th

Dealer: ♠ Q954
South ♥ A43
Both vul ♦ 10532
♣ K9

♠ 1076	N	♠ J83
♥ K72	W E	♥ J9852
♦ 976	S	♦ K
♣ 8743		♣ AJ65
	♠ AK2	
	♥ Q10	
	♦ AQJ84	
	♣ Q102	

West	North	East	South(B)
-	-	-	1♦
pass	1♠	pass	2NT (1)
pass	3NT (2)	pass	4♠ (3)
all pass			

(1) 18-19

(2) Now here it's up to your partnership understanding, but I prefer to play that any bid by North over South's strong 2NT rebid is forcing. North has nothing more to say and so correctly bid 3NT. If he had 5 ♠'s then he would bid 3♠ (forcing of course). Some players prefer to play new minor forcing in this situation.

(3) What did you bid with this South hand B in this week's quiz? This South did not like his ♥Qx holding and chose to bid 4♠, knowing that partner had only promised 4 ♠'s. I don't like this decision and actually have already written something on the Qx holding; it is reproduced below.

And what happened? A ♥ was led and declarer guessed wrong. 4♠ still made with an overtrick but scored badly as most pairs were in 3NT making +3 or +2.

A Word about Qx.

This is an extract from new-sheet 67:

The Qx is an interesting holding; if partner has Axx (as in this case) then the suit is immune to the opening lead without conceding two tricks to you. Qx holdings usually belong in declarer's hand, not dummy.

A 2-level overcall is close to an opening hand

Board 2 from Friday 15th

Dealer:	♠ J95	West	North(me)	East	South
East	♥ 864	-	-	pass	1♥
N-S vul	♦ AKQJ10	2♣ (1)	4♥ (2)	dbl (3)	all pass
	♣ 63				

♠ Q4	N	♠ 1063
♥ QJ	W E	♥ A10
♦ 9875	S	♦ 632
♣ 109872		♣ AQJ54
	♠ AK875	
	♥ K97532	
	♦ 4	
	♣ K	

- (1) What would you bid a favourable vulnerability with this West hand. I 'suppose' that there are options. You could make a weak jump overcall of 3♣ but I would like a better suit with 6 cards. You could consider the infamous UNT but everybody knows my opinion that it should be 5-5, and preferably with a few points in the minors. Now you can overcall just 2♣, but a two level overcall should promise around 11+ points and this hand is nowhere near. The only realistic option is pass.
- (2) Now the overcall has changed North's options. Normally he would bid 2♦ and subsequently raise ♥'s. But the ♣ overcall probably means that a NT contract or a slam are out and so North simply raised to the ♥ game.
- (3) Now East is in a spot. East knows this North pretty well and knew that the raise to 4♥ could easily be on just one or two points with 5 ♥'s. He expected two tricks in his hand and hoped that partner's presumed 11+ points would provide two more tricks (since West had at most 3 points in ♣'s then he must have a lot outside?).

And what happened? West's hand did not live up to East's expectations and 4♥* made an overtrick. The bottom line: -

- An overcall at the two level should be around 11+ points, i.e. close to an opening hand.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: Pass. You need a 5 card suit to overcall and you need 15-18 points to overcall 1NT. And double is very poor as a take-out double should be short in the suit opened and playable in the other 3 suits.
- Hand B: (a) 4♠. I like to play that any bid over the strong 2NT jump is forcing. So this shows 5 ♠ 's and it looks like the 5-3 ♠ fit will be better than 3NT.
(b) Pass. If you accept (a) above then partner has only 4 ♠ 's and you should choose to play in 3NT. A Qx holding is usually better in declarer's hand than dummy.
- Hand C: (a) 2♠. This hand is worth a jump (about 8-10 pts) and as the bid is not forcing it is important to bid the 4 card major suit rather than the 4 card ♦ suit.
(c) 2♠ or 3♠. Again, bid the major rather than a minor. The hand is just about in between a free bid of 2♠ or a more encouraging 3♠.
- Hand D: 4♠. With 3♠ or 3♦ as possible alternatives, it depends upon your style/system. I personally would prefer to rebid this great 6 card ♠ suit and would bid 4♠ if there is the slightest chance that partner may pass 3♠. But, anyway, this ♠ suit is self-sufficient and I would remove a 3NT bid (over my 3♠) to 4♠ anyway – so why not bid it straight away? A 3♦ bid runs the risk of playing in 5♦ when 4♠ scores more. Of course, I don't expect everybody will agree with me here?
- Hand E: 2♠. It would be nice to have a 6 card suit but there really is no alternative here. 2NT is silly with a singleton ♣, you cannot support ♥'s with just xx and 3♦ is game forcing and overstates the value of the hand. The best solution is to play 2/1 when partner's 2♥ is then game forcing and a reverse into 3♦ does not show extra values when playing 2/1.
- Hand F: 2♣. An easy one to finish with. You should not bid 2NT (11-12) as that denies a 4 card ♥ suit and you should not bid 2♥ as that promises 5 ♥'s. So bid 'up the line' - so 2♣ (rather than 2♦).

Fri 24th June

Club News Sheet – No. 138

Mon 20 th	1 st Ian/Gilli	73%	2 nd Bob/Dave	56%
Wed 22 nd	1 st Noreen/Kevin	57%	2 nd Kenneth/Tonni	55%
Fri 24 th	1 st Noreen/Kevin	57%	2 nd Bob/Dave	56%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	(a) What do you open with with Hand A? (b) Suppose you open 1♥, LHO overcalls 2♣, partner doubles (negative showing 4♠'s and 6+ points) and RHO bid 2NT. What do you do?
♠ AJ4 ♥ A108752 ♦ 3 ♣ J92	♠ A865 ♥ A10862 ♦ 32 ♣ 104	With Hand B partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 2♣, what do you do?
Hand C	Hand D	(a) What do you open with Hand C? (b) Suppose you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♦, what is your rebid?
♠ A9 ♥ Q105 ♦ 108 ♣ AKQJ75	♠ Q1097 ♥ QJ97 ♦ - ♣ KJ1085	With Hand D you are vulnerable and the opponents are not. Partner opens 1NT and RHO overcalls 2♥, what do you do?
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1♠, what do you bid? With Hand F RHO opens 1♦ and you pass. LHO raises to 2♦ and this is passed round to you, what do you do?
♠ J92 ♥ J107 ♦ QJ4 ♣ KQ92	♠ K105 ♥ J643 ♦ Q9 ♣ 10763	

Membership Fees

It is fully defined on the next page, but basically people now have to pay an annual fee to be members.

It's 1,00 bht a calendar year. For this year the fee is 500 bht which lasts from now through to 31st Dec.

Members will continue to pay 50 bht per session and for non-members it's 100 bht a session (Mon, Wed and Friday)

The Price of Bridge is going up

I listed in news sheet 135 many of the improvements that have been made in the club over the last 10 years and hinted that perhaps it's about time that the playing fee went up. This was favourably received and numerous members said that they thought that paying more was fine.

Now some of you may know what has been going on over the last 3 months although I have said nothing in the news-sheets. Dave and I decided to have a web-site for the club but unfortunately the person responsible for setting it up decided to quit and we were stitched. I had to hire a professional to finish the job (it's still not going yet) and it as cost me an awful lot of money (which I simply don't have!). I have also been spending a lot of money buying two new sets of boards, cards, a dealing program and bidding boxes etc. etc. in preparation for the expected huge numbers (now we have better premises and a web site?) next high season. It would also not surprise me if the Diana Inn decided to raise the fee we pay for playing here – they are not totally happy with their 'profit' at the moment and I don't want to move again. In discussion with a number of regular members we came up with the following: -

- 1- There will be an annual membership fee of 1,000 bht. It will be based on the calendar year but will start on July 1st this year. So for July – end December this year it will be 500 bht.
- 2- People wishing to join later in a year will pay 100 bht for each month left in that year.
- 3- The playing fee will remain at 50 bht a session for paid-up members (Mon, Wed & Fri).
- 4- Visitors and non-members will be charged 100 bht per session (Mon, Wed & Fri).

I believe that some sort of agreement like this is pretty standard throughout the World. If you do the maths you will discover that it is worthwhile being a member if you expect to play more than 20 times a year. If you play twice a week (about average for most of our residents) then that's 100 sessions and the extra charge is a mere 10 bht per session; once a week and it's 20 bht extra.

In addition to the weekly news sheet I will also arrange at least one day a week when we get printouts at the end of the session (it's a lot of work but I'll do it for every session when we expect to have enough people for a Mitchell movement – so every session in the peak season). And people past the beginner's stage are welcome at my free Bridge lessons; 10.30 – 12.00 every Wednesday and Friday.

As soon as the web site is really up and running then we will get the results posted on the web that evening (or the next morning). And I'm sure that people who are outside Thailand will like to read the news-sheets from the web or get their results from their last session.

And there are also other improvements around. We have two computer Bridge playing programs which you can borrow to load into your computer. Bridge Baron is probably best for less experienced players and the Wednesday club (Dave) has a program called Jack which has won the World Computer Bridge Championships for the last 5 years – it bids and plays better than any member of this club. We also have a very entertaining DVD of 4 ½ hours of the latest world championships – it was shown over 6 weeks on Sky TV in the UK, the commentary is excellent and players of all levels will enjoy it. Just ask to borrow it. All of the above and numerous books (I'll make up a list sometime) and magazines are free to members to borrow.

We are moving our club into the 21st century but unfortunately that has a small financial cost. I am sure that most members will be quite happy with this membership fee and I expect only the usual ½ dozen or so complainers. I understand that the originator of all of the current ill-feeling will be playing privately and inviting all of the mal-contents to play with him; Absolutely Fabulous.

You don't need to rebid if RHO bids Board 27 from Monday 20th

Dealer:	♠ 10753				
South	♥ 4	West	North	East	South(A)
Love all	♦ AJ1082	-	-	-	1♥ (1)
	♣ Q76	2♣ (2)	dbl (3)	2NT(4)	3♥ (5)
		pass	pass	dbl	all pass
♠ Q62	N	♠ K98			
♥ K	W E	♥ QJ963			
♦ K954	S	♦ Q76			
♣ A10843		♣ K5			
	♠ AJ4				
	♥ A108752				
	♦ 3				
	♣ J92				

- (1) What did you open with this South hand A(a) in this week's quiz? It's certainly at the top end for a weak 2♥, and with 3 decent ♠'s I slightly prefer a 1♥ opening to 2♥; it does not conform to the rule of 20 but the 2 aces, the shape and intermediates in the ♥ suit are compensation. If I decided it was not good enough for 1♥ then I would open 2♥ - I do not have a 'gap' so if I have a hand with a 6 card major and around 10 points then I never pass – it's either 1♥ or 2♥ in this situation.
- (3) It's refreshing to see a 2-level overcall up to strength! Some players would prefer to have a 6 card suit for a two level overcall but I think 2♣ is fine here. A reasonable alternative is double but I prefer to usually have 4 ♠'s if I double ♥'s.
- (4) A negative double, promising only 4 ♠'s and 6 points at this level (just the same as a 1♠ bid if there had been no overcall.
- (5) With both majors well stopped East is looking for game (3NT).
- (6) What did you bid with this South hand A(b) in this week's quiz? This is a marginal opener and now that RHO has shown a strong hand with both majors you should certainly pass. If RHO had passed then South could bid 2♥ or possibly 2♠, but after RHO has bid then a bid here at the 3 level should be much stronger as partner has not promised much.

And what happened? 3♥ doubled went 3 down for a complete bottom. At 3 tables a 2♥ opening was passed out. At the last table 2NT by West made +1, so I guess that 3NT would have made but doubling 3♥ scores more anyway.

The bottom lines: -

- If you have a weakish opener, partner responds and RHO bids then you are now under no obligation to find a rebid.
- And if you rebid at the 3 level when partner has promised only 6+ points then you need a very good opener.
- On this particular day the 2♥ opening worked. On another day 1♥ will work better. But one thing is for sure, I would never pass with this South hand.

Upgrade a hand with AKQxxx

Board 21 from Monday 20th

Dealer: ♠ A9
North ♥ Q105
N-S vul ♦ 108
♣ AKQJ75

♠ Q874 N ♠ K53
♥ AK87 W E ♥ J93
♦ A52 S ♦ 763
♣ 82 ♣ 10963
♠ J1062
♥ 642
♦ KQJ94
♣ 4

Table A

West	North(C)	East	South
-	1♣ (1)	pass	1♦
pass	2♣ (2)	all pass	

Table B

West	North(C)	East	South
-	1♣ (1)	pass	1♦
pass	1NT (2)	all pass	

Table C

West	North(C)	East	South
-	1♣ (1)	pass	1♦
pass	2NT (2)	pass	3NT
all pass			

- Table A (1) What did you open with this North hand C(a) in this week's quiz? It's not really suitable for 1NT (and too good anyway) so 1♣ is best.
(2) But here's the point, what did you rebid with the North hand C(b) in this week's quiz? It's 16 points, but what a 16! A 6 card suit headed by the AKQJ is an enormous + and with good intermediates everywhere it's more like an 18 count. 2♣ is far too timid for me and with stoppers in both majors I prefer 2NT or 3NT to 3♣.
- Table B (2) Now this pair were playing Acol, and when playing a weak NT a 1NT rebid shows 15-16 points; so this seems fine? It is if you consider this North hand to be just 16 points, but I evaluate it as much more.
- Table C (2) Now this is more like it, a jump to 2NT. In Standard American it shows 18-19 points and in Acol it shows 17-19 points. 3NT is an equally good bid; most players play that 3NT shows a good hand with a good long minor, this is a better system than 3NT to show 19 points.

And what happened? 1NT made +2, 2♣ was bid and made overtricks and 3NT was bid and made (or made +1) at the other two tables.

The bottom lines: -

- Upgrade a hand with AKQJxx

A game try or just competing?

Board 24 from Wednesday 22nd

Dealer: ♠ Q92
West ♥ KJ43
Love all ♦ 10843
♣ 107

♠ AJ874 N ♠ 10753
♥ Q1092 W E ♥ 76
♦ K5 S ♦ AQ62
♣ Q3 ♣ J54
♠ K
♥ A85
♦ J97
♣ AK9862

Table A

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	pass	2 ♠ (1)	3 ♣
3 ♠ (2)	pass	4 ♠ (3)	all pass

'Expert' Table

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	pass	2 ♠ (1)	3 ♣
pass (2)	pass	3 ♠ (4)	pass
pass (5)	pass		

- Table A (1) This is obviously correct, 6-10 with 3 or 4 card support.
(2) But what does 3 ♠ mean here? Is it invitational or simply competitive? Without the overcall most would play it as invitational. But with the intervening overcall it is simply competitive; with any other bid being a game-try. Anyway, whatever 3 ♠ was meant to mean it is a very poor bid; West should have 6 ♠'s to compete further (The Law) and he is not strong enough to make a try for game opposite a simple raise from partner.
(3) Now clearly East thought that West was making a try for game and with a reasonable hand with 4 trumps he decided to 'accept'.
- 'Expert' (2) Pass is correct here.
- Table (4) As I said, East has just the values to raise to 2 ♠ at (1). But with 4 trumps he should compete to the 3 level (the Law).
(5) And West obviously passes again.

And what happened? 4 ♠ went three down. At all of the other tables E-W bid correctly to 3 ♠ and went either 1 or 2 down; this being sound as 3 ♣ would have made.

The bottom lines:-

- In a competitive situation a raise to 3 of your major is purely competing; with a hand worth a game try make any other bid.
- In a competitive situation obey The Law. Compete to the number of combined trumps.

You need 11 points to respond at the two level

Board 21 from Wednesday 22nd

Dealer:	♠ Q107	<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ QJ3	West	North	East	South(B)
N-S vul	♦ AQ104	-	1♦	2♣	2♥ (1)
	♣ K72	pass	3♥ (2)	all pass	

♠ J942	N	♠ K3	<u>'Expert' Table</u>			
♥ K74	W E	♥ 95	West	North	East	South(B)
♦ J87	S	♦ K965	-	1♦	2♣	dbl (1)
♣ J93		♣ AQ865	pass	2♥ (3)	all pass	
	♠ A865					
	♥ A10862					
	♦ 32					
	♣ 104					

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this South hand B in this week's quiz? You cannot allow the opponent's into 'bullying' you into overbidding if there is a way out. It is the opponents who have forced the bidding up to the two level and not partner, you still need the normal 11+ points to respond in a new suit at the two level and so you cannot bid 2♥ here.
- (2) With a really good 14 count North could (should?) easily have bid 4♥ here.
- 'Expert' Table (1) Fortunately there is a solution, the negative double, and this hand is perfect. It's up to you exactly what a negative double here means; some guarantee both majors and others just one. Either way this hand is perfect.
- (3) And here we see yet another example of supporting with just 3 cards. South could easily have only 4♥'s but it surely is the only sensible rebid here.

And what happened? Results were all over the place but 3♥ went 2 down and scored badly. No N-S pair found the best contract of 2♥.

The bottom lines: -

- You need 11 points to respond with a new suit at the two level.
- But you only need 6+ points for a negative double in this situation.
- Opener may sometimes have to support with just 3 cards.

Stayman after intervention

Board 18 from Wednesday 22nd

Dealer: ♠ KJ62
East ♥ 32
N-S vul ♦ AK2
♣ AQ97

Table A
West North East South(D)
- 1NT 2♥ dbl (1)
pass pass (2)

♠ A542 N ♠ 8
♥ 10 W E ♥ AK8652
♦ 109865 S ♦ QJ743
♣ 642 ♣ 3
♠ Q1097
♥ QJ97
♦ -
♣ KJ1085

'Expert' Table
West North East South(D)
- 1NT 2♥ 2NT (1)
pass 3♣ (3) pass 3♥ (4)
pass 3♠ (5) pass 4♠
all pass

Table A (1) What did you bid with this South hand D in this week's quiz? Double here is for penalties; in previous news-sheets I have recommended that the 'stolen bid' philosophy applies only as far as a 2♦ overcall, and then only by agreement. The overcall has robbed you of your Stayman bid, but there is a solution if you have game forcing values. The simplest solution is to cue bid 3♥, asking partner to bid 3♠ with 4♠'s or else bid 3NT. But see our expert table for the complete solution.

(2) North assumed this was a penalty double.

'Expert' Table When the opponents overcall partner's 1NT opening with 2♣ then it's probably best to play that double is Stayman. But when the overcall is 2♦/♥/♠ then you have lost Stayman. Now I mentioned that simplest is to cue bid the enemy suit as Stayman, but those of you who have read the Lebensohl booklet know that you can differentiate between hands with a stop in the overcalled suit and hands without.

(1) With a stop in the overcalled suit, we start off with a Lebensohl 2NT.

(3) Forced response.

(4) Stayman, but now showing a ♥ stop having gone via 2NT.

(5) North has 4♠'s so he bids 3♠. Without 4♠'s he would have bid 3NT.

And what happened? Two N-S pairs bid and made 4♠. One was pushed into 5♠ and went one down. But 2♥ doubled was a disaster for N-S as it made, scoring -470.

The bottom lines: -

- After partner's 1NT opening, a cue bid of the opponent's suit is Stayman.
- It's up to you how high you play 'stolen bid'. I recommend either over 2♣ only or over 2♣/♦ only. A double of a higher bid is penalties.
- Partnerships have to agree on this; standard is that all doubles are penalties and any other agreement should be alerted.
- The very best solution is to play Lebensohl, but that's probably a bit complex for most of our club.

Opening in 4th seat – the rule of 15

Board 26 from Friday 24th

Now most of you know that one can open light in 3rd seat. The reason behind this is that 4th seat probably has a good hand and that since partner has passed there is no game your way, so try to confuse the issue. 1♥ and 1♠ openings in 3rd seat are often light (and indeed even in America they often open 1♥/♠ in 3rd seat with a decent 4 card suit) and there is actually a convention, Drury – common in America, which simply asks if the opening bid was sound.

Anyway, 4th seat is different again. If you do not expect to make a contract your way then you can always pass and the deal is passed out. But it's different if you have around 10 points and have the all-important ♠ suit. Then you may wish to open 1♠ with a minimal hand knowing that you have the highest ranking suit should a bidding war evolve.

There is, in fact, a separate 'rule' for a 4th seat opening. The rule of 15 – add up your points and the length of the ♠ suit and if the answer is 15 or more then open. This means that 1♣/♦/♥ openings in 4th seat are always very sound but a 1♠ opening may not be and many Americans also play Drury over a 1♠ opening from partner in 4th seat.

Anyway, here's an example of it going wrong at the club this Friday: -

Dealer:	♠ AQ865				
East	♥ K54	West	North	East	South(E)
Both vul	♦ 73	-	-	pass	pass
	♣ J73	pass	1♠ (1)	pass	3♠ (2)
		all pass			
♠ K10	N	♠ 743			
♥ A986	W E	♥ Q32			
♦ A982	S	♦ K1065			
♣ 1085		♣ A64			
	♠ J92				
	♥ J107				
	♦ QJ4				
	♣ KQ92				

- (1) Now North could simply pass, but the odds are that he can make a ♠ partscore his way and in 4th seat 1♠ is correct. If the ♥'s and ♠'s were reversed then North should pass. The ♠ suit is all important in the pass-out seat and the rule of 15 is applicable.
- (2) What did you bid with this South hand E in this week's quiz? You need 6-9 to bid 2♠ and 11-12 to raise to 3♠ (or bid Drury 2♣/♦ if you play that). With 10 you assess the situation. This hand is totally flat (so knock off a point), has numerous Quacks and has only 3 (poor) card trump support. The reasonable intermediates are nowhere near enough compensation and 2♠ is correct even if you play Drury in this situation.

And what happened? 3♠ was one down. 2♠ was bid and made at other tables.

The bottom lines: -

- Apply the rule of 15 for a 4th seat opener.
- Devalue a hand with 3334 type shape.
- Devalue a hand full of Quacks.
- Devalue a hand with only 3 card trump support.
- And maybe consider playing Drury, although it is not applicable in this situation.

And while we are on the subject of 4th seat openers: -

What does a 2♦ or 2♥ or 2♠ opener mean in 4th seat?

Obviously there is no need for the normal pre-emptive bid as you can simply pass the deal out. There are a couple of sensible alternatives: -

- (1) You can play them as a 'weak' two but a higher point range – say 9-12.
- (2) You can play them as strong (8 playing tricks).

Up to you. And you may want to discuss what an opening 3♣/♦/♥/♠ means in 4th seat! If you play the gambling 3NT then I would suggest that 3♣/♦ are a good long running suit with a few bits and pieces outside (as opposed to 3NT which is nothing outside).

Bidding in the pass-out seat_(balancing)

Board 18 from Friday 24th

Dealer: ♠ K105
 East ♥ J643
 N-S vul ♦ Q9
 ♣ 10763

♠ AQ8	N	♠ J74
♥ Q1082	W E	♥ A93
♦ 10532	S	♦ AJ87
♣ AJ		♣ 984

♠ 9632
 ♥ K7
 ♦ K64
 ♣ KQ52

West	North(F)	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
1♦	pass	2♦ (1)	pass
pass	dbl (2)	pass	2♠ (3)
all pass			

- (1) I would bid 1NT here, especially as 1♦ may be just 3 cards in Standard American.
- (2) What did you do with this North hand F in this week's quiz? The bidding has died and this is where balancing comes into operation. You could pass but I don't (did not, I was North) really want to sell out to 2♦ and I think that a balancing double is just about OK.
- (3) And South knows that North is bidding South's hand and certainly should not jump here, even with a stronger hand.

And what happened? 2♠ went one down and so 100 to E-W. But the other E-W's were left to play peacefully in 1NT or 2♦ scoring 120 and 110 resp. So a top to N-S.

The bottom line: - Understand balancing.

3NT or the Moysian fit?

Board 26 from Wednesday 22nd

Dealer: ♠ Q63
East ♥ KQ72
Both vul ♦ AQ63
♣ 98

♠ AKJ75 N ♠ 109
♥ 65 W E ♥ 10843
♦ 1042 S ♦ K875
♣ J42 ♣ K53
♠ 842
♥ AJ9
♦ J9
♣ AQ1076

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♣
pass (1)	1♥ (2)	pass	2♥ (3)
pass	4♥ (4)	all pass	

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♣
1♠ (1)	dbl (5)	pass	2♥ (6)
pass	2♠ (7)	pass	3♣ (8)
pass	4♥ (9)	all pass	

Table A (1) A 1♠ overcall looks clear to me here.
(2) It's up to your partnership style if you bid 1♦ or 1♥ here.
(3) With no interference in this auction, I would rebid 1NT here.
(4) But this is where this North and I disagree. This North claims that partner's raise should always promise 4 card support, I disagree. What, for instance, should South bid with ♠2♥AJ9♦J943♣AQ1076? I would rebid 2♥ at (2) with this hand. Anyway, North has shown 4+♥'s at (2) and I would bid 3NT here to show game values and exactly 4♥'s just in case South had supported with just 3♥'s.

Table B (1) This West correctly overcalled 1♠.
(5) A negative double, promising 4+♥'s and 6+ points (i.e. just the same as North's 1♥ bid at Table A).
(7) South now has options but has slightly more information (that West has a 5+ card ♠ suit). The choices are 2♣, 1NT or 2♥. I would not particularly argue with any of these but I slightly prefer my partner's choice of 2♥ provided that North understands that this may occasionally be just 3 card support and knows how to handle the subsequent auction. I was North so no problem(!)
(8) North has values for game but knows that partner may possibly have just 3♥'s in which case 3NT may be a better contract. North has a (tentative) ♠ stop but one stop is clearly not enough for 3NT. So he cue bids to ask partner for help in the ♠ suit. In this situation I play it as asking for a ½ stop.
(9) With no resemblance of a ♠ stop South correctly bids 3♣.
(10) And so North bids 4♥ in the full knowledge that it may be a Moysian fit but there is insufficient ♠ cover for 3NT.

And what happened? Sometimes there is no justice in this world. Two South's bid 3NT and made +1 or +2! Now this is difficult for me to comprehend. The 'obvious' 4th highest ♠ lead clearly sets 3NT by one or two tricks. And I say 'obvious' – with no outside entry West should most definitely not lead a top ♠. And 3NT by North would be equally hopeless when East leads the ♠10 which West ducks. 4♥ looks like a better contract than 3NT to me on these N-S cards, especially if West is known to hold 5♠'s (although both should fail as the cards lie). The 4♥ contracts both went down, but so should the 3NT contracts!

The bottom lines: -

- Partner's raise of your major suit response does not always guarantee 4 card support.
- If you need help from partner in the opponent's suit for 3NT, then cue bid the suit to see if he has it (the help required).

So while we are on the topic, let's look at it a little more: -

Raising with just 3 card support

Hand 1	Hand 2	With Hand 1 you open 1♣, LHO overcalls 1♥ and partner doubles (negative, showing exactly 4 ♠'s). What do you bid?
♠ K104	♠ KQ4	I would bid 2♠.
♥ 32	♥ 3	
♦ AJ94	♦ AQJ8	With Hand 2 you open 1♣ and partner bids 1♠, what do you bid? I prefer 2♠ to 2♣.
♣ AJ87	♣ Q8432	

So, with or without interference, a raise of responder's major suit response does not always guarantee 4 card support.

And responder has to realise this:

Hand 3	Hand 4	With Hand 3 partner opened 1♣ and you responded 1♠. Partner bids 2♠, what do you do?
♠ K1084	♠ K1084	I would bid 3NT just in case partner has just 3 ♠'s.
♥ AQ9	♥ KJ9	
♦ KJ7	♦ KJ7	With Hand 4 partner opened 1♣ and you responded 1♠. Partner bids 2♠, what do you do?
♣ 532	♣ 532	I would bid 2NT just in case partner has just 3 ♠'s.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 1♥ or 2♥? This is marginal between 1♥ or 2♥ and I would not argue with either (I slightly prefer 1♥). But I would never pass as for me there's no 'gap' when holding a six card major.
(b) Pass. This is a very marginal opener and partner has not promised much. Now that RHO has entered the auction you can happily pass; and you most certainly do not want to bid at the 3 level.
- Hand B: Double. A negative double, you do not have the values (11+) to bid 2♥.
- Hand C: (a) 1♣. 1NT really is a bit too offbeat and this hand is too good anyway.
(b) 2NT or even 3NT. 2NT shows 18-19 points which is what this hand is worth. 3NT is best used to show a good hand with a good long minor and is an equally good bid with this hand. 3♣ is reasonable I suppose but I prefer 2NT or 3NT; 2♣ is simply feeble.
- Hand D: 3♥, Stayman. If you play Lebensohl then you bid 2NT followed by 3♥ which is Stayman but showing a ♥ stop.
- Hand E: 2♠. 10 points is in-between 2♠ and 3♠ and you need a really good 10 to bid 3♠. With a totally flat hand full of quacks and only 3 trumps 2♠ is the bid.
- Hand F: Dbl. You don't need points to bid in the balancing seat (partner has them) and this hand is just about good enough for a take-out double.

Fri 1st July

Club News Sheet – No. 139

Mon 27 th	1 st Tobjorn/Gunn	64%	2 nd Bob/Dave	59%
Wed 29 th	1 st Tobjorn/Gunn	63%	2 nd Bill/Gene	58%
Fri 1 st	1 st Tobjorn/Gunn	56%	2 nd Bob/Dave	54%

Well done Tobjorn/Gunn, the triple at the first attempt.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A Hand B With Hand A Partner opens 1♥ and RHO overcalls 2♦, what do you do?

♠ KJ1083	♠ A987
♥ 105	♥ 72
♦ 108	♦ Q2
♣ K532	♣ 98652

With Hand B partner opens 1♥ and you respond 1♠. Partner then bids 2♦, what do you do?

Hand C Hand D With Hand C partner opens 1♦ and you bid 1♥. Partner then bids 3♣, what do you do?

♠ 9652	♠ AQ7
♥ KQJ76	♥ AK865
♦ 107	♦ 9
♣ J10	♣ A964

With Hand D you open 1♥ and LHO overcalls 2♦. Partner doubles (negative, promising only 4+ ♠'s and 6+ points) and RHO bids 3♦. What do you do?

Hand E Hand F

♠ K	♠ 7
♥ AQJ85432	♥ AQJ85432
♦ K	♦ 7
♣ K72	♣ 872

What do you open with Hand E?

What do you open with Hand F?

Hand G Hand H With Hand G partner opens 1♥ and you respond 1♠. Partner then bid 2♦, what do you do?

♠ AJ1086	♠ 84
♥ 103	♥ A9876
♦ 103	♦ 84
♣ Q643	♣ A874

With Hand H partner opens 1♥, what do you bid?

Who's right?

I overheard this conversation between one pair on Friday – who (if anyone) is right?

Player A: You overcalled, so I assumed you had an opening hand.

Player B: No, if I had an opening hand I would have doubled.

The Multi 2♦

I was asked if I could write something about the multi 2♦ opening, so here goes: -
There are many different variations of the multi but here is one pretty good variation:

2♦ = either (1) A weak (6 card) ♥ or ♠ hand, say 6-9 points.
or (2) A strong hand with a good long minor suit
or (3) A big balanced NT hand.

Now responder does not know what type of hand his partner has and should assume it is type (1). So he normally responds 2♥ which opener will pass or correct to 2♠. One exception is when responder has a hand with decent ♥'s such that he can bid to 3♥ (or more) if partner has a weak ♥ hand but not opposite a weak ♠ hand. With such a hand responder bids 2♠ which opener will either pass or correct to 3♥ holding weak ♥'s (or 4♥ with a max).

If responder has game ambitions opposite a presumed weak major hand, he can enquire about opener's hand type by bidding 2NT. Typical responses are: -

3♣ = weak ♥'s, upper point range (8-9)
3♦ = weak ♠'s, upper point range (8-9)
3♥ = weak ♥'s, lower point range (6-7)
3♠ = weak ♠'s, lower point range (6-7)
3NT = strong NT hand, see below for point range (I suggest 22-24).
4♣ = strong hand with a good long ♣ suit
4♦ = strong hand with a good long ♦ suit

Note that it's OK to go past 3NT with the strong ♣/♦ type hands as partner is also strong and slam may be there. My personal preference after a 4♣/♦ response is that the next suit up (i.e. 4♦ over 4♣ and 4♥ over 4♦) is RKCB (Kickback) as 4NT is not suitable to ask for aces/keycards with a minor suit as trumps.

What's the point range for 2♦ - 2♥ - 2NT?

It's up to you, but here's my suggestion: -

Your opening 2NT is 20-21
2♦ - 2♥ - 2NT is 22-24
2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT is 25+

The big advantage of this scheme is that you never need to open or rebid 3NT, so Stayman and transfers are always on. Another big advantage is that a 2♣ opening is always absolutely game forcing.

How strong a hand for 2♦ - 2♥ - 3♣/♦?

It's up to you. I recommend something like: -

♠ 65 or ♠ 5 i.e. about 9 playing tricks.
♥ A ♥ A6
♦ AKQ9854 ♦ KQJ
♣ A65 ♣ KQJ9874

So what is an opening 2♥/♠ bid?

Again, it's up to you. You can play them as strong but one popular treatment in Holland is weak (say 6-9) with 5 cards in the major and 4 cards in an unspecified minor. 2NT by responder would then ask for the minor.

So no weak 2♦?

If you play 2♦ as the multi then obviously you have lost the 2♦ as a weak hand – no great loss in my opinion. But the Dutch have actually come up with a solution!! Some (mainly Dutch) players play that an opening 2♣ bid is either very strong or else is a weak 2♦ opening. This means that when partner opens 2♣ you have to bid 2♦ unless you have a hand good enough to press on over a weak two in ♦'s. We'll leave it there!

That Moysian fit again

Board 20 from Monday 27th

I mentioned last week that occasionally a 4-3 major suit fit may work, especially if you have goods high trump cards and you take ruffs in the short trump suit hand. I was asked how anybody could bid to a poor 4♠ on these E-W cards, I happen to know as I was West!

Dealer:	♠ J97				
West	♥ J104	West	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ AQJ965	pass	2♦	3♣	pass
	♣ 5	3♥	pass	4♣	pass
		4♠ (1)	all pass		
♠ KQ43	N	♠ 862			
♥ K7653	W E	♥ A			
♦ 74	S	♦ 1082			
♣ 86		♣ AKQJ107			
	♠ A105				
	♥ Q982				
	♦ K3				
	♣ 9432				

(1) Partner's 3♣ overcall promised a good hand. 3♥ was not forcing and partner's 4♣ bid shows an even better hand. 5♣ is possible but there may well be 3 top losers, pass is obviously a very sensible (perhaps the best?) option. It's pushing it, but I tried 4♠.

And what happened?

4♠ made as the trumps split with the ace on-side. There was the odd silly contract so 3♣ making or making +1 scored badly.

The bottom line:-

A Moysian fit may play well if you can get a ruff in the short trump hand. This particular contract was very lucky to make but West played it well (sorry, scrap that - he was simply lucky) by leading up to the ♠ KQxx twice, drawing trumps and running the ♣'s. The contract can be beaten on a ♦ lead from North or if North gets a ♣ ruff – as I said, a lousy contract and a lucky make.

A possible Moysian fit again?

Board 2 from Monday 27th

Dealer: ♠ 94
East ♥ 743
N-S vul ♦ J7542
♣ Q87

♠ KJ1083	N	♠ AQ7
♥ 105	W E	♥ AK865
♦ 108	S	♦ 9
♣ K532		♣ A964
	♠ 652	
	♥ QJ9	
	♦ AKQ63	
	♣ J10	

West(A)	North(me)	East(D)	South
-	-	1♥	2♦
dbl (1)	3♦ (2)	3♥ (3)	pass
pass (4)	pass		

- (1) What did you bid with this West hand A in this week's quiz? You cannot bid 2♠ as that promises 11+ points, correct is a negative double. This promises 4+ ♠'s and 6+ points.
- (2) Now 'The Law' says that, all things being equal, you can compete to the total number of trumps (so 4♦ here?). But here all things are not equal, N-S are vulnerable and the opponents probably have far more points. 'The Law' needs adjusting here and 3♦ is quite sufficient with this North hand in this situation.
- (3) But even the modest raise to 3♦ gave East a problem. What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? If we assume that partner's negative double only promises ♠'s (that's what I recommend) then 4♣ is out as that would show a much stronger hand. The choices are thus pass, 3♥, 3♠ or double. Which did you choose? I prefer 3♠ - it may well be a Moysian fit but with two great top trumps and the ability to ruff ♦'s in the short trump hand I most definitely prefer 3♠ - even if it turns out to be a 4-3 fit. Double (take-out) and asking partner to choose the suit/level is an equally good alternative.
- (4) Pass here is obviously correct. If partner had bid 3♠ (or dbl) then West should try 4♠.

And what happened? Obviously a ♠ contract is far better than ♥'s and 3♥ scored badly. 4♠ was bid and made just once and just two other pairs managed 3♠.

The bottom line. This is a 'new theme' for the last couple of news-sheets – it's sometimes OK to support with 3 cards (so a possible 4-3 fit) if you have decent trumps and can ruff the danger suit in the 3 trump hand.

Is a 4♥/♠ opening weak or strongish?

Board 20 from Monday 27th

Dealer: ♠ 842
North ♥ K8
Both vul ♦ 10954
♣ Q1098

West North East(E) South
- pass 4♥ (1) pass
pass (2) pass

♠ AQ3 N ♠ K
♥ 7 W E ♥ AQJ85432
♦ AQ762 S ♦ K
♣ A653 ♣ K72
♠ J109765
♥ 106
♦ J83
♣ J4

- (1) What did you open with this East hand E in this week’s quiz? An opening 4♥/♠ is normally played a pre-emptive; the same as a 3♥/♠ opening but with one more trump.
- (2) And I too would pass with this West hand as slam looks remote.

And what happened? 13 tricks were easy with the ♥K doubleton on-side.

Hand F So an easy 6♥ missed, what went wrong? Now I agree that 4♥ is a better opening than 1♥ provided that partner knows that it may be this good.
♠ 7 But then what do you open with this Hand F from the quiz?
♥ AQJ85432 Clearly you cannot make the same opening bid.
♦ 7 The answer is to play Namyats.
♣ 872 In my (and many others) opinion 4♣ and 4♦ are not really good as natural pre-emptive bids (as they go past 3NT if partner has a good hand) – so with a weak minor hand open 3♣/♦ or 5♣/♦ or a gambling 3NT.

So that leaves 4♣/♦ ‘spare’ and the best use of these is to distinguish between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ 4♥/♠ openings. So a 4♣ opening is a good 4♥ and a 4♦ opening is a good 4♠. So playing Namyats we open Hand E with 4♣ and with Hand F with 4♥.

Simple Preference - Part 1

Simple preference is just that, it says that the bidder prefers partner's 1st bid suit to his 2nd bid. It does not imply support and is very often made on a doubleton. This would be a typical example: -

West	East(B)	West	East
♠ Q4	♠ A987	1♥	1♠
♥ AQJ85	♥ 72	2♦	2♥ (1)
♦ KJ54	♦ Q2	pass	
♣ 73	♣ 98652		

- (1) What did you bid with this East hand B in this week's quiz? East has a weak hand and does not want to press on but pass is incorrect. 2♥ is the correct bid, it simply says that East has a weakish hand and prefers ♥'s to ♦'s. The fact that the ♦'s are slightly better is irrelevant – partner has 5 or 6 ♥'s and maybe only 4 ♦'s – so put him back into the first bid suit as that's a known 5-2 fit and also it's a major (so scores more if it makes).

But there were a couple of examples of it going wrong on Friday: -

Simple Preference - Part 2

Board 11 from Friday 1st

Dealer: ♠ AJ1086

South ♥ 103

Love all ♦ 103

♣ Q643

♠ 943

N

♠ K52

♥ 96

W E

♥ K84

♦ 975

S

♦ AQ42

♣ J10752

♣ AK8

♠ Q7

♥ AQJ752

♦ KJ86

♣ 9

West	North(G)	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
pass	1♠	pass	2♦ (1)
pass	2♠ (2)	all pass	

- (1) South has options here. I don't consider the hand quite good enough for 3♥ and so the choice is between 2♦ and 2♥. Either is fine by me.
- (2) But what did you bid with this North hand G in this week's quiz? North has only promised 4♠'s and so decided to show his 5th. Without extra values or extra ♠ length (so 6+) this is incorrect. Partner has shown a weakish hand with 5+ ♥'s and 4+ ♦'s. He may be very short in ♠'s and North should give preference to 2♥ to play in the known 5(+)-2 fit.

And what happened? The usual mixed results but 3♥ and 2♠ both made exactly and 2♠ scored a bottom_

Simple Preference - Part 3

Board 19 from Friday 1st

Dealer:	♠ AK1073	
South	♥ 543	
E-W vul	♦ J9	
	♣ Q85	
♠ J	N	♠ 9652
♥ A98	W E	♥ KQJ76
♦ AK652	S	♦ 107
♣ AK42		♣ J10
	♠ Q84	
	♥ 102	
	♦ Q843	
	♣ 9763	

<u>Table A</u>			
West	North	East(C)	South
-	-	-	pass
1♦	pass (1)	1♥	pass
3♣	pass	3♦ (2)	pass
4♦ (3)	pass	pass (4)	pass

<u>Table B</u>			
West(me)	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
1♦	1♠ (1)	dbl (6)	pass
2♠ (7)	pass	3♥ (8)	pass
4♥ (9)	all pass		

- Table A:
- (1) I would overcall 1♠ here.
 - (2) This is simple preference. What did you bid with this East hand C in this week's quiz? It's a very good 7 points (a good 5 card major and good intermediates) and I would bid 3♥ here. The auction is game forcing and it certainly can do no harm to show this excellent 5 card ♥ suit rather than giving preference with a two card suit. The difference between this example and the last one is that the previous auction was not forcing.
 - (3) West expected ♦ support and bid 4♦. I would bid 4♥ even though it should be a Moysian fit, East can always correct to 5♦ with 4 weak ♥'s.
 - (4) I consider this auction game forcing but perhaps not everybody agrees with me? I would bid 4♥ here but then I would not be in this position.

- Table B:
- (1) This North overcalled 1♠.
 - (6) But that's no bother for East as a negative double shows exactly the same as 1♥ at Table A, 4+ ♠'s and 6+ points.
 - (7) West is in much the same position as his counterpart at Table A but North's ♠ overcall has actually helped. Rather than bid a (game forcing) 3♣ I chose to bid 2♠. You know me – if partner has a ♠ stop then I want (him) to be in 3NT.
 - (8) This denies a ♠ stop but does not promise a 5 card ♥ suit.
 - (9) And if you read last week's news sheet you'll know that I'm not afraid of a possible Moysian fit if we take the ruffs in the short trump hand.

And what happened. 4♥ played very nicely, 4♦ did not.

The bottom lines: -

- You don't have to give preference if you have a more descriptive bid and extra values.
- You don't have to give preference in a game forcing situation.
- Simply giving preference shows a minimal hand and does not promise a fit.

A Pre-emptive jump raise?

Board 7 from Friday 1st

Dealer: ♠ 84
South ♥ A9876
Both vul ♦ 84
♣ A874

West	North(H)	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
pass (1)	2♥ (2)	2♠	pass
4♠	all pass		

♠ QJ62	N	♠ AK1053
♥ 3	W E	♥ 105
♦ KQJ1096	S	♦ 73
♣ J10		♣ K632
	♠ 97	
	♥ KQJ42	
	♦ A52	
	♣ Q95	

- (1) A 2♦ overcall is an alternative.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand H in this week's quiz? Now you all know me, I would bid 4♥ here, simply because I have 5 trumps and so a total of at least 10. But N-S are vulnerable and some people may prefer a more conservative 3♥ and that's fairly reasonable I suppose, 2♥ is simply not enough.

And what happened? 4♠ made comfortably. Every other N-S pair played in 3♥ or 4♥.

Now the 3♥ bidders did well as 3♥ made and 4♥ went one down, but I don't think that 3♥ by North is enough. If North bids 3♥ then that keeps East quiet (even 2♠ was a bit pushy) but if 3♥ gets passed round to West he can (should) safely double. If partner bids ♠'s or ♦'s that's fine and if partner bids 4♣ then West can convert into 4♦ - this does not show a big hand (as it normally would) as West has already passed and it would show this hand type exactly.

But it would be a bold West indeed who ventures a bid over 4♥ had North bid that.

The bottom lines: -

- With 5 card support for partner's 1♥/♠ opening – jump to 4♥/♠ unless the hand is too strong.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: Dbl (negative). You do not have the values to bid 2♠, so double to show 4+ ♠'s and 6+ points.
- Hand B: 2♥. This is simple preference and does not promise anything other than that you probably prefer to play in ♥'s than ♦'s. You cannot bid 2NT here as that would show 11-12 points and 3♣ would be the 4th suit and forcing to game.
- Hand C: 3♥. The auction is game forcing and so there is no need to give preference on a two card suit. Show this great ♥ suit.
- Hand D: 3♠ (or dbl). Partner has only promised 4 ♠'s so it may be a Moysian fit, but 3♠ is a much better bid than 3♥ in my view. The hand is not strong enough to force to game but a free bid at the 3 level now is highly invitational and so correct. It depends upon how you play your negative doubles, but I play that partner's double of 2♦ here only promises 4 ♠'s (and not also 4 ♣'s) and so to bid 4♣ would show a strong (game forcing) hand in my style. Double, asking partner to choose between ♥'s and ♠'s, is an equally good bid.
- Hand E: 4♣ (Namyats). If you don't play Namyats it's a problem as it's too good for 4♥ and not good enough for 2♣. You would have to open 1♥. Even if you play strong twos (or Benjamin) I would still prefer a Namyats 4♣ as it may prevent the opponents bidding their ♠'s.
- Hand F: 4♥. Pre-emptive with 8 ♥'s.
- Hand G: 2♥. Simple preference. Partner has shown a weakish hand with the red suits and you are not good enough to go past 2♥.
- Hand H: 4♥. You know me, follow The Law (of total tricks). Some players may prefer 3♥, especially if vulnerable, but I don't think it's enough against good opposition. 2♥ is feeble.

Who's right? Both players were incorrect.

A direct overcall at the one level is around 7-16 points so neither denies nor promises opening values.

A double is generally about opening strength but you should not double with an unsuitable hand or a hand more suitable for an overcall just because it has 12+ points.

But note that an overcall at the two level should be around opening values. With a weak hand and a 6 or 7 card suit you can make a weak jump overcall.

Packing up the Bidding boxes?

Most clubs in the UK and elsewhere request members to pack up their bidding boxes at the end of the session, and a few members have mentioned to me that some players do not. We have a variety of different kinds of bidding boxes in the club and they are all *very* expensive; as I don't want them broken can I ask people *not* to pack up the bidding boxes unless they are completely sure about how to do it. It only takes me a few seconds and I prefer taking a bit more time clearing up at the end of a session than to have broken boxes.

8th July

Club News Sheet – No. 140

Mon 4 th	1 st	Jean-Marc/Terry	65%	2 nd	Bill/Gene	60%
Wed 6 th	1 st	John Gavens/Terry	62%	2 nd	Tobjorn/Gunn	60%
Fri 8 th	1 st	Jean-Marc/Phil	61%	2 nd	Bob/Dave	58%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A partner opens 1♦ and you respond 2♣. Partner then rebids 2♦, what do you do?
♠ 1052	♠ K82	
♥ AQ	♥ A103	With Hand B LHO opens 2♥ which partner doubles, what do you do?
♦ KQ	♦ K862	
♣ AQ9654	♣ 1093	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C you are playing Acol – so a weak NT for a change. Partner opens 1NT (12-14). (a) What do you bid? (b) Suppose you try 2♣ stayman, then what do you bid if partner responds 2♠?
♠ AQ7	♠ A10	
♥ 10	♥ AQ	
♦ KJ75	♦ AKQ842	
♣ AJ742	♣ J32	With Hand D RHO opens 3♥, what do you do?
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E you open 1♦ and partner responds 2♣ (a) What do you rebid? (b) Suppose that you choose 2♦ and partner bids 2♥, what do you bid now?
♠ AK86	♠ AJ32	
♥ 983	♥ J5	
♦ A9865	♦ J10	
♣ 8	♣ KQ842	With Hand F RHO opens 2♥, what do you do?
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1♦ and RHO doubles, what do you do? With Hand H partner opens 3♥, what do you do?
♠ 63	♠ A2	
♥ J83	♥ 62	
♦ A98	♦ Q10	
♣ J8543	♣ AKQJ1042	

Natural or 4th suit forcing?

West	East	There was a debate about this bidding sequence on Monday. Is West's 2♠ bid natural or 4 th suit forcing?
1♦	2♣	
2♦	2♥	
2♠?		

4th suit forcing or natural?

Board 25 from Monday 4th

E-W went astray here (but lucked out in the end). What was your answer to the 4th suit forcing/natural question in this week's quiz? Here's the complete deal:

Dealer:	♠ 94					
North	♥ J107642	West(A)	North	East(E)	South	
E-W vul	♦ 32	-	pass (1)	1♦	pass	
	♣ K72	2♣	pass	2♦ (2)	pass	
		2♥ (3)	pass	2♠ (4)	pass	
♠ 1052	N	♠ AK86	3♠ (5)	pass	4♠ (6)	dbl
♥ AQ	W E	♥ 983	5♦ (7)	pass	pass	dbl (8)
♦ KQ	S	♦ A9865	all pass			
♣ AQ9654		♣ 8				
	♠ QJ73					
	♥ K5					
	♦ J1074					
	♣ J103					

- (1) At favourable vulnerability a 2♥ opening is not totally unreasonable with these cards.
- (2) What did you bid with this East hand E(a) in this week's quiz? 2♦ is perhaps the best of the poor choices. 2♠ is a reverse and shows a strong hand in most people's style. 2NT(12-14) is a reasonable alternative (but then there would be no story).
- (3) West is in a spot here, what did you bid with this West hand A in this week's quiz? You obviously have game going values and so must make a forcing bid. 3♣ is not forcing and 4♣ or 4♦ go past 3NT and are probably not forcing anyway. I was West here and chose to 'manufacture' a 2♥ bid – if partner subsequently insists on ♥'s I can always try to retreat into NT? Anyway, it's difficult unless you simply punt 3NT.
- (4) What did you bid with this East hand E(b) in this week's quiz? I would simply bid 2NT or 3NT as I consider 2♠ to be 4th suit forcing here.
- (5) And West is again in a spot, what should he respond to East's '4th suit forcing' bid? Now E-W were (obviously) not a familiar partnership and West did not want to bid 3♣ in case East did not take it as forcing (I think it's easiest to play that everything after the 4th suit forcing is forcing to game). Anyway, West decided to simply raise the 4th suit; raising the 4th suit is a nebulous business and may or may not be natural – but it certainly is forcing.
- (6) And East thought that it was natural (i.e. West was 4405 shape).
- (7) West knew that this was a total screw up and so simply bid the ♦ game.
- (8) Although West had alerted East's 2♠ bid at (4) South did not bother to ask. He assumed that he had a ♠ trick coming (incorrect) and a ♦ trick coming (correct). He also assumed that E-W had no idea what they were doing (correct) and so decided to double. I think that this is rather silly – obviously E-W have missed 3NT and simply passing 5♦ should net a good score.

And what happened? 5♦ doubled made for 750 and an 'undeserved' top to E-W (but South deserved his bottom). 3NT was bid and made at two tables and there were the usual few random results.

The bottom line: -

- 4th suit forcing still applies if one player has repeated his suit.

4th Suit Forcing

After the afore mentioned debate I consulted 'my library' and I did indeed find one old book that implied that 4th suit forcing was only by responder. I think that that is nonsense. Anyway, I then found a rather more up-to-date book on conventions that agreed with me.

East	West	North	East	South
♠ A86	-	pass (1)	1♦	pass
♥ 98	2♣	pass	2♦ (2)	pass
♦ AK8765	2♥ (3)	pass	? (4)	pass
♣ Q5				

So let's get back to our example and change the East hand to this. What would you bid at (4)? Of course you have to bid 2♠, 4th suit forcing, as Axx is very unlikely to be a sufficient ♠ stop if you bid 3NT and partner has nothing in ♠'s. In fact many experienced pairs play that the 4th suit in this actual situation only asks for a ½ stop (say Qx) as it is unlikely that East would be looking for 3NT if he himself held nothing in ♠'s. And if partner indeed has ♠Qx then 3NT needs to be played with him as declarer.

A take-out double is playable in the other 3 suits

Board 20 from Monday 4th

There was a query on the traveller for this result; how on earth could North possibly end up in 3♦? I happen to know because I was (West) at the table: -

Dealer:	♠ K82	West	North(B)	East	South(F)
West	♥ A103	pass	pass	2♥	dbl (1)
Both vul	♦ K862	pass	3♦ (2)	pass	pass
	♣ 1093	pass			
		pass			
♠ Q1074	N	♠ 96			
♥ 84	W E	♥ KQ9762			
♦ AQ974	S	♦ 53			
♣ J7		♣ A65			
	♠ AJ32				
	♥ J5				
	♦ J10				
	♣ KQ842				

(1) What did you bid with this South hand F in this week's quiz? The hand has 4 ♠'s and double will work nicely if partner is co-operative enough to bid ♠'s. But the problem is that if North responds with 3♦ then South is totally fixed. I would simply pass.

(2) And here we see the problem, North did indeed bid his ♦ suit.

But what did you bid with this North hand B in this week's quiz? With reasonable ♥'s and a miserable ♦ suit I would bid 2NT (which South would obviously pass).

And what happened? Clearly 3♦ is a poor contact for North and it went 4 down, so 400 away. 2NT by North at another table went just two down. 2♥ was passed out once and went minus two for 200 to N-S. The bottom lines: -

- A take-out double should be playable in the other 3 suits.
- A 1NT response to partner's take-out double is 6-10 with a stop.
- If the opening bid was at the two level you need a little more for 2NT, say 8-11.

Don't bid again having pre-empted

Board 8 from Monday 4th

How many times have I said this in the news-sheets? But one of our top players disagrees with it on this particular deal and tried to justify it, it's falling on deaf ears with me and I stick to my principles.

Dealer:	♠ KJ963				
North	♥ 6	West	North(me)	East	South
Love all	♦ KJ104	pass	1♠	2♥	2♠
	♣ AJ4	4♥ (1)	4♠ (2)	pass	pass
		5♥ (3)	dbl	all pass	
♠ Q2	N	♠ A74			
♥ K10752	W E	♥ AQ985			
♦ A95	S	♦ Q86			
♣ 873		♣ 92			
	♠ 1085				
	♥ J3				
	♦ 732				
	♣ KQ1065				

- (1) This is correct (the Law). In competitive situation bid to the limit of 'The Law'.
- (2) And West's pre-emptive jump has made life difficult for North. If West has passed then North would make a game try (which South would decline). But West's excellent 4♥ bid has put on the pressure and North gambled 4♠ because of his decent shape.
- (3) But this is totally wrong. After a pre-empt nobody really knows what's going on and 4♠ may well be too high. West should pass.

His 'excuse' was that if 4♠ was going down then East should have doubled. I totally disagree; East has nothing more than his two level overcall suggested and has absolutely no reason to double. But West has much more than he needed for the pre-emptive raise to 4♥. West should be happy to defend, especially as he has a reasonably good defensive hand. If anybody should double 4♠ it is West; but I would pass.

And what happened? 5♥ doubled was 2 down for a clear top to N-S. 4♠ was doubled at another table and went -3. Another 4♠ contract went one down undoubled and 3♠ made exactly. So nobody made 10 tricks in ♠'s. I note that one other pair bid on to 5♥ but were not doubled, I most certainly would (did) double with the North hand – if only to stop South from bidding 5♠ as South may quite reasonably expect North to have a better hand for his 4♠ bid.

The bottom lines: -

- Do not bid again having pre-empted (a jump to the 4 level of partner's overcall is a pre-empt).

Sportsmanlike behaviour

There was a minor 'incident' on Wednesday. I was partnering John Gavens and he was declarer against Dave and Chuck. About ½ way through the hand John led a card from dummy and both defenders discarded. John and I simultaneously asked which of the defenders had revoked (so they can correct it immediately with the minimal amount of fuss). It was, of course, Chuck. So the complete opposite of the infamous 'unsportsmanlike' incident. I simply commented that that's the way we do it at our club. Agreed?

That Moysian fit yet again

Board 14 from Wednesday 6th

The 4-3 fit has been a theme in the last couple of news sheets. This time I was involved but it was my partner who chose to put me in the Moysian game contract – and he had not yet read the recent news sheets. So it's not just me who thinks it is sometimes correct.

Dealer:	♠ AQ7				
East	♥ 10	West	North(C)	East	South(me)
Love all	♦ KJ75	-	-	pass	1NT (1)
	♣ AJ742	pass	2♣ (2)	pass	2♠
		pass	4♠ (3)	all pass	
♠ J32	N	♠ 964			
♥ QJ964	W E	♥ K8732			
♦ Q64	S	♦ 932			
♣ 106		♣ K5	(1) 12-14		
	♠ K1085				
	♥ A5				
	♦ A108				
	♣ Q983				

- (1) I was playing Acol with this partner, so 1NT is 12-14.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand C(a) in this week's quiz? You have the values for 3NT but the ♥ suit may be wide open. I like my partner's 2♣ Stayman bid here – presumably with the intention of bidding 3NT if partner bids 2♥.
- (3) What did you bid with this North hand C(b) in this week's quiz? You could try 3♣ if you play that as forcing but most play it as a weak hand with 4 ♥'s and 5+ ♣'s. No, easily the best bid is 4♠ - go for the Moysian 4-3 ♠ fit game as 3NT will be dodgy when the opponents are known to hold at least 9 ♥'s. Well bid partner.

And what happened? 4♠ played very well and made 12 tricks for a complete top. Even if the trumps broke 4-2 it is still easily the best contract. And at other tables? On pair found a reasonable 5♣ which made exactly for an average score. The 3 other pairs all bid the poor 3NT, with only two getting what they deserved and going down.

The bottom lines: -

- Think about the Moysian fit if you have good 3 card support for partner's 4 card major and are short in another suit and so can take a ruff or two in the short trump hand.

And how should the bidding go playing Standard American assuming no interference?

There are a few options, here is one: -

North	South	(4) You could bid 2♥ here, 4 th suit, primarily to check for a ♥ stopper. But I would prefer to simply bid 4♠, going for the Moysian fit anyway as 1 stop may not be enough.
-	1♣	Another alternative is to bid the 4 th suit to ask for a stopper, but one stopper may not be enough and it gets a bit too complex for me when you have a simple 4♠ bid available.
1♦	1♠	
4♠ (4)	pass	

Redouble is for blood

Board 25 from Wednesday 6th

I've mentioned this a few times in the past but two players apparently did not understand this on Wednesday. When Partner opens and RHO doubles, then re-double shows 9+ points and is generally out for blood (to double the opponents wherever they rest if you can). Any subsequent double by either opener or responder is strictly for penalties.

Dealer:	♠ Q10985				
North	♥ A1095	West	North	East(G)	South
E-W vul	♦ 54	-	pass	pass	pass
	♣ Q6	1♦	dbl (1)	redbl(2)	1♠ (3)
		dbl (4)	redbl(5)	3♣ (6)	pass
♠ AJ	N	♠ 63	3NT (6)	all pass	
♥ KQ4	W E	♥ J83			
♦ KQ1063	S	♦ A98			
♣ K107		♣ J8543			
	♠ K742				
	♥ 762				
	♦ J72				
	♣ A92				

- (1) Some may prefer a 1♠ overcall.
- (2) What did you bid with this East hand G in this week's quiz? This redouble is incorrect of course, redouble here shows 9+ points and generally a mis-fit for partner. Now one can bid 1NT but that really should be upper range +- 8-9 after a double. I would pass with this hand.
- (3) Pass may be theoretically correct (only bid with a 5 card suit) but South was fairly sure that partner had both majors for this auction and so bid his 4-carder.
- (4) Penalties. With '9+' points opposite West thought that setting the opponents was the best bet. It's debatable at this vulnerability when they have a fit. I certainly would not double as pass is forcing after partner's strength-showing redouble – and if partner cannot double 1♠ because he does not have a decent ♠ holding then game (possibly slam) is there in a suit somewhere (assuming he has his 9+ points and knows what he is doing).
- (5) This is nonsense of course. North later explained that he redoubled because he thought that 1♠ would make. Exactly! Talk about being greedy. 1♠ would have made easily and if he'd passed then N-S would get a lovely top for making 1♠ doubled with an overtrick.
- (6) East wisely decided to bid as he has already mislead partner.
- (7) And West bid what he thought he could make (opposite the supposed 9+ points). At this stage I assume that he realised that partner did not have his redouble bid?

And what happened? 3NT was bid at 4 of the 5 tables (with a different auction I hope) and went the obvious two down at most tables for 200 away. 1♠ doubled +1 would have netted 260. Just one E-W pair stopped in 3♣ for the top score their way.

The bottom lines: -

- A redouble of RHO's initial overcall is 9+ points, often with a mis-fit.
- A subsequent double by either opener or responder is for penalties.
- If you expect to make a doubled contract, don't get greedy and redouble – especially if the opponents have somewhere to run.

5♦ did not score well here and I was asked how to bid the E-W hands.

Dealer:	♠ K72					
North	♥ 1085		West(D)	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ 976		-	-	-	3♥
	♣ Q1054		dbl (1)	4♥ (2)	4♠ (3)	pass
			5♦ (4)	pass	pass (5)	pass
♠ A10	N	♠ QJ8543				
♥ AQ	W E	♥ 2				
♦ AKQ842	S	♦ 103				
♣ J32		♣ A986				
	♠ 96					
	♥ KJ97643					
	♦ J5					
	♣ K7					

- (1) What did you bid with this West hand D in this week’s quiz? Without the ♠ suit I will not double and I would bid 3NT.
- (2) Now ‘The Law’ says to compete, but there are always exceptions. You have 10 combined ♥’s but with this totally flat heap 4♥ is very dangerous at this vulnerability – you only need to go two down to get a bottom even if the opponents can make game.
- (3) East has some values and a good 6 card suit, a free bid here shows values and 4♠ is correct.
- (4) And now we see the problem with the initial double. Partner (not unexpectedly) bid ♠’s but West does not know that it’s a 6 card suit (if he had bid 3NT initially and East bid ♠’s the he would know it was a long suit). Anyway, West bid 5♦ now, showing a good hand.
- (5) And it’s difficult for East to bid on as he has already shown values and has no extras.

And what happened? 5♦ made +1 but scored poorly. 4♥ was doubled once and went for 800. The reasonable 4♠ was bid twice and made 2 overtricks. Nobody bid 3NT but Jean-Marc & Phil did bid to the excellent 6NT for 990 – well done.

The bottom lines: -

- The simple version of ‘The Law’ (compete to the total number of trumps) is only applicable when the points are roughly equal. When the opponents clearly have more points it is dangerous and is especially dangerous at unfavourable vulnerability.
- Devalue totally flat (4333 type) hands – like this North one.
- Generally speaking, don’t double ♥’s without 4 ♠’s.
- Think NT when you have a double stop over the pre-empter.
- As is often the case with a decent long minor, think NT.

If 3NT is an option – then bid it? – part 2

Board 16 from Friday 8th

Dealer: ♠ 96543
West ♥ 4
E-W vul ♦ J83
♣ 9765

West	North	East(H)	South
3♥ (1)	pass	3NT	all pass

♠ KJ	N	♠ A2
♥ KJ9873	W E	♥ 62
♦ K652	S	♦ Q10
♣ 8		♣ AKQJ1042
	♠ Q1087	
	♥ AQ105	
	♦ A974	
	♣ 3	

- (1) Perhaps some may consider this too strong for a pre-empt and open 1♥. I won't argue with either as when vulnerable (against not) one's pre-empts should be decent.
- (2) What did you bid with this East hand H in this week's quiz? You all know me by now – with a long solid minor, bid NT. I simply bid 3NT.

And what happened? 11 tricks were there on the ♦ lead (that ♦10 was very useful). Just one other E-W pair found 3NT and the majority ignored my continual advice about 3NT being better than 5♣/♦ and played in 5♣ either making or going one down, a poor score either way.

The bottom lines: -

- As is often the case with a decent long minor, think NT.
- If 3NT is an option – then bid it?

Packing up the bidding boxes

I mentioned this last week, please don't pack them up unless you are completely sure how to do it. In particular the rectangular red ones are a bit tricky – this is because I have laminated some cards and protected others with selotape (otherwise they wear out in no time) and they are a tight fit and must be replaced in the box in exactly the right way.

Also the 'old fashioned' green boxes (with the side-ways cards) are easily broken, two to date, but I only now need to use them when we get 20+ tables. I too can dream.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: This is very tricky; you have game forcing values and cannot make a weak or invitational bid (so 2♦, 2NT, 3♣ and 3♦ are out). Also you cannot go past 3NT (so should not bid 4♣/♦) as 3NT may easily be the best spot. 3NT is very reasonable but I was worried about possible ♠ losers and so bid 2♥ (ostensibly natural and certainly forcing) assuming that partner would bid NT if he had ♠'s stopped – and with something like ♠Kx partner needs to be declarer in NT. If you think that this is too devious (I certainly won't argue) then bid 3NT. If you play 2/1 over 1♦ then 3♣ is forcing here and that is then clearly the best bid.
- Hand B: 2NT. I would like slightly better ♥'s but the ♥A is excellent as you can hold up two rounds if necessary.
- Hand C: (a) 2♣, Stayman. Now normally a 2♣ bid *guarantees* a 4 card major but this hand is a rare exception (I'll explain why at (c) later).
(b) 4♠. It's a 4-3 fit but with a singleton and 3 good trumps it is surely the best bet.
(c) Now partner may have bid 2♥ over your 2♣. You would then bid 3NT and if partner was 4-4 in the majors he would convert to 4♠ assuming that you too had 4 ♠'s. I think that that's a risk worth taking and the 4-3 ♠ fit may play better than 3NT anyway, especially if partner's ♥'s are poor.
- Hand D: 3NT. Double is a poor bid without 4 ♠'s. 4♦ is not forcing and I would fancy my chances of making 3NT anyway. Double followed by 4♦ over partner's expected 3♠ response would be forcing, but where are you going and it's gone past 3NT which is probably the best spot. And if you double and partner has a decent hand with just 4 ♠'s he will jump to 4♠ and you are again fixed as you have no idea if he has 4,5 or 6+ ♠'s!
- Hand E: (a) 2NT or 2♦. 2NT is 12-14 as it is the cheapest NT bid available - it is partner who has pushed the bidding up to the two level. 2♦ is a reasonable alternative and some may prefer that to bidding NT with a singleton in partner's suit. 2♠ is incorrect as that is a reverse and shows a stronger hand unless you have agreed otherwise (i.e. play 2/1 in this situation).
(b) 2NT (or 3NT). You have the ♠'s stopped so bid NT now (if you did not bid it last go). 2♠ is incorrect as it is 4th suit forcing and principally asking partner for a ♠ stop in this situation.
- Hand F: Pass. If you double you will be in trouble if partner responds 3♦.
- Hand G: Pass. Without the double you would have made a 'courtesy' bid of 1NT; but now that RHO has bid you should only bid 1NT if it is constructive (i.e. about 8-9 points) as partner has another bid if he has a strong hand.
- Hand H: 3NT. Far better than mentioning the ♣ suit, especially at pairs scoring.

Natural or 4th suit?

I would play this as 4th suit forcing, asking partner to describe his hand further with the first priority being to bid NT with a ♠ stop. If West had a real ♠ suit here then he should simply bid NT himself, East cannot realistically also have 4 ♠'s for his bidding to date. If East indeed had 4405 shape then I would have responded 1♥ with the hand in order to avoid any possible mis-understandings over 4th suit forcing and possibly missing a 4-4 ♠ fit.

15th July 2005

Club News Sheet – No. 141

Mon	11 th	N-S	1 st	Jim(Sco)/John Gavens	63%	2 nd	Bob/Dave	60%
Mon	11 th	E-W	1 st	Kenneth//Terry	60%	2 nd	Tobjorn/Gunn	58%
Wed	13 th	N-S	1 st	John Gavens/Terry	64%	2 nd	Bob/Monte	60%
Wed	13 th	E-W	1 st	Chuck/Louis	60%	2 nd	Tobjorn/Gunn	57%
Fri	15 th		1 st	John Gavens/Terry	63%	2 nd	Bob/Dave	62%

Editorial

Two players managed the elusive treble this week (one time not playing together). The ‘treble’ is defined as winning all 3 sessions in one week. This is only the 5th (and 6th) time that this miraculous feat has been achieved. Congratulations to both John Gavens and the other local beach bum.

After a few teething problems and a few (tens of) thousands of baht, the web site is finally fully functional. It's www.pattayabridge.com. Results will be put up every Mon, Wed and Fri evening (or the next morning) and the (uncensored) news-sheet will be put up every week. It has cost me a lot of money (and you a little) but I will not be blackmailed. I will continue to write the news-sheets in the same manner as I have for the last 2½ years – most people appreciate them; and most people also approve of the way the club is run. Please have a look at the web-site and let me know of any improvements that I may be able to make.

The annual membership fee (or 100 bht playing fee for visitors) has been generally accepted with good will by almost everybody. There were only two ‘regulars’ refusing to join, but their reasons are ‘political’.

I always bring along loads of magazines and a few books for people to borrow. – Simply ask.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	What do you open with Hand A?
♠ 10	♠ J	
♥ AKQ5	♥ 8	What do you open with Hand B in 1 st seat, love all?
♦ AKJ5	♦ J64	
♣ A1043	♣ QJ1097543	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C everybody is vulnerable. You open 1♦, LHO doubles, partner passes and RHO bids 1♠. What now?
♠ 6	♠ 7	
♥ K	♥ A10984	With Hand D it's favourable vulnerability. LHO opens 1♦, partner overcalls 1♥ and RHO bids 1♠. (a) What do you bid?
♦ AQ7543	♦ J8	(b) Suppose you bid 4♥ and LHO bids 4♠. Partner then bids 5♥ and RHO bids 5♠, what do you do?
♣ AQ1042	♣ 109532	

That 4333 type shape again

Board 12 from Monday 11th

Dealer: ♠ K64
North ♥ 9653
E-W vul ♦ J4
♣ J754

West(me)	North	East	South
pass	pass	1NT	pass
2♣	pass	2♦	pass
2NT	pass	pass (1)	pass

♠ 1053	N	♠ Q98
♥ KJ82	W E	♥ A107
♦ Q1053	S	♦ A876
♣ Q10		♣ AK9
	♠ AJ72	
	♥ Q4	
	♦ K92	
	♣ 8632	

(1) West has invited East to go to 3NT if he is max, but is he? It's 17 points but knock off a point for the 3343 shape and it's 16, so in the middle. Most people would then look at the top cards and good intermediates and bid 3NT anyway. But not my partner on this occasion; he considered that 16 was not max and passed the invitation, and I'm not arguing.

And what happened? Virtually everybody was in 3NT and they all made exactly 8 tricks, so 2NT making was an absolute top.

The bottom line: -

- One cannot overemphasise how bad the 4333 type shape is.

Open a 4 card major?

Board 19 from Wednesday 13th

Now I have written a piece on the merits of opening a 4 card major with a very strong hand (one where you would hate to be passed out in 1♣/♦) but it is not generally accepted. But on this particular occasion my partner played Acol where 4 card majors are allowed: -

Dealer:	♠ 875		<u>Table A</u>			
South	♥ 106432		West	North	East	South(A)
E-W vul	♦ 1084		-	-	-	1♣ (1)
	♣ 95		pass (2)	pass	pass	
♠ KQJ4	N	♠ A9632	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ J8	W E	♥ 97	West	North	East	South(A)
♦ 762	S	♦ Q93	-	-	-	1♥ (1)
♣ KQJ2		♣ 876	dbl (3)	4♥ (4)	4♠ (5)	5♥ (6)
	♠ 10		all pass			
	♥ AKQ5					
	♦ AKJ5					
	♣ A1043					

- Table A (1) What did you open with this South hand A in this week's quiz? The 4441 type shape is notoriously difficult for most systems that do not have a specific bid for it (often 2♦). The hand is not good enough for a 2♣ opening and 2NT is out with a singleton. So that really only leaves 1♣ (or 1♦ if you really prefer that). But with a hand this good I rather like to open 1♥ even if playing Standard American; sure, partner will assume it's a 5 card suit but the hand is good enough to stand anything that partner throws at you. Anyway, that's just my personal opinion and not mainstream thought and so I guess you have to open 1♣.
- (2) West has to pass when holding ♣'s.
- Table B (1) Now I was South here and, as I said above, I rather like to open a major with a super strong hand like this (I don't like being passed out in 1♣/♦). But fortunately I was playing Acol so 1♥ is automatic.
- (3) Over a 1♥ opening West has a reasonable double.
- (4) And being non-vul North sportingly raised to 4♥.
- (5) With 5 ♠'s this looks reasonable to me.
- (6) And South had to choose double or 5♥; as it happens either earns a top.

And what happened? 5♥ made exactly. Just one other pair reached 4♥ making. 1♣ was passed out as was a 1♦ opening and both scored badly for N-S.

The bottom lines. As some of you may know, I have written a few Bridge books (but nothing published yet). I have thought about this problem (of 1♣/♦ being passed out when 4♥/♠ can make) and I'll put it on the web soon – it's rather lengthy and needs to be read in context.

Vulnerability and 'The Law'

Board 19 from Friday 15th

Dealer:	♠ 94				
South	♥ KQJ765	West	North	East	South(D)
E-W vul	♦ K96	-	-	-	pass
	♣ K4	1♦	1♥	1♠	4♥ (1)
		4♠	5♥ (2)	5♠ (3)	6♥ (4)
♠ KJ3	N	♠ AQ108652	dbl		all pass
♥ 2	W E	♥ 3			
♦ AQ1052	S	♦ 743			
♣ QJ87		♣ A6			
	♠ 7				
	♥ A10984				
	♦ J8				
	♣ 109532				

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand D(a) in this week's quiz? Partner has 5+ ♥'s, so follow the Law 5+5=10.
- (2) Partner has 5 ♥'s, so follow the Law 6+5=11.
- (3) With ♠ support opposite East bids 5♠ here to make.
- (4) But what did you bid with this South hand D(b) in this week's quiz? It seems to me that this hand has no defence to 5♠ and since partner presumably has 6 ♥'s he may also have little defence. It looks like 5♠ is making. It's one above 'the Law' but at this vulnerability a sacrifice looks good to me.

And what happened? There was similar competitive bidding at all 5 tables on Friday but at the other 4 tables E-W were allowed to play in 5♠. 5♠ made for 650, 6♥ doubled was two down and cost only 300 for a complete top to N-S.

The bottom line: -

- If you are non-vul against vul opponents, you can afford to go 3 down doubled and still make a profit if they can make game.
- Look at the vulnerability.

Play Quiz Quickie

With ample entries everywhere, how do you play this suit? Answer overleaf.

♥ J876 W E ♥ AQ542

Six-Five come alive

Board 20 from Friday 15th

Dealer: ♠ 6
West ♥ K
Both vul ♦ AQ7543
♣ AQ1042

West	North(C)	East	South(me)
pass	1♦	dbl	pass
1♠ (1)	4♣ (2)	4♠	5♣ (3)
dbl (4)	all pass		

♠ K9743	N	♠ AQ105
♥ J876	W E	♥ AQ542
♦ KJ9	S	♦ 6
♣ 7		♣ 983
	♠ J82	
	♥ 1093	
	♦ 1082	
	♣ KJ65	

- (1) I think that this West hand is worth a jump to 2♠.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand C in this week's quiz? 4♣ seems about right to me, 3♣ is also acceptable but 5♣ may be too much vulnerable.
- (3) With these great ♣'s South has no problem going one more – it's lousy shape but partner obviously has great shape.
- (4) 5♥ may be a better bid here – it looks like a make to me provided that the ♥'s are played correctly (*low to the queen* – did you get that right in the play quiz?).

And what happened? It was a tricky one for the defence and 5♣* slipped through to make exactly and score a top. Another table found 5♣* but that went down one for an average score. One E-W pair were left in peace in 4♥ just making (see lay quiz) and another E-W pair decided to push on to 5♠ which made for the top their way.

The bottom lines: -

- 6-5 is excellent shape and has great trick making potential – especially with suits headed by the ace.
- Don't let the opponents play peacefully in 4 of a major if you are 6-5 in the minors.

Play Quiz Quickie Answer

You should play low to the queen. There is no gain in leading the jack as you are missing the 10 and 9. So leading low wins when North has a singleton king.

♥ J876	W E	♥ AQ542
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No natural 4♣ opener?

Board 24 from Wednesday 13th

Dealer: ♠ 9432
North ♥ K973
E-W vul ♦ A952
♣ K

Table A

West(B)	North	East	South
3♣ (1)	pass	pass	3♠ (2)
pass	4♠ (3)	all pass	

♠ J N ♠ K106
♥ 8 W E ♥ AJ10652
♦ J64 S ♦ KQ83
♣ QJ1097543 ♣ -
♠ AQ875
♥ Q4
♦ 107
♣ A862

Table B

West(B)	North	East	South
5♣ (1)	pass	pass	dbl (4)
all pass			

- Table A (1) What did you open with this West hand B in this week's quiz? With a 'solid' 8 card suit I don't think that 3♣ is enough. 4♣ may be right (if you don't play Namyats) but I prefer West's bid at Table B.
- (2) And now it's pretty easy for South to enter the auction
- (3) And for North to choose to go to game.
- Table B (1) This West considered 3♣ too feeble (I agree) and as they play Namyats (so 4♣ would show a sound 4♥ opener) he bid 5♣.
- (4) And now South is in a spot. 5♠ would be a wild gamble and so double is the only real alternative.

And what happened? 5♣ doubled went 2 down but E-W scored far better than at other tables where N-S were allowed to play in 4♠.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1♣ (or 1♦ if you prefer that), unfortunately, in Standard American. Strong 4441 type hands are a problem in all systems that do not have a specific bid (such as 2♦) to cater for them. I personally would open 1♥ with this hand (because of the dread of a 1♣/♦ opening being passed out) but I'm sure that most Standard American players would not approve?
- Hand B: 5♣. 3♣ is not enough and even 4♣ may enable the opponents to bid a making 4♥/♠. If you play Namyats then you obviously have to open 5♣ as 4♣ shows ♥'s.
- Hand C: 3♣ or even 4♣. This is a huge hand for offence and you should be playing rather than defending a possible 4♠. 5♣ is probably too high if partner has nothing.
- Hand D: (a) 4♥. Follow the Law.
(b) 6♥. Now there is a saying that 'the 5 level belongs to the opponents' which indicates pass. You and partner have pushed them up to the 5 level which may be too high for them. But this hand has nothing in the way of defence and it looks like 5♠ may well be making. At this vulnerability a 6♥ sacrifice bid (one above 'The Law') looks like a good bet to me.

Mon 18 th	1 st Martin(Hol) & Kenneth	61%	2 nd Chuck & Louis	57%
Wed 20 th	1 st Chuck/Ken	60%	2 nd Bob/Monte	59%
Fri 22 nd	1 st Chuck/Louis	60%	2 nd Eddie & John Gavens	59%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A partner opens 1♠, what do you bid?		
♠ J8753	♠ J753			
♥ 4	♥ Q4	With Hand B partner opens 1♠, what do you bid?		
♦ A94	♦ A74			
♣ 10864	♣ A1084			
Hand C	Hand D	Do you open with Hand C?		
♠ Q108432	♠ KQ75	(a) What do you open with Hand D?		
♥ A4	♥ K87	(b) Suppose you open 1♦ and partner responds 1♥, what do you bid next?		
♦ 98	♦ AQJ10			
♣ 1086	♣ A10			
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E RHO opens 2♠, what do you do?		
♠ AK6	♠ 8632	With Hand F partner opens 1♦ and you bid 1♥. Partner then bids 2NT (18-19), what do you bid?		
♥ K53	♥ AJ953			
♦ KQJ73	♦ K98	(a) What, if anything, do you open with Hand G?		
♣ 97	♣ 2	Suppose that you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♠, then		
Hand G	Hand H	(b) What is your rebid?		
♠ -	♠ KJ10	(c) Suppose you rebid 2♣ and partner bids 3NT, what now?		
♥ 10xxxx	♥ A32			
♦ Jx	♦ AQ104	With Hand H RHO opens 1♠, what do you do?		
♣ AKQJxx	♣ 642			
Hand J	Hand K	What do you open with Hand J?		
♠ KJ96	♠ AK754	With hand K LHO opens 1♥, partner overcalls 1♠ and RHO bids 2♥. What do you do?		
♥ Q76	♥ 53			
♦ Q104	♦ J9			
♣ KJ6	♣ 8752			
Hand L	You are West after this bidding, what do you bid at ? :-			
♠ 3	West(L)	North	East	South
♥ KQJ64	1♥	1♠	2♥	2♠
♦ Q652	?			
♣ AQ3				

The direct raise 4♥/♠ is pre-emptive

Board 2 from Monday 18th

Dealer: ♠ J753
East ♥ Q4
N-S vul ♦ A74
♣ A1084

Table A
West North(B) East South(Y)
- - pass 1♠
pass 4♠ (1) all pass

♠ 92 N ♠ K8
♥ J1062 W E ♥ A87
♦ K1032 S ♦ 9865
♣ QJ6 ♣ K973
♠ AQ1064
♥ K953
♦ QJ
♣ 52

Expert Table
West North(B) East South(Y)
- - - 1♠
pass 2♣ (1) pass 2♥
pass 4♠ (2)

Table A (1) What did you bid with this North hand B in this week's quiz? I witnessed two players bidding 4♠ but that is a very poor bid (I explain below). If you play some sort of strong raise of partner's opening major (such as Jacoby 2NT) then that is best. But playing natural methods you should bid 2♣.

'Expert' (1) Today our experts are playing simple methods and so North correctly bids 2♣.
Table (2) And now the jump to 4♠ shows a sound raise to game as opposed to a pre-emptive one (with 4 trumps, two aces and a queen in partner's 2nd suit this is a sound raise).

North A South X Just have a look at these two hands, South opens 1♠ and North correctly jumps to 4♠ - pre-emptive. South has a big hand but is warned off going slamming and 4♠ is perfect.
♠ J8753 ♠ AK10642 And if this North A bid 4♠ opposite South Y above then that too would be fine. But what if North B was opposite South X?
♥ 4 ♥ K953 If North jumps to 4♠ then an odds-on slam is missed.
♦ A94 ♦ KQ
♣ 10864 ♣ K

As it happened with the actual deal, everybody reached the fine 4♠ contract no matter how well or badly North bid. But it would have been a different story if South had had hand X.

The bottom lines: -

- A jump to 4 of partner's major is pre-emptive. Typically with 5 trumps, few points and a bit of shape.

If 4♥ is a poor contract, what about 6♥?

Board 8 from Friday 22nd

This board was brought to my attention by a South player who managed to stay out of a poor 4♥ contract (so getting a good score) and asked me to comment. At my table N-S got to an even poorer 6♥ (!) contract (doubled of course).

Dealer: ♠ AK6
West ♥ K53
Love all ♦ KQJ73
 ♣ 97

♠ Q108432 N ♠ J975
♥ A4 W E ♥ 8
♦ 98 S ♦ A1062
♣ 1086 ♣ AKQ4

♠ -
♥ QJ109762
♦ 54
♣ J532

Table A

West(C) North East South
pass (1) 1NT pass 2♦
pass 2♥ pass pass (2)
pass

Table B

West(C) North(E) East(me) South
2♠ (1) dbl (3) 4♠ (4) 5♥ (5)
pass 6♥ (6) dbl all pass

Table A (1) Did you open with this West hand C in this week’s quiz? Some people prefer more points in the suit, some people don’t like to pre-empt with an outside ace; but I think that a weak 2♠ opening is fine. Maybe this West played strong twos?

(2) The auction is then very easy for N-S and with 7 losers South decided not to try for game. It’s a marginal choice – put North’s ‘wasted’ ♠AK elsewhere and 4♥ will probably make. Anyway, it worked here.

Table B (1) My partner opened 2♠ - fine by me.

(3) But what did you bid with this North hand E in this week’s quiz? Double is a very poor bid with only 3 cards in the other major and 2NT looks pretty clear to me.

(4) East has an easy raise to 4♠ (and is ready to apply the axe if the opponents compete). That is the beauty of bidding 4♠ here – it may be a decent hand (as here) or it may be simply pre-emptive. You are in total control (partner is not ‘allowed’ to bid again of course) and the opponents may only know what’s happening when the red double card hits the table.

(5) And now South is in a spot. Opposite a take-out double from partner I too would bid 5♥ here.

(6) No comment.

And what happened? 2♥ at Table A actually made +2 and scored well. 5♥ either doubled or not was a popular spot and went two down. 6♥ doubled went 4 down for a cool bottom.

The bottom lines: -

- One should usually have the other major if you make a take-out double of a major suit opening (at any level).
- Don’t make a take-out double if a NT overcall describes your hand perfectly.

Well... I was asked....

Hand G Louis gave me Hand G. What did you open with Hand G(a) in this week's quiz? Louis had this hand when playing with somebody on the internet, I believe.

♠ - He opened 1♣ with which I totally agree and partner responded 1♠.

♥ 10xxxx What did you bid with Hand G(b) in this week's quiz? I agree with Louis' bid

♦ Jx of 2♣ - it's nowhere good enough for a reverse into 2♥. Partner then bid 3NT,

♣ AKQJxx what did you bid at G(c) in this week's quiz? Louis asked me what I would do and I said pass. That is what he did and apparently got a load of unjustified stick from his partner. If ♥'s was the best strain then his partner should not have leapt off to 3NT.

The bottom line: A jump to 3NT usually means that's where you want to play - regardless.

Game tries in competition – part 1

Board 4 from Friday 22nd

Dealer: ♠ QJ1096
West ♥ A97
Both vul ♦ A108
♣ 64

Table A
West(L) North East South(K)
1♥ 1♠ 2♥ 2♠ (1)
3♦ (2) pass (3) 4♥ (4) all pass

♠ 3	N	♠ 82
♥ KQJ64	W E	♥ 1082
♦ Q652	S	♦ K743
♣ AQ3		♣ KJ108
	♠ AK754	
	♥ 53	
	♦ J9	
	♣ 8752	

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand K in this week's quiz? You all know me (The Law). I guess that some may choose just 3♠ when vulnerable but I certainly would not argue with a brazen 4♠. 2♠ is simply too feeble for me.
- (2) And what did you bid with this West hand L in this week's quiz? The N-S bidding has improved this hand and I considered it now worth a game try. A 3♥ bid here is just competitive and so I bid 3♦ – a help suit game try – asking partner to bid game if he has help in the ♦ suit.
- (3) North has already bid his hand and has nothing more to say.
- (4) East was asked for help in the ♦ suit – and he has it.

And what happened? 4♥ made for a complete top to E-W. Other results were varied, with one N-S pair making 4♠.

The bottom lines: -

- Obey The Law (South should bid more than 2♠)
- In competitive situations like this a bid of your agreed suit is simply competing, with any other bid being a game try.

Game tries in competition – part 2

Board 9 from Wednesday 20th

Dealer: ♠ AJ865
South ♥ K8
E-W vul ♦ KQ987
♣ A

♠ Q4	N	♠ -
♥ Q92	W E	♥ A7654
♦ AJ63	S	♦ 1042
♣ Q965		♣ KJ1032

♠ K109732
♥ J103
♦ 874
♣ 5

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass (1)
pass	1♠	2♥ (2)	2♠ (3)
pass	3♠ (4)	pass	pass (5)
pass			

- (1) At this vulnerability I would open 2♠ here, these two 10's are worth a bit.
- (2) 2♥ is reasonable, although some may prefer double or a Michaels cue bid.
- (3) But this really is feeble.
- (4) This was meant as a game try – it is best played as simply competitive – trying to stop East from bidding again. In this sort of situation any bid *other* than 3♠ is a game try.
- (5) Even though South thought that North's bid was a try for game he did not consider this hand good enough. The point is that the bid at (3) only promised about 6-9 points and 3 card support – those extra *three* trumps are *enormous*.

And what happened? Two N-S pairs stopped short of the easy game.

The bottom lines: - See previous page.

Well... I was asked....

Hand H

What did you bid with Hand H in this week's quiz?

♠ KJ10
♥ A32
♦ AQ104
♣ 642

This hand was handed to me on a bit of toilet paper by Chuck (maybe it was tissue paper?). RHO has opened 1♠; Chuck asked me what I would bid. I instantly said pass, gave the paper back in case he needed it, and asked for the next question. Apparently Chuck feels that this hand is worth a 1NT (15-18) overall. I don't, and I believe that Louis agreed with me.

Here are the issues: - Chuck says that although it's only 14 points the ♠ KJ10 are excellent and will likely score 2 tricks, and the hand has two tens.

I say that the above is true (but you should not count the ♠ 10 twice) but you should knock off a point for the 4333 type shape. The pointed suits are great – but look at those round ones!

Who's right? Obviously the correct bid is the one that worked out best on the day.

I would award 10 points for pass and 7 for 1NT. Presumably Chuck's quiz would be the other way round.

Play Quiz

Bjorn gave me this article
from a Swedish newspaper.

North	North	South
♠ J96	-	1NT
♥ 74	2NT	3NT
♦ QJ1097	all pass	
♣ AJ9		

South
 ♠ A103
 ♥ AK
 ♦ 842
 ♣ KQ1064

You are South in 3NT and get the ♥Q lead.
 You have 8 tricks, which suit do you
 attack in order to get the 9th and how do
 you play the hand?

Answer: -

Dealer: ♠ J96
 South ♥ 74
 E-W vul ♦ QJ1097
 ♣ AJ9

♠ Q87	N	♠ K542
♥ QJ1065	W E	♥ 9832
♦ 653	S	♦ AK
♣ 82		♣ 753

♠ A103
 ♥ AK
 ♦ 842
 ♣ KQ1064

You have to get your 9th trick from ♠'s. You do not have time to establish the ♦'s – they will get the ♦AK and 3 ♥'s before you get your 9 tricks.

In order to get the two ♠ tricks necessary, you should cross to dummy with the ♣J and lead the ♠J and repeat the finesse later if necessary. This line only fails if West has both the ♠K and ♠Q, in which case the contract is unmakeable.

If West had led anything but a ♥ then you would have set about establishing the ♦'s of course as you then have time and should make an overtrick.

Still look for the fit after a 2NT jump Board 5 from Wednesday 20th

Checkback Stayman (or New Minor Forcing).

This board was played 5 times on Wednesday and 3 pairs landed in the very silly 3NT. And I know that the two other pairs also had silly auctions but lucked out (Tables A and C): -

Dealer:	♠ A9	<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ Q1062	West	North	East(D)	South
N-S vul	♦ 765	-	pass	1♦ (1)	pass
	♣ K543	1♥	pass	1♠ (2)	pass
		2♠ (3)	pass	4♠	all pass

♠ 8632	N	♠ KQ75
♥ AJ953	W E	♥ K87
♦ K98	S	♦ AQJ10
♣ 2		♣ A10
	♠ J104	
	♥ 4	
	♦ 432	
	♣ QJ9876	

<u>Table B</u>			
West (F)	North	East(D)	South
-	pass	1♦ (1)	pass
1♥	pass	2NT (2)	pass
3NT (4)	all pass		

Expert Table

West(F)	North	East(D)	South
-	pass	1♦ (1)	pass
1♥	pass	2NT (2)	pass
3♣ (4)	pass	3♥ (6)	pass
3♠ (7)	pass	4♠	all pass

<u>Table C</u>			
West	North	East(D)	South
-	pass	1NT (1)	pass
2♣ (5)	pass	2♠	pass
4♠	all pass		

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this East hand D(a) in this week's quiz? It's far too good for a 1NT opening and 1♦ is correct, with the intention of jumping in 2NT over partner's response.
- (2) And what did you rebid with this East hand D(b) in this week's quiz? 1♠ is not good enough as it is not forcing and you may well miss game if partner passes. 2♠ is possible, but see 'Expert Table' for my preferred solution.
- (3) Luckily West had enough to raise.
- Table B (2) This East correctly rebid 2NT (18-19, with possibly an undisclosed 4 card ♠ suit).
- (4) What did you bid with this West hand F in this week's quiz? I like to play that any bid here is game forcing (so pass is the only option with a very weak hand). But this 3NT bid is very poor as a possible 4-4 ♠ fit or 5-3 ♥ fit is likely to be much better with this singleton ♣. See 'Expert Table' for the best answer.
- Table C (1) This East chose a far-too-strong 1NT opener.
- (5) This is correct, Stayman is best when 5-4 in the Majors.
- 'Expert' (2) 2NT is best here. It is rarely passed and any major suit fit should be found.
- Table (4) What did you bid with this West hand F? This is Checkback Stayman (or New Minor Forcing). It asks partner to show 3 card ♥ support or a 4 card ♠ suit.
- (6) With both East shows the ♥ support (the cheapest bid).
- (7) And West now shows his 4 card ♠ suit.

How was slam bid?

Board 14 from Monday 18th

I was asked how slam was bid on this deal from Monday. I happen to know as it was at my table. However, I don't really approve of the bidding and so I suggest how our 'Experts' may have bid it: -

Dealer:	♠ AQ75	<u>Table A</u>			
East	♥ AK9	West	North	East	South(J)
Love all	♦ 6	-	-	pass	1♣ (1)
	♣ A10952	pass	1♠	pass	2♠
		pass	6♠ (2)	all pass	

♠ 1043	N	♠ 82	<u>Expert Table</u>			
♥ J4	W E	♥ 108532	West	North	East	South
♦ AJ752	S	♦ K983	-	-	pass	pass (1)
♣ 843		♣ Q7	pass	1♣	pass	1♠
	♠ KJ96		pass	3♦ (3)	pass	3♠ (4)
	♥ Q76		pass	6♠ (5)		
	♦ Q104					
	♣ KJ6					

- Table A (1) Did you open this South hand J in this week's quiz? I would pass – it's that dreaded 4333 shape, does not conform with the rule of 20, and has more pot-holes than the Beach Road.
- (2) There really is no point in asking if partner has the ♦A or not and so North simply bid the slam.
- 'Expert' (1) Our experts do not open hands like this.
- Table (3) A splinter; agreeing ♠'s, showing ♦ shortage, game forcing and looking for slam. Note that 2♦ would be a forcing reverse here and so there is no need to jump to the 4-level to splinter.
- (4) With his maximum hand for his initial pass and little wastage in ♦'s South co-operates. If he had an ace he would cue bid it. He has no ace and so simply encourages with a 3♠ bid. Note that 3♠ is encouraging (slow arrival) as South would bid 4♠ (fast arrival) with a minimal hand.
- (5) Here North knows that the ♦A is missing but with the knowledge that South likes North's ♦ shortage he has no problem simply bidding the slam.

And what happened? Only our intrepid pair at Table A found the slam.

The bottom lines: -

- A splinter agrees partner's last suit (usually a major) and is one level above the natural forcing bid.

Only one down!

Board 15 from Monday 18th

There's more than one interesting (amusing) point on this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ K92	West	North(me)	East	South
South	♥ AQ10872	-	-	-	1NT
N-S vul	♦ 82	2♣ (1)	4♥ (2)	dbl	all pass
	♣ 82				

♠ 864	N	♠ A103
♥ 4	W E	♥ KJ95
♦ J96543	S	♦ 107
♣ KQ5		♣ 10963
	♠ QJ75	
	♥ 63	
	♦ AKQ	← DUMMY
	♣ AJ74	

- (1) This pair play the Cappelletti defence to 1NT, whereby a 2♣ overcall indicates a single suited hand with the suit undefined (partner should bid 2♦ which you pass or correct). I will leave it to your imagination what I think of overcalling a strong NT at the two level with 6 points and a suit of Jxxxxx quality, even at this vulnerability.
- (2) N-S do not play Lebensohl and so North simply bid what he thought he could make.

At the end of the auction North asked East what West's 2♣ bid meant. East answered that it was the normal strong hand. North said 'eh?'. And East restated that West had a very strong hand. Only then did East notice the 1NT opening – he thought that West had opened 2♣ and that North was some sort of masochistic lunatic, especially at this vulnerability. Whether East would have doubled had he seen the opening 1NT bid, or if he knew the quality of his partner's two level overcalls over a strong NT, we will never know.

Anyway, let's go onto the play. East led a ♣ which declarer won in dummy. What should declarer do now?

Answer: His immediate priority is to dispose of the ♣ loser ASAP. So he should lead the ♦ AKQ and pitch the ♣. This is more important than taking a trump finesse (that is likely to lose in light of the double). As it happens East ruffs the 3rd ♦ trick but that's ruffing with a natural trump trick anyway.

And what happened? 4♥ doubled went one down but scored an average as at the two other tables it went two down undoubled. And why was the board played only 3 times? I was North at this particular table and so obviously remembered the board. A visitor turned up late (he had gone to Soi 4) and so I sat out the rest of the session to let him play. When I kibitzed the same 4♥ contract being played on the last round it made! Now I did not think that I had played it that badly so I had a look and, lo and behold, the E-W hands had been switched! So the board was averaged for the last two times it was played.

The bottom lines: -

- Please put the cards back into the correct slot!
- The rules clearly state that the board should be left in the centre of the table during play. If this is done I cannot see how hands can be switched?

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 4♠. Obey the Law. The direct jump to 4 of partner's major is pre-emptive; typically 5 trumps, few points, and a bit of shape.
- Hand B: 2♣. Obviously you cannot make the same 4♠ bid that you did with Hand A. So to show the stronger type hand you bid another suit and then jump to game in partner's major. More advanced pairs may have other options for a forcing raise (such as Jacoby 2NT).
- Hand C: 2♠. Seems clear-cut to me.
- Hand D: (a) 1♦. It's far too strong for 1NT. In fact, it's not far off a 2NT opener and with two working 10's I would not argue too much. But I would open 1♦.
(b) 2NT. 18-19. 1♠ is non-forcing and I would prefer a more shapely hand for 2♠. 2NT here is best played as not denying a 4 card major as a possible major suit fit can be uncovered later (2NT is rarely passed).
- Hand E: 2NT. 15-18 or so with (at least) one stop; don't worry about the weak doubleton (same as with a 1NT opener) – the stop(s) in the suit opened are what are important with the 1NT or 2NT overcall. Double is a very poor choice with only 3♥'s.
- Hand F: It's best (easiest) to play any bid as forcing in this situation, so 3♥ is reasonable. But the very best solution is to play Checkback Stayman (or New Minor Forcing if you really prefer that) whereby 3♣ asks partner to clarify his major suit holdings (3 card♥ support or a 4 card♠ suit). Playing CBS (or NMF) means that a bid of 3♥ in this situation shows a 6 card suit.
- Hand G: (a) 1♣. It's far too good to pass and it is surely best to open this great 6 card♣ suit rather than the motley 5 card♥ suit.
(b) 2♣. Nowhere near good enough for the reverse into 2♥.
(c) Pass. Partner's jump to 3NT means that that is where he wants to play. It's perhaps a shame that you could not mention the♥'s – but that's partner's fault.
- Hand H: Pass. Despite the good♠ holding sitting over opener it's not quite good enough for 1NT(15-18) in my opinion (that 4333 type shape again).
- Hand J: Pass. Deduct a point for the 4333 type shape and it does not conform to the rule of 20 in any case.
- Hand K: 4♠. The Law. If vulnerable I would not argue with 3♠ but 2♠ really is not enough.
- Hand L: 3♦. This hand has improved after partner supported and the opponents have bid♠'s. In my opinion it is worth an invitation to game. But 3♥ here is not invitational – it is simply being competitive – in fact, any bid *other* than 3♥ is the game try!
3♦ here is actually a help-suit game try – asking partner to bid game if he has help in the♦ suit.

Mon 25 th	N-S	1 st	Sid/John Gavens	56%	2 nd	Bob/Dave	53%
Mon 25 th	E-W	1 st	Eddie/Phil	61%	2 nd	Bjorn/Kees	60%
Wed 27 th		1 st	Chuck/Terry	69%	2 nd	Richard/Ken	66%
Fri 29 th		1 st	Terry/John Gavens	60%	2 nd	Chuck/Louis	56%

Bidding Quiz**Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated**

Hand A Hand B

♠ Q3 ♠ Q86
♥ A5 ♥ AJ3
♦ Q1094 ♦ 875
♣ 97632 ♣ A876

With Hand A LHO opens 1♥ and RHO bids 1♠, what do you do?

With Hand B partner opens 1♦, what do you bid?

Hand C Hand D

♠ A3 ♠ KJ104
♥ AK75 ♥ 1074
♦ 82 ♦ AK106
♣ AQ1065 ♣ K10

With Hand C LHO opens a weak 2♥ and this is passed round to you. What do you do?

What do you open with Hand D?

Hand E Hand F

♠ J984 ♠ J72
♥ 4 ♥ AQ1073
♦ A763 ♦ 1087
♣ KJ73 ♣ Q8

With Hand E RHO opens 2♥ and you have to pass - it's nice shape. but really is not strong enough to make a take-out double.

It goes round to partner who bids 3♣; what do you do?

With Hand F partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 1♥, what do you do (everybody is vulnerable).

That infamous Unusual 2NT again

Board 1 from Monday 25th

I've said it before the UNT is the most abused convention out there.....

Dealer:	♠ Q3				
North	♥ A5	West	North(A)	East	South
Love all	♦ Q1094	-	pass	1♥	pass
	♣ 97632	1♠	2NT (1)	3♠	5♣ (2)
		dbl	all pass		
♠ A10762	N	♠ K954			
♥ 73	W E	♥ QJ1064			
♦ J863	S	♦ A2			
♣ K8		♣ QJ			
	♠ J8				
	♥ K982				
	♦ K75				
	♣ A1054				

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand A in this week's quiz? Pass is obvious to me, but this North chose the UNT. Usually weak and definitely promising 5-5 in the minors.
- (2) Expecting more cards and points in the minors opposite, South quite correctly (in my humble opinion) bid 5♣.

And what happened? 5♣ doubled went two down for 300 to E-W for a poor score. Even if E-W bid to 4♠ it is doubtful that they can make it.

The bottom lines: -

- The UNT guarantees at least 5 cards in each minor.
- It is unwise to bid the UNT when all of your points are in the majors.
- I will not comment further on a hand that satisfies neither of the above criteria.
- There are more pass cards in the bidding box than any other – why is it sometimes so difficult for people to find them?

Who should bid 1NT?

Board 10 from Monday 25th

An easy 3NT game was missed on this deal. Who would you blame – or would you blame both?

Dealer:	♠ KJ104	West	North(D)	East	South(B)
North	♥ 1074	-	-	pass	pass
E-W vul	♦ AK106	pass	1♦ (1)	pass	1NT (2)
	♣ K10	all pass			

♠ 752	N	♠ A93
♥ K652	W E	♥ Q98
♦ Q4	S	♦ J932
♣ Q942		♣ J53
	♠ Q86	
	♥ AJ3	
	♦ 875	
	♣ A876	

- (1) What did you open with this North hand D in this week's quiz? It is decent shape – 4432 type shape is 'average' – you deduct only for 4333 type shape and add on for better shapes. So it's an average 14 count – but then look at those 10's. It's generally accepted that three 10's are worth a point, so with four of them this is a clear 1NT opener.
- (2) And what did you bid with this South hand B in this week's quiz? 2♣ really is a poor bid – it is passing the buck and you will be fixed next go if/when partner bids 2NT. No, it's best to make the decision now: 1NT (6-9/10) or 2NT (11-12)? I deduct a point for the 4333 type shape, so it's a 10 count and with no 10's or 9's for me it's a clear 1NT bid.

And what happened? 9 tricks were made at 5 out of the 6 tables, so 1NT scored badly as 3 N-S pairs bid the game.

The bottom lines: -

- Add on a point for three 10's, more for four 10's.
- Deduct a point for the 4333 type shape.

Another easy 3NT missed

Board 25 from Monday 25th

Another easy 3NT game was missed on this deal and I was asked what went wrong: -

Dealer:	♠ Q5				
North	♥ QJ9862	West (C)	North	East(E)	South
E-W vul	♦ K4	-	2♥	pass	pass
	♣ 942	3♣ (1)	pass	3♠ (2)	pass
		4♠ (3)	all pass		
♠ A3	N	♠ J984			
♥ AK75	W E	♥ 4			
♦ 82	S	♦ A763			
♣ AQ1065		♣ KJ73			
	♠ K10762				
	♥ 103				
	♦ QJ1095				
	♣ 8				

- (1) So what did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? This sort of thing comes up a lot – when not sure, double? But double is most certainly a very poor bid here with only a doubleton ♠. So bid 3♣ then? That's possible but then how are you going to get to the likely best spot of 3NT? – partner most certainly has nothing in ♥'s. No, the best bid with this West hand C is 2NT.
- (2) And what did you bid with this East hand E in this week's quiz? You have a good fit for partner's ♣'s but raising ♣'s is not the answer – how many times have I said that 3NT is usually easier than 5 of a minor. Now you could mention the ♠ suit but then you're may be going past 3NT and partner will probably expect 5+ ♠'s. Even though partner failed to find his best bid of 2NT it's still not too late, the best bid with this East hand E is 3♥ - ask partner if he has a ♥ stop (which he may have overlooked last time?).
- (3) Last chance. West can still bid 3NT here – but he chose not to.

And what happened? 4♠ went 5 down (so -500) which was not good as every other E-W made a +ve score, with 3NT making exactly being the most popular.

I would imagine that most players bid ♥'s at some level with this East hand and so I was surprised that only one N-S pair doubled them: -

Dealer:	♠ AQ103				
South	♥ J	West	North	East	South(F)
Both vul	♦ AQJ43	-	-	-	pass
	♣ KJ2	pass	1♦	1♥ (1)	pass (2)
		1NT (3)	dbl (4)	2♥ (5)	dbl (6)
		all pass			
♠ K86	N	♠ 954			
♥ 2	W E	♥ K98654			
♦ K965	S	♦ 2			
♣ 109754		♣ A63			
	♠ J72				
	♥ AQ1073				
	♦ 1087				
	♣ Q8				

- (1) A weak jump overcall is pushing it with this hand when vulnerable. But with decent shape and a 6 card suit I think that 1♥ is fine.
- (2) What did you bid with this South hand (F) in this week's quiz? Against vulnerable opponents I think it's best to go for the penalty. This N-S pair play negative doubles and so South passed, awaiting North's 'automatic' re-opening double.
- (3) But playing negative doubles you sometimes get the opponents for more than if you simply play penalty doubles. West should pass with this hand but thought that 1NT might be a decent spot.
- (4) North's bid says 'no it ain't'. He knows now that partner probably has the ♥'s sitting over the overcaller.
- (5) Whether East corrects into his 6-carder or passes really does not matter now.
- (6) And now South (me) gets in his penalty double – but one level higher!

And what happened? 2♥ doubled made 3 tricks and went for 1100. I note that at every other table South was declarer in 3NT making exactly and so scoring 600. Clearly it must have been South who bid NT every time as he was declarer. Is it only me who likes to double opponents at the one or two level with hands like this? I would not even dream of bidding NT.

The bottom lines: -

- With a holding like AQ10 xx sitting over overcaller, think penalty double (i.e. pass if playing negative doubles) – especially if they are vulnerable.
- With a poor hand and no fit for partner, pass his overcall.
- If you play negative doubles and want to penalise RHO then you have to pass. Partner (at least any regular partner of mine) will normally re-open with a double that you can then pass for penalties.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: Pass. The hand is not good enough for a take-out double. And, what's more, it is totally unsuitable for an unusual 2NT (weak, promising 5-5 in the minors). With virtually all of the points in the opponent's suits it's usually best to defend.
- Hand B: 1NT. 2♣ really is pointless – it simply delays any decision and may make life difficult for partner. So grab the bull by the horns and make the decision now (1NT or 2NT). With this 4333 type shape and no intermediates I bid 1NT.
- Hand C: 2NT. With excellent ♥'s this is clear. Double would be a very poor bid with just two ♠'s and there really is little point in mentioning the ♣ suit when NT looks like the best spot. And when you know that partner cannot possibly have anything in ♥'s you have to bid NT yourself.
- Hand D: 1NT. It's average shape (so neither add on nor deduct) but the four tens are easily worth an extra point or more.
- Hand E: 3♥. You have a decent hand with excellent ♣ support. You want to be in 3NT if partner has a ♥ stop – so ask him. 4♠ is not a good bid as partner will probably expect a 5+ card (and stronger) suit. 4♣ is not a good bid as it goes past a possible 3NT contract.
- Hand F: Pass. Awaiting partner's 'automatic' re-opening double when playing negative doubles. If you do not play negative doubles then double (penalties). Any sort of NT bid here is a poor choice – go for the penalty.

Mon 1 st	1 st Chuck/Terry	63%	2 nd Bob/Dave	55%
Wed 3 rd N-S	1 st John Gavens/Terry	59%	2 nd Jim/Tom	53%
Wed 3 rd E-W	1 st Jo/Guy	65%	2 nd Phil/Jean-Marc	54%
Fri 5 th	1 st Chuck & Ken	57%	2 nd Chris/Paul	55%

Bidding Quiz**Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated**

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A RHO opens 1♠ what do you do?
♠ 94	♠ AQ72	With Hand B you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♦, what do you bid?
♥ AK1095	♥ K98	
♦ AQ954	♦ A7	
♣ 8	♣ AQ72	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C you open 1♦ and partner bids 1NT. (a) What do you bid? (b) What do you bid if RHO overcalls 2♥?
♠ 9	♠ AQ4	With Hand D you open 1♦, partner bids 1♥, you bid 2♣ and partner bids 2♠ (4 th suit forcing). (a) What do you bid? (b) Suppose you bid 3♣ and partner jumps to 4♦, what now?
♥ 53	♥ -	
♦ AK1098542	♦ J10652	
♣ A10	♣ AQJ65	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E LHO opens 1♣ and this is passed all of the way round to you. What do you do?
♠ AJ5	♠ KQ92	With Hand F RHO opens 1♣. (a) What do you do? (b) Suppose you double, LHO bids 1♦ and this is passed round to you, what do you do now?
♥ 752	♥ A10965	
♦ Q9542	♦ A102	
♣ J8	♣ 10	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G RHO opens 1♣, what do you do?
♠ KQ109	♠ J9853	With Hand H partner passes, RHO opens 1♦, you pass and LHO bids 1NT. Partner and RHO then pass, what do you do?
♥ AJ	♥ KJ3	
♦ 10763	♦ 863	
♣ K105	♣ J8	
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J partner opens 1♣ and you bid 1♦. Partner then bids 2NT (18-19), what do you do?
♠ 9863	♠ J8	With Hand K LHO opens 1♣ and partner doubles. (a) What do you do? (b) What would you do if RHO had bid 1♦?
♥ 105	♥ J73	
♦ KJ82	♦ K53	
♣ K108	♣ J9832	

That infamous Unusual 2NT (or Michaels) yet againBoard 1 from Monday 1st

Dealer: ♠ Q87642
 North ♥ 876
 Love all ♦ 63
 ♣ QJ

West	North	East	South(A)
-	-	1♠	2♠ (1)
pass (2)	3♥ (3)	pass	4♥ (4)
dbl (5)	all pass		

♠ -	N	♠ AKJ103
♥ J542	W E	♥ Q
♦ K872	S	♦ J10
♣ AK1042		♣ 97653
	♠ 94	
	♥ AK1095	
	♦ AQ954	
	♣ 8	

- (3) What did you bid with this South hand A in this week's quiz? Double is a possibility (and convert a 2♣ response in 2♦ to show the two-suiter) but most people (including me) prefer a stronger hand for that action. So how about a Michael's cue bid of 2♠ - showing a two-suited hand with ♥'s and minor. Perhaps reasonable, but Michaels (and the UNT) are weak, pre-emptive bids and this South hand really is too good. Now many pairs play that Michaels/UNT are either weak or very strong – but the problem here is that this South hand is not *very* strong. I would simply overcall 2♥ with this South hand and perhaps get a 3♦ bid in later.
- (4) West is very happy with the turn of events – he had a bad hand opposite a 1♠ opener but now that the opponents have charged in things are looking rosey. Of course it's best to pass here and simply wait to see how big a penalty you will get later.
- (5) North has no choice of course.
- (6) And now we see the problem – you cannot bid Michaels (or UNT) with intermediate hands. South has pre-empted himself and cannot now show a decent hand without going to the game level. Michaels is a pre-empt and bidding again here breaks the golden rule – don't bid gain having pre-empted.
- (7) West is extremely happy to be able to apply the axe now at the 4 level.

And what happened? 4♥ doubled went 3 or 4 down (the scoring was unclear) but just 3 down was 500 away and a disaster for N-S.

The bottom lines.

- Michaels (and UNT) are pre-empts. A good 13 points is far too strong.
- Some more experienced players play that they are either weak or very strong. And by very strong I mean just that – close to a 2♣ opener, this South hand is nowhere near.
- With a 5-5 shape hand that is in the middle range, simply overcall the higher ranking suit.
- Michaels (and the UNT) are the most abused conventions out there ... (said that before).

Look for the 4-4 major fit after a 2NT jumpBoard 14 from Monday 1st

Dealer:	♠ J1054					
East	♥ A742		West(B)	North	East(J)	South
Love all	♦ 943		-	-	pass	pass
	♣ 53		1♣	pass	1♦	pass
			2NT (1)	pass	3♠ (2)	pass
♠ AQ72	N	♠ 9863	4♠	all pass		
♥ K98	W E	♥ 105				
♦ A7	S	♦ KJ82				
♣ AQ72		♣ K108				
	♠ K					
	♥ QJ63					
	♦ Q1065					
	♣ J964					

- (1) What did you rebid here with this West hand B in this week's quiz? 2NT is best. This does not deny a 4 card major as this strength showing bid is rarely passed and any 4-4 fit should come to light in subsequent bidding. 3NT is a poor bid, especially as you may miss a 4-4 ♠ fit.
- (2) And what did you bid with this East hand J in this week's quiz? You have a 4 card major and so should not bid 3NT. I prefer to play that any bid is forcing here and I would prefer to play 3♣ as Checkback Stayman (asking opener to bid a 4 card major if he has one) – but this had not been discussed and so East simply bid his ♠ suit.

And what happened? 4♠ was reached at 3 tables and made twice. Although 4♠ is not that great a contract because of the bad split, it is still far better than 3NT which was bid at the other two tables and justifiably went down both times.

The bottom lines: -

- After opener jumps to 2NT (18-19 points) then I think it's best to play any bid as game forcing.
- I also like to play that 3♣ is Checkback Stayman (whether ♣'s have been bid or not) -asking partner to clarify his major suit holdings, but this has to be agreed with partner.
- Either way, you should be able to locate the 4-4 major suit fit.
- The jump to 2NT is 18-19.
- The jump to 3NT is best used as a long solid minor suit.

3NT is usually better than 5♣/♦

Board 11 from Monday 1st

I was asked about this one, in particular South's bid at (4): -

Dealer:	♠ J86	<u>Table A</u>				
South	♥ K107	West	North	East	South(C)	
Love all	♦ J763	-	-	-	1♦	
	♣ KQ3	pass (1)	1NT (2)	2♥ (3)	4♦ (4)	
		pass	5♦	all pass		
♠ KQ743	N	♠ A1052	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ 842	W E	♥ AQJ96	West	North	East	South(me)
♦ -	S	♦ Q	-	-	-	1♦
♣ J8542		♣ 976	pass (1)	1NT (2)	pass	3NT(5)
	♠ 9		all pass			
	♥ 53					
	♦ AK1098542					
	♣ A10					

- Table A (1) This West hand has good shape but is obviously not good enough to double. Over a 1♥ opening an infamous Michaels would not be too bad. But over 1♦ that's out (it shows ♥'s and ♠'s) and pass is probably the most prudent bid. I would overcall 1♠, but then I am me.
- (2) 1NT is a much better bid than 2♦ here.
- (3) East has options here. Double is take-out of ♦'s and I think that either a 2♥ overcall or a double are equally good. If you're interested in what I would actually bid, I too would overcall 2♥.
- (4) I'm not actually certain what South bid here, but they ended up in 5♦ going one down on a ♥ lead. Now I was asked what South should bid here; what did you bid with this South hand C in this week's quiz? I think that this South hand is enormous after partner has bid 1NT and I want (partner) to be in 3NT (at my Table B the bidding was slightly different). Anyway, if you accept my philosophy that this hand wants to play in 3NT if possible, what do you do after the ♥ overcall? The answer is to ask partner if he has a ♥ stop – bid 3♥.
- Table B (5) I was South here and with no interference I simply raised partner to 3NT.

And what happened? 3NT made 12 tricks on a ♥ lead. It would make 3 tricks on a ♠ lead but that is not the issue. 5♦ was 'wrong-sided' so went one down. There were obviously the usual few spurious results.

The bottom lines: -

- In my opinion (and many expert's) it's best to overcall with a 5 card major.
- So I would make a (very) pushy 1♠ overcall with this West hand and I agree with the 2♥ overcall (rather than double) with this East hand.
- If you need a stop in the opponent's suit, cue bid the suit to ask partner.
- Don't worry about no stop in an unbid suit when opponents have bid – partner may have a stop there or it may well not be led.

About 4th suit forcing

Board 6 from Wednesday 3rd

I was also asked about this one, in particular East's bid at (3): -

Dealer:	♠ K652		<u>Table A</u>			
East	♥ 9853		West	North	East(D)	South
E-W vul	♦ K3		-	-	1♦	pass (1)
	♣ 743		1♥	pass	2♣	pass
			2♠ (2)	pass	3♣ (3)	pass
♠ 103	N	♠ AQ4	4♦ (4)	pass	5♦ (5)	all pass
♥ AJ72	W E	♥ -				
♦ AQ987	S	♦ J10652	<u>'Expert Table'</u>			
♣ K9		♣ AQJ65	West	North	East(D)	South
	♠ J987		-	-	1♦	pass
	♥ KQ1064		1♥	pass	2♣	pass
	♦ 4		2♠ (2)	pass	3NT (3)	pass
	♣ 1082		4♦ (6)	pass	4♠ (7)	pass
			4NT	etc. to 6♦		

- Table A: (1) At this vulnerability I would be tempted to bid with this South hand - in fact I did overcall 1♥ at my table and the opponents stopped in 4♦ after a competitive auction. But that's not the issue here.
- (2) 4th suit forcing. Asking partner to describe his hand further.
- (3) Now this is the issue, what should East bid? What did you bid with this East hand D(a) in this week's quiz? Should he show his ♠ stop by bidding NT or should he show his 5th ♣? See 'Expert Table' for what I think.
- (4) I would play 3♦ as forcing here (after the 4th suit) but perhaps it's safer for an unfamiliar partnership to jump.
- (5) What did you bid with this East hand D(b) in this week's quiz. It's pairs and you have gone past 3NT. Partner is looking for a ♦ slam. A cue bid of the ♥ void is possible, but a void in partner's 1st bid suit is not usually an asset. You could cue bid the ♠ A, but that would probably confuse him as you have denied a ♠ stop. Since 5♦ is bound to get a poor score at pairs I would simply bid 6♦.
- 'Expert Table' (3) After partner's 4th suit enquiry you have to describe your hand. The first priority is to bid NT with a stop. 2NT is fine, stating that you have a ♠ stop and leaving the final contract open. I personally would bid 3NT – to tell partner I'm not interested in his ♥'s and to confirm excellent ♠ stops.
- (6) Setting trumps and looking for slam
- (7) A cue bid, showing the ♠ A.

The bottom line: 4th suit forcing asks partner to define his hand further. Most players play that showing a stop for NT is the highest priority and that showing belated support for partner or extra length in a suit of your own is of lower priority and denies a stop in the 4th suit.

Pass and/or double need to be alerted??

Now as it happened on Wednesday I was at a stationary table next to Chuck's stationary table. As one would expect there was always a lot of discussion/dispute at my neighbour's table and I could not help but overhear some of it: - One of our visitors had an exchange with Chuck when Chuck asked why the visitor's partner's conventional double (or it may have been a pass) was not alerted. The visitor explained to Chuck that most passes and doubles need not be alerted. Chuck disagreed. Who's right?

Both are a bit right. Pass and double are both bids and the most recent ACBL document says that 'only passes or doubles with highly unusual or unexpected meanings' need to be alerted. So we just have to determine what 'highly unusual or unexpected' means. I think that for this club it should be a meaning that is not standard. For example, suppose you open 1♦, LHO overcalls 1♠ and partner doubles; standard these days is that double is negative (showing ♥'s) and may or may not be alerted or announced as such if you wish. If the double was showing the suit bid (i.e. penalties) then that should be alerted at this club as it is not 'standard' these days. (Almost) everything that applies to our club is written up in the 'Local Rules' section on our web site and my policy is very simple – alert bids that are not 'standard'. The ACBL rules are a total mess, keep changing, and are impossible to logically comprehend.

The 'local rules' apply at this club, and if in doubt – alert. I have, however, written up the current ACBL rules on Alerts which Guy was kind enough to provide me with. If you don't have access to a computer and want a copy of either then ask me.

Dealer: ♠ AJ5
East ♥ 752
Love all ♦ Q9542
♣ J8

About Balancing – part 1

Board 14 from Wednesday 3rd

♠ 86432	N	♠ 7	West	North(E)	East	South(G)
♥ 9863	W E	♥ KQ104	-	-	1♣	pass (1)
♦ K	S	♦ AJ8	pass	pass(2)	all pass	
♣ 763		♣ AQ942				
	♠ KQ109					
	♥ AJ					
	♦ 10763					
	♣ K105					

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand G in this week's quiz? South does not have quite enough for a 1NT overcall. It's the wrong shape for a double and has no 5 card suit for an overcall. So South has to pass and hope that partner understands balancing.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand E in this week's quiz? If you had length in ♣'s then pass would be reasonable, but without ♣ length you should bid. Where are the points? Partner obviously has quite a few of them but was unable to bid because there was no suitable bid for him. So you have to 'protect' him and with this North hand 1♦ is clear. In the balancing (or protection) seat you do not need normal values for your bid. One common theme is 'borrow an ace (some say king) from partner'.

And what happened? 1♣ made +2 for a clear top to E-W. Good results were obtained for N-S when they competed to 2♦ or 3♦.

About Balancing – part 2

Board 29 from Wednesday 3rd

Dealer: ♠ KQ64
North ♥ A87
Love all ♦ J4
♣ 9643

♠ 1072
♥ 1062
♦ A107
♣ KQ52

N
W E
S

♠ J9853
♥ KJ3
♦ 863
♣ J8

♠ A
♥ Q954
♦ KQ952
♣ A107

West	North	East	South(H)
-	pass	1♦	pass
1NT (1)	pass	pass (2)	2♠ (3)
pass	pass (4)	pass	

- (1) 1NT is the best bid here. 3 tens are worth a point but deduct a point for the flat shape.
- (2) I too would pass here. 2♥ would be a reverse and I would like a little bit more and a better ♥ suit. 2♦ would generally promise 6 ♦'s and leaving 1NT is best I think.
- (3) What did you bid with this South hand H in this week's quiz? This is again the balancing (pass-out seat) and although you have just 6 points it's best to bid. I was South at this table and I did not want to sell out to 1NT – so I bid 2♠.
- (4) North should not raise here – he knows that partner is bidding four of his points.

And what happened? 2♠ made exactly for a near top. At another table West was left to play in 1NT making +2 for a clear top their way.

The bottom lines: -

- Understand balancing. There have been whole books written on the subject. Basically, when you are in the pass-out seat and the bidding has died at a rather low level, then partner must have some points. So bid as if you had an ace more than you actually have. And partner should not raise as he knows that you have 'borrowed' 4 points from his hand.

About Balancing – part 3

Board 28 from Friday 5th

E-W scored a clear zero on this board, what went wrong?

Dealer:	♠ A653				
West	♥ Q4	West(K)	North	East(F)	South
N-S vul	♦ J4	pass	1♣	dbl (1)	1♦
	♣ KQ754	pass (2)	pass (3)	pass (4)	
♠ J8	N	♠ KQ92			
♥ J73	W E	♥ A10965			
♦ K53	S	♦ A102			
♣ J9832		♣ 10			
	♠ 1074				
	♥ K82				
	♦ Q9876				
	♣ A6				

- (1) What did you bid with this East hand F(a) in this week's quiz? The experts continue to debate whether to overcall the 5 carder or double when 5-4 or 4-5 in the majors. Either seems OK to me (but I generally prefer to overcall).
- (2) What did you bid with this West hand K in this week's quiz? Without the bid from South West would probably have to bid 1NT (6-9) but after South has bid he is now under no obligation to bid this ill-fitting heap. So my answer to K(b) is pass.
- (3) South's bid generally denies 9+ points (otherwise he would redouble) and his bid at the one level is considered forcing by most. I would bid 1♠ but pass worked out quite well ...
- (4) And what did you bid with this East hand F(b) in this week's quiz? It has worked out perfectly for him! His initial double promised a hand playable in ♦'s, ♥'s, or ♠'s. Now that South has bid ♦'s everything is absolutely fabulous as a simple 1♥ bid now promises 5♥'s and 4♠'s (double would show 4-4 in the majors). You should only pass 1♦ here with strength in ♦'s and this pass is simply pathetic.

And what happened? 1♦ went one down but scored a complete top for N-S as the bidding went higher at all the other tables. 2♥ by E-W would have been a good spot for E-W but all the N-S's competed further and all went for 200.

The bottom line: It is rarely correct to pass out one of a minor in the pass-out seat when you have 9 cards in the majors!

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 2♥. The hand is far too good for a (pre-emptive) Michaels cue bid. And if you play that Michaels may be either weak or very strong this hand is nowhere near strong enough for 'very strong'. I do not like to double with this type of shape (you are fixed over a 2♣ response) and 2♥ looks clear to me.
- Hand B: 2NT (18-19). This is not denying a 4 card major as a 4-4 ♠ fit will subsequently be found. If partner actually has an extremely weak hand (such that he is going to pass 2NT) which has 4 ♠'s then he should have bid 1♠ in preference to 1♦. Note that 3NT is a very poor bid here as there may be a 4-4 ♠ fit.
- Hand C: (a) 3NT. Full speed ahead and dam the torpedoes.
(b) 3♥. But after an overcall it would be foolhardy to blast 3NT. You need a ♥ stop from partner – so bid 3♥ to ask if he has one.
- Hand D: (a) 2NT (or 3NT). The first priority after a 4th suit enquiry is to show a stop.
(b) 6♦. Partner is looking for slam and you have gone past 3NT. It is difficult to bid accurately now as you have denied a ♠ stop – so just bid slam.
- Hand E: 1♦. This is call balancing (bidding in the pass-out seat). Partner obviously has points but was unable to bid (usually because he has a flattish hand – so no 5 card suit – and not strong enough for 1NT and the wrong shape for double).
- Hand F: (a) Double or 1♥. The experts are continually debating which to do with 9 cards in the majors and I won't argue with either.
(b) 1♥. Now you can show your hand perfectly, 5 ♥'s and 4 ♠'s. Pass is a very poor option - you should only pass in this sort of position when you have ♦ strength.
- Hand G: Pass. Wrong shape for a double, cannot overcall with no 5 card suit, not enough points for 1NT. With these flattish hands that are worth an opener you often find that you have to pass if RHO opens. That is no problem if partner understands balancing.
- Hand H: 2♠. Don't pass and sell out so easily. This bidding has died far too low and partner has points.
- Hand J: 3♠. Partner's strength showing jump does not deny a 4 card major – so look for a possible 4-4 ♠ fit. Actually, this is not the very best solution – best is to play Checkback Stayman in this sequence – so 3♣ asks for majors exactly the same as if it were over a 2NT opening.
- Hand K: (a) 1NT – but only just. This is a miserable 6 count but bidding 1NT is better than bidding a 3 card suit.
(b) Pass. After RHO has bid you no longer have to. So a bid here would be a 'free bid' saying that you have something to say. With a 4 card major and about 6-9 points bid the major (you can have a point or two less with a 5 card major). But a free bid of 1NT here should really be a decent hand (say 8-9 points).

Mon 8 th	1 st Bill/Dave	66%	2 nd Kees/Mike	54%
Wed 10 th	1 st John/Gavens /Terry	59%	2 nd Phil/Jean-Marc	56%
Fri 12 th	1 st John/Gavens /Terry	59%	2 nd Chuck/Monte	55%

Bidding Quiz**Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated**

Hand A: Hand B With Hand A partner opens 1♠ and you respond 2♦. Partner then bids 2NT (12-14), what do you do?

♠ 1053	♠ KQJ865
♥ A109	♥ 1086
♦ AKQ1063	♦ Q9
♣ 4	♣ 73

What do you open with Hand B at favourable vulnerability?

Hand C Hand D With Hand C RHO opens 1♦, what do you bid?

♠ K853	♠ 9
♥ Q10986	♥ J74
♦ Q4	♦ AJ1032
♣ AK	♣ AK54

And now for a tricky one. With Hand D LHO opens 3♠ and this is passed round to you, what do you do?

Hand E Hand F What do you open with Hand E?

♠ AKQ	♠ 95
♥ A4	♥ KQJ97653
♦ 83	♦ 105
♣ AKQ642	♣ 10

With Hand F it is favourable vulnerability. What do you do if (a) RHO opens 2♣, or (b) RHO opens 2NT.

Hand G Hand H With Hand G your partner opens 2♣ but RHO overcalls 2♠, what do you do?

♠ A876	♠ Q10864
♥ 83	♥ 83
♦ Q9653	♦ 653
♣ A5	♣ 752

With Hand H your partner opens 2♣ but RHO overcalls 2♠, what do you do?

Hand J Hand K What do you open with Hand J?

♠ 5	♠ QJ10
♥ AKQ652	♥ KJ92
♦ AKJ1042	♦ KJ
♣ -	♣ A952

With Hand K RHO opens 1♦ (a) what do you bid?
(b) suppose you choose 1NT (15-18) and partner bids 2♠ (natural in these player's system). RHO and you pass and LHO bids 3♦ which partner doubles. What do you do?
So for K(b) it's: -

1♦	1NT	pass	2♠
pass	pass	3♦	dbl
pass	?		

Beginner's Play Quiz

		W	N	E	S
♠ 10862	N	-	-	pass	1♦
♥ AQ72	W E	pass	1♥	pass	1♠
♦ K7	S	pass	1NT	pass	2NT
♣ 982		pass	pass	pass	

↑ You ♠ KQ73
 ♥ K
 ♦ AQ10963
DUMMY→ ♣ K5

You are West. Partner leads the ♣Q which North wins with the ♣A in hand. He then leads the ♦J and takes the ♦ finesse which you win with the ♦K.

- (a) What card do you lead?
(b) And who has the ♠A?

Is 4NT Blackwood?

Board 13 from Monday 8th

Dealer:	♠ 8				
North	♥ J8643	West(A)	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ 94	-	pass	1♠	pass
	♣ Q9865	2♦	pass	2NT (1)	pass
		4NT (2)	pass	pass (3)	pass
♠ 1053	N	♠ KQJ72			
♥ A109	W E	♥ KQ			
♦ AKQ1063	S	♦ 872			
♣ 4		♣ J102			
	♠ A964				
	♥ 732				
	♦ J5				
	♣ AK73				

- (1) The 2NT rebid here is 12-14. I would not argue if you prefer a 2♠ rebid.
(2) This was meant as Blackwood. What did you bid with this West hand A in this week's quiz? I guess that slam may be there if East has the right cards but with 3 poor ♠'s I think that looking for slam is probably a bit pushy and I would settle for 4♠.
(3) East assumed that 4NT was invitational (to 6NT) and so passed.

And what happened? South led the ♣A and so 4NT went 3 down. Everybody else was in 4♠, doubled three times, and making anything from 9 to 11 tricks.

The bottom line.

Regular partnership have to decide when 4♣ asks for aces and when it's 4NT. I wrote up my thoughts in an old news-sheet (No 80) and it's now on the web in the 'conventions' link.

A lucky hand for the system

Board 18 from Wednesday 10th

Dealer: ♠ 9
East ♥ J74
N-S vul ♦ AJ1032
 ♣ AK54

West	North(D)	East(B)	South
-	-	3♠ (1)	pass (2)
pass	4♦ (3)	pass	5♦ (4)
all pass			

♠ 7	N	♠ KQJ865
♥ KQ954	W E	♥ 1086
♦ K87	S	♦ Q9
♣ 10986		♣ 73
	♠ A10432	
	♥ A3	
	♦ 654	
	♣ QJ2	

- (1) What did you open with this East hand B in this week's quiz? 2♠ looks obvious and is what most would bid, but I personally would not argue too much with 3♠ when non-vul. But this E-W pair play strong twos and so East 'had to' open 3♠.
- (2) South has to pass of course as double would be for take-out. On a good day partner will double and you can pass for penalties.
- (3) What did you bid with this North hand D in this week's quiz? Double is possible but I don't like it with just 3♥'s. Partner may well raise with just 3 or 4♥'s and West may well double with a♥ stack. So North is in a real spot after the unorthodox opening – he has the choice between a perhaps feeble pass or a more brazen 4♦. He chose the latter and I'm glad that I was not in this position.
- (4) And now it's South in the spotlight. North has bid at the 4 level, but it is in the balancing seat. South has poor trump support but his ♠ and ♥ holding are perfect. Should he push on to game? Again, another close call and I'm glad it wasn't me.

And what happened? 5♦ was one down for a top to E-W.

The bottom line: Sometimes a hand simply works well for your system; give North a 4th♥ so that he would double and then it's a top to N-S.

Don't Double with two-suitersBoard 27 from Wednesday 10th

Dealer:	♠ J6			
South	♥ AJ42	West(me)	North	East(C)
Love all	♦ AK73	-	-	-
	♣ J84	pass	1♦	dbl (1)
		pass (3)	1NT	pass
		pass (4)		1♠ (2)
♠ A107	N	♠ K853		
♥ 3	W E	♥ Q10986		
♦ 9862	S	♦ Q4		
♣ 76532		♣ AK		
	♠ Q942			
	♥ K75			
	♦ J105			
	♣ Q109			

- (1) What did you bid with this East hand C in this week's quiz? A take-out double is a poor bid as it should be playable in the other 3 suits. You will get into a mess if partner responds 2♣. The correct bid here is a simple 1♥ overcall. A Michaels cue bid is incorrect as the hand is intermediate in strength – I have written a few words on Michaels and UNT recently and it's on the web. Ask me if you want a copy.
- (2) With this flat hand South is not quite good enough for a redouble. I too would bid 1♠.
- (3) Luckily for East, West no longer has to bid (he would have bid 2♣).
- (4) And now we see the problem. I was West and if I were playing with my twin brother I would bid 2♣ - being assured of a ♣ fit. But I know the eccentricities of this particular East (JohnG) and know that he (incorrectly in the view of most experts) will double on two suited hands. So I had a problem – did partner have ♣'s or not? I decided not to risk it and luckily that was the correct choice as partner indeed had the dreaded two-suiter without ♣'s.

And what happened? 1NT was 1 down for a slightly good score to E-W. 2♥ (which East would have been playing in if West had bid 2♣) would have been a poor contract. And if East had unwisely chosen a 2♦ Michaels bid then that too would have led to a poor contract.

The bottom lines: -

- A take-out double should be playable in the other 3 suits (unless it is extremely strong).
- If you double and then bid a new suit over partner's reply, that shows a hand that was too good to simply overcall (so around 17+ with a good suit).
- Thus if you have a two-suiter that is unsuitable for Michaels/UNT then you should simply overcall with the 5 card suit.

How to bid slam?

Board 9 from Wednesday 10th

This board caused some discussion on Wednesday; here's the bidding at our table: -

Dealer:	♠ J103				
North	♥ 1082	West	North	East(E)	South(F)
E-W vul	♦ KQ96	-	pass	2♣ (1)	4♥ (2)
	♣ J87	pass (3)	pass	5♣ (4)	pass
		6♣ (5)	all pass		
♠ 87642	N	♠ AKQ			
♥ -	W E	♥ A4			
♦ AJ742	S	♦ 83			
♣ 953		♣ AKQ642			
	♠ 95				
	♥ KQJ97653				
	♦ 105				
	♣ 10				

- (1) What did you open with this East hand E in this week's quiz? It's much too strong for a 20-22 2NT and 2♣ is certainly correct. Remember, AKQxxx is not 9 points! With 10 playing tricks and just 3 losers this hand is easily a 2♣ opener.
- (2) What did you bid with this South hand F in this week's quiz? Anyone worth his salt would bid 4♥ here (look at the vulnerability), over either a 2♣ or 2NT or any other opening.
- (3) Standard is that double is for penalties here, so West really has to pass.
- (4) East really can do nothing else but bid 5♣
- (5) West has a few options here. Partner has obviously set trumps and so a 5♦ bid is a cue bid showing the ace. A less good option is to cue bid the ♥ void but that probably denies the ♦A. Anyway, not many will find the grand at this club and 6♣ should be a good score.

And what happened? 7♣ will make on the 'obvious' ♥ lead. Nobody found the 7♠ grand, but one pair bid 6♠+1 for the E-W top. I believe that a few players undervalued the East hand and opened just 2NT. They then found the ♠ fit but not the slam!

The bottom line:

- Open a 10 playing trick hand (with loads of points) with 2♣.

I got it (slightly) wrong

Last week I talked about a disagreement between Chuck and Guy. Apparently Guy claimed that all passes and doubles need not be alerted. Chuck was of course absolutely correct in saying that some do. I quoted what the ACBL said last week.

But at our club the ACBL rules do not necessarily apply. At our club any bid (including double or pass) that is not 'standard' needs to be alerted.

Our local club rules are on the web-site and I have also printed out a few copies for those without access to a computer. Let me know if you have any comments. I also have a copy of the ACBL alert procedures, it is **twelve** pages long and in my opinion a lot of it is total rubbish. At this club our local rules apply and instead of having to memorise 12 pages of double Dutch we simply say that anything that is non-standard should be alerted or announced. There is a **one** page list in our rules that covers just about everything.

When RHO overcalls your partner's 2♣ opening Board 25 from Friday 10th

This board caused some discussion on Friday. What should you do with a +ve response if RHO overcalls your partner's strong 2♣ opening?

Dealer:	♠ 5	<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ AKQ652	West	North(J)	East	South(G)
E-W vul	♦ AKJ1042	-	2♣ (1)	2♠ (2)	dbl (3)
	♣ -	pass	pass (4)	pass	

♠ K42	N	♠ QJ1093	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ 94	W E	♥ J107	West	North	East	South
♦ 8	S	♦ 7	-	2♣	pass	2♠
♣ J1097643		♣ KQ82	pass	3♥	pass	4♦
	♠ A876		pass	4NT (5)	pass	5♥
	♥ 83		pass	7♦ (6)	pass	
	♦ Q9653					
	♣ A5					

- Table A (1) What did you open with this North hand J in this week's quiz? With virtually slam in your hand anything other than your strongest bid is not enough. Even if playing strong twos I would open 2♣ and if playing Benjamin twos I would open 2♦. Now there are players who say not to open 2♣ with strong two suiters (but bid naturally) and I generally agree with this philosophy – but I think that this hand is simply too strong. You may not even be too high at the six level even if partner is totally bust.
- (2) A rather bold bid over a 2♣ opening, especially at this vulnerability. But this player is not renowned for underbidding. I would pass.
- (3) What did you do with this South hand G in this week's quiz? Double is wrong here – that shows a weaker hand with nothing but reasonable ♠'s. With two aces opposite a 2♣ opener South should be thinking slam. 2NT is probably best.
- (4) But I would pull the double with this North hand. I would bid 3♥ and then 4♦ over partner's expected 3NT reply. Both of these bids (3♥ and 4♦) are forcing.
- Table B (5) 4NT is not generally a good bid when holding a void – if the answer is one ace then which ace is it?
- (6) But fortunately there was no problem when partner turned up with both of the missing aces.

And what happened? Just two of the 4 tables bid 7♦. The 4th table bid 6♥(+1).

The bottom lines: -

- If partner opens 2♣ and RHO overcalls then double is for penalties and is usually a weak hand with little help for partner outside the overcalled suit. Pass is negative (or waiting) and any bid is positive.

Incorrectly criticise me?... then expect to get it back

Board 22 from Friday 5th

There was a rather noisy exchange of views on Friday Aug 5th; let's have a look at the deal in question as I'm sure everybody wants to see the deal that they heard all about: -

Dealer:	♠ 95	West	North	East(me)	South
East	♥ J9863	-	-	pass	1♦
E-W vul	♦ J85	pass	1♥	pass	1♠
	♣ A63	pass	1NT	pass	2NT (1)
		pass	pass (2)	pass	

♠ 10862	N	♠ AJ4
♥ AQ72	W E	♥ 1054
♦ K7	S	♦ 42
♣ 982		♣ QJ1074

There's nothing special about the bidding. 2NT at (1) asked partner to bid 3NT if he was max (8-9) The North hand is not good enough and so correctly passed. But it's all about the play: -

	♠ KQ73
	♥ K
DUMMY→	♦ AQ10963
	♣ K5

East led the ♣Q which declarer took with the ♣A. He then led the ♦J which ran round to West's ♦K. Now West has a couple of winning options. He can cash just the ♥A and then a ♣ but simplest is to return a ♣ immediately. But he chose to cash his ♥AQ first, leaving this position. Unfortunately the obvious ♣ back now no longer defeats the contract as North has the ♦8 entry to his 3 good ♥'s. But West does not know this and a ♣ return obviously defeats the contract if East has the ♦8. But West decided to lead the ♠2. What should East do? Now this East is a rather quiet guy and so he did not simply throw his cards at partner (or say 'I don't accept those ♥ leads!' – those in the know will appreciate the humour in this) but had a think about if the situation could possibly be

	♠ 95
	♥ J98
	♦ 85
	♣ 63

♠ 10862	N	♠ AJ4
♥ 72	W E	♥ 10
♦ 7	S	♦ 2
♣ 98		♣ J1074

	♠ KQ7
	♥ -
DUMMY→	♦ AQ1096
	♣ K

salvaged. What would you play - without looking at the other hands? The answer is that the only hope to stop the overtrick now is to play the ♠J. If partner (West) has the ♠10 and the ♦8 then declarer makes just 8 tricks as dummy is left with a losing ♠K7 for his last two cards.

So East played the ♠J and declarer then wrapped up the remaining tricks as he had the ♦8 as an entry for the ♥'s which West had set up for him and then had the ♣K entry to table.

Now I had said nothing and all would have been well if JohnG had simply kept quiet. But he piped up with 'oh dear, oh dear, Terry; fancy not taking the ♠A!'

I don't usually say much when partner makes a mistake, but if he tries to blame me

I waved his ♣8&9 under his nose and asked why he did not defeat the contract by simply returning partner's suit - instead of setting up declarer's suit and then knocking out my entry?

John's answer was that he 'did not fancy it because the ♣K was on the table'. Can anybody explain the logic of this to me?

A pre-beginner's mistake; I understand that our beginners Paul and Chris had no trouble setting the contract which helped them on to a well deserved 2nd place finish.

When you open (or overcall) 1NT you have said it all

Board 27 from Friday 10th

There was a mild disagreement on this board on Friday. Disagreement between whom? Why, John Gavens and the rest of the Bridge playing world!

Dealer:	♠ K63				
South	♥ AQ6	West(me)	North	East(K)	South
Love all	♦ 6543	-	-	-	pass
	♣ KJ6	pass	1♦	1NT (1)	pass
		2♠ (2)	pass	pass	3♦ (3)
		dbl (4)	pass	3♠ (5)	all pass
♠ A9852	N	♠ QJ10			
♥ 93	W E	♥ KJ92			
♦ Q82	S	♦ KJ			
♣ 743		♣ A952			
	♠ 74				
	♥ 10754				
	♦ A1097				
	♣ Q108				

- (1) 15-18 with a ♦ stop
- (2) This East (JohnG) had previously told me that he does not play Stayman or transfers in this position, so 2♠ here was natural.
- (3) A rather bold bid as East has promised a strong hand with ♦ strength and partner may well have only 3 ♦'s in their system.
- (4) West knows that he can contribute two tricks to the defence, and with partner's 1NT overcall promising something in ♦'s and 15+ points, 3♦ is going down.
- (5) What did you bid with this East hand K in this week's quiz? Once you have opened (or overcalled 1NT) then you have said your hand and partner is the 'captain'. He knows the combined strength and is in charge. You do not even have to look at your hand again – partner has said he wants to double and defend and he's in charge.

But not with this particular East (John G) – apparently the only person who knows anything about bridge in this club is him. Chuck (North) tried to politely tell him that once you have bid 1NT you have said it all. JohnG said 'rubbish' and that he was fully entitled to pull the penalty double.

And what happened? 3♠ went one down. 3♦ would have gone one down. This is exactly what you would expect from the Law of Total Tricks. Both sides have 8 combined trumps and the two level is the limit for either side.

Anyway, I was West, we got a bad score, I said nothing further and simply moved on to the next table.....

Now John Gavens has been previously warned (news-sheet 83) that he would be banned from the club if he was rude to anybody else. He is continually criticising partners and a number have refused to play with him. As he only plays (an ancient version of) Acol it is obviously very difficult for me to find a partner for him. However, I am very familiar with Acol and have partnered him when possible recently. As I am a far better player than him (that is not saying much) there have been few problems - apart from the Fri 3rd incident two pages back when he criticised me for letting a contract make an overtrick when all he had to do to set the contract was lead back my suit when he got in (instead he set up declarer's suit and then tried to knock out my entry!). Anyway, things came to a head on this deal from this Friday.

Dealer:	♠ J95	West	North	East	South(me)
North	♥ AQJ7	-	pass	1♥	dbl
Both vul	♦ 873	pass	2NT	all pass	
	♣ K94				

♠ Q63	N	♠ K102
♥ 652	W E	♥ 109843
♦ J96	S	♦ KQ
♣ J863		♣ A102
	♠ A874	
	♥ K	
	♦ A10542	← DUMMY
	♣ Q75	

Pretty straightforward bidding to a comfortable contract. East led a ♥ but North overtook dummy's ♥K with the ♥A. He then led a ♦ which he ducked when the ♦K appeared from East (I have no problem with that). Play continued and he eventually emerged with 8 tricks after E-W led ♥'s every time they got in.

At the end of play I simply asked why he threw away a ♥ trick at trick one (East eventually got two ♥ tricks) if he was (correctly) going to duck a ♦ anyway? The conversation then continued along these lines: -

John: Don't be so stupid, man. Can't you see that I have no entry.

Terry: But you don't need an entry if you are simply going to duck a ♦ - you can lead a low ♦ from dummy.

John: How stupid are you? Can't you see that I have no entry.

Terry: But why do you want an entry if you

John: How damned stupid are you? Can't you see that I have no entry.

I will be giving free drinks all round if anybody can explain *anything* rational John's play/remarks. Anyway, needless to say, he received a suspension.

The bottom lines: - If you want to criticise people at the club, then be prepared to get it back (especially if you choose to criticise me). Everybody makes mistakes and I certainly never mind when somebody politely points out one of mine. JohnG has never made a mistake in his life and is obviously far too good for this club. All agreed?

Anybody can make a mistake but there is no need to be rude about it. And if you know that it (being rude again) will get you suspended from the club – well, who is stupid?

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 4♠. I don't think it's worth a slam try with such weak trumps opposite 12-14. If you do want to ask for aces in this sort of situation then you have to decide whether the asking bid is 4♣ or 4NT. I prefer to play 4♣ as the ace ask if partner's last bid was 1NT or 2NT.
- Hand B: 2♠. But at favourable vulnerability I would not argue too much if you chose 3♠.
- Hand C: 1♥. A take-out double is unsuitable as it is not playable in the other 3 suits and you are fixed over 2♣. 2♦ (Michaels) is also unsuitable as the hand is too good (but nowhere near good enough for the strong variety).
- Hand D: There's no real answer to this one, just what works on the day. I would not double with just 3 (very poor) ♥'s and so for me it's a toss-up between an optimistic 4♦ or a pessimistic pass.
- Hand E: 2♣. It's **far** too strong for 2NT (20-22). AKQxxx is not 9 points and a 10 playing trick hand like this needs a 2♣ opening.
- Hand F: (a) 4♥, make life difficult for them.
(b) 4♥, make life difficult for them.
- Hand G: 2NT. This is a +ve response and promises a stop in the suit overcalled. There are other options depending upon your style and you could pass if you wish (it's forcing). But the one thing that you cannot do is double; in the absence of any other agreement double here is penalties and means that you have a poor hand with reasonable ♠'s and that you think that doubling the opponents is the best spot unless partner has an extremely unbalanced hand.
- Hand H: Double. This shows a poor hand with decent ♠'s. If partner has the usual balanced 22+ hand then doubling the opponents is probably the best spot. If partner does not have the balanced hand type he will normally pull the double and the sequence is then game forcing.
- Hand J: 2♣. Now it is not normally a good idea to open 2♣ with strong two-suiters and it's usually best to bid it naturally. Open the highest ranking and then jump in the other, but this really is so strong that 2♣ is surely best. You would look awfully foolish if 1♥ was passed out and you made 12 tricks opposite a bust partner.
- Hand K: (a) 1NT (15-18). I guess that double is not too bad, but with 4 points in ♦'s and only 3 ♠'s I prefer 1NT. Note that 1NT here does not deny a 4 card major and that most people play that Stayman and transfers apply.
(b) Pass. Automatic. You do not even have to look at your hand. You have bid 1NT and told your story; partner is now in charge.

Beginner's

Play Quiz

- (a) ♣9. You can also cash the ♥A before you lead the ♣ if you wish to inform **Answer:** partner that you have the ♥Q. You have to set up partner's ♣'s and you cannot play the ♥Q after the ♥A as that undoubtedly set's up declarer's suit. What's more, you have to set up partner's ♣ suit before his entry (the ♠A) is knocked out.
- (b) Partner. North has shown up with the ♣A and ♦J and would have gone on to 3NT if he also had the ♠A.

20th Aug 2005

Club News Sheet – No. 146

Mon 15 th	1 st Phil/Jean-Marc	58%	2 nd Bill/Dave	55%
Wed 17 th	1 st Jim & Tom	56%	2 nd = 4(!) other pairs	55%
Fri 19 th	1 st Chuck/Mike	60%	2 nd Phil/Richard	52%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A Hand B With Hand A LHO opens 1♣ which is passed round to you,

what do you do?

♠ QJ7
♥ 42
♦ AQJ32
♣ 653

♠ 4
♥ AK987653
♦ Q10
♣ Q9

What do you open with Hand B?

Hand C

Hand D

With Hand C RHO opens 1♣, what do you do?

♠ K52
♥ KQJ3
♦ K75
♣ 972

♠ AK86
♥ 9642
♦ K4
♣ K85

With Hand D you open 1♣ and LHO overcalls 1♥. This is passed round to you, what do you do?

Hand E

Hand F

With Hand E partner opens 1♠, what do you bid?

♠ J9
♥ AK87
♦ 10543
♣ KJ2

♠ 95
♥ 10
♦ AK82
♣ AJ6543

With Hand F partner opens 1♥ and you bid 2♣. Partner then jumps to 3♥, what do you do?

Hand G

Hand H

With Hand G you open 1♥ and partner responds 1♠, but RHO overcalls 2♣, what do you do?

♠ K6
♥ K10752
♦ K76
♣ AJ4

♠ K6
♥ K10752
♦ K764
♣ AJ

Hand H is slightly different. You open 1♥ and partner responds 1♠, RHO again overcalls 2♣, what do you do?

Namyats solves all the problems!

Board 26 from Monday 15th

Dealer: ♠ 83
East ♥ QJ
N-S vul ♦ A65
 ♣ A106532

♠ KQ10976 N ♠ AJ52
♥ 104 W E ♥ 2
♦ KJ7 S ♦ 98432
♣ KJ ♣ 874

♠ 4
♥ AK987653
♦ Q10
♣ Q9

Table A

West	North	East	South(B)
-	-	pass	1♥ (1)
1♠	2♣	2♠	4♥
4♠ (2)	dbl (3)	all pass	

Table B

West	North	East	South(B)
-	-	pass	1♥ (1)
1♠	2♣	2♠	3♠ (4)
dbl (5)	4♥	pass	4♠ (6)
pass (7)	5♣ (8)	pass	6♥ (9)
all pass			

'Expert' Table

West	North	East	South(B)
-	-	pass	4♣ (1)
4♠ (9)	5♥ (12)	5♠	pass
pass	dbl (13)	all pass	

Table C

West	North	East	South(B)
-	-	pass	4♥ (1)
4♠ (9)	pass (10)	pass	5♥ (11)
5♠	dbl	all pass	

Table A (1) What did you open with this South hand B in this week's quiz? See 'Expert Table' for my opinion.

(2) West has an easy 4♠ bid having heard partner support.

(3) And here we see just one problem with South opening just 1♥ - North has no reason to expect such a wild distribution and so doubled.

Table B (1) This South also opened just 1♥, but as we shall see he had absolutely no intention of letting the opposition play in 4♠.

(4) This cue bid shows a very strong hand.

(5) I would simply bid 4♠ here.

(6) This cue bid shows a very very strong hand, and I would assume 1st round ♠ control. It presumably confirms ♥'s as trumps.

(7) And now West has lost his chance to bid 4♠!

(8) A cue bid showing the ♣A.

(9) Obviously the previous bidding was unnecessary as South intended to bid this all along? Apparently this player has been following the World Junior Bridge Championships and this was 'youthful exuberance' – he presumably wished to emulate (or surpass?) their achievements. And it nearly came off (see the play at Table B later).

Table C (1) Back to sanity. This South chose a (reasonably) good opening bid.

(9) But at this vulnerability West had just enough to come in.

(10) North passes as he has no idea if South has a good hand or not.

(11) I believe that somebody at the table said 'lucky Terry isn't watching – you'll get written up for bidding again having pre-empted'. But I have my spies.

Of course South would not 'have to' bid again if he had chosen the best opening bid – see 'Expert Table'.

- ‘Expert’ Table
- (1) Now this clearly is the best bid – if you play Namyats. I have mentioned Namyats a few times recently and it really is a good convention. It says ‘I have a good 4♥ opener’. Then, of course, you have told partner everything and have no need to bid again (and risk being ‘written up’ !).
 - (9) West may or may not come in now knowing that there is a good hand on his right. Let’s assume that he does.
 - (12) Now North is in charge. He knows partner has a decent 4♥ opener and so can raise to 5♥. This really is the beauty of Namyats – say your hand in one bid.
 - (13) And again it’s North who knows that 5♠ probably is not making.

The play at Table B

♠ 83 ♥ Q ♦ A65 ♣ A10653	♠ KQ10976 ♥ 10 ♦ KJ7 ♣ J	N W E S	♠ AJ52 ♥ - ♦ 98432 ♣ 87
♠ 4 ♥ AK98765 ♦ Q10 ♣ 9			

At Table B, you will recall, South simply charged into 6♥ having emphatically advertised his ‘void’ in ♠’s. West is on lead, and knowing that South had a ♠ void (or the ♠ A) and that North held the ♣A, he reasonably led a trump. South won with the ♥J in dummy and immediately led a small ♣. South put up the ♣Q and West won with the ♣K.

← Now we reach this position.
 What should West lead?
 The only way to defeat the contract now is to call South’s bluff and lead a ♠.
 After a long huddle, that’s what West did and South failed in his somewhat enterprising contract.

And what happened elsewhere? South’s bidding here earned him a 2nd top anyway as at other tables E-W were allowed to make ♠ contracts!

The bottom lines: -

- Check out Namyats.
- It is especially important to open 4♥ (or 4♣ playing Namyats) when short in ♠’s.
- Don’t bid again having pre-empted.
- Don’t necessarily believe the opponent’s bidding.
- I like to play poker but rarely bluff at bridge (partners tend not to trust you after a while).
- Bridge, unlike poker, is a partnership game where it’s best to tell partner what you’ve got.

Off to slam again

Board 4 from Monday 15th

Our enterprising slam bidder from the previous hand is in action again on this deal. Now somebody else did ask me how slam was bid, and I happen to know: -

Dealer:	♠ J10732				
West	♥ A3	West	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ A1076	pass	1♠	pass	2♣
	♣ KJ	pass	2NT (1)	pass	4NT (2)
		pass	5♥	pass	6NT
		all pass			
♠ A65	N	♠ 984			
♥ Q8752	W E	♥ J4			
♦ 982	S	♦ Q43			
♣ 53		♣ 107642			
	♠ KQ				
	♥ K1096				
	♦ KJ5				
	♣ AQ98				

- (1) I would bid 2♦ here, but 2NT is not totally 'wrong' as it shows 12-14 points.
- (2) But unfortunately (or fortunately – depending upon how you look at it) 2NT at (1) apparently shows 15-17 in French Standard (I have no idea - I am just quoting the Frenchman sitting South) and so off to slam they went.....
4NT was apparently Blackwood here - you have to decide whether to use 4NT or 4♣ in sequences like this.

And what happened? 6NT made at this table and another table where it was bid. The other three tables rested in 3NT making 10, 11, or 12 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- French Standard is a system that I know nothing about, but in Standard American a 2NT rebid after a two level response from partner shows 12-14 points.
- Standard American is the 'standard' system in this club (but you can play whatever you like – as long as you agree it with partner).
- It (usually) helps if both members of a partnership play the same system.

More bottom lines: -

- Assuming Standard American it is marginal if South should look for slam at (2). It is a mis-fitting 18 and so 30-32 in total; but this South hand does have excellent intermediates. It's marginal and I think that a quantitative 4NT at (2) is probably about right.
- And should North accept? 13 is slap in the middle but North has two tens and KJ in partner suit. So yes.
- And is 6NT a good contract? It looks like a lay-down 12 tricks to me. 4♠'s, 2♥'s, 2♦'s and 4♣'s. But two pairs somehow managed less. One player asked me if he took the ♦ finesse the 'wrong' way? The answer is yes (you don't need the ♦ finesse).

(My) recommended bidding (playing Standard American) is: -

1♠ - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2NT - 4NT - 6NT

where 2♥ is 4th suit forcing, 2NT shows a ♥ stop, 4NT is quantitative and 6NT accepts.

So what is the 2NT rebid?

Board 13 from Wednesday 15th

Playing Standard American it's quite simple (and logical). You open and partner responds at the one level. 1NT is 12-14 and 2NT is 18-19 (with 15-17 you would have opened 1NT).

Fine, but what if the opponents are inconsiderate enough to intervene?

Dealer:	♠ Q8542				
North	♥ J	West	North	East	South(H)
Both vul	♦ A985	-	pass	pass	1♥
	♣ 1098	pass	1♠	2♣	2NT (1)
		all pass			
♠ J1097	N	♠ A3			
♥ A963	W E	♥ Q84			
♦ QJ	S	♦ 1032			
♣ 654		♣ KQ732			
	♠ K6				
	♥ K10752				
	♦ K764				
	♣ AJ				

(1) What did you rebid with this South hand H in this week's quiz. First of all, is this NT bidding catching? I note that on the previous page North decided to rebid 2NT instead of a more descriptive 2♦, but on that occasion it was not totally wrong (as it showed the correct point range). But 2NT here is definitely wrong – not only is 2♦ a far more descriptive bid, but 2NT here shows 18-19 points!!

Why is that?, you may ask, as it's the cheapest NT bid available. The answer is given in the answers to Hand G in this week's quiz. What did you bid with this South hand with a small ♦ transferred to the ♣ suit (so Hand G - ♠K6 ♥K10754 ♦K76 ♣AJ4)? You should pass – it is not partner, but an opponent who has pushed the bidding up to the two level and 2NT may simply be too high for partner who may have just 6 points.

And what happened? West led a ♣ and even though dummy's ♣1098 gave South a 2nd ♣ stop the contract still went 3 down for a complete bottom to N-S. 3♦ made exactly at another table for the N-S top.

The bottom lines: -

- With 5-4 (with the 5 higher ranking) open the 5 carder and rebid the 4 carder (if there is room).
- If partner responds at the two level then 2NT by you is 12-14
- If partner responds at the one level and RHO overcalls at the two level, then 2NT by you shows a much stronger hand (some say 18-19). It definitely is not 12-14 as with that range you can simply pass.

There's no such animal as a pre-empt in 4th seat Board 21 from Monday 15th

Dealer:	♠ A984		<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ A975		West(A)	North	East(C)	South
N-S vul	♦ 6		-	1♣	pass (1)	pass
	♣ AQJ10		pass (2)			
♠ QJ7	N	♠ K52	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ 42	W E	♥ KQJ3	West(A)	North	East(C)	South
♦ AQJ32	S	♦ K75	-	1♣	pass	pass
♣ 653		♣ 972	1♦ (2)	dbl	2♦ (3)	all pass
	♠ 1063					
	♥ 1086					
	♦ 10984					
	♣ K84					

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this East hand C in this week's quiz? The theory that one should double with an opening hand went out in the Stone Age. This hand has no 5 card suit to overcall and is not strong enough for 1NT, so pass. That is, as long as your partner knows all about balancing
- (2) What did you bid with this West hand A in this week's quiz? I was asked this on Monday and said 1♦. One player suggested 2♦ as it's a decent suit and this bid should keep anybody (especially opponents) from bidding ♥'s. An interesting concept, but unfortunately a jump like this in 4th seat is not pre-emptive but shows a good hand. Now you could pass, but where are the points? Dummy has 5 or less and so partner has points; the most likely scenario is that partner has a decent hand with nothing to bid (as in this actual case) and so it is your duty to balance when holding 7+ points and so 1♦ is the best bid. I would only pass instead of bidding in this situation with 7+ points if I had a good holding in the suit opened.
- Table B (2) This West got it right.
- (3) And E-W found the top spot.

And what happened? 1♣ passed out made and scored well for N-S. 2♦ made or made +1 and scored well for E-W. The bottom lines: -

- Understand balancing.
- A jump in the balancing seat is never pre-emptive, but shows a good hand.
- There's no such thing as a pre-emptive bid in the balancing seat – check news-sheet 81.

What does the 2♠ bid mean?

I was checking out some old news-sheets and found this sequence (no interference):

1NT - 2♣ - 2♥ - 2♠

What does the 2♠ bid mean?... it is up to partnership understanding. Playing 4-way transfers it shows an invitational hand with 4 ♠'s (2NT would deny a major suit playing 4-way transfers). Others play it as a hand with 5 ♠'s but not quite good enough to transfer and then invite. I like to play 4-way transfers and so for me it's the former.

The 4-4 fit is best

Board 13 from Monday 15th

This hand caused considerable debate on Monday. 4♥ is easy and everybody easily found it with a 5-4 fit. But as I keep on saying – the 4-4 fit is golden. This deal is, in fact, typical. There is a 4-4 ♠ fit and a 5-4 ♥ fit. And the good 4-4 fit is superior, making one more trick!

But the real point is – how do you find the 4-4 ♠ fit when you have already found the 5-4 ♥ fit? Nobody managed this on Monday; and, indeed, I think it is virtually impossible unless you have a fairly sophisticated bidding system after 1NT.

Tables A or B are absolutely typical of 99% of the Bridge playing world: -

Dealer:	♠ A765		<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ AJ97		West	North	East	South(D)
Both vul	♦ A2		-	1NT	pass	2♣ (1)
	♣ A76		pass	2♥ (2)	pass	4♥ (3)
			all pass			
♠ 983	N	♠ 104				
♥ 854	W E	♥ 6	<u>Table B</u>			
♦ KQJ7	S	♦ 108654	West	North	East	South(B)
♣ Q84		♣ KJ1032	-	1NT	pass	2♦ (1)
	♠ KQJ2		pass	3♥ (4)	pass	4♥ (5)
	♥ KQ1032		all pass			
	♦ 93					
	♣ 95		<u>'Expert' Table</u>			
			West	North	East	South(B)
			-	1NT	pass	2♣ (1)
			pass	2♥	pass	3♣ (6)
			pass	3♠ (7)	pass	4♠
			all pass			

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this South hand D in this week's quiz? The 'Expert' opinion these days is to bid Stayman with all 5-4 (or 4-5) hands in the majors.
- (2) And North responds 2♥ with both majors of course.
- (3) And I'm sure that most people would simply raise to game (having found a 5-4 major suit fit).
- Table B (1) Now some people (especially Europeans) prefer to transfer when 5-4 in the majors, so let's see how that works here.
- (4) Now I guess it depends upon how you play your super-accepts (I assume that everybody will super-accept with 4 trumps and a superb maximum?). Anyway, let's suppose that North super-accepts with 3♥.
- (5) Then South has nothing more to say other than 4♥.
- 'Expert' Table (1) As I said above, most experts bid 2♣ when 5-4.
- (6) But this is where we sort the men from the boys. South knows that there is a 5-4 ♥ fit. But he is also an expert and with these excellent ♠'s he also knows that if there is also a 4-4 ♠ fit then 4♠ will be a better contract. So what does he do? Why, he asks North what his shape is, of course. 3♣ here is SARS (Shape Asking Relays after Stayman). It's all up on our web site.
- (7) And it could not be simpler, 3♠ here says that North also has 4 ♠'s.

And what happened? Anybody who had read (and digested) the NT bidding book on the web would have scored a complete top for making 4♠+2. At our club everybody played in the inferior 4♥ which should only make 11 tricks. Don't ask me how to bid to 6♠; obviously simply locating the 4-4 ♠ fit is good enough for a complete top.

The bottom lines: -

- Locating the 4-4 fit is what all bidding systems are all about

- The 4-4 fit is sacred; it is a cow to India, it is Bin Ladin to a terrorist, it is
- It is better than a 5-3 fit, and a *good* 4-4 fit is better than a 5-4 fit!
- SARS is fully described in the NT bidding book on our web-site.
- If you do indeed look at the NT bidding book, you will discover that there is a section totally devoted to how to find the superior 4-4 fit even though a 5-4 fit has already been uncovered; and this actual 'expert' sequence is given, so it's not something I made up after the event!
- Read our web-site?

A Shapely Hand?

Board 17 from Friday 15th

Dealer: ♠ AK86
 South ♥ 9642
 Love all ♦ K4
 ♣ K85

West	North(D)	East	South
-	1♣	1♥	pass (1)
pass	1♠ (2)	2♦	3♣ (3)
all pass			

♠ QJ9	N	♠ 1043
♥ A	W E	♥ KQ1073
♦ 872	S	♦ AQJ9
♣ J109632		♣ 7
	♠ 752	
	♥ J85	
	♦ 10653	
	♣ AQ4	

An amusing contract that went four down – who would you blame?

- (1) South has the values for 1NT, but with a minimal hand and no ♥ stop pass is correct.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand D in this week's quiz? Should North compete with a flat 13 count? If you play negative doubles it's easy and double here is 'automatic'. Thus the 1♠ bid here shows a very shapely hand with 5+ (probably 6+) ♣'s and 4 ♠'s.
- (3) And so South quite reasonably showed his ♣ support for partner's 'long' suit.

Perhaps this N-S pair do not play negative doubles? (in that case I would pass with the North hand).

And what happened? Two pairs managed to find the miserable 3♣ contract with the 3-3 fit. It did not play well. This (anonymous) North, of course, blamed South. I would not be so quick to (incorrectly?) criticise partner.

The bottom lines:

- Play negative doubles.
- Then if opener bids (rather than the 'automatic' double) that shows a shapely hand.

Checkback Stayman, New Minor Forcing (NMF) and Crowhurst

I was asked to clarify the differences between these three conventions.

(a) 1♣ - 1♦ - 2NT - 3♣

I have stated in earlier new-sheets that 3♣ here is Checkback Stayman, and so it is. As I have often said, the 2NT rebid does not deny a 4 card major and opener may have 4♥'s and/or 4♠'s for this sequence and the best way for responder to find the major suit fit (if there is one) is to use 3♣ as Checkback Stayman. Regardless of whether the opening bid was 1♣ or 1♦.

(b) 1♣ - 1♦ - 1NT - 2♣

But this sequence is different. Unless you play Walsh (and as far as I know only Clive and Monte in our club have even heard of it) then opener's 1NT rebid denies a 4 card major and so the 2♣ bid is to play.

But there is a (small) twist. There is a convention called Crowhurst that uses an artificial bid of 2♣ after a 1NT rebid. But Crowhurst 2♣ is not used primarily to find out about major suit fits (although the responses do often say something about opener's majors). Anyway, the Crowhurst 2♣ convention was invented because Eric Crowhurst does not like to open 1NT with a weak doubleton. So if he has a hand within his 1NT range with a weak doubleton he will open 1 of a suit and then rebid 1NT if his partner bids his doubleton. Thus his 1NT rebid has a very wide range (12-17 if you play a strong NT system). Obviously responder sometimes needs to know how many points opener actually has and so 2♣ asks. In my opinion it's all nonsense and I have no problem simply opening 1NT with a weak doubleton.

(c) 1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣

And here we see just one problem with the Crowhurst 2♣ convention. 2♣ here is traditionally Checkback Stayman (or NMF), asking opener if he has 4♥'s and/or 3♠'s. If you play Crowhurst then opener also has to give his point count and responder is not promising either 5♠'s or 4♥'s. The responses are simply too complicated for a simple soul like me.

(d) 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣

(e) 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♦

Finally, let's look at Checkback Stayman vs. New Minor Forcing (NMF). You are responder and have a decent (let's say game invitational) hand with 5♠'s after partner opens 1♣. So you bid 1♠ and opener rebids 1NT. 2♠ by you now would be a weak bid and so you need a conventional bid to find out if partner has 3♠'s. If your partnership plays Checkback Stayman then this bid is 2♣, regardless of whether partner opened 1♣ or not, so (d). If you play NMF then the asking bid is two of the other minor, so (e).

Which is best? I prefer Checkback Stayman as there is then more room in the responses to be specific about the majors and give strength information. Using 2♦ to ask as in sequence (e) does not give opener enough room to be specific.

But, for some strange reason, NMF seems to be the more popular of the two these days.

An Adjusted Score?

Board 25 from Friday 15th

There is one small problem when Terry plays 'all alone'. What should I do if I am defending and my play partner 'i.e. he who would have been dummy' defends so badly that it gives declarer an absolute top (as opposed to an absolute bottom)? I discussed the board below with a few players and they all agreed that the result should not stand – it is unfair to other players, so I decided to say that the board was 'not played' at my table.

Dealer:	♠ A3	West(me)	North	East	South
North	♥ AK10	-	1NT	pass	2♣
E-W vul	♦ K9875	dbl (1)	2♦	pass	3NT
	♣ K32	all pass			

♠ K985	N	♠ 762
♥ J5	W E	♥ 8762
♦ 642	S	♦ AQ3
♣ AJ97		♣ 1064
	♠ QJ104	
	♥ Q943	
	♦ J10	
	♣ Q85	

(1) I was West and, with these decent ♣ intermediates, I decided that I would like a ♣ lead and so I doubled the Stayman bid. I am not saying that double is a particularly good bid here (some would prefer a 5 card ♣ suit and/or better ♣'s), but I decided to double and it should have worked out very well

	♠ -	
	♥ AK10	
	♦ K987	
Me ↓	♣ 32	
♠ 98	N	♠ 7
♥ J5	W E	♥ 8762
♦ 42	S	♦ A3
♣ AJ7		♣ 106
	♠ QJ	
DUMMY	♥ Q943	
→	♦ J	
	♣ Q5	

East, as instructed, led a ♣. I would lead the ♣10 but he chose the ♣4 and it does not really matter. Then South (dummy) moved to the East seat and defended with me. Declarer played the ♣8 from dummy and I played the ♣9 which declarer took with the ♣K. Declarer then led ♠A followed by a small ♠ which I won with the ♠K. Clearly I need to get partner in to lead another ♣ through dummy, so I led the ♦6. North played small and East's ♦Q won the trick. So East is on lead in this (←) position. Clearly the obvious ♣ back now (or cash the ♦A followed by a ♣) sets the contract by two tricks (E-W get 1♠, 2♦'s and 3♣'s). But East cashed

the ♦A and then led the ♦3 to give Declarer all of the remaining tricks and thus score an overtrick – a 3 trick difference.

What should I (as director) do?

Normally when somebody defends this badly it's no problem – and I don't even bother to write it up as the defender simply gets a bad score. But here it's different – East's play has gifted his partner/him a cold top (instead of a cold bottom). Obviously(?) I cannot let the result stand – that is totally unfair to other N-S pairs who have encountered sensible defence.

Every table played in 3NT, at one table North made exactly and the other two went one down. Whatever I did would affect the results; in the end I decided to simply 'average' the board – as if it had not been played. Any comments?

The bottom line: If partner doubles Stayman – then lead ♣'s!!

A Jump after a two level response is forcing?

Board 2 from Friday 15th

I note that two pairs missed game on this board, let's look at the bidding at my table: -

Dealer:	♠ 95	West	North(F)	East	South
East	♥ 10	-	-	pass	1♥
N-S vul	♦ AK82	pass	2♣	pass	3♥ (1)
	♣ AJ6543	pass	4♥ (2)	all pass	

♠ 832	N	♠ AJ64
♥ KQ8	W E	♥ 95
♦ J1054	S	♦ 763
♣ KQ7		♣ 10982
	♠ KQ107	
	♥ AJ76432	
	♦ Q9	
	♣ -	

- (1) Partner's ♣ response has not improved this hand but he has responded at the two level (so has 11+ points). Whether the hand is worth 3♥ is open to debate, you need little from partner to make game. Of course there's no problem playing 2/1 as you simply bid 2♥ as the sequence is game forcing.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand F in this week's quiz. I note that 2 out of the 4 tables played in 3♥, so maybe North passed? Now I am not an expert on Standard American but I believe that a jump (to 3♥ here) is forcing after a 2-level response and that certainly makes sense to me. In Acol the response may be only 8 points and so 3♥ here is not forcing. 2/1 is simplest (and best), of course, as a simple 2♥ is forcing!
Anyway, I do not believe that North can pass playing Standard American and so 3NT or 4♥ seem reasonable.

And what happened? 4♥ was bid twice and 2 tables stopped in 3♥. Everybody made 10 tricks.
The bottom line: -

- After a two level response, a jump by opener is forcing.
- Play 2/1?

Don't deny a 4-card major

Board 19 from Monday 15th

- | | |
|---------|--|
| ♠ J9 | Partner opens 1♠, what did you respond with this East hand in the quiz? |
| ♥ AK87 | I witnessed one (anonymous) member bid 2NT! I hope that you realise what is |
| ♦ 10543 | wrong with this bid? It is right as far as values are concerned, but it denies a 4 |
| ♣ KJ2 | cards ♥ suit and there may be a 4-4 ♥ fit. The correct bid here is 2♦. You then |
| | raise a ♥ bid by partner (I would raise 2♥ to 4♥) or else bid 2NT over 2♠ (this |
| | still shows 11-12 and so nothing is lost by bidding correctly) and raise 2NT to 3NT. |

And what happened? Partner did not have 4♥'s and so everybody reached 3NT – but that's not the point, is it?

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1♦. You could simply pass out the hand but I would need better ♣'s for that. Partner has some values and you should bid here to 'protect' him as he may well have quite a good hand but no suitable bid. This is called balancing.
- Hand B: 4♣, (showing a good 4♥ bid) if you are one of those enlightened people who realise that 4♣ as natural is a silly opening bid (open 3♣ or 5♣) and that one should play Namyats. If you do not play Namyats then I guess that you have to open 4♥ and hope that partner guesses that you have a decent hand.
- Hand C: Pass. You have no 5 card suit to overcall; you are not playable in the other 3 suits and so should not double; you do not have enough for a 1NT overcall. You should pass and be sure to play with a partner who understands balancing.
- Hand D: Dbl. Playing negative doubles this is 'automatic'. Now some people may say that since North has 4♥'s then there is no point in doubling as it is unlikely that partner has a penalty pass. Fine, if that is what you think (I won't argue too much) then pass – partner could not find a bid over 1♥ and cannot have much. To bid 1♠ here (in either scenario) I would like a much shapelier hand with 5+ ♣'s. Note that 1NT (assuming you had a ♥ stop) would be totally wrong as that shows a very big hand opposite a passed partner.
- Hand E: 2♦. 2NT (or 3NT) is wrong because it denies 4♥'s.
- Hand F: 3NT (or 4♥). Partner's jump after a 2-level response is forcing in Standard American and so you cannot pass.
- Hand G: Pass. In this situation you do not need to bid; 2♥ would show 6♥'s and 2NT would show a much stronger hand as partner may have only 6 points.
- Hand H: 2♦. Here you do not have to pass as you have a comfortable rebid and this is not strength showing. 2♥ would show 6♥'s and 2NT would show a much stronger hand.

Mon 22 nd	N-S	1 st	Bill/Dave	59%	2 nd	Paul/Chris	53%
Mon 22 nd	E-W	1 st	Kenneth/John	63%	2 nd	Bob/Monte	54%
Wed 24 th		1 st	Kenneth/John	60%	2 nd	Bob/Monte	57%
Fril 26 th		1 st	Clive/Ken	63%	2 nd	Bob/Dave	55%

Editorial

The news-sheet is free* to club members and to visitors to the Monday or Friday sessions. It cost me some money and a lot of time to produce and I do not appreciate seeing copies torn up, sat upon, and/or scribbled on and discarded at the club. If you want any scrap paper – to write something on or whatever, then simply look in my suitcase where there are always loads of spare papers (under where the boards are kept) – or simply ask me.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A RHO opens 1♦ after two passes, what do you do?
♠ K8432	♠ J82	With Hand B partner opens 1♥ and RHO overcalls a weak 2♠. What do you do?
♥ AK74	♥ 1082	
♦ 865	♦ Q105	
♣ K	♣ A1062	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C it is unfavourable vulnerability. Partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 1♠, what do you do?
♠ AQ107	♠ 963	With Hand D partner opens 1♦, what do you bid if - (a) RHO passes? (b) RHO overcalls 1♥? (c) RHO overcalls 1♠?
♥ J1093	♥ QJ9	
♦ 73	♦ Q65	
♣ 974	♣ Q732	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1NT, what do you do?
♠ KQ73	♠ A752	With Hand F RHO opens 1♥. (a) What do you do? (b) Suppose you double, then what do you do when partner jumps to 3♦?
♥ 953	♥ 876	
♦ J9642	♦ AQ45	
♣ 5	♣ KQJ	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G LHO opens 3♠ and this is passed round to you. What do you do?
♠ 4	♠ A8	With Hand H partner opens 1♦, what do you bid?
♥ AK3	♥ A108432	
♦ AJ54	♦ K	
♣ AKQ95	♣ AK98	

Play 4th suit forcing as a game force

Board 24 from Monday 22nd

Dealer: ♠ 10942
West ♥ KJ75
Love all ♦ 973
♣ 74

♠ KQJ7	N	♠ A8
♥ 9	W E	♥ A108432
♦ A10865	S	♦ K
♣ QJ6		♣ AK98
	♠ 653	
	♥ Q6	
	♦ QJ42	
	♣ 10532	

Table A

West	North	East(H)	South
1♦	pass	1♥	pass
1♠	pass	2♣ (1)	pass
2♦ (2)	pass	3♥ (3)	all pass

Table B

West	North	East(H)	South
1♦	pass	2♥ (4)	pass
2NT (5)	pass	4♣ (6)	pass
4♥	pass	5♣	pass
5♥	pass	6♥	pass
6NT	all pass		

- Table A (1) I don't know if this was intended as natural or not; I would play it a 4th suit forcing. Some play that a jump in the 4th suit (so 3♣ here) is natural (and forcing).
(12) With a ♣ stop I would bid 2NT here.
(13) Now this jump to 3♥ would probably not be forcing if it was made at (1), but I like to play 4th suit forcing is forcing to game (it really does make subsequent bidding easier). So I would bid just 2♥ here, but this pair really have to sort out if they play 4th suit forcing or not. And if 2♣ at (1) was simply natural then is 3♥ here forcing?
- Table B (4) What did you bid with this East hand H in this week's quiz? This East solved all rebid problems by making a strong jump shift; this is game forcing. However, I don't really like it with this hand as I would prefer a much more robust suit.
(5) Partner's bid has (virtually) ruled out ♠'s and so I think 2NT is OK here. 2♠ is equally good.
(6) Now East has set up a game forcing situation, but this is a very common mistake – leaping off to the ace ask prematurely. East has two options here - 3♣ or 3♥ and should bid one of them to find out if partner has any sort of ♥ support. And even a quantitative 4NT is not too bad a bid, but simply charging into an impossible slam is not good bidding.

And what happened? 6NT was one down. All of the other tables were in 3NT or 4NT making the obvious 11 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- Take it slowly in a game forcing situation – don't charge into the ace-ask prematurely.
- A strong jump shift should be a good hand with a good (virtually self-sufficient) suit.
- Check if you and your partner both play 4th suit forcing.
- In my opinion it's easiest to play 4th suit forcing as a game force.
- With 30-32 combined points, you generally need a **good** long suit or a **fit** to make slam, obviously a long suit with two (or three) losers is of no use.

1NT or a negative double?

Board 15 from Wednesday 24th

Dealer: ♠ J5
South ♥ 862
N-S vul ♦ AJ94
♣ AQ83

♠ 96 N ♠ K8432
♥ Q5 W E ♥ AK74
♦ KQ102 S ♦ 865
♣ J10652 ♣ K
♠ AQ107
♥ J1093
♦ 73
♣ 974

West	North	East(A)	South(C)
-	-	-	pass
pass	1♦ (1)	1♠ (2)	1NT (3)
pass	pass	2♥ (4)	dbl
2♠	pass	pass	dbl
all pass			

- (1) I prefer 1♣ when 4-4 in the minors but it's not that important.
- (2) What did you bid with this East hand A in this week's quiz? It's worth a noise but double is wrong with two-suiters (you're stuck if partner responds 2♣). It's not that good a ♠ suit but either 1♠ or a Michaels 2♦ would be my choice.
- (3) What did you bid with this South hand C in this week's quiz? Now this really is an interesting one as there are three very sensible options. You can pass, await partner's double, and then pass that; but the vulnerability is wrong if partner has a decent hand. Or you can double (negative) to show your 4♥'s; but then you will never get to NT if that is correct (quite likely with these ♠'s sitting over the overcaller). Or you can simply bid 1NT. Now 1NT here shows some values (with a minimum 6-7 count you can always pass as partner has another bid if he has a good hand). I was South and chose 1NT.
- (4) What would you bid here? Even at this vulnerability it is dangerous to bid as South has shown a quite decent hand with ♠'s. Pass is the prudent option.

And what happened? 2♠ doubled was two down and the 300 to N-S was a complete top. One other East got to 2♠ and another to 2♠ but neither was doubled – was South asleep? And another South bid 2NT – that's was too high and surely he could have doubled East?

The bottom lines: -

- When partner opens and RHO overcalls then 1NT by you shows a decent hand.
- Bidding again having heard LHO respond 1NT over your original overcall is sticking your neck out.
- Don't bid 2NT with insufficient values if you can make a penalty double.

Hand D Let me just expand the theme about only bidding 1NT after an overcall when you have something to say. Partner has opened 1♦, what did you bid with this hand D in the quiz?

- ♠ 963
♥ QJ9
♦ Q65
♣ Q732
- (a) If RHO passes then you have to bid, and so 1NT is correct.
 - (b) If RHO overcalls 1♥ then 1NT is reasonable (some would pass).
 - (c) But if RHO overcalls 1♠ then you should pass. You have a minimum with no ♠ stop.

Garbage Stayman

Board 12 from Wednesday 24th

I was asked by East to write this one up. I'm not sure if it was because of his good bidding or his partner's play?

Dealer:	♠ -				
West	♥ AJ106	West	North	East(E)	South
N-S vul	♦ Q875	1NT	pass	2♣ (1)	pass
	♣ Q10632	2♠	all pass		

♠ AJ82	N	♠ KQ73
♥ K87	W E	♥ 953
♦ A10	S	♦ J9642
♣ K984		♣ 5
	♠ 109654	
	♥ Q42	
	♦ K3	
	♣ AJ7	

(1) What did you bid with this East hand E in this week's quiz? My preferred version of Stayman is 'Garbage Stayman'. So East does not need invitational values as he is going to pass any response.

But the play was perhaps the most interesting point on this hand. N-S quickly wrapped up one ♣ trick and three ♥ tricks (an initial ♣ lead and ♥ Q from South). North then switched to a low ♦ and so he's going to score his ♦ Q after West won with the ♦ A. But how many trumps do you expect South to make in this resulting position, with West on lead? :-

	♠ -		
	♥ 6		
	♦ Q87	DUMMY	
	♣ Q1062	↓	
♠ AJ82	N	♠ KQ73	
♥ -	W E	♥ -	
♦ 10	S	♦ J964	
♣ K98		♣ -	
	♠ 109654		
	♥ -		
	♦ 3		
	♣ J7		

The answer is none! West correctly led a small ♠ to dummy and won the ♠ K. A small ♦ was then led to North. The ♣ return was ruffed and then a top ♦ from dummy left South powerless. He ruffed with the ♠ 10 and West overruffed. West then ruffed another ♣ with the ♠ Q and another top ♦ from table meant curtains for South. West had the ♠ A8 and a top ♣ sitting over South's ♠ 96.

And what happened at other tables? E-W scored just above average as at another table it was South in 2♠ (doubled) going for 800.

The bottom lines: -

Garbage Stayman

You can bid 2♣ Stayman without invitational values provided that you can cope with any response. There are two hand types where you can bid this 'Garbage Stayman': -

- 4441 type hands with short ♣'s (this one was 4351 which is acceptable as even a 4-3 ♥ fit should play better than 1NT).
- 54xx or 45xx type hands (9 cards in the majors) where you bid 2♣, pass a major suit response and convert 2♦ into 2 of your 5 card major.

Bid first time or later?

Board 1 from Wednesday 24th

I was also asked about this one, in particular what North should do.

Dealer:	♠ J82	<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ 1082	West	North(B)	East	South
N-S vul	♦ Q105	-	pass	pass	1♥
	♣ A1062	2♠ (1)	pass (2)	pass	3♦ (3)
		pass	3♥ (4)	3♠ (5)	pass
		pass	4♥ (6)	pass	
♠ KQ9653	N	♠ 74			
♥ Q3	W E	♥ A96			
♦ J6	S	♦ K743			
♣ QJ7		♣ K985			
	♠ A10				
	♥ KJ754				
	♦ A982				
	♣ 43				

- (1) A weak jump overcall...
- (2) ... that makes life difficult for North. I was asked what he should bid – what did you bid with this North hand B in this week's quiz? There are just two sensible options, pass or 3♥. Now sometimes you have to stretch when there is an overcall, but for me 3♥ is too much of a stretch. I would pass and then bid 3♥ over partner's expected re-opening double (playing negative doubles). Life really is easier for North if playing negative doubles as he knows he has a chance to bid again without showing values that he does not have.
- (3) Perhaps this pair don't play negative doubles? Anyway, South decided to bid his ♦'s.
- (4) And North obviously gives preference.
- (5) But now East entered the lists. He has a reasonable hand (for either offence or defence) and the ♥ Axx now look good (partner is presumably short).
- (6) But this really is pushing it. North explained that he thought South must be very short in ♠'s if East has 3 ♠'s. But that does not really hold water, with 3 ♠'s East would (should) have raised to 3♠ at the first go. No, 4♥ is an overbid here; I would pass at teams scoring and double at pairs.

And what happened? 4♥ went two down, so 100 for a good score to E-W. This was only beaten by the E-W pair who were allowed to play in 2♠ (110).

Editorial

The web-site is now fully functional. I'm getting the hang of it now and I think it's pretty decent for an absolute computer novice who only got the hang of e-mails and oogle 3 months ago! It is www.pattayabridge.com of course. Feel free to give me any comments/ suggestions/ improvements. You cannot write to the site, but you can e-mail or give me anything that you would like me to consider putting up.

Double with a flat hand? – part 1

Board 18 from Friday 26th

Now regular readers of the news-sheets will know that I say that a take-out double is generally playable in the other three suits, and not to double when holding a flat hand. Now this is generally excepted, and with a flat hand you should get another go if partner knows about balancing. But there is a limit; and the limit is around 15-16 points. With a hand of this strength or more which is unsuitable for NT (no stop) then you really have to double.

Dealer:	♠ 4	Table A			
East	♥ AK3	West	North(G)	East	South
N-S vul	♦ AJ54	-	-	3♠	pass
	♣ AKQ95	pass	4♣ (1)	pass	5♣ (2)
		all pass			

♠ 8	N	♠ AJ107653	Table B			
♥ J95	W E	♥ 864	West	North(G)	East	South
♦ KQ82	S	♦ 63	-	-	3♠	pass
♣ J10832		♣ 7	pass	dbl (1)	pass	4♥ (3)
	♠ KQ92		all pass			
	♥ Q1072					
	♦ 1097					
	♣ 64					

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this North hand G in this week's quiz? Now normally it's best to have 4 ♥'s but this hand is certainly playable in ♥'s (a Moysian fit will play very well when you can take a ruff in the 3-trump hand and have the top trumps.
- (2) And this shows why 4♣ is such a bad bid. South cannot bid 4♥ now (North has denied reasonable ♥'s) and a 4♥ bid here would show 5 decent ♥'s. And the bidding has gone past 3NT and 3♠ doubled so South is out of good bids.
- Table B (1) This North correctly doubled.
- (2) And South simply cannot go wrong!! Pass, 3NT or 4♥ - he's spoilt for choice.

And what happened? 5♣ was 2 down. 4♥ was reached at the other two tables.

The bottom lines: -

- You can sometimes double a major suit opening if you have 3 good cards in the other major. It's nice to have 4 but 3 is acceptable with a good hand.

Double with a flat hand? – part 2

Board 24 from Friday 26th

Dealer: ♠ A752
West ♥ 876
Love all ♦ AQ45
♣ KQJ

♠ 10964	N	♠ QJ3
♥ AKQ94	W E	♥ 2
♦ 6	S	♦ 985
♣ A64		♣ 987532
	♠ K8	
	♥ J1053	
	♦ KJ10732	
	♣ 10	

Table A

West	North(F)	East	South
1♥	pass (1)	pass	pass

Table B

West	North(F)	East	South
1♥	dbl (1)	pass	3♦ (2)
pass	3NT (3)	all pass	

'Expert Table'

West	North(F)	East	South
1♥	dbl (1)	pass	3♦ (2)
pass	3♥ (3)	pass	3NT
all pass			

Table A (1) This is poor. What did you bid with this North hand F(a) in this week's quiz? Double is clear with this hand, especially as it has 4 ♠'s.

Table B (1) This North correctly chose to double.
(2) A jump in a suit after partner's take-out double shows around 8-10 points, so this bid is just fine.
(3) What did you bid with this North hand F(b). This North assumed that South must have something in ♥'s and so bid 3NT. But there really is a better solution – see 'Expert Table'.

'Expert' (3) What North should really do is bid 3♥ - asking partner if he has a ♥ stop. In this particular case N-S have a ♥ stop whoever is declarer – but if South has something like ♥Kx then it is imperative that South is declarer.

The bottom lines: -

- If you have 15+ points and RHO opens at the one level, then you really should say something. With a stop in the suit bid a 1NT may be best; with no stop and no 5 card suit to overcall, then double is probably best.
- A jump response to a take-out double is around 8-10 points.
- If you have no stop in the opponent's suit but feel that NT may be the best spot, then cue bid the opponent's suit to ask partner if he has a stop.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1♠ or 2♦ (Michaels). You do not have ♣'s and so should not double. Pass is an option but I would make a noise with this hand. It's not that good a suit but a 1♠ overcall is reasonable and the only other reasonable option is 2♦ - showing a weak hand with 9 cards in the majors.
- Hand B: Pass. Hopefully you are playing negative doubles and you expect partner to re-open with a double which you will then convert to 3♥. Now this does not show any values, but it is better than overbidding by making a noise now.
- Hand C: There are three reasonable options here: -
1. dbl - negative, showing 4♥'s.
 2. 1NT - showing about 8-9 points with at least 1♠ stop.
 3. pass - intending to pass partner's (automatic) double for penalties
- At this vulnerability I think it's one of the first two options and since the ♠'s are so much better than the ♥'s I think that 1NT is best.
- Hand D: (a) 1NT
(b) pass or 1NT, borderline. You do not have to bid but you do have a good ♥ stop.
(c) Pass. With a minimum and no ♠ stop you are under no obligation to bid. A bid of 1NT after an overcall should show a decent 8-10, hopefully with a stop.
- Hand E: 2♣, and pass any response. This is called 'Garbage Stayman'.
- Hand F: (a) dbl. 16 points is too many to pass.
(b) 3♥. It looks like there will be loads of ♦ tricks in 3NT, provided that partner has a ♥ stop – so ask him. Note that it's best for partner to be declarer in a possible 3NT as something like ♥Kx is not a stop if you are declarer.
- Hand G: dbl. You do not mind if partner bids 4♥ as a Moysian fit should play well with these top ♥'s. And double also leaves room for partner to bid 3NT or pass for penalties – both of which you would be perfectly happy with. A 4♣ bid here is poor as it is unlikely to lead to a good contract.
- Hand H: 1♥. I prefer a much better suit for a strong jump shift to 2♥.

Mon 29 th	1 st	Martin/Rosemary	60%	2 nd	Bob/Monte	58%
Wed 31 st	1 st	Jim/Tomas	57%	2 nd	Dave/Bill	56%
Fri 2 nd	1 st	Dave/Bob(England)	61%	2 nd	Jean-Marc/Tomas	57%

Bidding Quiz**Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated**

Hand A	Hand B	What do you open with Hand A (in 2 nd seat)?
♠ A54	♠ A953	With hand B you open 1♣ and LHO overcalls a weak 2♥.
♥ Q87	♥ A10	Partner passes as does RHO, what do you do?
♦ AJ4	♦ 53	
♣ J743	♣ KQ1082	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C Partner opens 1♣ and RHO bids 2♣, Michaels. What do you do?
♠ AQ107	♠ AK42	With Hand D it's favourable vulnerability and you are playing negative doubles. It goes three passes to partner who opens 1♦. RHO overcalls 1♠, what do you do?
♥ J1093	♥ Q8753	
♦ 73	♦ -	
♣ 974	♣ 10952	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E it's love all. Partner opens 1♣ and RHO overcalls a weak 2♥, what do you do?
♠ KQ6	♠ J73	With Hand F it's favourable vulnerability and you are playing negative doubles of course. It goes three passes to you and you open 1♦. LHO bids 1♠ and this is passed round to you. What do you do?
♥ KJ74	♥ A6	
♦ 92	♦ AK98752	
♣ AJ74	♣ 3	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G you open 1♦, partner responds 1♥ but RHO then bids 2♣, what do you bid?
♠ AK53	♠ AJ53	With Hand H it's the same. You open 1♦, partner responds 1♥ but RHO then bids 2♣, what do you bid?
♥ K63	♥ K6	
♦ AQ52	♦ J542	
♣ K5	♣ KJ3	
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J LHO opens 2♠ and this is passed to you, what do you bid?
♠ 5	♠ J4	With Hand K RHO opens 1♣, what do you do?
♥ AKQ864	♥ Q98653	
♦ AJ86	♦ K1064	
♣ A7	♣ 5	

Who bid too high?

Board 20 from Monday 29th

3NT is a poor contract, who do you think is responsible?

Now I have been criticised recently (what's new?) by somebody who thinks that I should try to teach the basics instead of convoluted 'Expert Bidding'. OK, perhaps the critic would like to examine this hand where, in my view, he showed poor bidding judgement (and then tried to blame partner).

Dealer: ♠ A54
West ♥ Q87
Both vul ♦ AJ4
 ♣ J743

♠ K93	N	♠ J87
♥ A1092	W E	♥ K4
♦ 10962	S	♦ 753
♣ 65		♣ KQ1098
	♠ Q1062	
	♥ J653	
	♦ KQ8	
	♣ A2	

Table A

West	North(A)	East	South
pass	1♣ (1)	pass	1♠
pass	1NT	pass	3NT (2)
all pass			

'Expert Table'

West	North(A)	East	South
pass	pass (1)	pass	1♦ (3)
pass	2NT (4)	pass	pass (5)
pass			

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this North hand A in this week's quiz. It's the same old theme – hand evaluation. Knock off a point for the 4333 type shape; and with no intermediates or touching honours, and with the only 4 card suit headed by the Jack, this hand is most certainly not worth an opener.
- (2) This is a decent 12, but with no fit for partner then 2NT is enough; although this overbid, in my opinion, is not as bad as North's.
- 'Expert' (1) Our experts know all about 4333 type hands being bad, of course.
- Table (3) This hand is worth an opening, even in 4th seat. Open 1♣ if you play 'short ♣'.
(4) 11 – poor 12 with no 4 card major.
(5) And South now has an easy pass.

And what happened? 3NT was bid at virtually every table and went down every time.

The bottom lines: -

- How often do I have to say it? Even one of the 'top' players in the club fails to comprehend it – deduct a point for the 4333 type shape – it has no trick making potential.
- When you end up in a poor contract and get a bad result, perhaps you should review your own bidding before (or as well as, if you must) criticising partner?

Lucrative Low-Level Doubles?

Overcalls (and weak openings) seem to be getting weaker and weaker these days. Perhaps that's because some players do not know how to (or do not wish to) penalise the opponents at a low level? No less than four examples came up recently: -

A Lucrative Low-Level Double – Part 1

Board 24 from Monday 29th

Dealer: ♠ J4
West ♥ Q98653
Love all ♦ K1064
♣ 5

West(B)	North(K)	East(E)	South
1♣	2♥ (1)	pass (2)	pass
dbl (3)	pass	pass (4)	pass

♠ A953	N	♠ KQ6
♥ A10	W E	♥ KJ74
♦ 53	S	♦ 92
♣ KQ1082		♣ AJ74
	♠ 10872	
	♥ 2	
	♦ AQJ87	
	♣ 963	

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand K in this week's quiz? This North chose a weak jump overcall. I guess that non-vul it's OK even with this weak suit as it has decent shape. But many players would prefer a better suit. Pass is obviously reasonable but I would choose 2NT – the dreaded UNT – showing the two lowest unbid suits. I would prefer to have 5 ♦'s but with 10 red cards this hand is just about acceptable.
- (2) What did you bid with this East hand E in this week's quiz? I bet most of you simply bid 3NT without blinking?
Now I'm not saying that that is necessarily wrong, but it really surprises me the number of lucrative low-level doubles that are missed these days. I was East and I considered that if we are making 3NT or more (400, 430 whatever) then we will probably get 8 tricks defending a 2♥ doubled contract and the resultant 500 scores a top.
- (3) What did you bid with this West hand B in this week's quiz? If you play negative doubles then double is 'automatic' here and is certainly correct with this hand.
- (4) And East carried through with his plan of defending 2♥ doubled.

And what happened? Of course everything does not always work out exactly as planned. 2♥ doubled was only two down (300 – because they had a nice ♦ fit) but this was an absolute top for E-W as 3NT by E-W went down at other tables (because N-S had a nice ♦ fit).

The bottom lines: -

- Take the money. With a good holding sitting over overcaller, it is often better to be sure of a decent + score by doubling the opponents rather than try for 9 tricks in NT.
- With an excellent holding over an overcall – think double, not NT
- Agree to what level you play negative doubles (3♦, 3♥ or 3♠ are common) and then opener should always re-open with a double unless he has a *very* peculiar hand.

This time it's a pre-emptive opening with a weak suit: -

Dealer: ♠ AQ1096
 West ♥ 10
 Love all ♦ 1097532
 ♣ 3

Table A
 West North East South(J)
 2♠ (1) pass pass 3♥ (2)
 pass pass (3) pass

♠ J87432 N ♠ K
 ♥ J2 W E ♥ 9753
 ♦ - S ♦ KQ4
 ♣ KQ862 ♣ J10954
 ♠ 5
 ♥ AKQ864
 ♦ AJ86
 ♣ A7

Table B
 West North East South(J)
 2♠ (1) pass pass dbl (2)
 pass pass (4) pass

- Table A (1) This is a shapely hand, but with such a poor ♠ suit I don't really like 2♠. It may work out, but I would pass and hope to maybe get in some sort of two-suited bid (maybe Michaels) later.
 (2) What did you bid with this South hand J in this week's quiz? It really is too good for just 3♥. 4♥ is possible but partner does not need much for slam to be there, so I prefer double.
 (3) And I don't blame North for passing here.
- Table B (2) This South chose to double, excellent. You have no problem whatever partner bids: raise 3♥ to 4♥; if partner bids 4♣ then either 4♦ (forcing) or 4♥ are reasonable; if partner jumps or bids ♦'s then you can look for slam.
 (4) But partner may pass, of course; and with these top tricks South (or should I say most people) certainly won't mind that.

And what happened? 2♠ doubled was the final contract at two of the tables, it went for 500 or 800. 3♥ made +2 for a bottom and the last table bid and made 4♥ for a poor score.

As the cards lie, 6♦ makes; but I most certainly think that North is correct to go for the penalty. Anybody who criticises North's pass, saying that '6♦ makes', is surely a 'results merchant'?

The bottom lines: -

- If your hand is too strong to simply overcall, then double.

And this time it's a simple 1-level overcall (with a weak suit!): -

Dealer:	♠ AK42		
West	♥ Q8753		
E-W vul	♦ -		
	♣ 10952		
♠ Q9865	N	♠ 10	
♥ 4	W E	♥ KJ1092	
♦ QJ4	S	♦ 1063	
♣ KQ76		♣ AJ94	
	♠ J73		
	♥ A6		
	♦ AK98752		
	♣ 3		

<u>Table A</u>				
West	North(D)	East	South(F)	
pass	pass	pass	1♦	
1♠	pass (1)	pass	2♦ (2)	
pass	2♥	pass	2♠ (3)	
pass	2NT	all pass		

<u>'Expert' Table</u>				
West	North(D)	East	South(F)	
pass	pass	pass	1♦	
1♠	pass (1)	pass	dbl (2)	
all pass				

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this North hand D in this week's quiz. Now a negative double (to show ♥'s) is reasonable, but at this vulnerability it's surely best to take the money in 1♠ doubled? So pass and await partner's 'automatic' re-opening double.
 (2) And what did you bid with this South hand F in this week's quiz? Pass is 'automatic' – see 'expert' table.
- 'Expert' Table (1) At this vulnerability our expert is going for the penalty, of course.
 (2) And this South expert knows what he is doing. You should only not re-open with a double if you cannot stand to defend or if you feel that you will get a better score elsewhere (say a slam or vulnerable game). With 3 ♠'s, a singleton, top cards in the other two suits and vulnerable opponents this South knows that 1♠ doubled will net a good score if that's what partner has in mind. South also knows that West probably has only 5 ♠'s (he did not open a weak 2♠). And note that the 'automatic' double cannot cost. Partner has some points but did not bid. So if he is not looking for the penalty he does not have ♥'s (he would have negative doubled) and so can only have ♣'s and insufficient values to bid 2♣. So South should double and if partner does bid 2♣ he can then bid 2♦ - easy eh? – well it is with a little thought/logic.

And what happened. North felt sick playing in the silly 2NT and it went 3 down for a totally deserved bottom. All the other N-S's scored 110 or 130; so the 200 (or 500) for 1♠ doubled going one or two down would have given N-S a very clear top.

South's 'excuse' was that he did not want to defend at the one level. Why not???

The bottom Lines: -

- Look at the vulnerability!
- If partner wishes to penalise the opponents (even at the one-level) at favourable vulnerability, then go along with him. One down nets a top (200) if you have no game, and 2 down nets a top (500) even if you have game.
- Remember the 'magic 200 (and 500)' at pairs scoring.
- Trust partner?
- Don't listen to people who say that a penalty double of a one-level contract cannot be good.

And remember this deal from last week's news sheet? It was under the title '1NT or a negative double?'. Last week I gave the bidding after East overcalled a 1♦ opening with 1♠ and I also added that one N-S pair got too high (2NT). I was subsequently told their bidding: -

Dealer:	♠ J5				
South	♥ 862	West	North	East	South(C)
N-S vul	♦ AJ94	-	-	-	pass
	♣ AQ83	pass	1♣ (1)	2♣ (2)	pass (3)
		2♦ (4)	pass (5)	pass (6)	2NT (7)
		all pass			
♠ 96	N	♠ K8432			
♥ Q5	W E	♥ AK74			
♦ KQ102	S	♦ 865			
♣ J10652		♣ K			
	♠ AQ107				
	♥ J1093				
	♦ 73				
	♣ 974				

- (1) As I said last week, I prefer 1♣ when 4-4 in the minors.
- (2) And again, as I said last week, Michaels is a sensible option here.
- (3) What did you bid with the South hand C in this week's quiz? Now here you have to have an agreement, and a very sensible simple one is that with some values (say 7+ points) you should double if you have a decent holding in one (or both) of the suits shown. So double.
- (4) You can play 2♦ here as equal length in the majors, asking partner to choose.
- (5) North has nothing to say.
- (6) Presumably this pair play 2♦ as natural.
- (7) And now we see a problem resulting from South failing to take any action on the first round. He did not want to sell out to 2♦ and so bid 2NT. As partner has only promised around 13 points, this is an overbid (2NT at any stage by responder when opener has not shown extras is generally 11-12 points).

And what happened? 2NT was 2 down for a bottom.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't be bullied into 2NT if you can double the opponents (often the case).
- You need to have some sort of defence against Michaels (and UNT).

Defence Against Michaels/UNT.

- I suggest that you play double as 7 or 8+ points with a good holding in at least one of the suits shown.
- In this example: South should double at (3); at (5) North would double the 2♦ bid (penalties); and South would pass or double a retreat into 2♠.

What to do with a long minor and a 4 card major opposite a 1NT opener.

Board 24 from Wednesday 31st

I was asked about the bidding at table A: -

Dealer: ♠ Q984
 West ♥ K92
 Love all ♦ AKQ
 ♣ Q75

♠ A763 N ♠ J1052
 ♥ Q1073 W E ♥ AJ
 ♦ 9763 S ♦ J10542
 ♣ 9 ♣ K8

♠ K
 ♥ 8654
 ♦ 8
 ♣ AJ106432

Table A

West	North	East	South
pass	1NT	pass	2♣ (1)
pass	2♠	pass	3♣ (2)
pass	pass (3)	pass	

Table B

West	North	East	South
pass	1NT	pass	2♠ (1)
pass	2NT (4)	pass	3NT (5)
all pass			

- Table A (1) How does you partnership bid with 4 of a major and a long minor? If you do not play 4-way transfers then you have to start with Stayman.
 (2) And if partner does not show your 4 card major then bid the minor – this is played as forcing when you don't play 4-way transfers.
- Table B (1) This pair play 4-way transfers so it's easy – transfer to ♣'s and then bid 3♥ –as always, a transfer followed by a new suit is game forcing.
 (4) But playing 4-way transfers partner can super-accept. With a poor ♣ holding North would simply bid 3♣; so 2NT is a super-accept of ♣'s, showing Hxx (where H is A,K or Q).
 (5) Now South knows that the ♣ suit can be set up (or runs) and 3NT looks like a better bid than mentioning this motley ♥ suit. On this rare occasion I have no problem with not mentioning the major. South could equally well bid 3♥ if he wished and here North would simply convert to 3NT.

And what happened? 3NT was bid at 3 of the 4 tables and made +1 or +2.

The bottom lines: -

- If you do not play 4-way transfers then a Stayman bid followed by 3 of a minor is forcing.
- If you do play 4-way transfers you transfer to the minor and then bid the major.
- Thus if you do play 4-way transfers bidding Stayman followed by 3 of a minor is undefined. I have written up all of the possibilities in the NT book on the web; simplest is just to play that it's a weak hand with 6 of the minor and a 4 card major, so passable.

How Many Points?

West	North	East	South
1♦	pass	1♥	2♣
2NT?			

How many points does the 2NT bid above indicate? Answer next page.

How many points?

Board 27 from Monday 29th

Dealer: ♠ Q98
South ♥ J1097
Love all ♦ 863
♣ QJ8

West	North	East	South(G)
-	-	-	1♦
pass	1♥	2♣	2NT(1)
pass	3NT	all pass	

♠ J10642	N	♠ 7
♥ 85	W E	♥ AQ42
♦ KJ94	S	♦ 107
♣ 32		♣ A109764
	♠ AK53	
	♥ K63	
	♦ AQ52	
	♣ K5	

(1) What did you bid with this South hand G in this week's quiz? 2NT is correct – it does not show 12-14 as it is an opponent who has pushed the level up. With a flat 12-14 you would pass and 2NT is much the same as a jump to 2NT if there was no overcall, so 18-19.

And what happened? 3NT was bid at all 4 tables. That's what you would expect, but it's a tricky contract against good defence.

How Many Points - Answer

What did you answer to the quiz on the previous page? The answer is 18-19; it is not partner, but RHO, who has pushed the level up and you should pass with a flat 12-14.

Hand G	Hand H	You open 1♦, partner responds 1♥ but RHO then bids 2♣. With Hand G you had planned to jump to 2NT (18-19) if there had been no bid from RHO, so you make the same bid after RHO overcalls at the two level (promising a stop of course). But with Hand H it's different. You had planned to rebid 1NT (12-14) but RHO's bid means that you now cannot, so pass.
♠ AK53	♠ AJ53	
♥ K63	♥ K6	
♦ AQ52	♦ J542	
♣ K5	♣ KJ3	

Sometimes you can still compete without over-bidding

Board 2 from Friday 2nd

Dealer:	♠ 42	<u>Table A</u>			
East	♥ A86	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ A976	-	-	1♥	pass
	♣ J976	pass (1)	pass		

♠ AJ63	N	♠ KQ	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ 1042	W E	♥ KQJ93	West	North	East	South
♦ 542	S	♦ KQJ3	-	-	1♥	1♠ (2)
♣ 842		♣ Q3	2♥ (3)	pass	4♥ (4)	pass
	♠ 109875		pass	dbl (5)	all pass	
	♥ 75					
	♦ 108					
	♣ AK105					

Table A (1) With this flat shape, this hand is certainly not worth a bid.

Table B (2) But at this table South decided to overcall. Most would like a few points in the suit for an overcall with just 7 points, but I guess that the ♠ suit is ‘solid’?

(3) Now this West later said that he would have passed had there been no overcall – but he did not want to sell out to 1♠.

(4) With 19 points, East bid game.

(5) And with two aces opposite a vulnerable overcall North doubled.

1♥ made +2; 4♥ doubled was one down. What went wrong at table B?

The answer is that West should not bid at (3) but (assuming they play negative doubles) that’s no problem. Partner will ‘always’ re-open with a double and West can then bid 2♥.

The bottom line.

- Playing negative doubles has numerous advantages.
- And remember that playing negative doubles then opener should virtually always re-open with a double opposite a partner who passes the overcall. This is not just because partner may have a penalty hand, but he may have a good spot to rest in but had insufficient values to bid straight away.
- This latter point is especially true if you do not play negative free bids (and as far as I know no club member does).

Editorial – 2005 Club Champions

I have calculated the standings (up to 2nd Sept) and the full results are on the web. To view them access the web site (www.pattayabridge.com) and then go to results and you will see a link there off to ‘championship standings’ (‘press here’). I feel that coming 2nd or 3rd in the Gold Cup is in itself quite an achievement and that the Silver and Bronze competitions should be lesser competitions and be more open to others (less frequent players) to win.

So what has been decided this year is that the 'Gold Cup' (best 30) is the main club competition, with awards for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places, just the same as last year. Then there are two other competitions; the Silver Plate will be the best of 10 and the Bronze Medallion is best of 5 results - then everybody has a shot if they can put in 10 or even just 5 decent scores. The latest standings are as follows, full details are on the web site or in the results book: -

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
Gold Cup (30)	Chuck	Dave	Bob	Clive	Ken	Phil
Silver Plate (10)	Ken	Clive	Ge/De	Thorlief	JohnG	Austin
Bronze Medallion (5)	Gerard/Derek	Thorlief	Clive	Alex	JohnG	Austin

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: Pass. Knock off a point for this 4333 type shape. Two aces are insufficient compensation for the poor shape and lack of intermediates or touching honours. And with the only 4 card suit (a minor) headed by the Jack this really is a miserable collection of cards. Here is a quote from a renowned international expert (not me!): – *'It is difficult to over-emphasise how bad the 4333 type shape is'*.

Hand B: Double. Automatic - assuming you play negative doubles.

Hand C: Double. You cannot simply pass as you may get stuck next go. It's best to play that double here shows some points (say 7+) and values in at least one of the suits shown by the opponent. It's the same over an UNT.

Hand D: Pass. You have a mis-fit with partner and excellent ♠'s. 1♠ will not make and at this vulnerability just one down should net a top. Double (negative, showing ♥'s) is possible but not as good as pass for the above reasons.

Hand E: Pass or 3NT. You have excellent ♥ stops so should make 3NT. But you may not, or you may get a better score for defending 2♥ doubled. I chose to pass and passed partner's 'automatic' re-opening double.

Hand F: Dbl, 'automatic'. Since all 3 players passed originally partner must have his fair share of the outstanding points, but he could not muster up a response. Why not? Probably because he has excellent ♠'s and wants to defend 1♠ doubled. This Hand F is great for defence (a singleton, 3 ♠'s and 3 top quick tricks in the other suits). If partner is indeed planning to pass this double you should be delighted. And nothing is lost if he bids instead (unlikely).

Hand G: 2NT. 18-19.

Hand H: Pass. 2NT here shows 18-19 as we saw with the previous hand, and you cannot bid anything else as that too would show a stronger hand (2♠ is a reverse, so 16+).

Hand J: Dbl. It's too good for just 3♥; 4♥ is possible but I prefer to double and then bid 4♥ next go to show this good hand. And you never know, it may just be that 2♠ doubled is the best spot (if partner passes the double).

Hand K: Pass or 2NT. 2NT is the unusual NT, showing ♦'s and ♥'s here. Pass is perhaps a bit feeble and a weak 2♥ is a bit dangerous with such a poor suit (and a possible ♦ fit will be lost). I would prefer to have 5 ♦'s for the 2NT bid but with 10 red cards it's just about OK.

Mon	5 th	1 st	Bob/Monte	60%	2 nd	Ken/Clive	58%
Wed	7 th	1 st	Terry	56%	2 nd	Clive/Tomas/Kenneth	54%
Fri	9 th	1 st	Clive/Ken	62%	2 nd	Ian/Tomas	61%

The standings in the Gold Cup competition are getting closer; currently we have: -

1st **Chuck** 1855.7 2nd **Dave** 1835.3 3rd **Bob** 1832.0 4th Ken 1740

So Bob is nearly up with Dave; and with the way it works, if Bob gets a score above 56.5% his total goes up, so a 60% session would add on 3.5 which would be enough to overtake Dave (provided Dave does not get a score above 56.5%). The 56.5% figure happens to be the 30th best result for both of them. It's a real cliff hanger, and bear in mind that Dave has the handicap of often not playing or sometimes playing with a beginner on Wednesdays.

Chuck needs a score above 56.7% to improve and Ken needs above 55.3% to improve.

I have been asked if I could hold an 'advanced' bidding class. If you are interested, then ask me. I will do it before the Wed and Fri sessions if there is enough demand. But I'll probably go back to one of these days for beginners when Don/Cheryl return.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A partner opens 1♣ and RHO overcalls 1♠. It's favourable vulnerability; what do you bid?
♠ K72 ♥ AJ ♦ 87542 ♣ K92	♠ A74 ♥ - ♦ AK1053 ♣ KQ963	

(a) What do you open with Hand B?
(b) What do you rebid if partner responds 1♥?
(b) What do you rebid if partner responds 1♠?

Hand C	Hand D	Do you open Hand C in 2 nd seat?
♠ KJ64 ♥ KQ8 ♦ 9762 ♣ K5	♠ KJ64 ♥ KQ8 ♦ 976 ♣ K52	Do you open Hand D in 2 nd seat?

Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1NT, what do you do?
♠ A964 ♥ K874 ♦ 52 ♣ 854	♠ J87 ♥ AQ3 ♦ AQ96 ♣ AJ2	What do you open with Hand F?

What does the last bid in these sequences show? :-

- Sequence W 1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣?
 Sequence X 1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♥?
 Sequence Z 1♦ - 1♥ - 1NT - 2♠?

Don't Abuse the Reverse

Board 22 from Friday 2nd

I kept this hand over from last week (last week's news-sheet quiz was full). There is a saying in bridge: 'A reverse shows strength – but don't (ab)use the reverse to show strength'.

Dealer: ♠ Q10982
 West ♥ AQ65
 E-W vul ♦ 82
 ♣ J2

Table A

West	North	East(B)	South
pass	pass	1♣ (1)	pass
1♥	pass	2♦ (2)	pass
3NT (3)	pass	pass (4)	pass

♠ K6	N	♠ A74
♥ KJ1098	W E	♥ -
♦ QJ96	S	♦ AK1053
♣ 85		♣ KQ963
	♠ J53	
	♥ 7432	
	♦ 74	
	♣ A1074	

'Expert' Table

West	North	East(B)	South
pass	pass	1♦ (1)	pass
1♥	pass	2♣ (5)	pass
3♥ (6)	pass	4♣ (7)	pass
? (8)			

- Table A (1) What did you open with this East hand B(a) in this week's quiz? See experts.
 (2) A reverse, showing 16 + points. But unfortunately promising more ♣'s than ♦'s.
 (3) 2♥ may be better here, but this was an unfamiliar partnership and West did not know if East would take 2♥ as forcing.
 (4) And East can now never show his shape whatever West had bid.
- 'Expert' Table (1) 1♦ is correct when 5-5 in the minors, however many points.
 (5) What did you rebid (assuming you opened 1♦) with this East hand K(b) in this week's quiz? Partner's 1♥ bid has not improved this hand and a simple 2♣ is quite sufficient now. This is rarely passed (and if it is then it is surely the best spot) and partner will usually give preference with a weak hand.
 (6) West has options here. 3♦ may be preferable.
 (7) East now shows his shape.
 (8) And West either bids 5♦ or 4♦ (forcing, to look for slam).

And what happened? 3NT went down. Other tables were in 2♦, 3♦ or 5♦ all making 12 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- When 3-3 in the minors, open 1♣.
- When 4-4 in the minors, it's up to you/your partnership understanding. Some advocate always opening 1♦; others (including me) always open 1♣ and yet others will simply open the strongest.
- When 5-5 in the minors, open 1♦. This is a must.
- A reverse shows a good hand, but promises greater length in the first bid suit.

Be wary if LHO bids NT

Board 19 from Monday 5th

If RHO opens, you overcall, and LHO bids 1NT, then he is around 7-10 with a stop in your suit. So if you bid again, be wary – LHO has advertised a decent holding in your suit: -

Dealer:	♠ K72				
South	♥ AJ	West	North(A)	East	South
E-W vul	♦ 87542	-	-	-	1♣
	♣ K92	1♠	1NT (1)	pass	pass
		2♠	(2) dbl	(3) all pass	
♠ A109864	N	♠ Q53			
♥ K32	W E	♥ 10975			
♦ QJ6	S	♦ 1093			
♣ A		♣ 876			
	♠ J				
	♥ Q864				
	♦ AK				
	♣ QJ10543				

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand A in this week's quiz? As I mentioned last week (and above), a 1NT bid after an overcall should be a decent hand (with a stop); there is no need for a 'courtesy' 1NT in case partner has a good hand as he gets another go anyway. This actual hand is at the top end but with no points in the long suit and a fragile ♠ stop I think that 1NT is better than 2NT, especially as RHO has overcalled at red, so presumably has a decent hand.
- (2) And this is a decent hand. I cannot really criticise the 2♠ bid. Although passing would probably work out very well as you will get a ♠ lead and may set 1NT.
- (3) But it's favourable vulnerability, and with 11 points opposite an opener North decided to go for the 'magic' 200. Good bidding.

And what happened? Just one down, but that 'magic' 200 was a top for N-S.

The bottom lines: -

- When LHO bids 1NT over your overcall, be very wary of bidding again; especially if vulnerable.

Points in the suit

Board 4 from Monday 5th

Now we all know about my 'things' (always re-open with a double when playing negative doubles; never deny a 4 card major; knock off a point for 4333 type shape etc.) but now it's time for one of Chuck's. Chuck is always quite insistent about having points in your suit (especially for pre-empts) and his advice should have been heeded on this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ AKQ93				
West	♥ K76	West	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ A	2♠ (1)	pass (2)	pass	pass (3)
	♣ K1087				
♠ 108652	N	♠ J			
♥ Q84	W E	♥ AJ95			
♦ K8	S	♦ Q109732			
♣ AQ9		♣ J4			
	♠ 74				
	♥ 1032				
	♦ J654				
	♣ 6532				

- (1) Certainly a very wild pre-empt. What would Chuck say? Well actually I know what Chuck said (he was North).
- (2) So what do you do with an enormous hand when RHO bids your suit? You could double followed by NT but with vulnerable opponents it is often best to pass.
- (3) I was South and will normally balance with a double here, but with just 1 point that is pushing it a bit?

And what happened? Two down, that 'magic' 200 was again a top for N-S. At most other tables it was North playing in ♠'s and not doing too well.

The bottom lines: -

- A 5 card suit to the 10 really is pushing it, especially vulnerable.

Knock off a point?

Board 4 from Monday 5th

Hand C	Hand D	What did you open with Hands C & D in the quiz? I was asked if I would open this hand C from Monday in 2 nd seat. Apparently one South passed and got a good score as a result.
♠ KJ64	♠ KJ64	Maybe, but maybe he would have got a good score anyway?
♥ KQ8	♥ KQ8	The asker suggested that one should knock off a point for an ace-less hand. Now aces are great cards, but kings are also good.
♦ 9762	♦ 976	I would always open this hand (1♦), especially as it has the ♠ suit.
♣ K5	♣ K52	

One should adjust for aces when very strong (say 20+); I don't deduct, but add on for a hand with 3 or 4 aces. Move the ♦2 to the ♣ suit so that we have Hand D so it's 4333 shape then 'obviously' I would pass. You should **always** knock off a point for **any** 4333 type shape. And, what's more, you will find that this complies with the rule of 20 – hand C is an opener and Hand D is not (only 19). The rule of 20 automatically compensates for the bad 4333 type shape.

That 4333 type shape again

Board 4 from Friday 9th

All N-S pairs overbid this hand from Friday (but it was not always South): -

Dealer: ♠ A964
West ♥ K874
Both vul ♦ 52
 ♣ 854

♠ KQ3	N	♠ 1052
♥ J10962	W E	♥ 5
♦ K74	S	♦ J873
♣ Q3		♣ K10976
	♠ J87	
	♥ AQ3	
	♦ AQ96	
	♣ AJ2	

Table A

West	North(E)	East	South(F)
pass	pass	pass	1♦ (1)
pass	1♥	pass	2NT (2)
pass	3NT (3)	all pass	

Table B

West	North(E)	East	South(F)
pass	pass	pass	1NT (1)
pass	2♣ (4)	pass	2♦
pass	2NT (5)	pass	3NT (6)
all pass			

- Table A (1) What did you open with this South hand F in this week's quiz? See table B for the correct answer. At two tables South thought it too strong for 1NT and so opened 1♦ ...
- (2) ... and rebid 2NT to show 18-19.
- (3) And North then clearly has enough to bid the game.
- Table B (1) This South got it right, he knows all about how bad the 4333 type shape is, so correctly opened just 1NT.
- (4) But unfortunately it was his partner this time who overbid. What did you bid with this North hand E in this week's quiz? 2♣ here is simply an undisciplined gamble. It may 'work' if there is a 4-4 major suit fit (but you are one level higher) but it is almost certain to lead to disaster if partner has no major. This North hand is a poor 7 count and should pass 1NT...
- (5) ... and here we see the problem, North has to overbid over a 2♦ response.
- (6) And now South is maximum for his bidding and correctly accepts.

And what happened. Even with a combined 25 count, 3NT is hopeless and went down (by one, two or even 3) tricks at every table. Why? Because the 4333 type shape is terrible, it has no trick making potential. This deal is a classic example and those who do not believe me (and think that 18 points is 18 points regardless) should study this deal.

The bottom lines: -

- Knock of a point for the 4333 type shape
- Do not bid Stayman without invitational values unless you can cope with **any** response.

Bidding After Partner's 1NT rebid.**Checkback Stayman (CBS) and
New Minor Forcing (NMF)**

How did you get on with sequences W, X & Z in this week's quiz?

Hand W	Sequence W	1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣
♠ KJ76 ♥ 4 ♦ 65 ♣ Q107642		In this sequence, if you do not play Checkback Stayman (CBS) or New Minor Forcing (NMF) then 2♣ is a weak bid, showing 4 of the major bid and usually 6 of the minor. This hand is typical and partner is expected to pass. If you play CBS or NMF then you would have to bid 3♣ with this hand. I understand that one player bid 2♣ in a sequence like this one Monday with a 13 count and a ♣ suit. It's weak unless you play CBS/NMF.
Hand X	Sequence X	1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♥
♠ KJ765 ♥ Q942 ♦ 65 ♣ 62		In this sequence, the 2♥ bid is again weak. But this time it promises 5 ♠'s and 4 (or 5) ♥'s. Opener should pass or correct. This is the same whether or not you play CBS/NMF.
Hand Y	Sequence W	1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣
♠ KJ965 ♥ KJ94 ♦ 65 ♣ 62		So how do you bid a hand like this? Responding 1♠ must be correct; but after partner's 1NT rebid a 2♥ bid would be weak and this hand has invitational values. The only real solution is to play CBS (or NMF). The 2♣ asks opener to clarify his major suit holdings. CBS (or NMF) guarantees invitational or better values. In this situation the responses would be: -
	2♦ =	Not 4 ♥'s or 3 ♠'s, minimum points
	2♥ =	4 ♥'s (possibly also 3 ♠'s)
	2♠ =	3 ♠'s but not 4 ♥'s
	2NT =	Not 4 ♥'s or 3 ♠'s, maximum points
	other =	Opener can bid above 2NT to describe his hand further provided that he is non-min. There are various schemes here.
Hand Z	Sequence Z	1♦ - 1♥ - 1NT - 2♠
♠ KJ76 ♥ AK942 ♦ A5 ♣ 62		This sequence is totally different. Responder has reversed and the bid is forcing. This hand has game going values and the reverse informs partner of his shape (5 ♥'s) so that opener can pick the best denomination. I witnessed one player trying to pass this 2♠ bid one Monday - I advised him to look closely at partner's bidding before playing the pass card that he was pulling out of the box.

Which is best - Checkback Stayman or New Minor Forcing?

Hand Y	Sequence: -	1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2?
♠ KJ765		So what's the difference between CBS and NMF?
♥ KJ94		They are the same if the opening bid was 1♦ (2♣ asks) but if the opening
♦ 65		was 1♣ then it's different. Playing CBS 2♣ asks; playing NMF 2♦ asks
♣ 62		and 2♣ is simply putting partner back in his first bid suit.

Which is best? I prefer CBS as opener has more room to show his strength. Also, the 2♦ bid can be used as another artificial bid (Inverted Checkback), but that's another story. If you use 2♦ (NMF) then opener has to get to the 3 level to show a max hand when he has no major suit holding. Playing CBS, if you happen to have a weakish hand with ♣ support after a 1♣ opening then you have to jump to 3♣. I see no problem there as it keeps the opposition out.

So in response to a 2♦ NMF bid we have: -

2♥	=	4♥'s (possibly also 3♠'s)
2♠	=	3♠'s but not 4♥'s
2NT	=	Not 4♥'s or 3♠'s, minimum.

Here we see the problem, with 2♦ as the asking bid there is no room for opener to show min/max when he has no major. Thus this 2NT has to show a minimum and if opener is maximum then he has to bid something above 2NT. Not quite as good as CBS, but workable.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1NT. This shows a good hand (around 8-10) with a ♠ stop. Since RHO has made a vulnerable overcall and this is a very fragile single ♠ stop it's only worth 1NT. And it's not that good a hand with the points in the wrong places (a 5 card suit headed by the 8 is not good) and so I think that 2NT would be pushing it too much.
- Hand B: (a) 1♦. Always open the higher ranking when 5-5.
(b) 2♣. Quite sufficient, the 1♥ bid has not improved your hand.
(c) 3♣ (but I won't argue if you say 2♣). The ♠ response from partner has improved this hand and I would make a game-forcing 3♣ bid.
- Hand C: 1♦. The shape is OK and it's worth an opener in any seat.
- Hand D: Pass. Knock off a point for that totally flat 4333 type shape.
- Hand E: Pass. If you bid Stayman you are fixed over a 2♦ response. A subsequent 2NT bid is then invitational and you will probably get/be too high, whether or not partner presses on.
- Hand F: 1NT. Knock off a point for the 4333 type shape. Simple.

Mon	12 th	1 st	Bill/Dave	56%	2 nd	Mike/Tomas	54%
Wed	14 th	1 st	Kenneth/David	60%	2 nd	Dave/Ian & Tom/Tomas	55%
Fri	16 th	1 st	Philip/Tomas	53%	2 nd	Clive/Dave	51%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A RHO opens 1♥, what do you do?
♠ AKQ8652	♠ J95	(a) What do you open with hand B?
♥ K4	♥ K5	(b) Suppose you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♥, what do you rebid?
♦ Q106	♦ A2	
♣ Q	♣ AKQ876	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C partner opens 1NT, what do you do?
♠ KJ1092	♠ A653	With Hand D partner opens 1♥ and you bid 1♠. Partner then rebids 2♦, what do you do? _
♥ J10	♥ K5	
♦ 1092	♦ 987	
♣ J65	♣ K642	

What does the last bid in these sequences show? :-

Sequence W	West	North	East	South
	1♣	pass	1♥	pass
	2♥	2♠	3♦?	
Sequence X	West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♥	pass	2♥
	pass	pass	dbl?	
Sequence Y	West	North	East	South
	1NT	pass	2♣	pass
	2♠	pass	3♣?	

Take-out or penalty double? Board 27 from Monday 12th

I say the same things week after week, but who listens?

Of course we all know that we pre-empt to the limit and bid only once. And we also know, I hope, that if you wish to raise partner's pre-empt, you do so immediately and not wait until the opponents have gauged each other's strength: -

Dealer:	♠ AJ1087642				
South	♥ K43	West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ 8	-	-	-	pass
	♣ 5	pass	4♠ (1)	dbl (2)	pass (3)
		5♣ (4)	pass	pass	5♠ (5)
		pass	pass	dbl	all pass
♠ Q	N	♠ K9			
♥ 109	W E	♥ AQJ65			
♦ 9763	S	♦ K104			
♣ AK8642		♣ J109			
	♠ 52				
	♥ 872				
	♦ AQJ52				
	♣ Q73				

- (1) An 8 card major suit, so open 4♠.
- (2) This was meant as penalties.
- (3) Obvious
- (4) West decided to bid his ♣ suit.
- (5) And with a good defensive hand and absolutely no reason to bid ♠'s, South decided to turn a top into a bottom.

And what happened? 5♠ doubled went 3 down for a complete bottom to N-S. 5♣ would have gone two down for a good N-S score

The bottom lines: -

- Obey The Law; (N-S have 10 combined trumps and should not go beyond 4♠).
- If you wish to raise partner's pre-empt, do so **immediately**.
- It is unwise to raise partner's pre-empt with no honours in his suit and just two small.
- Pre-empts are all about creating uncertainty. After you/your partner pre-empt then do not assume that the opponents have arrived in a good spot.
- Decide to what level a double of a pre-empt is for take-out. Chuck says 4♥, I prefer 3♠ (with a double of a higher pre-empt showing values). Up to you/your partner.

There's no need to jump in a game-forcing sequence Board 15 from Monday 12th

Dealer: ♠ 982
 South ♥ 972
 N-S vul ♦ J1092
 ♣ KJ2

♠ AKQ73 N ♠ 5
 ♥ 865 W E ♥ AKQJ10
 ♦ 83 S ♦ AKQ65
 ♣ 1083 ♣ A6
 ♠ J1064
 ♥ 43
 ♦ 74
 ♣ Q9754

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	pass	2♣	pass
2♠ (1)	pass	3NT (2)	all pass

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	pass	2♣	pass
2♠ (1)	pass	3♥ (2)	pass
4♥	pass	4NT (3)	pass
5♦	pass	5NT (3)	pass
6♦	pass	7♥	al pass

- Table A (1) A positive response. Different partnerships have different opinions about what constitutes a +ve response but this certainly qualifies for all but those who demand an automatic 2♦ relay.
- (2) 3NT was bid here at two tables. Apparently both East's later said that they were afraid that partner would pass 3♥ - perhaps they should partner each other?
 See Table B for how it should go.
- Table B (2) 3♥ is game forcing and obvious.
- (3) Blackwood gives partner one ace and one king and so 7♥ is odds-on. Easy.

And what happened? 3NT was bid as at two tables and made 12 or 13 tricks for poor scores. One table bid 6♥+1 and two bid 7♥ making. There are 12 top tricks; 7♥ is not a great contract and the best line is to draw just two rounds of trumps, then the ♦AK and ruff the 3rd ♦ with the ♥8. This succeeds when ♦'s are 3-3 or when ♦'s are 4-2 with the doubleton ♦ hand not starting with ♥8xx or when the ♥9 falls in two rounds. That's probably around 80%, so certainly good enough at pairs scoring.

The bottom lines: -

- The sequence 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT shows 22-24 balanced and is non-forcing. This is the **only** sequence that starts with 2♣ that is not game forcing.
- **Any** other sequence that starts with a 2♣ opener is **game** forcing.
- If responder gives an initial +ve response (i.e. not 2♦) then slam is probably there.
- In a game forcing situation, a jump to game is fast arrival, showing a minimum and a wish to play in that contract.

Open 1NT and you've said it all!

Board 4 from Wednesday 14th

Dealer: ♠ J95
 West ♥ K5
 Both vul ♦ A2
 ♣ AKQ876

♠ K73	N	♠ A84
♥ 6	W E	♥ QJ1093
♦ J10765	S	♦ Q94
♣ J1094		♣ 52
	♠ Q1062	
	♥ A8742	
	♦ K83	
	♣ 3	

'Expert' Table (*see note)

West	North(Z)	East	South
pass	1NT (1)	pass	2♣ (3)
pass	2♦	pass	3♦ (4)
pass	3NT (5)	pass	pass (6)
pass			

Table A

West	North(B)	East	South
pass	1♣ (1)	1♥	pass (2)
pass	3♣ (3)	pass	3NT
all pass			

Table B

West	North(B)	East	South
pass	1♣ (1)	1♥	1NT (2)
pass	3NT	all pass	

Table C

West	North(B)	East	South
pass	1NT (1)	pass	2♣ (4)
pass	2♦	pass	3♠ (5)
pass	4NT (6)	pass	pass
pass			

- Table A (1) What did you open with this North hand B(a) in this week's quiz? It's **far** too good for 1NT and 1♣ is correct (with a view to rebidding 3NT).
 (2) With ♥'s sitting over the overcaller, South passed awaiting North's 'automatic' re-opening double.
 (3) But North was hoping to make a vulnerable game and so bid 3♣. With this particular hand when vulnerable it is reasonable not to re-open with a double but I would prefer 1NT (partner may be very weak). 1NT here would show a very strong hand with a ♥ stop and ensures that 3NT is played from the correct hand if that turns out to be the final contract.
- Table B (2) This South chose 1NT instead of the 'penalty' pass and 3NT was again easily reached.
- Table C (1) This North chose a 1NT opening. Way off-beat and **far** too strong of course.
 (4) When 5-4 or 4-5 in the majors it's best to go via Stayman (and leave transfer sequences to 5-5 major suit hands).
 (5) This N-S pair play Smolen. It is a rather out-dated/inefficient convention (see expert table) but the 3♠ bid here promised game values with 4 ♠'s and 5 ♥'s.
 (6) This bid is not catered for when playing Smolen. Opener is expected to bid 3NT or 4 of responder's 5 card suit. I believe that opener was trying to compensate for his appalling underbid with his opening bid and that 4NT was quantitative.

And what happened? North at table C got what he deserved, 4NT went one down – the ♣'s did not run (not totally surprising in view of South's bidding).

All of the other tables bid the easy 3NT one way or another and shared the top.

Hand Z Now this brings me on to an interesting point – bidding 5-4 (or 4-5) major suit hands when partner opens 1NT. Let's change this North hand slightly so that it actually is a sensible (but absolutely maximum) 1NT opener.

♠ J95 So you open 1NT and partner bids 2♣. You respond 2♦ and partner jumps to

♥ K5 3♥ (or 3♠ playing Smolen). How can you indicate to partner that you are

♦ A82 maximum? The answer is that you cannot playing traditional or Smolen.

♣ AKQ76

'Expert' So for this example North holds this Hand Z (* note, so a reasonable 1NT opener) and South holds the actual South hand. Our experts play all of the latest gadgets of course: -

Table

- (1) Hand Z is a (very maximum) 1NT opener.
- (3) And responder always bids Stayman with all 5-4 (or 4-5) hands.
- (4) Now South has a game forcing hand and the traditional method is to jump in the 5-carder (so 3♥) or jump to 3♠ playing Smolen. But there is a better method that not only ensures that opener is always declarer but also allows opener to show a maximum without going past game (this is very important if responder has only invitational values – impossible to bid playing traditional methods) and is also important if responder has slam ambitions if opener is maximum. So responder now bids 3♦ - a Quest transfer – promising 5♥'s, 4♠'s and invitational or game forcing (or better) values.
- (5) North now shows his maximum (and no fit for partner).
- (6) And South has no further ambitions even knowing that partner is maximum. Easy, eh?

The bottom lines: -

- A 1NT opening is 15-17 points. Anybody who considers ♣ AKQ876 to be just 9 points needs to attend my bidding lessons?
- If you underbid then it is very dangerous to overbid later in order to compensate, especially if you go past game.
- And note that this actual North's hand A most definitely has not improved with South showing both of his short suits!
- When you open 1NT you have said it all. Partner is the captain and you cannot subsequently take control unless partner invites.
- The only exception to the above is when partner transfers into a major and you have a maximum and 4 cards in the major – then you can super-accept.
- If you play Quest transfers (1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♦/♥ to transfer to ♥/♠ resp) then these are invitational or better and opener should not simply accept with a maximum.
- And, perhaps most important of all, there is no room playing standard (or Smolen) methods for responder to show an invitational hand when 5-4 (or 4-5) in the majors. The only way is to play Quest transfers and they are fully described in the NT book on our web site. If you want details and have no computer access then I can print the pages for you.

A help-suit game try

Board 24 from Wednesday 14th

What was your answer to the 3♦ bid in Sequence W (the sequence below) in this week's quiz? I asked two of our top players after the Wednesday session; one said 'a trial bid' and the other said 'a help suit game try'. Actually they are both correct (two names for the same thing). When you have agreed a major suit at the two level then a bid of another suit below 3 of the major is a help-suit game try and asks partner to bid game (or bid something other than 3 of the major) if he has help in the suit bid.

Dealer: ♠ A109
West ♥ A873
Love all ♦ 105
♣ AJ106

♠ J2	N	♠ KQ654
♥ 6542	W E	♥ -
♦ AJ964	S	♦ K832
♣ 43		♣ K952

♠ 873
♥ KQJ109
♦ Q7
♣ Q87

West	North	East	South
pass	1♣	pass (1)	1♥
pass	2♥	2♠	3♦ (2)
pass	3♠ (3)	pass	4♥
all pass			

- (1) I would overcall 1♠. I do not see the point in passing and then bidding ♠'s at a higher level next go.
- (2) South certainly has values to push on, and 3♥ would be simply competitive. But this South hand is just about worth a shot at game provided that there are not two quick ♦ losers. So South bid 3♦. This is a help-suit game try and asks partner to bid game with ♦ help.
- (3) I believe that North believes that two small is good enough to accept a help-suit game try? and so cue bid his ♠A. I do not (singleton or top honour is needed), and with two small ♦'s I would simply bid 3♥. North maintains that dbl at (2) is better than a ♦ help-suit try. I disagree, a ♠K or Q in North's hand would be useless whereas a ♦ honour is what South needs.

And what happened. 4♥ went one down. 3♥ was bid and made at just one table and scored a top. The bottom line: -

- Help-suit game tries apply when a major suit has been agreed at the two level and apply whoever opens the bidding.
- A small doubleton is not a good enough holding to accept a help-suit game try. You need an honour (A,K or Q) or a singleton/void.
- If you wish to accept the game try then you can cue bid if partner is unlimited (i.e. could be looking for slam).

The power of aces

Board 22 from Wednesday 14th

I have frequently said the aces are undervalued (at 4 points) compared with quacks that are overvalued. The following deal from Wednesday illustrates that fact perfectly: -

Dealer:	♠ J73				
East	♥ 2	West	North	East	South(A)
E-W vul	♦ K4	-	-	1♥	dbl (1)
	♣ KJ86543	pass (2)	2♣ (3)	2♦	2♠ (3)
		pass (4)	3♥ (5)	pass	3NT (6)
		all pass			
♠ 104	N	♠ 9			
♥ 108753	W E	♥ AQJ96			
♦ J72	S	♦ A9853			
♣ A109		♣ 72			
	♠ AKQ8652				
	♥ K4				
	♦ Q106				
	♣ Q				

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand A in this week's quiz? This South hand really is too strong for a simple 1♠ overcall, and if you play weak jump overcalls you cannot jump to 2♠. So South correctly doubled with the intention of bidding ♠'s next go to show this very strong hand.
- (2) I would bid 3♥ (even 4♥ at a different vulnerability) here.
- (3) This North hand is close to a +ve 3♣ response and I would not argue with that bid.
- (4) West again failed to support partner (who has now shown a decent red two-suited hand).
- (5) But West's failure to act gave North enough rope to hang himself. South has shown a ♠ hand that was too strong to simply overcall 1♠ and North knows that he easily has values for game now. And with a 7 card ♣ suit and something in ♦'s he got 'greedy' – opting for 3NT if South had a ♥ stop. 3♥ asked partner to bid 3NT with a ♥ stop.
- (6) And so South obediently did what he was asked.

And what happened? A ♥ was led and since N-S had 3 aces missing the best that South could do was cash his 8 tricks. Note that the North hand is totally useless; with the ♣A it may possibly have been a different story. So 3NT was one down and every other N-S pair were in the 'obvious' 4♠, making exactly.

The bottom lines: -

- Aces are good cards. Give South the ♣A and North's gamble may have paid off – with South making 11 tricks in either 3NT or 4♠ if both the ♣'s and the ♠'s were solid. I won't bother to go into the mathematics of that possibility, but it is surely way less than 50%? Unfortunately the deal went with the percentages when South did not have the ♣A!
- With no ace and a singleton in the opponent's suit you probably need more than one stop from partner for 3NT to be successful.
- A double followed by a bid of a new suit shows a hand that was too strong to simply overcall.

False Preference

Board 26 from Friday 16th

One pair got to a poor 3NT contract on this deal and I was asked about the bidding: -

Dealer:	♠ Q10984	<u>Table A</u>			
West	♥ J	West(D)	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ Q52	-	-	1♥ (1)	pass
	♣ A753	1♠	pass	2♦ (2)	pass
		2NT (3)	pass	3NT (4)	all pass

♠ A653	N	♠ -	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ K5	W E	♥ Q10864	West(D)	North	East	South
♦ 987	S	♦ AK10643	-	-	1♥ (1)	pass
♣ K642		♣ Q8	1♠	pass	2♦ (2)	pass
	♠ KJ72		2NT (3)	pass	3♦ (4)	all pass

♥ A9732			<u>'Expert' Table</u>			
♦ J			West(D)	North	East	South
♣ J109			-	-	1♥ (1)	pass

With E-W bidding N-S's majors in front of them it was difficult for N-S to find their ♠ fit!

			1♠	pass	2♦ (2)	pass
			2♥ (3)	pass	3♦ (4)	all pass

- Table A (1) It's usually best to open your longest suit, but with a weakish hand with a 5 card major and a 6 card minor then opening the major usually works out best.
(2) A simple 2♦ rebid is quite sufficient here, especially as partner bidding your void does not improve the hand.
(3) What did you bid with this West hand D in this week's quiz? This is where it all went wrong. 2NT by responder is virtually always 11-12 points; this is a poor 10 (mis-fit with partner and poor intermediates in the 'long' suits). See 'Expert' table for the correct bid.
(4) At the end of the deal West blamed East for the poor result (3NT went way off), West thought that East should have bid 3♦. Now I have a lot of sympathy with East here, if West had had his bid then 3NT may well have been the top spot.
- Table B (4) This East did indeed decide upon 3♦ and that worked out best.
- 'Expert' Table (3) Our experts know that 2NT is an overbid here. Now West could pass but East may have up to around 16 points and the thing to do with a reasonable hand in this situation is to give 'false preference'. So putting partner back into his first bid suit to give partner another shot if he has a good hand.
(4) But East does not have a good hand, and so can either pass 2♥ (a sound possibility at pairs scoring) or else simply bid 3♦.

And what happened? 3NT went 3 down. 3♦ made 10 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- 2NT by responder is 11-12 points in most auctions.
- If unsure what to do, giving false preference is sometimes the solution. Note that giving false preference to a major suit usually only shows two card support.

There were a couple of deals on Friday where my partner had a ♠ void. He handled them differently – but we landed on out feet both times: -

A ♠ void – part 1

Board 1 from Friday 16th

Dealer:	♠ -	West	North	East	South(me)
North	♥ K975	-	1♦	pass	2NT (1)
Love all	♦ KQ10532	pass	3NT (2)	all pass	
	♣ AK2				

♠ Q107543	N	♠ A982
♥ 4	W E	♥ AJ1062
♦ J6	S	♦ 9
♣ J765		♣ 943
	♠ KJ6	
	♥ Q83	
	♦ A874	
	♣ Q108	

- (1) 11-12 points with no 4 card major.
- (2) North's knows all about South's 'thing' about not being in 5 of a minor if 3NT is an option. 3♦ would be weak (to play) and so North really has to decide now between 5♦ and 3NT and with this partner decided to bid 3NT.

And what happened? 3NT got the expected ♠ lead but still made a comfortable +1. At all of the other tables 5♦ was bid, making 11 or 12 tricks and so 3NT scored the top.

The bottom lines: -

- 3NT+1 scores more than 5♦ making or +1.

Just two boards later the same N-S pair has another ♠ void (but N-S had changed places): -

A ♠ void – part 2

Board 3 from Friday 16th

Dealer: ♠ KQ84
 South ♥ 8742
 E-W vul ♦ AKQ
 ♣ K6

♠ A752	N	♠ J10963
♥ J63	W E	♥ KQ9
♦ 987	S	♦ 103
♣ QJ4		♣ 1087
	♠ -	
	♥ A105	
	♦ J6542	
	♣ A9532	

West	North(me)	East	South
-	-	-	1♦ (1)
pass	1♥ (2)	pass	2♣
pass	2♠ (3)	pass	3♣
pass	3NT (4)	pass	4♥ (5)
pass	6♦	all pass	

- (1) A marginal opener, but acceptable in my view.
- (2) Always bid 4 card majors up the line, even if one is this ropery!
- (3) 4th suit forcing. North could simply bid 3NT here, but he went via the 4th suit with the intention of showing a better hand.
- (4) So showing a very good hand (since he went via the 4th suit) with a ♠ stop(s).
- (5) But this time South (North from the last hand) did not feel like chancing his luck again with a void in the unbid suit. Now he would not remove to a minor (certainly not with this North) but 4♥ does look like a very sensible bid. Moysian fits should play well when you can ruff with the short trumps.
- (5) But North knows that 4♥ will play terribly with his pathetic ♥ suit; he also thought that 5♦ would score badly (3NT is probably better) so he bid 6♦!

And what happened? 6♦ got the expected ♠ lead and so made when North pitched dummy's two losing ♥'s on the ♠ K&Q (he lost just the first ♠ trick). All the other tables were in 3NT making +1 or +2 and so 4♥ or 5♦ would indeed have scored a bottom.

The bottom lines: -

- 3NT+1 scores more than 5♦ making or +1; but not as much as 6♦!

Play Quiz

Assuming ample entries everywhere and no bidding from the opponents, how would you play this ♦ suit?

Dummy Declarer
 ♦ AJ97 ♦ K1085

Answer overleaf

A ♠ void – part 3

Board 11 from Friday 16th

A different partner this time, but yet another ♠ void: -

Dealer:	♠ 10763				
South	♥ 942	West	North	East	South(me)
Love all	♦ AJ97	-	-	-	1♥
	♣ J5	1♠	2♥	2♠ (1)	3♠ (2)
		4♠	pass	pass	5♣ (3)
♠ KJ952	N	pass	5♥ (4)	all pass	
♥ 83	W E				
♦ 432	S				
♣ Q43					
	♠ -				
	♥ AKJ76				
	♦ K1085				
	♣ AK76				

- (1) I would bid more.
- (2) This is a cue bid, and since N-S have bid ♠'s it's probably a void.
- (3) This is another cue bid – South is looking for slam!
- (4) North should bid 5♦ here, but he either did not recognise partner's bids as cue bids looking for slam or considered his hand too weak.

And what happened? South made 12 tricks. But he need not have worried about missing slam as all of the other South's played in just 3♥!

The bottom lines: -

- Holding a hand like this South one, the hand improves every time that the opponents bid ♠'s.
- This South hand is surely worth game after the merest squeak from partner?
- Don't 'automatically' cover an honour with an honour. You should only do so if you can promote a card in your hand or in partner's. East should not cover the ♦J lead here.

Play Quiz Answer.

Obviously it's a 50% guess which way to finesse. So how did I play it?

I led the ♦J from dummy with the intention of overtaking with the ♦K and playing a (losing as it happens) finesse against West. But the reason for playing the ♦J rather than a small one is that East may slip up and cover – he did! Note that playing the ♦10 from hand is not the same thing as 'nobody' would cover the ♦10 seeing the ♦AJ9x on table.

The Roman 2♦

I personally think that a weak 2♦ opening is rather a waste of a useful bid. Other possible uses, such as Flannery, are also a bit of a waste (most Flannery type hands can be bid naturally). One quite popular treatment for an opening 2♦ is to show a 3-suited hand.

Any 4441 type or 0445 type with the 5-carder a minor are permissible.

And the point range? You can play what you like and I discuss the best range for your system later. Playing Mini Roman it is about 12-14.

There are various schemes for the responses to 2♦. One typical scheme is: -

- 2♥ = Pass (or correct to 2♠).
- 2♠ = Pass (or correct to 3♣).
- 2NT = Shortage ask. Opener then bids the suit below the shortage (3♠ with ♣ shortage). Responder can then sign off in any of opener's suits or bid on. With a strong hand responder now bids the shortage suit and things take off.
- 3♦ = An invitational (limit) raise for either major. Opener should respond 3♥/♠ with a minimum or 4♥/♠ with a maximum.
- 3♥ = Natural (6 card suit). Obviously opener raises to game if this is one of his suits.
- 3♠ = Natural (6 card suit). Obviously opener raises to game if this is one of his suits.
- 3NT = To play
- 4♣ = Ace asking
- 4♦ = To play in 4♥ or 4♠.

Which Range?

Hand 1	Hand 2	So what point range is best for your Roman 2♦ system? Consider these two hands. Suppose that you play a strong NT system, then you open Hand 1 with 1♣ (or 1♦ or even 1♥ if you are that way inclined) and partner responds 1♠, what is your rebid? Whatever you opened, the only realistic rebid is 1NT, fine. But Hand 2 is a problem; you cannot rebid 1NT as that would show 12-14 points.
♠ 4	♠ 4	
♥ KQ87	♥ AK87	
♦ AJ54	♦ AJ54	
♣ K743	♣ KJ43	

But if you play a weak NT then you have the same problem but the other way round. You open whatever your system dictates and with Hand 2 you rebid 1NT (15-16) over a 1♠ response. But here it's hand 1 that is the problem.

Basically, these 4441 type hands (especially with short ♠'s) are difficult to bid if you open one of a suit and partner responds in your singleton if you cannot rebid 1NT.

So it's best to have your Roman 2♦ bid to be the same range as your opening 1NT.

But, of course, you can play whatever range you like; and many prefer to play Mini Roman as 12-14 comes up more often than 15-17.

And I am not saying that Roman 2♦ is necessarily the best use of the 2♦ opening; my personal preference is to play Benjamin twos.

Always Transfer

Board 13 from Friday 16th

Unlike Stayman, there is no points requirement for a Jacoby transfer. There are no guarantees, but it generally works out best to transfer to a major however many points you have. Here is an example where one player did not realise that.: -

Dealer:	♠ 843		<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ A5432		West(C)	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ A		-	pass	1NT	pass
	♣ 10732		pass (1)	pass		
♠ KJ1092	N	♠ A75	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ J10	W E	♥ Q97	West(C)	North	East	South
♦ 1092	S	♦ KQ84	-	pass	1NT	pass
♣ J65		♣ KQ4	2♥ (1)	pass	2♠	all pass
	♠ Q6					
	♥ K86					
	♦ J7653					
	♣ A98					

Table A (1) What did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz?

Table B (1) This West got it right – it virtually always works out better to transfer when holding a 5 card major – and it is even more important to do so with a weak hand.

And what happened? South led a ♦ but North's ♥ switch ensured that the contract made just 8 tricks. So 1NT made +1, but the 2♠ bid at other tables easily makes 9 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- You should always transfer with a 5 card major, regardless of strength.
- The only exception is when also holding 4 cards in the other major (so 5-4 or 4-5 in the majors) when it's best to use Stayman with all strength hands.

Balanced hand Bidding

On the next page I state that I will get tougher on people who open 1NT with hands of 20 or 21 points. Just in case you don't know how to bid big balanced hands here is a chart (for playing a strong NT) that has appeared in numerous previous news-sheets: -

12-14 points	open 1 of a suit and rebid NT at the lowest level.
15-17 points	open 1NT
18-19 points	open 1 of a suit and jump rebid in NT.
20-21 points	open 2NT
22-24 points	open 2♣ and rebid 2NT
23+	this one you have to decide with your partner. Standard is to open 3NT or else to open 2♣ and then jump to 3NT. The 'best' solution is to play Benjamin twos.

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: Dbl. With the intention of bidding ♠'s next go. If you play weak jump overcalls then this is the way to show a hand that is too strong for a simple overcall.

Hand B: (a) 1♣. It's far too good for 1NT.

(b) 3NT. This is the rebid with a good hand with a good long minor like this.

Hand C: 2♥. Always transfer, regardless of strength. And this is even more important with weak hands; a transfer does not promise any points.

Hand D: 2♥. Pass is possible but partner's simple rebid is not forcing and you have a decent hand and may make game opposite a 15 or 16 count, so you should give him another chance. 2NT by you would be an overbid as it (as usual by responder) shows 11-12 points. That just leaves giving 'false' preference back to the first bid suit.

Sequence W: It's a help-suit game try, asking partner to bid game if he can help in the ♦ suit.

Sequence X: Penalties. East did not double the 1♥ bid as that would have been a negative double. He was prepared to defend 1♥ doubled and must now be extremely happy with the turn of events. Note that this double cannot be asking opener to bid something – if responder had values elsewhere then he could have found a bid over 1♥.

Sequence Y: This one is up to partnership agreement. Traditionally it is forcing, showing 4♥'s and 5+♣'s. However, if you play 4-way transfers it is better to transfer to the minor and then bid 3♥ with that type of hand. So if you play 4-way transfers the sequence is free and it's best used as a form of Minor Suit Stayman – known as SARS (Shape Asking Relays after Stayman). It's full described in the NT bidding book on our web site.

Editorial

Count your cards (face down). There was *yet another* case on Wednesday when a hand was played out with one player holding 14 cards and another just 12. This really is getting beyond a joke and is wasting everybody's time. I have now updated the club rules – the offending partie(s) will automatically receive a zero for the board. If there is a non-offending party then they will receive their average +. I will give them more than their average for the day as they would presumably have got a good score against opponents who cannot even count their cards? If, say, North and East have 12/14 resp. and play starts then *everybody* will receive zero. Perhaps after a few zeros people will learn to count their cards?

Don't open 1NT way out of range. Most players play the strong 1NT opening, so 15-17 points. Now I try to 'protect' 'beginners' from Chuck, but I can only do so much and I finally had to side with Chuck on this one. If anyone opens 1NT with 20+ points then I will caution them. And if they do it again I'll warn them. If they *keep on* doing it then they will simply be awarded a zero score every time and risk a suspension from the club. People come to the club to play bridge and repeated blatant disregard of the rules is not playing bridge.

Making a bid which is 4 points outside the stated range is a psyche and is not allowed in this club. And if a player in a regular partnership does it repeatedly it is defined as 'cheating'. Chuck got a warning/suspension a couple of years back for psyching twice, he has never done so since. It's only fair that I treat others in the same way. Agreed?

Mon 19 th	N-S	1 st	Bill/Dave	56%	2 nd	Alex/Thorlief	55%
	E-W	1 st	Clive/Terry	61%	2 nd	Philip/Tomas	59%
Wed 21 st		1 st	Clive/Gerry	67%	2 nd	Chuck/Terry	65%
Fri 23 rd	Individual	1 st	Jeff	69%	2 nd	Jan	66%

Contacting Others

It has been suggested that I compile a list of member's/guest's telephone/e-mail details. Now I do have most of them in my little book, but it's not available to everyone all the time! So I have now included a page on our website. When you open the main page, click on 'contact us' and then at the very bottom of that page you'll see a 'contact members' link. When you click that you'll be asked for a password. At the moment it contains just ½ a dozen or so entries, if you would like your details included then give them or e-mail them to me (if I don't already have them) and I'll include them and tell/e-mail you the password.

Editorial

Most players in the club play a strong NT and I recommend that people playing a weak NT either announce the range or else fill in a convention card. I had to adjust one board on Wednesday when the opponents felt that they were damaged by not knowing that the opposition played a weak NT (I gave them an average). It did not affect the outcome of 1st or 2nd place and I let the original score by the 'offenders' stand. I suggest that everybody announces the range when partner opens 1NT, *whatever it is*. I believe that that is the current WBF policy.

The club championship race is hotting up, with Clive charging up the rankings with a few good results. He has now overtaken Ken and leads the Silver Plate (best 10 results) but has some way to go before catching Bob, Dave or Chuck.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A Hand B With Hand A RHO opens 1♥, what do you do?

♠ KJ93	♠ AJ64	With Hand B what do you do if RHO: (a) opens 1♦? (b) opens 1♠?
♥ J108	♥ KQ84	
♦ J92	♦ 10	
♣ A43	♣ A1054	

Hand C Hand D With Hand C RHO opens 1♦, what do you do?

♠ QJ83	♠ A64	With Hand D partner opens 1♣ and RHO overcalls 1♠, what do you do?
♥ A97	♥ Q764	
♦ K74	♦ KQ109	
♣ Q95	♣ 107	

Don't Pre-empt then bid again!

Board 22 from Monday 19th

I say the same things week after week, but who listens?

Dealer:	♠ 1052				
East	♥ 10742	West	North	East(me)	South
E-W vul	♦ A102	-	-	pass	2♠ (1)
	♣ K97	dbl	3♠	dbl (2)	pass
		4♣ (3)	pass	4♥ (4)	4♠ (5)
♠ K7	N	pass	pass	dbl (6)	all pass
♥ AQ63	W E				
♦ J	S				
♣ AJ10653					
	♠ AQJ9643				
	♥ J5				
	♦ 9765				
	♣ -				

- (6) Obviously South should open 3♠, some may even try 4♠.
- (7) This is for take – out and generally denies 4♥'s (with 4♥'s, East would bid them).
- (8) West is quite happy to show his ♣ suit.
- (9) And this 4♥ bid tells West that it's a Moysian ♥ fit, so choose between 4♥ and 5♣.
- (10) What West would have done we will never know – because South broke the golden rule – bidding again having pre-empted. And, what's more, by doing it so late in the auction E-W have had loads of space to gauge what's going on.
- (11) And East happily doubled – the Moysian fit in ♥'s was dodgy and the 5 level (5♣) may well be too high.

And what happened? 4♠ doubled went two down for a joint top to E-W. 5♣ was bid and went one down at two other tables. Nobody rested in 4♥ - I suspect that it would have gone down.

The bottom lines: -

- Pre-empt to the limit first go.
- Do not bid again having pre-empted.

Don't Double with flat hands – part 1

Board 6 from Monday 19th

I say the same things week after week, but who listens?

N-S got a poor score here, who would you blame?

Dealer:	♠ Q10862				
East	♥ K62	West	North	East(me)	South(A)
E-W vul	♦ 107	-	-	1♥	dbl (1)
	♣ Q92	redbl (2)	1♠	pass (3)	pass
♠ 4	N	2♦ (4)	pass	2♥ (5)	2♠ (6)
♥ 4	W E	3♣ (7)	3♠ (8)	dbl (9)	all pass
♦ AK8543	S				
♣ K10865					
	♠ KJ93				
	♥ J108				
	♦ J92				
	♣ A43				
	♠ A75				
	♥ AQ9753				
	♦ Q6				
	♣ J7				

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand A in this week's quiz? I hope you passed – this is a very poor double. Now South later explained to me that they had agreed to double 1♥ when holding 4♠'s. Maybe they had mis-understood something that I have frequently said – that you should normally have 4♠'s for a double of 1♥. But the reverse is not true! I most certainly do not say that you should double 1♥ simply because you have 4♠'s – you need to be short in ♥'s (i.e. playable in all other 3 suits) if not very strong. This flat hand is not the correct shape (and is too weak) for a double.
- (2) Redouble shows 10+ points and generally a mis-fit for partner and an ability to penalise at least two of their suits.
- (3) East cannot punish ♠'s and so passes in case partner can. This is a forcing pass.
- (4) But West does not have ♠'s either and so correctly bids his ♦'s.
- (5) And East obviously shows his 6 card ♥ suit.
- (6) Unwise
- (7) West shows his shape.
- (8) And with 5♠'s North feels happy bidding 3♠.
- (9) East knows it's a mis-fit and feels that he has enough defence to double 3♠.

And what happened? 3♠ doubled went four down for a complete top (800) to E-W.

The bottom lines: -

- Do not double with flat hands unless very strong.
- A take-out double should be playable in the other 3 suits.

Don't Double with flat hands – part 2

Board 8 from Monday 19th

I say the same things week after week, but who listens?

The same N-S got a poor score here just two boards later, who would you blame?

Dealer:	♠ QJ83				
West	♥ A97	West	North(C)	East(me)	South
Love all	♦ K74	1♦ (1)	dbl (2)	3♦ (3)	3♥ (4)
	♣ Q95	all pass			
♠ AK94	N	♠ 752			
♥ Q103	W E	♥ 852			
♦ A1093	S	♦ J862			
♣ A6		♣ J73			
	♠ 106				
	♥ KJ64				
	♦ Q5				
	♣ K10842				

- (1) E-W were playing a weak NT and so West opened 1♦
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand C in this week's quiz? I hope you passed – this is a very poor double.
- (3) Pre-emptive! I guess that East had gauged the ability of N-S in competitive situations and decided to put them to the test?
- (4) Very reasonable, if partner had had his bid.

And what happened? 3♥ went one down for a top to E-W.

The bottom lines: -

- Do not double with flat hands unless very strong.
- A take-out double should be playable in the other 3 suits.
- A jump in partner's suit after a double is pre-emptive (although some may prefer something a little better or more ♦'s than this actual East hand).

Now N-S were at each other's throats throughout the session and I understand that they do not wish to partner each other in future. The problem is, who in the club is going to partner anybody who repeatedly doubles with miserable flat hands as both of these two do?

Don't Double with the wrong shape

Board 16 from Friday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ AJ64
West ♥ KQ84
E-W vul ♦ 10
 ♣ A1054

West	North(B)	East	South
1♠	dbl (1)	pass (2)	2♦
dbl	2NT (3)	pass	pass (4)
pass			

♠ K8752	N	♠ 10
♥ 2	W E	♥ A107653
♦ AKJ86	S	♦ 4
♣ Q8		♣ K7632
	♠ Q93	
	♥ J9	
	♦ Q97532	
	♣ J9	

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand B(b) in this week's quiz? I hope you passed – this is a very poor double. You have no sensible action after partner responds with the all-too-likely 2♦.
- (2) I would bid 2♥. A two-level bid is weakish, generally 6 cards, and non-forcing after a double.
- (3) Anyone who regularly reads the news sheets or has attended any of the bidding lessons knows that if you double and then bid NT, that shows a hand that was too strong for an initial 1NT overcall – so 19+ points.
- (4) And so I would have bid 3NT if I were South.

And what happened? 2NT made exactly for an average board. Luckily North was not playing with me or he would have been in 3NT.

The bottom lines: -

- If you double and then bid NT then that shows a very strong (19+) hand.
- A take-out double should be playable in the **other** 3 suits (not the suit opened!).

Bidding the opponent's suit

Board 17 from Wednesday 21st

A cue bid of the opponent's suit may mean many things and is often asking for a stop for NT purposes. However, when partner overcalls in a major suit then a cue bid by you may have a different meaning. Here is a sequence by Chuck and myself from Wednesday: -

Dealer:	♠ KQJ94				
North	♥ 52	West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ AJ87	(me)		(Chuck)	
	♣ K7	-	1♠	2♥	pass
		2♠	(1) dbl	(2) pass	(3) pass
		3♦	(4) pass	3♥	(5) all pass
♠ 2	N	♠ A753			
♥ K86	W E	♥ AQJ93			
♦ KQ65	S	♦ 103			
♣ QJ1064		♣ 53			
	♠ 1086				
	♥ 1074				
	♦ 942				
	♣ A982				

- (1) Chuck and I have agreed that a cue bid in this situation shows a limit raise or better (a direct 3♥ bid is thus pre-emptive).
- (2) North wants a ♠ lead if he ends up defending.
- (3) East could bid 3♥ here to show no more than a minimal two-level overcall.
- (4) With a really good raise to 3♥ West made another try. This had not been discussed but is best played as a help-suit game try (or else a cue bid if West bids on over a 3♥ bid from partner).
- (5) And East has a minimum with nothing in ♦'s and so correctly signs off.

And what happened? 3♥ is an excellent contract and actually made +1 for a top. One other pair was in 3♥ making for a good score and at the other tables N-S played in ♠'s for good scores their way.

The bottom lines: -

- A cue bid of the opponent's suit can mean different things in different situations.

A 50% chance is 100% better than a 0% chance

Board 20 from Friday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ J108762

West ♥ 982

Both vul ♦ 3
♣ KJ10

♠ Q93 N ♠ AK54
♥ A103 W E ♥ KQJ5
♦ KQ102 S ♦ AJ5
♣ A53 ♣ 92

♠ -

♥ 762

♦ 98764

♣ Q8764

West	North	East	South
1NT (1)	pass	2♣	pass (2)
2♦	pass	4♣ (3)	pass
4♠	pass	5♣ (4)	pass
5♥	pass	6NT	pass

- (1) Now you all know to knock off a point for the 4333 type shape, but with two 10's and a 9 a 1NT opening is just about acceptable, especially in an individual tournament.
- (2) I believe that one South did actually bid a vulnerable (Unusual) 2NT here. A bit rash.
- (3) Gerber.
- (4) 5♣ asks for Kings when playing Gerber.

♠ 1087

♥ -

♦ DUMMY
♣ K ↓

♠ Q9 N ♠ K54
♥ - W E ♥ -
♦ K S ♦ -
♣ 5 ♣ 9

♠ -

♥

♦ 9

♣ Q87

Now the bidding was fairly straightforward although one pair did end up in a somewhat optimistic 7NT. But this time it's all about the play (or the defence, to be more precise). I don't know the exact details but it was pretty much the same at all 3 tables. North led the ♠J and dummy won and set about cashing the ♣A and the red suit winners. That left this position, what should North discard on the ♦K lead from West? The answer is that he must discard the ♣K – he has a complete count of the ♠ suit and knows that West has the remainder of the trick if he discards another ♠. If West has the ♣Q then North is truly

squeezed and can do nothing about it, but it's a 50% chance that partner has that card and 50% is a far better bet than 0%. Also, West may have decided to take the ♣ finesse if he had held the ♣Q.

And what happened? Every defender did not look at dummy and threw a ♠ so that every West made 13 tricks.

The bottom lines.

If you know that you are the only defender covering a suit, then you have to keep your guard in that suit and hope that partner has a guard in the other suit.

The Negative Double

Board 15 from Friday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ 97
South ♥ K2
N-S vul ♦ J42
♣ AQJ654

♠ J53	N	♠ KQ1082
♥ 1085	W E	♥ AJ93
♦ A76	S	♦ 853
♣ K982		♣ 3

♠ A64
♥ Q764
♦ KQ109
♣ 107

West	North	East	South(D)
-	-	-	pass
pass	1♣	1♠ (1)	2♦ (2)
2♠ (3)	pass	pass	3♠ (4)
pass	4♣	all pass	

- (1) With a 5 card and a 4 card major it's generally considered better to overcall rather than double. If you double then you may end up playing in ♦'s when you have a 5-3 ♠ fit.
- (2) What did you bid with this South hand D in this week's quiz? A negative double (promising 4 ♥'s) stands out a mile.
- (3) Excellent, muddy the waters a little with support for partner.
- (4) But now South is a little fixed, he has close to opening values but has not even shown his ♥ suit. He chose a somewhat peculiar 3♠ bid.

And what happened? 4♣ went 1 down for an average.

The bottom lines: -

- A negative double shows 4 cards in the unbid major and the point count is unlimited (although it is of course limited by a passed hand).

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: Pass. This flat hand is totally unsuitable for a double.

Hand B: (a) Dbl. The perfect take-out double.

(b) Pass. Double is terrible as you will be completely fixed over partner's likely 2♦ response.

A take-out double should be short in the suit **bid**.

Hand C: Pass. This flat hand is totally unsuitable for a double.

Hand D: Dbl. A negative double promising 4 ♥'s and values to at least compete to the two level.

Mon 26 th	1 st	Clive/Gerry	64%	2 nd	Dave/Bill	63%
Wed 28 th	1 st	Jim/Tomas	61%	2 nd	Kees/Bjorn	54%
Fri 30 th	1 st	Tomas/Philip	59%	2 nd	Jim/Tom	57%

Police Raid

The Friday results were incomplete and will not count towards championship results, especially as 5 travellers completely disappeared - maybe the police took them as 'evidence'? Anyway, the police now say 'no problem' and agree that we are completely legal. I disagree (with 'no problem'), I most certainly have a problem with us being disturbed like this and I will be doing my best to find out who orchestrated this act and ensure that nothing similar ever happens again.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A Hand B With Hand A partner opens 1♠ and RHO overcalls 2♦, what do you bid?

♠ - ♠ KQ54
♥ KQ83 ♥ A108
♦ 63 ♦ J54
♣ AQ96432 ♣ KJ4

With Hand B you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♦, what is your rebid?

Hand C Hand D With Hand C you open 1♠ and LHO overcalls 2♦. Partner bids 3♣ (forcing), what do you bid?

♠ AQ7642 ♠ AK10543
♥ J104 ♥ -
♦ AQ2 ♦ K1054
♣ K ♣ A107

With Hand D LHO opens 2♥ which RHO raises to 3♥, what do you bid?

Hand E Hand F What do you open with Hand E?

♠ AK743 ♠ 86
♥ 98 ♥ K1074
♦ AKQJ74 ♦ AJ92
♣ - ♣ 942

With Hand F RHO opens 2♥, you pass, LHO raises to 3♥ and partner doubles. Everybody is vulnerable, what do you do?

Hand G Hand H What do you open with Hand G?

♠ AK97543 ♠ 876
♥ AK8 ♥ KQ76
♦ A ♦ Q1098
♣ K9 ♣ A6

With Hand H partner opens 1♣ and you bid 1♦. Partner then bids (a) 1♠ or (b) 1NT.

What do you do in either scenario?

3NT from the right side!

Board 21 from Monday 26th

Most E-W pairs reached the correct contract (by differing routes) but one went astray: -

Dealer: ♠ J109853
North ♥ 975
N-S vul ♦ 84
♣ 75

♠ - N ♠ AQ7642
♥ KQ83 W E ♥ J104
♦ 63 S ♦ AQ2
♣ AQ96432 ♣ K
♠ K
♥ A62
♦ KJ10975
♣ J108

Table A

West(A)	North	East(C)	South
-	pass	1♠	2♦
3♣ (1)	pass	3♠ (2)	pass
3NT (3)	all pass		

Table B

West(A)	North	East(C)	South
-	pass	1♠	2♦
3♣ (1)	pass	3NT (2)	all pass

Table C

West(A)	North	East(C)	South
-	pass	1♠	2♦
dbl (1)	pass	2♠ (2)	pass
3♣ (3)	pass	3NT (4)	all pass

Table A (1) What did you bid with this West hand A in this week's quiz? See Table C for my choice.
(2) What did you bid with this East hand C in this week's quiz? See Table B for my choice.
(3) With no ♦ stop this is very silly if course, but the previous 3♣ bid started the rot as after a not too unexpected 3♠ rebid from East West is totally fixed.

Table B (1) This West also chose 3♣ (not my choice).
(2) But this time East chose to rebid 3NT with his hand C. Should East show his 6th ♠ or hid double ♦ stop? If feel that the latter is far more important (so bid 3NT) as if 3NT is the correct contract then East certainly has to be declarer.

Table C (1) This West (Dave) bid as I would have done. The negative double shows ♥'s and a subsequent ♣ rebid would show his shape and strength admirably
(2) 2NT would also lead to the right contract from the right hand but I prefer 2♠ because it shows the 6th ♠ and I also consider 2NT to be 12-14 in this sequence and 3NT is simply gambling.
(3) Isn't life simple when you start out with the right bid! This 3♣ bid is natural, forcing and confirms just 4 ♥'s.
(4) And East has an easy 3NT bid.

And what happened? 3NT made +2 when played by East, it was -2 when played by West!

The bottom lines: -

- Play (and remember that you play) negative doubles.
- The auction at Table C shows how much easier it is to keep the bidding low by using a negative double.
- If you have an excellent (double) stop in the opponent's suit, think NT.

Don't Deny a 4-card major

Board 20 from Monday 26th

It's the same old story ...

Dealer: ♠ 876
West ♥ KQ76
Both vul ♦ Q1098
 ♣ A6

♠ J10 N ♠ A932
♥ J53 W E ♥ 942
♦ A3 S ♦ K762
♣ Q108753 ♣ 92

♠ KQ54
♥ A108
♦ J54
♣ KJ4

Table A

West	North(H)	East	South(B)
pass	pass	pass	1♣
pass	1♦	pass	1NT (1)
pass	pass (2)	pass	

'Expert Table'

West	North(H)	East	South(B)
pass	pass	pass	1♣
pass	1♦	pass	1♠ (1)
pass	2NT (2)	pass	3NT (3)

- Table A (1) What did you bid with this South hand B in this week's quiz? 1♠ of course, never deny a 4-card major.
- (2) And this deal shows up another reason (other than possibly missing a fit). What did you bid with this North hand H(b) in this week's quiz? This North considered a raise to 2NT but decided against it because of the weak ♠'s (and the fact that partner had not bid them!). I'm not sure that I totally go along with that, but it really is simpler if partner (South) bids correctly.
- 'Expert (1) Now **nobody!!** at the club reached 3NT on this deal, so I had to call in our Table' experts. They never deny 4 card majors of course.
- (2) Now North should probably have bid 2NT at Table A, but it's very clear to do so here, that ♦Q1098 is worth far more than two points!
- (3) And South has easily enough to accept the invitation.

And what happened? 1NT was the final resting place at 3 tables; making 8,9 or 10 tricks. The player making just 8 tricks lost his way when he decided to attack ♣'s instead of ♦'s.

The bottom lines: -

- Play on your long suits.
- Be especially aware of suits with excellent intermediates (♦'s in this case) – you can play these without fear of losing an unnecessary trick.
- Never deny a 4 card major.

Don't double with just one suit!

Board 26 from Wednesday 28th

N-S missed 4♠ here, who would you blame?

Dealer: ♠ AK10543

East ♥ -

Both vul ♦ K1054

♣ A107

West North(D) East South(F)

- - 2♥ pass

3♥ (1) dbl (2) pass pass (3)

pass

♠ Q972

N

♠ J

♥ Q93

W E

♥ AJ8652

♦ 876

S

♦ Q3

♣ KQJ

♣ 8653

♠ 86

♥ K1074

♦ AJ92

♣ 942

- (1) With 3 card support it's usually best to raise partner's pre-empt. It may make life difficult for the opposition and is what 'The Law' says.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand D in this week's quiz? I think that double is a silly bid – what are you going to do over a 4♣/♦ response from partner (he sure ain't goin' to bid ♠'s!)? No, with a ♠ suit – bid it. Either 3♠ or 4♠. If you double and then remove a 4♣/♦ response from partner to 4♠ than that would show a much **stronger** hand.
- (3) And what did you do with this South hand F in the quiz? Obviously you cannot envisage a ♠ game and a jump to 5♦ may well be too high, and with a good 8 points sitting over the ♥ opener a feeble 4♦ (showing 0-8) really cannot be a good bid. Against vulnerable opponents I agree with this decision to pass.

And what happened? 3♥ went one down for a top to E-W as 4♠ was bid and made at other tables.

The bottom lines: -

- Do not double a major suit opening holding 5 or more cards in the other major – bid the major.

A 2♣ Opener? – part 1

Board 25 from Wednesday 28th

Dealer: ♠ Q962
 North ♥ AJ6
 E-W vul ♦ 1093
 ♣ 1095

♠ J8	N	♠ AK743
♥ Q1074	W E	♥ 98
♦ 82	S	♦ AKQJ74
♣ AK643		♣ -
	♠ 105	
	♥ K532	
	♦ 65	
	♣ QJ872	

Table A

West	North	East(E)	South
-	pass	2♣ (1)	pass
3♣ (2)	pass	3♦	pass
3♥	pass	3♠ (3)	pass
4♣ (4)	pass	4♠ (5)	pass
6NT (6)	all pass		

'Benji Table'

West	North	East	South
-	pass	2♣ (7)	pass
2♦ (8)	pass	3♦ (9)	pass
3♥ (10)	pass	3♠ (11)	pass
3NT (12)	all pass		

What went wrong here at Table A?

- (1) What did you open with this East hand E in this week's quiz? It is probably 9-10 playing tricks and a 1♦ opening will not work out too well if it is passed out. So playing Standard American it is 'standard' to open 2♣ with this sort of hand. Unfortunately the wheels can come off if partner expects you to have about 6 more points!
- (2) An obvious +ve response.
- (3) Now this is the 4th suit and this is where the real problems began. I do not consider this as necessarily natural and so the bidding is bound to go past 3NT. At this stage East knows that it's a total mis-fit and his hand has got worse with every bid (West has bid both rounded suits). Since East has 6 points less that partner is expecting and it's ill-fitting, 3NT may work out better here.
- (4) With no ♠ stop West simply bids 4♣, and we're too high whatever happens.
- (5) Showing a real ♠ suit.
- (6) East suggested that since West knew it was a mis-fit now he should pass. ♠ AKQ4
 But West has a decent 10 points and opposite a 'genuine' 2♣ opener such ♥ K
 this one then an easy slam would be played in a silly game contract. 4♠ is ♦ AKQJ74
 too high anyway and surely 4♠ must be forcing here? ♣ QJ
 How does West know that East does not have a 'genuine' 2♣ opener?
 The answer is to play Benjamin twos. Unfortunately they have not made it across the pond yet
- (7) 8+ playing tricks or 22-23 balanced.
- (8) Benji is best played with a mandatory relay.
- (9) 9 tricks with ♦'s.
- (10) a natural 3♥ is better than 4♣ as 3NT may be the best spot.
- (11) 2nd suit
- (12) What a simple sequence, what's the problem?

And what happened? The majority of the field stopped in 3NT +1. 6NT went -1.

The Bottom lines: -

- Opening 2♣ with great 17 counts may be standard practice in the States, but there are certainly better ways and it can easily get out of control if partner has a good hand!

A 2♣ Opener? – part 2

Board 15 from Wednesday 28th

Dealer: ♠ Q82
 North ♥ Q643
 E-W vul ♦ 764
 ♣ J108

♠ J107	N	♠ -
♥ 1097	W E	♥ J52
♦ KJ5	S	♦ Q109832
♣ A532		♣ Q764
	♠ AK97543	
	♥ AK8	
	♦ A	
	♣ K9	

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	2♣ (1)
pass	2♦ (2)	pass	2♠
pass	3♠	pass	4NT
etc to 6♠			

- (1) What did you open with this South hand G in this week's quiz? Now here I have no problem with a Strong 2♣, 21 points is more like it and a bit in every suit means that any assets that partner has are going to be useful (unlike when you have a void).
- (2) This pair play 2♦ as semi-positive with 2♥ as the outright negative. As I understand the treatment, 2♥ is a definite negative showing around 3–4 or less points and 2♦ is 'waiting' with 4–5+ and game forcing.

And what happened? Everybody made 12 tricks in ♠'s but only this pair bid it.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: Dbl. A negative double showing 4 ♥'s. This is better than bidding 3♣ as the bidding is then up at an uncomfortably high level and you may not have enough room to reach 3NT played by the correct hand (partner) if that is the correct contract. And, of course, it may be difficult to find a possible ♥ fit
- Hand B: 1♠. Never deny a 4 card major.
- Hand C: 3NT. As Elvis once said, 'It's Now or Never'. If you decide to show your 6th ♠ then either you have gone past 3NT or it's played by the wrong man.
- Hand D: 3♠ or 4♠. You have ♠'s, so bid them. Double is a very poor bid with 5 ♠'s and even worse with 6 ♠'s! If you double then what are you going to do when partner inevitably responds in a minor? If you bid 4♠ that shows a **much** stronger hand and if partner responds 5♣ you are probably up the creek.
- Hand E: 2♣ or 1♦. The modern practice in Standard American is to open a hand which has nearly game in its own hand, regardless of high card points, with 2♣. This means that you will not get passed out when two points from partner is enough to make game; but it has the distinct disadvantage that you will get too high when partner has a good but ill-fitting hand. Assuming that you do not like 2♣, I prefer to open 1♦ rather than 1♠ with this hand for two reasons: (a) 1♦ is far less likely to get passed out than 1♠, (b) you open 1♦, then jump in ♠'s (game forcing) and then bid ♠'s again. This shows a strong 5-6. Of course all of your problems are solved if you play strong twos or Benjamin twos (open 2♦/2♣ resp.) and partner's automatic relay keeps the bidding low when a misfit is uncovered.
- Hand F: Pass. Partner presumably has just 4 ♠'s and it is difficult to judge if you can make 5 of a minor or if you will get more for defending. I would take the money and pass. And there really is no other sensible option: this is a good 8 count and 4♦ shows around 0-8 points and you may miss game; but 5♦ may well be too high!
- Hand G: 2♣. Now this hand really is worth a 2♣ opener. And if I was playing strong twos or Benjamin I would still open the strongest bid (2♣/2♦ resp.) as this really is too strong for a strong two opener.
- Hand H: (a) 2NT, this is a decent 11 points. ♠'s may be a problem as partner has three or less but you should probably take a chance.
(b) 2NT – this time it's easy when partner bids ♠'s.

Contacting Others

We now have a list of some member's/guest's telephone/e-mail details on the web-site. When you open the main page, click on 'contact us' and then at the very bottom of that page you'll see a 'contact members' link. When you click that you'll be asked for a password. At the moment it contains just ten or so entries, if you would like your details included then give them or e-mail them to me (if I don't already have them) and I'll include them and tell/e-mail you the password.

Mon 3 rd 1 st Bob Short/Phil	62%	2 nd David/Kenneth	56%
Wed 5 th 1 st Dave/Hans	63%	2 nd Phil/Tomas	62%
Fri 7 th (Individual) 1 st Bob Short	65%	2 nd Phil = Jan	55%

The police raid.

For those not in the know, the Pattaya Bridge Club (established for more than ten years!) was raided by Pattaya’s ‘finest’ on Friday 30th Sept. Despite the fact that playing Bridge (not for money) is totally legal in Thailand, the police decided to suspend (so finish) the game and hang around intimidating people for 2 hours.

I went along to the police station on Tuesday 4th , giving them copies of all of our legal papers etc, and have been ‘assured?’ that we will not be raided again and that there is **Don’t Bid Blackwood with a weak doubleton** I tried to find out who ‘ratted’ on us and was met by a rue smile. It looks like it was probably a Thai in the vicinity – hoping to get a kickback from a successful raid.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	(a) what do you open with Hand A? (b) suppose you choose 1♦ and partner bids 1NT, what do you rebid?
♠ -	♠ AKQ8	
♥ KQ7	♥ A2	
♦ AQJ973	♦ AQ5	What do you open with Hand B - or what do you rebid if you choose to open 2♣ and partner responds 2♦?
♣ AK95	♣ AK95	

Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C RHO opens 1♠, what do you do?
♠ 6	♠ K102	
♥ 108	♥ 94	With Hand D partner opens 1♦ and you respond 1NT. Partner then bids 3♣, what do you do?
♦ A10942	♦ K54	
♣ KQ942	♣ 107632	

Contacting Others

I have compiled a list of member’s/guest’s telephone/e-mail details for those who wish to have their contact details known. It is included a page on our website; when you open the main page, click on ‘contact us’ and then at the very bottom of that page you’ll see a ‘contact members’ link; when you click that you’ll be asked for a password. At the moment it contains 20 or so entries, if you would like your details included then give them or e-mail them to me (if I don’t already have them) and I’ll include them and tell/e-mail you the password.

Baby Blackwood

After any one-level suit opening, a jump to 3NT is not really needed (you can always bid something and then bid 3NT). So some players play this as Blackwood. This is ideal when you have a responding hand that is looking for slam but has no aces (so that a zero response gets you too high). The previous West hand was not ideal (a weak doubleton), so let's change it slightly (and put it as East for clarity): -

Example 1

West	East	West	East
♠ KJ96	♠ 5	1♥	3NT
♥ A9876	♥ KQ54	4♦	4♥
♦ 104	♦ KQJ9873	pass	
♣ KQ	♣ J		

Example 2

West	East	West	East
♠ KJ96	♠ 5	1♥	3NT
♥ A9876	♥ KQ54	4♥	pass
♦ A104	♦ KQJ9873		
♣ 95	♣ J		

Example 3

West	East	West	East
♠ A96	♠ 5	1♥	3NT
♥ A9876	♥ KQ54	4♠	6♥
♦ A104	♦ KQJ9873	pass	
♣ 95	♣ J		

It is best not to play Roman responses, as 4♠ showing two aces and the trump queen may be too high if ♥'s are trumps; and responder may not actually be angling to play in the major opened and so not interested in the 'trump' king. Baby Blackwood may also be used after a minor suit opening.

Baby Blackwood may also be used when a 9-card major suit has been found, for example the sequence: -

1♥ - 3♥ - 3NT or 1♠ - 3♠ - 3NT. 3NT cannot realistically be to play as responder presumably has 4 trumps or else a definite desire to play in the suit contract. Note that it's not the same after 1♥ - 2♥ as then responder has only promised 3 card support and 3NT is natural, offering that as an alternative contract to 4 of the major.

A Cold Slam played in a partscore (4 times)!

Board 22 from Wednesday 5th

Nobody even found game on this deal from Wednesday: -

Dealer: ♠ K102
 East ♥ 94
 E-W vul ♦ K54
 ♣ 107632

♠ A853	N	♠ QJ9764
♥ AJ106	W E	♥ 8532
♦ 1082	S	♦ 6
♣ 84		♣ QJ
	♠ -	
	♥ KQ7	
	♦ AQJ973	
	♣ AK95	

Table A

West	North(D)	East	South(A)
-	-	pass (1)	1♦ (2)
pass	1NT	pass	3♣ (3)
pass	pass (4)	pass	

Table B

West	North(D)	East	South(A)
-	-	pass (1)	1♦ (2)
pass	1NT	pass	3♦ (3)
pass	pass (5)		

Table C

West	North(D)	East	South(A)
-	-	pass (1)	1♣ (2)
pass	1NT	pass	3♦ (6)
pass	pass (7)	pass	

'Expert Table'

West	North(D)	East	South(A)
-	-	pass (1)	1♦ (2)
pass	1NT	pass	3♣ (3)
pass	4♣ (12)	pass	etc.

Table D

West	North(D)	East	South(A)
-	-	2♠ (1)	dbl (8)
pass	3♣ (9)	pass	3♦ (10)
pass	pass (11)		

- Table A (1) Every player but one passed this hand – that's probably about the only positive thing I can say about the bidding on this deal! 2♠ is a very poor pre-empt as it's vulnerable, the ♣QJ are 'worthless' and, most importantly, it has a 4 card ♥ suit.
- (2) What did you open with this South hand A(a) in this week's quiz? Some may prefer 2♣ (or 2♦ if you play Benjamin) but that usually does not work well with two-suiters – especially minors. I'll go into this in more detail next page. With a ♠ void you can be certain that a 1♦ opening will not be passed out and then a jump to 3♣ by you is game forcing.
- (3) Perfect. Absolutely (game) forcing in Standard American. I do not know what system this pair play.
- (4) Even if 3♣ was not forcing in their system (?), this hand is superb opposite partner's advertised two-suiter. The ♦K is golden and with 5 ♣'s North must obviously bid again. 4♣ seems 'obvious'. See 'Expert' table.
- Table B (3) This South chose to jump rebid his ♦'s. This shows a strong hand but unfortunately it is not forcing.
- (5) So North passed (reasonable)
- Table C (2) This South chose to open 1♣ and then jump in ♦'s. This is wrong as it shows more ♣'s than ♦'s.
- (6) This is 'obviously' forcing
- (7) but North chose to pass.

- Table D (1) An off-beat (I'm trying to be polite) 2♠ opener.
 (8) Fine, far too strong for anything but double.
 (9) Correct
 (10) This shows a good hand (too good for a simple 3♦ overcall). South considered that it was forcing. Unfortunately it is not, the only forcing bid is 3♠.
 (11) South has shown a very good hand and North has promises about 0-8 points with his simple 3♣ bid. With 6 points more than minimum, I would bid 4♦ and then 5♣ or 6♣ would be reached.
- 'Expert' (1) I much prefer a 1♦ opening to a strong artificial bid. If you open with a strong
 Table artificial 2♣/♦ bid and then bid 3♦ you are too high to comfortably find the best spot – a 4♣ bid shows the shape but you've gone past 3NT. There really is no problem with opening 1♦ and then rebidding a (game forcing) 3♣.
 (12) North supports and off they go to 5♣ or 6♣.

And what happened? Obviously I would like to award every N-S pair a zero, but unfortunately the rules don't allow for that. In a large tournament (or a teams game) then all of these N-S's would get a poor score (or a suitable comment from team-mates), but here the N-S at Table A got a complete top for playing in 3♣ making 13 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- A 'high reverse', such as 1♦ - 1NT - 3♣, or 1♠ - 2♥ - 3♣ is game forcing in Standard American (and every other system that I am vaguely acquainted with).
- A jump rebid, such as 1♦ - 1NT - 3♦, or 1♦ - 1♥ - 3♦ is invitational and not forcing.
- Be wary of opening 2♣ (or 2♦ playing Benjamin) with strong two-suiters unless it is going to be easy to show both suits (below the level of 3NT).
- Even if you are enlightened enough to Benjamin (or something similar) with two artificial strong opening bids, do not assume that a 1-level opening is limited to around 17 or 18 points – it is not! The high reverse is still game forcing even if you play a strong two or Benjamin system.

Looking for 3NT?

- At (12) at our expert table, North has another option – he can explore 3NT. A possibility is that he could bid 3♥ to ask partner to bid 3NT with a ♥ stop (or he could bid 3♠ to show a ♠ stop and ask partner to bid 3NT with a ♥ stop). There really is no obvious advantage in playing it one way or the other – you simply have to agree!

A dubious double?

Board 17 from Wednesday 5th

What would you do with this East hand at (5) below?

Dealer:	♠ 10976					
North	♥ KJ8		West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ A102		-	pass	1♣	pass (1)
	♣ 1086		1♦	pass	1♥ (2)	pass
			1NT (3)	pass	pass	2♠ (4)
			pass	pass	pass (5)	
♠ Q2	N	♠ AJ53				
♥ 1063	W E	♥ AQ97				
♦ K843	S	♦ 9				
♣ QJ42		♣ K973				
	♠ K84					
	♥ 542					
	♦ QJ765					
	♣ A5					

- (1) I see no reason not to overcall 1♦ here.
- (2) Obviously correct; never deny a 4-card major and bid them up the line.
- (3) Fine. I think that 1NT is better than 2♣ here as partner may have only 3(2?) ♣'s.
- (4) Now South knows that partner has some points; he wanted to stick his oar in but LHO had already bid ♦'s. Nobody had bid ♠'s and he assumed that partner had them. Obviously pass is a much more prudent option.
- (5) Now what should East do? He is pretty much maximum for his bidding so far, South presumably does not have 5 ♠'s (he did not overcall immediately), partner probably has two ♠'s (if not 3). 1NT was probably going to make comfortably and at pairs scoring I would double. Setting 2♠ by two tricks is not enough at this vulnerability if 1NT makes the likely +1.

And what happened? Luckily 2♠ went 3 down so E-W got a reasonable score anyway; a double would have given them a clear top.

The bottom lines: -

- I shall make no further comment about South's bid!
- If the opponents have taken you out of what was probably going to be a good score, then consider doubling them – especially at pairs scoring.

There were 2 good examples of the UNT on Friday. That's quite unusual - 'usual' at our club is for people to bid the UNT with completely unsuitable hands! So, just for a change, here are two good examples: -

The Unusual NT (UNT) – part 1 Board 5 from Friday 7th

Dealer:	♠ Q9874				
North	♥ AJ732		West(C)	North	East
N-S vul	♦ K		-	pass (1)	pass
	♣ 106		2NT (2)	4♠	5♣ (3)
			pass	5♠	pass (4)
			pass		pass
♠ 6	N	♠ -			
♥ 108	W E	♥ Q9654			
♦ A10942	S	♦ J876			
♣ KQ942		♣ AJ53			
	♠ AKJ10532				
	♥ K				
	♦ Q53				
	♣ 87				

- (1) A marginal opener; the singleton ♦K is poor and pass looks right to me.
- (2) What did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? 2NT is the UNT and this is an excellent example.
- (3) with a known double fit, 5♣ is fine.
- (4) E-W have pushed them up, excellent

And what happened? 5♠ went one down at two tables. At the third table East pushed on to 6♣ and that went down (doubled).

The bottom lines: -

- The UNT promises 5-5 in the two lowest unbid suits.

The Unusual NT (UNT) – part 2Board 16 from Friday 7th

Dealer:	♠ 2					
West	♥ J10962		West	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ Q8654		1♣	2NT (1)	3♠	pass
	♣ A4		4♠	pass	pass	5♣ (2)
			pass	pass (3)	dbl	pass
♠ QJ7	N	♠ A108653	pass	5♦ (4)	dbl	pass (5)
♥ AQ53	W E	♥ 7	pass	pass		
♦ J32	S	♦ A97				
♣ K98		♣ QJ10				
	♠ K94					
	♥ K84					
	♦ K10					
	♣ 76532					

- (1) Another reasonable 2NT bid. Note that 2NT shows the lowest two unbid suits (even if the opposition are playing a 'short club') as a 1♣ opening is 4+ cards more often than not. So this 2NT showed the red suits.
- (2) South incorrectly assumed that the UNT was ♣'s and ♦'s.
- (3) No need to correct if it's not doubled (yet).
- (4) Thus re-inforcing that it's the red suits. Redouble is an alternative.
- (5) Confused. Clearly a correction to 5♥ is correct.

And what happened? 4♠ should make and 5♥ should be a good save at this vulnerability. 5♦ minus 4 was not, nor was the 5♣ redoubled at another table when there was the same mis-understanding, North decided upon an SOS redouble at (4) and South again did not realise that North had the red suits.

The bottom lines: -

- The UNT shows 5-5 in the two lowest unbid suits. If 1♣ is opened, then 2NT by the next players shows ♦'s and ♥'s. This is true even if the opponents play a 'short ♣'.

There were 3 balanced 26 point hands on Wednesday, I'll mention just two of them (in the 3rd there was no major suit fit and everybody found a sensible 3NT).

The 3NT opener (or 2♣ - 2♦ - 3NT) – part 1

Board 25 from Wednesday 5th

Dealer: ♠ 7
 North ♥ J10973
 E-W vul ♦ K1082
 ♣ 1083

♠ AKQ8	N	♠ J652
♥ A2	W E	♥ Q4
♦ AQ5	S	♦ J7643
♣ AK95		♣ J6
	♠ 10943	
	♥ K865	
	♦ 9	
	♣ Q742	

Table A

West(B)	North	East	South
-	pass	pass	pass
2♣	pass	2♦	pass
3NT	pass	pass	pass

Table B

West(B)	North	East	South
-	pass	pass	pass
3NT	pass	pass	pass

'Expert Table'

West(B)	North	East	South
-	pass	pass	pass
2♦ (1)	pass	2♥ (2)	pass
2NT (3)	pass	3♣ (4)	pass
3♠	pass	4♠	all pass

Table A and B are absolutely typical Standard American auctions, with no hope of ever finding the correct contract (4♠). Even with an adverse 4-1 trump break 4♠ should make comfortably. For this deal our experts have to come from the UK as Standard American or 2/1 or whatever players who do not play Benjamin twos have no hope.

- 'Expert Table'
- (1) Absolutely game forcing playing Benjamin. And also promising at least 20 points. With a great hand but less than 20 points then open 2♣ playing Benji.
 - (2) Playing Benjamin twos I believe that it's best to always relay (so 2♦ over 2♣ and 2♥ over 2♦) – find out what opener's hand type is.
 - (3) And here we get to the point – there is no need for the space-consuming 3NT bid. 2NT here is a balanced 25+ and game forcing ...
 - (4) ... and that leaves room for partner to bid Stayman, transfer or whatever.

And what happened? All 4 tables played in 3NT which should fail on the obvious ♥ lead but two declarers did scramble home. Anyone who found 4♠ (nobody did) would have got a complete top.

Now I did overhear somebody suggest that at Table A or B that East should bid 4♣ Stayman and 'sign-off' in 4NT if there is no fit. I wandered away as I did not wish to get involved in nonsense like this (4NT may be one too high - and how do you investigate slam?). Anyway, the real solution stands out a mile – play Benjamin.

The 3NT opener (or 2♣ - 2♦ - 3NT) – part 2

Board 28 from Wednesday 5th

Dealer: ♠ Q832
West ♥ 1053
N-S vul ♦ 106
♣ 10432

♠ 6	N	♠ 10754
♥ KQJ84	W E	♥ 762
♦ 8754	S	♦ QJ9
♣ 976		♣ A85
	♠ AKJ9	
	♥ A9	
	♦ AK32	
	♣ KQJ	

Table A

West	North	East	South
2♥ (1)	pass	pass	dbl (2)
pass	2♠ (3)	pass	4NT (4)
pass	5♣	pass	5♠ (5)
all pass			

Table B

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	pass	2♣ (6)
pass	2♦	pass	3NT
all pass			

- Table A (1) I'm sure that not everybody would open 2♥.
(2) Double is quite reasonable with this monster; but you could agree to play the cue-bid (3♥) to show a really big hand. Michaels and UNT etc do not apply in the pass-out seat.
(3) A non-jump, so 0-8.
(4) South thought that it was worth investigating slam. I'm not convinced that 4NT is wise here (North may be totally bust) and a jump to 4♠ (showing a very strong hand) may be more prudent. Whether partner has the ♣ ace or not is not the point, whether he has points (say 7-8) is what matters.
(5) South gave up with no ace opposite.
- Table B (6) Here we go again, the typical non-Benjamin auction....

And what happened? 5♠ made exactly after some careful declarer play (he had to be careful at the 5 level). Two N-S's languished in NT and one table correctly got to the comfortable 4♠ making exactly.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 1♦. With a ♠ void this is very unlikely to get passed out. I do not like to open 2♣ with two-suiters as you frequently have no room to show your hand.
(b) 3♣. Having opened 1♦, a jump to 3♣ now is game forcing. 3♦ is not such a good bid as it's not forcing and partner may pass.
- Hand B: Ugh! There is no sensible answer to this question playing Standard American! Playing Standard American you open 3NT (or else open 2♣ followed by 3NT). Both are completely unsatisfactory of course, as if partner has rubbish with a 4 card major he has no idea if he should pass or risk Stayman. And he has the same problem with a 5 card major (transfer or not?). The only sensible option is to play Benjamin twos.
- Hand C: 2NT. The UNT, showing the two lowest unbid suits.
- Hand D: 4♣. Partner's 3♣ bid is game forcing so show your excellent ♣ support. This hand has grown enormously after partner's ♣ bid and slam could well be there. There is also a reasonable alternative, and that is to look for 3NT by bidding a major suit. 3♥ or 3♠ cannot be natural (you bid 1NT to start with) and must be looking for 3NT. It's up to you if it shows or denies a stop; something to discuss.

Mon	10 th	N-S	1 st	Alex/Jeff	57%	2 nd	David/Kenneth	50%
		E-W	1 st	Clive/Tom	66%	2 nd	Bob Short/Phil	58%
Wed	12 th		1 st	Peter (Lux)/Kari	60%	2 nd	Dave/Gene	55%
Fri	14 th		1 st	Bob/Monte	61%	2 nd	Kari/Ian	60%

Now you may ask how you can come 2nd in a Mitchell with 50%? – The answer is that the scores for ‘Terry all alone’ are not included! And tough luck for John Gavens/Phil on Friday – they scored 60% but only came 3rd!

There were loads of interesting boards this week – too many for the news-sheet and so some have been left over for next week.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A LHO opens 1♣ and this is passed round to you, what do you do?
♠ K9	♠ 864	
♥ QJ6	♥ AJ108763	With Hand B, what do you do if:
♦ Q1076	♦ 8	(a) RHO opens 1♦?
♣ QJ43	♣ Q7	(b) RHO opens 2♦ (weak)?
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C there are 3 passes and you open 1♠ in 4 th seat. LHO overcalls 2♣ and this is passed to you. What do you do?
♠ AQ1085	♠ K1074	
♥ K94	♥ Q10	With Hand D partner opens 1♥ and you respond 1♠. Partner then bids 1NT, what do you do?
♦ Q106	♦ K85	
♣ K8	♣ K1062	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1♠ in 4 th seat and RHO overcalls 2♣, what do you do?
♠ 9	♠ AQ1085	
♥ AQJ	♥ K94	With Hand F RHO opens 1♠, what do you do?
♦ J543	♦ Q106	
♣ Q10762	♣ K8	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G RHO and you both pass and LHO opens 1♠ in 3 rd seat. Partner passes and RHO bids 1NT, what do you do?
♠ 9	♠ 87	
♥ AQJ	♥ Q76	(a) what do you open with Hand H?
♦ J543	♦ K87	(b) suppose you open 1♣, then what do you bid when partner responds 1♥?
♣ Q10762	♣ AKQ85	
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J partner opens 2♠ and RHO passes, what do you do?
♠ 642	♠ AJ75	
♥ AJ	♥ KJ872	With Hand K partner opens 1♦ and you respond 1♥. Partner then bids 1NT, what do you do?
♦ K864	♦ 3	
♣ A852	♣ 965	

1NT overcall in the balancing seat

Board 6 from Monday 10th

Two out of 5 pairs got too high (3NT) on this deal from Monday: -

Dealer:	♠ K9				
East	♥ QJ6	West	North(A)	East	South
E-W vul	♦ Q1076	-	-	1♣ (1)	pass
	♣ QJ43	pass	1NT (2)	pass	2♣ (3)
		pass	2♦	pass	3NT (4)
		all pass			
♠ J10642	N	♠ Q85			
♥ 10752	W E	♥ A3			
♦ J94	S	♦ AK2			
♣ 7		♣ K8652			
	♠ A73				
	♥ K984				
	♦ 853				
	♣ A109				

- (1) I would open 1NT, I suppose they played a weak NT?
- (2) What did you do with this North hand A in this week's quiz? There are two sensible options. You can pass, or you can bid 1NT. Now this is the pass-out (or balancing seat) and is totally different from bidding in the direct seat (I cover it in detail below). Anyway, 1NT in the balancing seat is around 10-13 points.
- (3) Stayman
- (4) South was expecting 15-18 opposite.

And what happened? 3NT went two down for a poor score. If South had passed 1NT then the +90 for N-S would have score around average.

The bottom lines: -

- Be aware of balancing bidding. In the above example North would get a poor score for passing 1♣ and so needs to be able to bid 1NT. One effective way of thinking about it is that you 'borrow' 4 points from partner. And partner needs to know this of course and not leap about – so pass with the 11 count above.

Bidding in the Pass-out seat is totally different: here is a general type of schedule, different partnerships may vary upon this a little: -:-

1NT	=	10-13
Double followed by NT	=	14-16
2NT	=	17+
A take-out double	=	7+
An overcall	=	7+
Double followed by a suit	=	strong, but not as strong as in the direct seat because we also have the jump overcall to show a strong hand.
A jump overcall	=	strong, range/strength up to you, say 17+ or equiv.
Double followed by a new suit	=	about 14-17 as a direct jump shows a stronger hand.
Cue bid	=	a 2♣ opener!

Note that jump overcalls are always strong. The cue bid and 2NT are not Michaels/UNT – they do not exist in the balancing seat. There is no such thing as a pre-empt in the pass-out seat, only bid if you expect to get a +ve score!

Giving Count

Sometimes it is very important for partner to know how many cards you have in a suit (and thus how many declarer has).

Suppose you are defending a 3NT contract and see ♦KQJ1098 on the table but no outside entry. Declarer plays a low card from hand (so partner has the ace) and you hold ♦72, which card do you play?

The answer is that it is really important to give count in this kind of situation so that he knows how long to hold up his ace. You should play the ♦7 – highest from an even number of cards. If you held ♦742 you must play the ♦2 to show an odd number.

It is good practice to always give count when declarer is playing a suit. This helps partner to get a picture of who has what. Of course this may help declarer, and more advanced players know when to lie about their suit lengths - when the information is more important to declarer than to partner.

There's no such thing as a pre-empt over a pre-empt! Board 10 from Wednesday 12th

Dealer:	♠ 3				
East	♥ Q942	West	North	East	South(B)
Both vul	♦ K42	-	-	2♦	3♥ (1)
	♣ 98652	4♠	5♥ (2)	5♠	pass
		pass	6♥	pass	pass
		dbl	all pass		
♠ AKJ1075	N	♠ Q92			
♥ 5	W E	♥ K			
♦ AQ5	S	♦ J109763			
♣ A104		♣ KJ3			
	♠ 864				
	♥ AJ108763				
	♦ 8				
	♣ Q7				

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand B(b) in this week's quiz? 'Unfortunately' any jump here shows a strong hand. With this hand B you should simply overcall 2♥; 3♥ shows a very good hand.
- (2) An easy 5♥ bid, maybe there's slam?

And what happened? 6♥ doubled went 3 down for a bottom to N-S at this vulnerability.

The bottom lines: -

- You cannot pre-empt over a pre-empt; jumps show a very good hand.

Invite with a good 11 or 12.Board 21 from Wednesday 12th

Dealer: ♠ Q94
 North ♥ KJ953
 N-S vul ♦ AJ3
 ♣ 95

♠ A86 N ♠ K1074
 ♥ A8642 W E ♥ Q10
 ♦ Q62 S ♦ K85
 ♣ A8 ♣ K1062

♠ J54
 ♥ 7
 ♦ 10975
 ♣ QJ743

West	North	East(D)	South
-	pass	pass	pass
1♥	pass	1♠	pass
1NT	pass	2NT(1)	pass
3NT(2)	all pass		

- (1) What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? It's a decent 11 points with three 10's, and the Q10 in partner's suit make it well worth a try for game (2NT).
 (2) West has shown 12-14, and with this max he should certainly accept.

And what happened? 3NT made exactly. It's a pretty straightforward bidding sequence to a decent contract – so the same at every table? Apparently not, At the other three tables one was in 1NT and the other two in 2NT (making +1).

The bottom lines: -

- With 12 or a decent 11, invite game opposite partner's opening.
- With 14 points, accept partner's game invitation.
- Three 10's are worth a point, especially in NT.

Intermediates countBoard 17 from Friday 14th

Dealer: ♠ A106
 North ♥ QJ
 Love all ♦ AJ104
 ♣ AJ106

♠ KJ875 N ♠ 32
 ♥ A75 W E ♥ K843
 ♦ K63 S ♦ Q92
 ♣ 84 ♣ KQ52

♠ Q94
 ♥ 10962
 ♦ 875
 ♣ 973

West	North	East	South
-	1NT	all pass	

I don't know the auction at other tables, but three N-S's arrived in 1NT. I was North here and with his totally flat 2 count my partner said '*good luck partner – you'll need it*' as he put down dummy. In fact he was incorrect, even a declarer of my limited ability had no problem making +1 on this combined 19 count. Why's that? Just look at those 10's and 9's! 2♥ tricks with just 3 points in the suit! Whichever suit E-W attack helps declarer!

The bottom lines: Add on for 10's and 9's. But note that the North hand is not too strong for 1NT because the ♥QJ doubleton are poor cards - but turned out great opposite 109xx! And I've mentioned touching honours before – those two J10 combinations in the North hand.

Penalising the opponents when there's no penalty double available

Dealer: ♠ K6542
 South ♥ 875
 E-W vul ♦ AK97
 ♣ 3

Board 19 from Friday 14th

♠ 9 N ♠ AQ1083
 ♥ AQJ W E ♥ K94
 ♦ J543 S ♦ Q106
 ♣ Q10762 ♣ K8
 ♠ J7
 ♥ 10632
 ♦ 82
 ♣ AJ954

Table A

West(G)	North	East(F)	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	1♠ (1)	pass (2)	1NT
dbl (3)	pass	pass (4)	2♠ (5)
pass	pass	dbl (6)	all pass

Table B

West(E)	North	East(C)	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	pass (1)	1♠	2♣ (7)
pass (8)	pass	pass (9)	

- Table A: (1) A light opener, but fine in 3rd seat.
 (2) What did you bid with this East hand F in this week's quiz? It's a decent 14 count which has improved with RHO opening 1♠, and so 1NT is reasonable but would not be my choice. I like my partner's pass (I was West) – wait and see what happens – maybe things will turn out very well? Double is out of course, as that is take-out.
 (3) What did you bid with this West hand G in this week's quiz? A double here is take-out of ♠'s, and as you have already passed partner will only expect 10-11 points. Pass is reasonable, but I chose to double.
 (4) We've got them here, what a great partner I have.
 (5) We're toast whatever I do.
 (6) When I say double – I mean it.

- Table B: (1) This North chose to pass. OK.
 (7) Way short of the mark for a 2-level overcall.
 (8) What did you bid with this West hand E in this week's quiz? Playing negative doubles you pass of course – awaiting partner's 'automatic' re-opening double which you will then pass for penalties.
 (9) Unfortunately West is still waiting. What did you do with this East hand C in this week's quiz? Playing negative doubles then a re-opening double is absolutely mandatory with anything but a very strange hand.

And what happened? 2♠ doubled went two down for the top to E-W. 2♣ went four down; it was a decent score for E-W, but a double would have got the top spot.

The bottom lines

- If LHO opens and RHO bids 1NT, then dbl is for take-out of the suit opened.
- With length and strength in RHO's suit, it's usually best to pass.
- When playing negative double, opener should re-open with a double with most hand types.

3rd hand high

Board 21 from Friday 14th

There are a number of saying in bridge. Two which are true most of the time are:

- (a) 3rd hand plays high and (b) return partner's suit.

Let's see what happened when both of these were ignored: -

Dealer:	♠ J10753	West	North	East	South
West	♥ 7653	1NT	pass	pass (1)	pass
Love all	♦ 52				
	♣ 103				

♠ K64	N	♠ 9
♥ Q2	W E	♥ A108
♦ AKJ106	S	♦ Q94
♣ Q42		♣ KJ9865
	♠ AQ82	
	♥ KJ94	↑
	♦ 873	DUMMY
	♣ A7	

E-W play 4-way transfers, so East could have shown his ♣ suit at (1). But what's the point? 3NT must surely be the best bet for game.

Anyway, it's about the play now. North led the ♠J, some would prefer a 4th highest but that's not the issue here. What should South play? What he did was play low! Now the contract still looks pretty hopeless for West and perhaps he should take his ♠K and run for two down?

But he did not want to give up so easily and so he also played low. Now North had no idea what was going on and understandably switched to a ♥. Low from dummy and South produced the ♥9 which declarer won with the ♥Q. Declarer then ran the ♦'s and then a ♣ ensured +1 when South turned up with the ♠A. N-S eventually winning just the ♥K, ♠A and ♣A.

Clearly South should have won trick 1 with the ♠A and returned the ♠Q; that ensures the defeat of the contract. Apparently South did not want to 'waste' his partner's ♠J!

And what happened at other tables? 3NT was bid at 3 other tables; it went one down twice and somehow made +2(!) at the fourth. I'm afraid I don't know the (lack of) defence at that table.

The bottom lines: -

- An honour lead (especially against NT) usually promises the next lowest card - unless you play some sort of 'sophisticated' scheme such as 'Jack denies'.
- Do not be afraid to overtake partner's honour lead if you can afford it.
- Return partner's suit.
- 3rd hand plays high. When there is no honour in dummy it is usually best for the 3rd player (i.e. sitting over dummy here) to play his highest card.
- I prefer to keep my leads simple, especially with unfamiliar partners, and find that it's simplest to always lead top of an honour sequence.

How do you reach 6NT

Board 23 from Friday 14th

Most pairs reached slam (6♥) and I was asked how 6NT could be reached. This was a typical auction: -

Dealer:	♠ AQJ				
South	♥ AK8543	West	North	East	South(H)
Both vul	♦ AJ4	-	-	-	1♣
	♣ 3	pass	1♥ (1)	pass	1NT (2)
		pass	4♣ (3)	pass	4♥
♠ 9653	N	pass	5♣ (4)	pass	5♠
♥ J	W E	pass	6♥ (5)	all pass	
♦ 1053	S				
♣ J9765					
	♠ K1042				
	♥ 1092				
	♦ Q962				
	♣ 104				
	♠ 87				
	♥ Q76				
	♦ K87				
	♣ AKQ85				

- (1) What did you open with this South hand H(a) in this week's quiz? I would open 1NT (15-17). In my opinion it's much too good for 1♣ followed by 1NT (12-14) or 2♣.
- (2) And what did you rebid with the South hand H(b)? 1NT is 12-14 and if you don't agree with me that it's worth a 1NT opener then that's the rebid. Note that this does not guarantee a stop. I witnessed one South having a problem with this rebid here, he eventually chose 2♦ which is incorrect because it shows a much stronger hand (it's a reverse) and also promises 4♦'s.
- (3) Gerber.
- (4) Kings?
- (5) Chicken?

First of all, to answer the question (how to bid 6NT). It's easy of course, (1NT – 6NT). 7♥ or 7NT are also fine contracts that could/should also be reached after a 1NT opening, but fail because of the 5-1 ♣ break and either finesse (♠ or ♦) failing.

And what happened? 3 pairs bid 6♥ (one made +1, presumably West discarded a ♣?). One pair bid 6NT and one somehow stopped in 3NT.

The bottom lines: -

- AKQxx is more than 9 points! Upgrade a hand with a holding like this.
- If you open 1NT you never have a rebid problem!
- A reverse is 16+ and shows at least 5-4 (always with more cards in the first bid suit).
- 4♣ is Gerber after partner's last bid was 1NT or 2NT.
- 4NT is quantitative (invitational) after partner's last bid was 1NT or 2NT.

Combining Chances

Board 27 from Friday 14th

One pair overbid to 6♠ on this deal, and nearly every North mis-played it :-

Dealer: ♠ KQ97642
South ♥ 94
Love all ♦ 84
♣ 107

♠ 5	N	♠ 1083
♥ AK105	W E	♥ QJ63
♦ Q65	S	♦ 1072
♣ K9854		♣ J63
	♠ AJ	
	♥ 872	
	♦ AKJ93	
	♣ AQ2	

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♦ (1)
1♥ (2)	1♠	2♥	3♥
pass	3♠ (3)	pass	4♠
all pass			

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♦ (1)
2♣ (2)	4♠ (4)	pass	6♠ (5)
all pass			

Table A: (1) 1♦ is correct, it's too strong for 1NT and not good enough for a strong bid.

(2) I would double! – looks ideal.

(3) No ♥ stop

Table B: (2) I still prefer double

(4) I guess that this is fine if you agree it's weak!

(5) And with 19 points South quite reasonably bid slam.

And what happened? 6♠ went two down. 4♠ made exactly at every table except Table A. Now I don't know how it was played at other tables - presumably every E-W cashed two ♥'s and then declarer drew trumps and then took a losing finesse. At Table A declarer was a bit more careful. He drew trumps and cashed ♦AK and ruffed the 3rd round. That set up the ♦'s and it was not necessary to take a (losing) finesse. Mind you, if East led the ♥QJ and then a ♣ then it's not so easy – but did he? I bet most North's mis-played it?

The bottom lines: -

- If West had doubled, then a jump to 4♠ by North is to play.
- But after a simple overcall it's not so clear and has to be agreed. It seems sensible to me to play it as weak but I can't fault South's bidding with no such agreement.
- Combine your chances when declarer. If you have various options in the play – then try to set up a suit rather than a finesse – you can always finesse later if the suit can't be set up.

Who should bid Blackwood?

Board 10 from Friday 14th

I was asked how to reach 6♠ or 6NT on this board. My inquisitor correctly saying that after West bids Blackwood and finds an ace missing then it's dodgy to look for kings.

Answer below.

Dealer: ♠ 103
East ♥ QJ98
Both vul ♦ 953
♣ Q965

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
2NT (1)	pass	3NT (2)	all pass

♠ AQJ6	N	♠ K982
♥ A5	W E	♥ K74
♦ KQJ86	S	♦ 1072
♣ A10		♣ KJ3
	♠ 754	
	♥ 10632	
	♦ A4	
	♣ 8742	

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
2♣ (1)	pass	2♦	pass
2NT (3)	pass	3♣ (4)	pass
4♠	pass	pass (5)	pass

Table A: (1) 20-21

- (2) With a flat hand opposite 20-21 slam may be doubtful and so this East eschewed the possible ♠ fit and bid 3NT. Now you all know me (never deny a 4 card major, even with 4333 shape) but there is one important exception – that's when you have so many points that you expect to make 11 tricks in either contract. So given that East does not want to look for slam, 3NT is better than Stayman. Mind you, a quantitative 4NT looks like a reasonable shot and West would accept with his clear maximum.

Table B: (1) I'm not sure if they play a different system or if this West upgraded this hand to 22-24 points. With this great ♦ suit upgrading is certainly reasonable.

- (3) 22-24 in Standard American these days

(4) Stayman

- (5) Having found the 4-4 fit I think that East should go for slam here. I would bid 4NT (Blackwood) and then 6♠. Now I have mentioned in earlier news-sheets that bidding Blackwood is dodgy with a wide open suit that partner has not bid but since he's got 22-24 points it's worth the risk.

And what happened? One pair bid 6♠. 3NT got the 2nd top and the rest shared the wooden spoon for 4♠+2.

The bottom line: -

- One rare exception to denying a 4 card major is when you have a flat hand and so many points that you expect to make the same number of tricks (i.e.11) in 3NT or a major suit.
- After a 2NT opening (or 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT) then 4NT is quantitative, 4♣ is Gerber.
- After a 2NT opening (or 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT) then 3♣ is Stayman and 3♦/♥ are transfers.
- When you have shown your hand then it's up to partner to look for slam; so in this example West can never go slamming – it's up to East if he wants to have a shot.
- Having used Blackwood or RKCB, 5NT asks for kings and it's generally accepted that all aces (or key cards) must be present for a king ask.

Raise partner's pre-empt with 3 card support

Board 6 from Friday 14th

Dealer: ♠ K108
East ♥ KQ8753
E-W vul ♦ 5
♣ K96

Table A

West(J)	North	East	South
-	-	2♠	pass
pass (1)	3♥ (2)	pass	4♥
all pass			

♠ 642	N	♠ AJ9753
♥ AJ	W E	♥ 9
♦ K864	S	♦ J102
♣ A852		♣ J103
	♠ Q	
	♥ 10642	
	♦ AQ973	
	♣ Q74	

Table B

West(J)	North	East	South
-	-	2♠	pass
3♠ (1)	pass (3)	pass	pass

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this West hand J in this week's quiz? See table B.

(2) With West showing little values, North has a comfortable 3♥ bid.

Table B: (1) With 3 card support for partner's pre-empt, always raise. This is 'The Law' and you should raise pretty much regardless of your points; I would bid 3♠ here with a lot less points and even with more (if not quite enough to try for game).

(3) And now it's not so easy for North. 4♥ is probably worth a try but you could easily run into trouble if East has a little more and South did not have ♥'s.

And what happened? 3♠ made +1 for the E-W top. 4♥ was bid and made twice.

The bottom line. With 3 trumps, always raise partner's pre-empt (either a 2 or 3 opening).

(Usually) don't rebid a 5-card suit

Board 5 from Friday 14th

Dealer: ♠ AJ75
North ♥ KJ872
N-S vul ♦ 3
♣ 965

♠ K1086	N	♠ 42
♥ 95	W E	♥ A63
♦ K842	S	♦ Q1075
♣ Q108		♣ KJ72
	♠ Q93	
	♥ Q104	
	♦ AJ96	
	♣ A43	

Table A

West	North(K)	East	South
-	pass	pass	1♦
pass	1♥	pass	1NT
pass	2♥ (1)	all pass	

Table B

West	North (K)	East	South
-	pass	pass	1♦
pass	1♥	pass	1NT
pass	pass (1)	pass	

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this North hand K in this week's quiz? See table B.

Table B: (1) Now I guess that bidding 2♥ is not totally unreasonable here, but I usually prefer to have a 6 card suit. In this particular case South has denied 4 ♠'s and so presumably has something in ♣'s. Also, you'll probably get a ♠ lead on the bidding and that may work out very nicely if partner has a ♠ honour.

And what happened? 3NT got a ♠ lead and so scored +2 for a complete top – outscoring everybody else who all played in ♥'s.

The bottom lines: -

- It's usually best not to rebid a 5 card suit. Even if there is a 5-3 fit it may play better in NT.

Force partner to do the right thing

Board 22 from Friday 14th

There's interesting bidding and play on this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ AQ	West	North	East	South
East	♥ 10742	-	-	pass	pass
E-W vul	♦ AK6	pass	1♣ (1)	pass	1♥ (2)
	♣ AJ85	pass	4♥ (3)	all pass	

♠ 2	N	♠ K10853	(1) I would downgrade because of no
♥ KQ	W E	♥ 86	honours in the ♥ suit and open 1NT,
♦ J873	S	♦ 109542	but I won't argue with the 1♣ opening.
♣ K97632		♣ Q	(2) I would bid 1♠ - followed by 2♥.
	♠ J9764		Bid 5-5's from the top down.
	♥ AJ953		(3) But the final contract is always 4♥ anyway.
	♦ Q		
	♣ 104		

Now onto the play. West decided to lead his singleton ♠. Now some may say that it's a bad lead with this trump holding, but as I was West I'll say nothing more.

South then asked East what the lead of a two meant. East replied 'standard bridge'. Upon further interrogation he was informed that the lead of a two promises an honour unless it's a singleton. That's standard.

DUMMY	♠ A	Declarer reasonably played the ♠Q and East won.	
→	♥ 742	On the bidding, East placed West with ♠Jxx(x)	
	♦ AK	and so reasonably returned a ♦.	
	♣ J85	South won, led a ♣ to the ♣A and finessed a ♥	
		which West won.	
♠ -	N	♠ 10853	That leaves this position, with West on lead.
♥ K	W E	♥ 8	What card should West play now?
♦ J87	S	♦ 10942	Now West knows that East is now void in ♣'s
♣ K9762		♣ -	(he noticed partner's ♣Q fall). And he also knows
	♠ J976		that his ♣K is a boss and will stand up if led.
	♥ AJ95		So he led the ♣9!!
	♦ -		Now West knows exactly what's going on and he
	♣ 10		also knows that his partner does not!

The answer is, as it often is, trust partner (rather than an opponent). E-W play Lavinthal (McKenny) and a high ♣ asks for a ♠. East knew that this would mean that South had started with 5 ♠'s but after some thought he decided to trust partner. The ♠ return set the contract.

And what happened? 4♥ made exactly at every other table.

The bottom lines: -

- Eight ever, nine never: South should play the ♥A at trick one.
- Bid touching 5-5's from the top down (4-4's bid the lower ranking).
- Play a signalling system. I recommend Lavinthal (McKenny) for all non-regular partnerships as the 'standard' for our club. I have a sheet on it for those interested.
- Trust partner!

Overtake if you need to lead to the next trick

Board 6 from Wednesday 12th

And let's have another board on defensive play: -

Dealer:	♠ AJ103				
East	♥ 62	West	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ 6	-	-	pass	1♣
	♣ Q109875	dbl	3♣ (1)	pass (2)	pass
♠ KQ82	N	3♦ (3)	pass	pass	4♣
♥ K109	W E	pass	pass	4♦	pass
♦ KQJ52	S	pass	5♣	pass	pass
♣ 3		dbl	all pass		
	♠ 964				
	♥ AQJ3				
	♦ 8				
	♣ AJ642				

- (1) Perhaps OK, but this denies a 4 card ♠ suit.
- (2) With a 6 card suit opposite partner's double, 3♦ would be reasonable here. 3♦ is probably better than mentioning this motley ♥ suit.
- (3) This shows the hand pretty well.

West led the ♦K, which card should East play?

Answer: He should overtake with the ♦A and return a ♥. Why? Because West will almost certainly be in a spot if he is left on lead at trick two – the ♥ switch needs to come from East. East also knows the ♦ situation (declarer must be void now) and he also knows that West will probably continue with a fateful ♦ if left on lead.

And what happened? East played an encouraging ♦3 at trick one (they pay low to encourage). Obviously West had no idea that East had 6 ♦'s and so he 'safely' continued with a ♦. The resultant ruff and discard gifted the contract to South.

And at other tables? 5♣ was doubled and went one down at two other tables.

The bottom lines: -

- Make life easy for partner if you can.
- A king lead promises the queen if you've bid the suit.

Editorial

I have been going through old news-sheets as I put them on the web and found this amusing article (137): -

What a Friendly Club!

Our Irish visitors (Kevin and Noreen) remarked to Richard what a nice, quiet, friendly club this is! Richard told them that that's the way the director tries to keep it (and has to put in a lot of effort just to do that). I could give a list of ½ a dozen or so players who are noticeably absent at the moment – but no names!

One of these un-named noticeably absent individuals returned, caused considerable disruption, and has now been banned. Dave remarked how nice and peaceful the club had been for 6 months or so before his return and suggested he be thrown out for good. Most agree.

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: 1NT. About 10-13 in the balancing seat. Pass is also reasonable I suppose.

Hand B: (a) 3♥, pre-emptive.

(b) 2♥. A simple overcall. You cannot pre-empt as a jump over a pre-emptive opening shows a very strong hand – there is no such thing as a pre-empt over a pre-empt.

Hand C: Dbl. 'Semi-automatic' when playing negative doubles and this hand certainly is no exception. Double so that partner can pass if he has a ♣ penalty hand.

Hand D: 2NT. This is an excellent 11 points and well worth a raise.

Hand E: Pass. Sit back and wait for partner's 'automatic' re-opening double (you are playing negative doubles of course).

Hand F: Pass. It's usually best to pass with length and strength in RHO's suit. You cannot double for penalties and on a good day partner will get a double (take-out) in and you can pass for penalties. 1NT (15-18) is just about acceptable (this hand is good enough as it has improved with RHO bidding ♠'s) but I don't really like it with this many ♠'s.

Hand G: Dbl. This is for take-out (of ♠'s). It would be nice to have 4 ♥'s but these are 3 decent ones; and partner will not expect more in values as you are a passed hand.

Hand H: (a) 1NT. The ♣AKQxx are huge and this hand is easily good enough for a 15-17 1NT.

(b) 1NT. If you did not open 1NT (15-17) then you have to bid 1NT now (12-14). Note that this does not guarantee a ♠ stop – it simply shows a balanced 12-14.

Hand J: 3♠. With 3 card support always raise partner's pre-empt and make it difficult for the next player.

Hand K: Pass. It's usually best to bebid your major here only if you have a 6 card suit. In this particular case it's very likely that 1NT will play nicely even if partner has 3 ♥'s as he has bid your singleton and the expected ♠ lead will turn out nicely if partner has an honour in the suit (especially the queen).

Mon 17 th	1 st Bob Short/Gene	59%	2 nd David/Kenneth	55%
Wed 19 th	1 st Dave/Hans	56%	2 nd Bjorn/Ian	55%
Fri 21 st N-S	1 st Dave/Bob	66%	2 nd Bill/Mike	53%
	21 st E-W 1 st Chuck/Tomas	59%	2 nd Bob Short/Gene	55%

I had too many interesting boards last week, so some of them appear in this issue.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	(a) What do you open with Hand A. Suppose you choose 2♣, the what do you bid after partner bids (b) 2♦ (negative or waiting), or (c) 2NT (8-10 balanced)?
♠ AKQJ	♠ Q754	
♥ KQ42	♥ 10632	
♦ 6	♦ K75	With Hand B LHO opens 1♣ and partner doubles. You choose to bid 1♥ and partner bids 3♥, what do you do?
♣ AQJ5	♣ 96	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C you open 1♠ and partner raises to 4♠, what do you do?
♠ AJ	♠ Q853	
♥ AJ1094	♥ AQ62	With Hand D LHO opens 2♠, passed to you. (a) what do you do? Suppose you choose to double – partner bids 3♣ and RHO bids 3♠, (b) what do you do now?
♦ KQ3	♦ K73	
♣ 1062	♣ A10	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E RHO opens 1♣ and you double. Partner bids 1♥ (what an obliging partner!). What do you bid?
♠ K8	♠ KQJ9732	
♥ KQJ98	♥ A9	
♦ AQ4	♦ 3	What do you open with hand F?
♣ K43	♣ AQ9	

Editorial – About our clubs

Dave and I were asked about the Wednesday funds, so here's the complete picture.

I run the Monday and Friday clubs; I look after the money and also membership fees and that goes towards the running of the club - the web-site (very expensive), cards, bidding boxes, boards, news-sheets etc etc.

The Wednesday club is run by Dave (although I do help out occasionally) and these funds are used for what Dave (and I) think fit. Currently they have paid for trophies and the Jack computer program. Members are invited to borrow Jack.

Club membership is 1000 bht per year (cheaper if you join later in the year). Membership entitles you to play at all 3 venues for just 50 bht a time; non-members pay 100 bht.

A comedy of errors?

Board 12 from Wednesday 12th

A few strange bids here! As at least two players had no idea what they were doing, I'd better clarify bidding after a 1NT opening has been overcalled: -

Dealer: ♠ KQ103
West ♥ A1074
N-S vul ♦ 5
 ♣ QJ96

West	North	East	South
1NT (1)	2♣ (2)	3♦ (3)	pass
pass (4)	dbl (5)	pass	3♥
all pass			

♠ 764	N	♠ J52
♥ KJ52	W E	♥ 84
♦ A83	S	♦ KQ1064
♣ AK10		♣ 742
	♠ A98	
	♥ Q93	
	♦ J972	
	♣ 853	

- (1) You all know me by now, I would not open 1NT with this hand (knock off a point for the 4333 type shape and treat it as a 14 point hand). Anyway, perhaps West had sized up the opposition?
- (2) Showing at least 5-4 in the majors (Multi Landy). With this nice shape I won't argue with it being a major card short.
- (3) What is this?? Standard is that it's game forcing. There 'obviously' is no such thing as a pre-emptive bid after partner has opened with a strong NT!?
- (4) Obviously I would have bid here (a 'natural' 3♥ - showing a stopper there) as I would take 3♦ as strong and forcing.
- (5) Equally obviously North should pass here – West has passed a presumed forcing 3♦ bid, South has promised zero and North has no more than (one could say not as much as) he has already shown. It appears that North intended this as penalties! Apparently his 'thoughts' went along these lines – partner did not bid a major after my Multi Landy so he must have ♦'s! No further comment by me.

And what happened? 3♥ went 3 down for a deserved bottom to N-S, well, North anyway.

The bottom lines: -

- Sort out what you play after partner's 1NT opening is overcalled. I recommend Lebensohl.
- Playing Lebensohl or not, 3♦ is forcing here as a natural 2♦ is available with a weak ♦ hand. (and, actually, you can show an invitational ♦ hand by going via 2NT, Lebensohl).

Who's the dick-head?

Board 25 from Wednesday 12th

Dealer: ♠ Q103
East ♥ KQ4
Both vul ♦ Q10964
♣ Q10

West	North	East	South
-	-	1NT	pass
2♦	pass	2♥	all pass

♠ 75	N	♠ KJ96
♥ J7652	W E	♥ A108
♦ KJ52	S	♦ 87
♣ 97		♣ AK53
	♠ A842	
↑	♥ 93	
DUMMY	♦ A3	
	♣ J8642	

I was dummy (West) and when the ♦A was led I (humorously?) commented that South obviously has the ♦K if he led the ♦A.

Anyway, South then continued with the ♦3 and declarer finessed!!

And what happened? 2♥ thus went one down when South got his obvious ruff, with 2♥ making easily at other tables. East then call South a 'dick-head' for leading an ace without the king. Can you find a suitable word to describe East? The bottom lines: -

- Nobody in their right mind is going the lead an ace from AQ, especially if a strong NT was opened on their right!
- Do not take a 'finesse' which is 100% certain to fail and give defenders a ruff!

Editor's note: After this news-sheet was published East explained that he called South a 'dick-head' for leading an ace when RHO has opened 1NT. Now I agree that it's probably not that good a lead – I would not lead an A from Ax as it's odds-off that partner has the king and you make the suit easy for declarer to handle. So, in my opinion, the ♦A lead was a poor one and so East should have punished South for it by playing ♦'s correctly rather than gifting South a good score.

A word about upside-down Attitude

There are a number of different signalling techniques, but there are three distinct types that are **independent**. It appears that one of our top players got confused when his partner wanted to play 'upside-down signals' – (what his partner meant was upside-down attitude signals).

- (a) Telling partner about your holding in a suit when he leads it (some give attitude, some give count).
- (b) Telling partner about your holding in a suit when declarer leads it (give count if it's going to help partner and not help declarer.).
- (c) Discard Signals. When you discard (say on a suit declarer is leading). Then your first discard should tell partner what suit you like and don't like – I recommend Lavinthal (McKenny) as the 'club standard'.

These 3 are largely independent of each other and a very large number of players in this club prefer 'upside-down attitude' – i.e. low to encourage for (a) above. Indeed, I also prefer this scheme as it makes more sense than throwing a high card from a suit that you like. It is common in Europe but not in America.

Some players also play upside-down count but I don't advise this and see little point.

Anyway, if someone wants to play upside-down attitude for (a) that that does not affect discards – he still plays count at (b) and Lavinthal at (c) in the normal way and this is very common in this club.

And note that if you do decide to play upside-down attitude and say partner leads ♦A against a ♠ contract, then holding ♦Q72 you play the two to encourage; holding ♦72 you still play the ♦2 to encourage (you want a ruff). Some people get confused here – this is not count, but attitude, and so in this situation you play low from a doubleton. Of course if you do find this confusing then you can also play upside-down count!

The Trump promotion

Board 17 from Wednesday 12th

Now most of the articles in the news-sheets are about the bidding; so just for a change we'll have one on defensive play: -

Dealer:	♠ AK10543				
North	♥ J	West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ Q53	-	1♠	pass	2♥
	♣ 1074	pass	2♠	all pass	
♠ Q7	N	♠ J98			
♥ K74	W E	♥ 10932			
♦ A9876	S	♦ J10			
♣ Q86		♣ AK92			
	♠ 62				
→	♥ AQ865				
DUMMY	♦ K42				
	♣ J53				

East led the ♣A. Now West new that his partner held the ♣K – East was the same East as the previous deal when he called somebody a ‘dick-head’ for leading the ace without the king. Anyway, E-W had agreed to play upside-down attitude signals (so low to encourage) and so West played the ♣6. North played the ♣4 I would have played the ♣7 in order to confuse the E-W signals.

Anyway, there was no need to try to confuse East as even with the ♣4 played to the first trick he could not work out that partner had encouraged and so switched to the ♦J.

Now normally West would have ducked this (retaining the ♦A over dummy's ♦K) but he knew exactly what was going on. West took the ♦A, led the ♣Q followed by the ♣8 and sat back waiting for partner to do the right thing in this position: -

Dealer:	♠ AK10543			
North	♥ J			
Love all	♦ Q5			
	♣ -			
♠ Q7	N	♠ J98		
♥ K74	W E	♥ 10932		
♦ 9876	S	♦ 10		
♣ -		♣ 9		
	♠ 62			
→	♥ AQ865			
DUMMY	♦ K4			
	♣ -			

What do you think that East should lead here, having just won the last trick with the ♣K?

The answer is that he should lead the ♣9.

It matters not if dummy ruffs, the important thing is that West knows that it's the 13th ♣ and he will ruff high – forcing declarer to ruff even higher and thus promoting East's trump holding.

And what happened?

East lamely led a ♥ and scored just one trump trick.

Every other N-S went down.

The bottom lines: -

- Understand trump promotion!
- Look at partner's signals.
- As declarer, false-card if you want to disrupt the defender's signals.

Don't Pre-empt then bid again!

Board 27 from Wednesday 12th

I say the same things week after week, but who listens?

Dealer: ♠ J8753
South ♥ KQ6
Love all ♦ J53
♣ 86

West(me)	North	East	South
-	-	-	3♦ (1)
dbl (2)	4♦ (3)	4♥ (4)	5♦ (5)
dbl (6)	all pass		

♠ AKQ104	N	♠ 93
♥ J72	W E	♥ 108543
♦ 9	S	♦ A62
♣ AK102		♣ J93
	♠ 6	
	♥ A9	
	♦ KQ10874	
	♣ Q754	

- (12) A real top-of-the-range pre-empt, so South decided to 'upgrade' it to 3♦ (as opposed to 2♦). It's 21 (for the rule of 20) and a 1♦ opening is very reasonable. But I'm an easy goin' guy and won't argue too much with the 3♦ pre-empt.
- (13) And, indeed, the opening bid makes it awkward for West. He surely has to double and I happen to know what his plan was (it was I!). If partner responded 3♥ then I was planning 3♠ (showing a good hand). If partner responded 4♥ then I would have left him there.
- (14) I totally agree with this bid. When partner makes a 3-level pre-empt then raise to 4 with 3-card support, virtually regardless of strength (The Law).
- (15) Perhaps a bit pushy as a free bid shows values, but with 5♥'s I think that it's justified and I certainly won't argue with my partner's decision to bid 4♥.
- (16) But I will, of course, argue with this. South decided to open with a pre-empt. Full stop. If you open with a pre-empt then do not bid again unless invited. Full stop. Partner's raising of the anti is **not** an invitation for you to bid again. South's 'excuse' was that he had a good hand and that 5♦ may well work out – it's falling on deaf ears here. 'Everybody' knows my views – if you pre-empt, then that's it!
- (17) West, of course, was more than happy to double with his top cards for defence and only 3 poor♥'s.

And what happened? 5♦ doubled went two down for 300 away and a deserved bottom to N-S. Whether 4♥ would have made or not nobody knows, as nobody else bid game with the E-W cards. It's certainly not a straightforward contract for East as he has entry problems to hand on the presumed ♦K lead and he may well lose the obvious 3♥'s and another trick - a ♦ or something else, depending upon his line of play.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't change horses in mid-stream. If you have decided to open with a pre-empt then there's nothing you can do about it later – just hope it works out!
- Do not bid again having pre-empted. Said that before?

The 2♣ Opener and responses

There has been a lot of discussion about this (and a 'waiting' 2♦ response) at the club recently. So I'll give a couple of hands from the club and then give the 'definitive' solution.

♠ AQJ6	N	♠ K982	West	East
♥ A5	W E	♥ K74	2♣ (1)	2NT (2)
♦ KQJ86	S	♦ 1072	3♣ (3)	3♠ (4)
♣ A10		♣ KJ3	4♠ (5)	pass (6)

First of all, remember this hand from last week's news-sheet (who should bid Blackwood)? I gave a couple of auctions but this was apparently that from one table. Last week I suggested that it should be East asking bidding Blackwood but one member disagreed:

- (1) This is a nice hand. With the KQJ sequence in a 5 card suit I'm happy with a 2♣ opener, with the intention of rebidding 2NT (22-24).
- (2) But unfortunately partner got in the 2NT bid – more of responses to 2♣ later.
- (3) Apparently this was Stayman. Now this is a new one on me, but I guess reasonable. The main problem (apart from the fact that I don't like the 2NT response) is that the wrong guy is going to play the hand and it's also going to be difficult to find a minor suit fit. After a 2♣ opening one should be thinking slam – and it's quite likely to be in a minor. Baron (initiating a sequence where both players bid 4-card suits up the line) is probably better but I give a completely different scheme later anyway.
- (4) The 4-4 ♠ fit is located.
- (5) And West confirms this.

Now this East came up to me about my comment last week that East should bid Blackwood in this sort of situation - I said that the only 'problem' was the weak ♦ suit but that's probably OK opposite a 2♣ opener.

He said that East cannot bid Blackwood as a Blackwood bidder promises an ace and he said that West should bid Blackwood at (5). My reaction: -

- Poppycock. A Blackwood bidder does not promise an ace, especially if partner has shown a huge hand (there is another excellent example of this in news-sheet 85). Of course it's nice to have the security of one ace and if partner starts with a lowly one-level bid then Baby Blackwood that I mentioned last week is a solution.
- Anyway, in this situation West should not be the asker as when he gets a zero ace response it's far to dangerous to ask for kings with an ace missing. Indeed, it's generally accepted that all the aces are present when one asks for kings.
- In this situation, with 3 kings, it should be East asking (he also knows that there are values for slam (West does not) and should bid 4NT at (6) and go on to slam with just one ace missing.

Before I get onto the 'real solution. Let's have another problem hand from this Monday: -

A 2♣ opener?

Board 2 from Monday 17th

This hand also caused lots of problems: -

Dealer:	♠ 1074		
East	♥ 108763		
N-S vul	♦ A54		
	♣ 106		
♠ AKQJ	N	♠ 82	
♥ KQ42	W E	♥ AJ5	
♦ 6	S	♦ QJ10	
♣ AQJ5		♣ K8742	
	♠ 9653		
	♥ 9		
	♦ K98732		
	♣ 93		

Table D

West(A)	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
1♣ (1)	1♥ (13)	2♣	pass
6♣ (14)	all pass		

Table A

West(A)	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
2♣ (1)	pass	2NT (2)	pass
3♣ (3)	pass	3♦	pass
3♠ (4)	pass	3NT	pass
4NT (5)	pass	5♦	pass
5♥ (6)	pass	5NT	all pass

Table B

West(A)	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
2♣ (1)	pass	2♦ (2)	pass
2♠ (7)	pass	3♣ (8)	pass
3♥ (9)	pass	5♠ (10)	pass
pass (11)	pass		

Table C

West(A)	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
2♣ (1)	pass	2♦ (2)	pass
3♣ (12)	etc to 6♣?		

- Table A: (1) What did you open with this West hand A(a) in this week's quiz. Now 2♣ seems 'obvious' – but you will have a problem next bid!
(2) 8-10, balanced. I don't like this response and go into it all next page.
(3) It appears that this pair also play this as Stayman. Perhaps reasonable, but how do you find a ♣ fit?
(4) And West again has a problem – I would take this as 5 ♠'s and 4 ♥'s.
(5) Apparently both players understood this to be Blackwood. No comment from me as I don't like the sequence anyway.
(6) To sign off in 5NT
- Table B: (2) Presumably 'waiting'
(7) And West also has a problem here. 2♠ should be a 5+ card suit
(8) Natural
(9) I have no idea why West did not bid 6♣ (via Blackwood if you like).
(10) Up to you pard.
(11) I have no idea why West did not bid 6♣.
- Table C: (12) I would want (at least) 5 ♣'s for this bid.
- Table D: (1) Now this West knows all about the rebid problems if you open 2♣ on a 4441 type shape hand – and so he (I) opened 1♣. Simple! (as long as it's not passed out). But you know me – I rarely pass partner's 1♣ opening and expect the same from partner.
(13) A shade(?) light for a vulnerable overcall.
(14) Since the opponent's were still gloating about the good 6♥ that they had bid on the previous board, I simply plonked the 6♣ card on the table.

And what happened? 6♣ is obviously the contract. Everybody else was all over the place.

Responses to the 2♣ opening

2♦ negative or 2♦ waiting? What is 2NT? How much for a +ve response? How good a suit? It's about time I covered this once and for all.

First of all, I'll put in my usual plug for Benjamin twos. My preferred system is both a strong 2♣ and 2♦ with responder always relaying (or 'waiting' – with the next bid up). I have covered Benjamin twos numerous times before so now I'll go into the best scheme for responding to 2♣ if that is your only strong bid. I play this with Chuck or Lewis, and I believe that Bob and Allan also play it.

Now as I mentioned previously, responder bidding a natural 2NT (or 3NT!) is terrible – it takes up space, has the wrong man as declarer and makes finding minor suit fits very difficult.

The solution? 2NT is not natural! And the modern way of thinking is that you should only give a +ve if you have something very positive to say (i.e. a **good** suit). The 'modern' scheme opposite a 2♣ opener is: -

2♦ = Waiting. Could be a very good hand but one that does not qualify for one of the +ve bids. This 2♦ waiting bid is game forcing because 2♥ is the negative.

2♥ = Negative. No ace or 5 points or less. This requirements for a +ve vary according to partnership understanding. Typical is this, with say 8+ points in total: -

2♠ = A ♠ positive. 5+ card ♠ suit and two honours in the suit.

2NT = A ♥ positive. 5+ card ♥ suit and two honours in the suit.

3♣ = A ♣ positive. 5+ card ♣ suit and two honours in the suit.

3♦ = A ♦ positive. 5+ card ♦ suit and two honours in the suit.

Let's see how this would work with the 'problem' hand from last week:

♠ AQJ6	N	♠ K982	West	East
♥ A5	W E	♥ K74	2♣	2♦ (1)
♦ KQJ86	S	♦ 1072	2NT (2)	3♣ (3)
♣ A10		♣ KJ3	3♠	4NT etc to 6♠.

- (1) Waiting. Game forcing.
- (2) 22-24 balanced
- (3) Stayman

Of course none of this would help declarer with the previous 4414 hand and I would still open 1♣ unless I had a specific scheme for showing a strong 4441 type hand. Now there is such a scheme (the mini-maxi multi), but I'll leave that for a much later date!

Partner may be bust!

Board 16 from Monday 17th

The bidding at Table A was that of at least two tables. The right contract, but the wrong route! :

Dealer:	♠ K8	<u>Table A</u>				
West	♥ KQJ98	West	North(E)	East	South(B)	
E-W vul	♦ AQ4	1♣	dbl	pass	1♥ (1)	
	♣ K43	pass	4♥ (2)	all pass		
♠ A1063	N	♠ J92	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ A	W E	♥ 754	West	North(E)	East	South(B)
♦ 1083	S	♦ J962	1♣	dbl	pass	1♥ (1)
♣ AJ1087		♣ Q52	pass	3♥ (2)	pass	pass (3)
	♠ Q754		pass			
	♥ 10632					
	♦ K75					
	♣ 96					

- Table A: (1) Fine, showing 0-8 points. Some players will prefer 1♠ here, this is one exception to the general rule of bidding 4 card suits up the line – if partner does not like ♠'s (and bids 2♦ or 2NT – showing a very strong hand) you have enough values to bid ♥'s without raising the level.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand E in this week's quiz? 4♥ is an overbid here, I have covered this in previous news-sheets. Remember, partner may have zero points! Both 2♥ and 3♥ show good hands here.
- Table B: (2) This North bid correctly. 3♥ shows a very strong hand (2♥ would be just a strong hand) and asks partner to bid game if he is not totally bust (i.e. has about 3 or more points)
- (3) And what did you bid with this South hand B in this week's quiz? It's a clear 4♥ opposite partner's very strong bid.

And what happened? ½ of the field reached 4♥ (I suspect like Table A). The other ½ played in ♥ partscores – presumably South did not bid game when asked?

The bottom lines: -

- There is a well know saying that I have often read. Inexperienced bidders tend to overbid good hand and underbid poor ones. It is very true.
- Understand bidding after a double: -
- A double followed by a raise of partner's minimal bid suit shows a good hand (say 15-16).
- A double followed by a jump raise of partner's minimal bid suit shows a very good hand (say 17-19).
- A double followed by a jump to game in partner's minimal bid suit shows a very very good hand (say 21+, i.e. game values in your hand).
- When you make a minimal response to partner's double and he raises, then take the above into account. So raise 2♥ to 4♥ with 6-8 points and 3♥ to 4♥ with 3-8 points.

The 2nd double is also take-out

Board 12 from Wednesday 19th

Dealer: ♠ -
West ♥ J74
N-S vul ♦ AJ108
♣ Q76532

West	North	East	South(D)
2♠	pass	pass (1)	dbl (2)
pass	3♣	3♠ (3)	dbl (4)
pass	4♣ (5)	dbl	all pass

♠ KJ9764	N	♠ A105
♥ K53	W E	♥ 1098
♦ Q62	S	♦ 954
♣ 4		♣ KJ98
	♠ Q853	
	♥ AQ62	
	♦ K73	
	♣ A10	

- (1) I would raise to 3♠ immediately here – make it difficult for South.
- (2) What did you bid with this South hand D(a) in this week's quiz. With 4 ♠'s it may be more prudent to pass, but with 4 ♥'s it's very tempting to double! I don't like 2NT as this may well not even be a ♠ stop.
- (3) What I would have done last go.
- (4) What did you bid with this South hand D(b) in this week's quiz? I would pass. South intended this double as penalties – unfortunately it is not. It shows a big red two-suiter.
- (5) North's last bid promised zero points. And if you accept what I say about South's 2nd double I would jump to 4♥ here; but perhaps North knew his partner?

And what happened? 4♣ doubled went one down, but scored an average as other South's also overbid (a hopeless 3NT twice). 4♠ by West went 4 down at another table, so presumably 3♠ would have gone down for a good score to N-S.

The bottom lines: -

- With 3-card support for partner's pre-empt, it's usually best to raise immediately.
- If partner has not shown any values, then the 2nd double is also take-out, showing a big hand with the other two suits.

3rd hand plays high – part 1

Board 2 from Wednesday 19th

Dealer: ♠ A6
East ♥ 10874
N-S vul ♦ 1072
♣ K954

♠ 872	N	♠ K1054
♥ J632	W E	♥ Q95
♦ KJ53	S	♦ AQ984
♣ J8		♣ 2
	♠ QJ93	
	♥ AK	
DUMMY	♦ 6	
→	♣ AQ10763	

West	North	East	South(C)
-	-	pass (1)	1♣
pass	1♥	pass (2)	1♠
pass	1NT	pass	pass (3)
pass			

- (1) I would open 1♦
- (2) And double (so showing ♦'s and ♠'s) looks ideal now
- (3) With no ♦ cover I would bid ♣'s, and with this powerful hand 3♣ looks about right.

Anyway, it's about the play. East led the ♦8 (as would I) and West contributed the ♦3! His 'excuse' was that he thought that the ♦8 was top of nothing. That would leave North with ♦AQ109 – just about possible I suppose? But West should play high anyway – it cannot cost.

And what happened? N-S got a good board, but not as good as the pair who bid and made 5♣.

The bottom lines: -

- 3rd hand plays high (except if there is a finessable honour in dummy).

3rd hand plays high – part 2

Board 20 from Wednesday 19th

Dealer: ♠ Q5
 West ♥ K543
 Both vul ♦ 97
 ♣ Q5

♠ 9732	N	♠ AKJ10
♥ 72	W E	♥ Q8
♦ J5432	S	♦ AKQ
♣ 32		♣ AK107
	♠ 864	
↑	♥ AJ1096	
DUMMY	♦ 1086	
	♣ 864	

Table A

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	2♣	pass
2♦	pass	3NT (1)	pass
pass (2)	pass		

Benjamin twos Table

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	2♦ (3)	pass
2♥ (4)	pass	2NT (5)	pass
3♣ (6)	pass	3♠	pass
4♠	all pass		

- Table A: (1) A typical Standard American or ancient Acoll auction. 3NT here is 25+ balanced.
 (2) And West has no idea if he should pass or try Stayman.
 ‘Benji’ (3) Game forcing
 Table (4) Automatic relay
 (5) 25+ balanced.
 (6) Stayman

And what happened? An enormous mixed bag of results. One West passed the game forcing Standard American 2♣ bid (2♣ - 2♦ - 2♠ - pass), one West even passed the opening 2♣ bid!

Now 3NT is obviously a silly contract. South led the ♥9 (4th highest) – I would lead the ♥J (top of an interior sequence) and I’m sure that others would lead a different ♥ – but that’s not really the issue:- North played low!!

The bottom lines: -

- 3rd hand plays high (except if there is a finessable honour in dummy).
- When partner leads an honour (promising the lower cards in a sequence) then overtake and return the suit.
- Play Benjamin twos.

3rd hand plays high – part 3

Board 26 from Friday 21st

Dealer:	♠ J1064	
East	♥ Q8765	
Both vul	♦ 53	DUMMY
	♣ KQ	↓
♠ AKQ	N	♠ 3
♥ A92	W E	♥ J10
♦ AK8	S	♦ QJ9764
♣ 9632		♣ J1085
	♠ 98752	
	♥ K43	
	♦ 102	
	♣ A74	

<u>Table A</u>			
West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
2NT	pass	3♦ (1)	pass
3♥ (2)	pass	4♦	pass
5♦	all pass		

<u>Table B</u>			
West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
2NT	pass	3NT (1)	all pass

Table A: (1) Meant as natural; I prefer the bid at Table B.
 (2) He thought partner's bid was a transfer.

Table B: (1) This is a superb 5 points and well worth a shot at game opposite partner's 20-21 (or 20-22 – depending how you play it). And you all know me, I prefer to go for 3NT rather than 5 of a minor (and you get the lead up to partner).

And what happened? 5♦ went minus one at the two tables it was bid, and 3NT was bid at 3 tables and generally made +1.

Now I say generally – but at one table it made +3! How?

North led a standard 4th highest ♥6 and South ducked! What's more, he even tried to justify this appalling play in the post-mortem – saying that he thought North's lead could be 'top of nothing'. As this post-mortem could be heard all over the room I feel justified in adding my tuppence worth: -

And what can I say? Well actually quite a lot but I'll just keep it simple and polite: -

- One sometimes leads 'top of nothing' – but rarely against a NT contract! 4th best is 'standard' and that's what most sensible players would assume North's lead here to be.
- If it was indeed a rather obscure 'top of nothing' then that would give declarer ♥AQ987 in the suit and South's ♥K is a gonner anyway.
- North is marked with 5-6 points on the bidding and so would normally be expected to lead (4th best) from a suit with some values.
- There is absolutely no possible combination of cards where ducking here is remotely sensible. The only time it works is when West has a rather unlikely singleton ♥A, and then partner holds ♥Q987652 and would lead the ♥7.

The bottom lines: -

- 3rd hand plays high.
- When partner leads a lowish card against a NT contract, assume it's 4th best unless there is convincing evidence to the contrary.
- When you have made a foolish play, own up to it, rather than trying to justify it to the whole room!
- 'Sorry partner' would be the correct (but uncharacteristic) comment from (this) South.

Benjamin is the way

Board 27 from Friday 21st

There have been a few hands in recent week were playing Benjamin twos has worked very well (balanced 25+ hands). But that is by no means the most important feature of Benjamin twos – a more important feature is the ability to show a strong hand that's not good enough for 2♣ and not get passed out in 1♥/♠ when game makes: -.

Dealer: ♠ 1065
South ♥ Q864
Love all ♦ Q972
♣ 72

Table A (Standard American)

West	North	East	South(F)
-	-	-	1♠ (1)
pass (2)	pass	pass	

♠ 84 N ♠ A
♥ K105 W E ♥ J732
♦ AKJ1085 S ♦ 64
♣ 108 ♣ KJ6543
♠ KQJ9732
♥ A9
♦ 3
♣ AQ9

Table B (Standard American)

West	North	East	South(F)
-	-	-	1♠ (1)
2♦ (2)	pass	3♣ (3)	4♠ (4)
all pass			

Table C (Ancient Acol)

West	North	East	South(F)
-	-	-	2♠ (1)
pass	pass (5)	pass	

The 'Benji' Table

West	North	East	South(F)
-	-	-	2♣ (1)
2♦ (6)	pass (7)	pass	2♠ (8)
pass	3♠ (9)	pass	4♠ (10)
all pass			

Table A: (1) What did you open with this South hand F in this week's quiz? It's about 8½ playing tricks and not quite good enough for 2♣, so 1♠ and cross your fingers in Standard American

(2) And yes, somebody did actually pass with this West hand! Turned out well!

Table B: (1) I was South here and also opened 1♠.

(2) What most would do.

(3) I would pass

(4) My hand's improved with an expected ♣ lead.

Table C: (1) A strong two, forcing for one round in Acol.

(5) But this West did not realise this. Now Ancient Acol is slightly different from Benjamin as the 2♠ opener is forcing. 2NT is the negative, so bid 2NT (negative) and then 4♠ over partner's expected 3♠ as this hand is worth a trick and partner may be non-min. Note that, unlike Benji, responder cannot invite game and has to simply gamble.

'Benji'
Table (1) 8-9 playing tricks in this instance.

(6) Let's assume that West bids

(7) Then North passes

(8) 8-8½ playing tricks in ♠'s, I don't play this sequence as strictly forcing.

(9) But this North hand expects to be worth a trick and so should bid. This is simply invitational (not slow arrival as 2♠ is not forcing) and invites 4♠ if partner is not just a bare 8 playing tricks.

(10) With more than a minimum, South bids the game.

And what happened? 4♠ was bid twice and made exactly. ♠ partscores scored 170 or 200 at other tables.

The bottom lines :-

- Play Benjamin twos.
- I have explained responding to a strong Benjamin 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥/♠ in earlier news sheets (it's up on the web in the Benjamin two section). In particular, I wrote an article called 'the problem with playing tricks' (news-sheet 72). If you read that, you will understand why North should raise to 3♠ and not pass.

Walking the dog?

Board 21 from Friday 21st

Some say that you can't teach an old dog new tricks. Chuck tried this one on me on Friday:

Dealer:	♠ K84				
North	♥ AKJ98	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ 75			(Chuck)	(me)
	♣ 1093	-	1♥	pass (1)	1NT
		pass	2♥ (2)	3♣ (3)	pass (4)
♠ Q1032	N	pass	pass		
♥ 107432	W E				
♦ QJ103	S				
♣ -					
	♠ 965				
	♥ 65				
	♦ AK962				
	♣ 854				

- (1) Now what would you bid here? 2♣? 3♥? 3NT? It's not obvious and I guess that anything could work. Chuck passed!
- (2) Pass is reasonable.
- (3) Now Chuck tried his trick.
- (4) South has two top tricks opposite an opener, but this dog was too wily to double!

And what happened? 3♣ made exactly for an average.

The bottom lines :-

- I know and respect Chuck's bridge abilities. In particular I know that an overcall by him at the two level is sound. So I smelled a rat here, why did he not overcall 1st time?
- The answer is that he was hoping to get doubled! Apparently this trick has a name: walking the dog!

The jump to four is weak

Board 15 from Wednesday 19th

Dealer: ♠ 1062
South ♥ K6532
N-S vul ♦ A63
♣ Q9

♠ 9853 N ♠ KQ74
♥ 87 W E ♥ Q
♦ 752 S ♦ J1084
♣ AK87 ♣ J543

♠ AJ
♥ AJ1094
♦ KQ3
♣ 1062

West	North	East	South(C)
-	-	-	1♥
pass	4♥ (1)	pass	4NT (2)
pass	5♦	pass	5♥
all pass			

- (1) This would also be my choice – it's a weak bid, promising (usually) 5 ♥'s and little else. This hand is about top of the range for the bid.
- (2) What did you do with this South hand C in this week's quiz? This hand is nowhere near good enough opposite a weak jump and should pass. You really need at least 19 points to make a move here, and with that much I would not bid Blackwood if the ♣'s were wide open - I would cue bid 4 ♠.

And what happened? 5♥ lost the obvious 3 tricks. 4♥ was bid and made at most other tables.

The bottom lines: -

- Raising partner's 1♥/♠ opening to 4♥/♠ is weak.
- Avoid Blackwood when holding a wide-open suit unless you have reason to believe that partner has a top card in that suit.

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: (a) I opened 1♣ because: -

(b) There is no sensible answer. Any bid now shows a 5+ card suit.

(c) There is no sensible answer. It appears that some play 3♣ as Stayman here (that's a new one on me), but how do you find a minor suit fit for slam?

Hand B: 4♥. Partner has a very strong hand. You have shown 0-8 and he's inviting you to bid game if you are not totally bust. Easily enough here.

Hand C: Pass. Partner raise to 4♠ is a weak pre-emptive bid.

Hand D: (a) Pass (or double). I prefer pass but will not argue with double as it's very tempting holding values and 4 ♥'s. 2NT is a poor bid with these ♠'s as it may not even be one stop.
(b) Pass. A 2nd double here is also take-out; showing a big red two-suiter in this situation.

Hand E: 3♥. Partner may be bust. 3♥ shows a very strong hand here and partner should bid game with about 3+ points. 4♥ is an overbid which you should only make if partner is likely to pass 3♥ with 3+ points because he does not read the news-sheets.

Hand F: 1♠, it's not quite good enough for 2♣. Playing Benji open 2♣ (2♣-2♦-2♠).

Mon	24 th	N-S	1 st	Jim(Sco)/Chuck	60%	2 nd	Bjarni/Ole	53%
		E-W	1 st	David/Kenneth	56%	2 nd	Jan/Phil	53%
Wed	26 th		1 st	Dave/Hans	62%	2 nd	Chuck/Terry	58%
Fri	28 th	N-S	1 st	Bob/Dave	62%	2 nd	Jan/Tomas	59%
	21 st	E-W	1 st	Mike&Angela	63%	2 nd	Bjorn/Ian	61%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	What do you open with Hand A?
♠ AKJ7432	♠ AJ65	With Hand B partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcall a weak 2♠, what do you do?
♥ -	♥ J975	
♦ 8	♦ 82	
♣ AJ876	♣ Q97	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C RHO opens 1♠. (a) what do you do? (b) Suppose you pass and partner bids 2♦, what do you do?
♠ A64	♠ 94	With Hand D you open 1♦, LHO overcalls 2♠ and this is passed to you, what do you do?
♥ QJ107	♥ 106	
♦ AQ5	♦ AQ653	
♣ 1076	♣ AK106	
Hand E	Hand F	What do you open with Hand E?
♠ A8	♠ K2	With Hand F LHO opens 1♠ and this is passed to you. (a) What do you do? (b) Suppose you bid 2♦ and partner bids 2NT, what now?
♥ AJ	♥ 2	
♦ AQJ108753	♦ K108432	
♣ K	♣ AJ53	
Hand G	Hand H	An easy one. With Hand G RHO opens 3♣, you pass, LHO raises to 4♣ and partner doubles. What do you bid?
♠ K1043	♠ KJ9652	With Hand H you open 1♠ in 4 th seat. Partner responds 2NT (11-12), what do you bid?
♥ 87543	♥ A6	
♦ J65	♦ A6	
♣ 9	♣ K84	
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J LHO opens 1♦ and partner overcalls 1♥. What do you do?
♠ KQ4	♠ 98	With Hand K you open 1♦ and partner responds 1♥, what is your rebid?
♥ K943	♥ A8	
♦ J86	♦ AQJ32	
♣ KJ10	♣ Q1073	

Sequences L and M:

L: What does the 2♣ cuebid here mean?

M: What does the 3♠ jump here mean?

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♠	pass	2♣ ?
1♣	1♠	pass	3♠ ?

Yet another example of a hand ‘impossible’ to sensibly bid because of a system with only one strong bid. When will the Yanks come out of the middle-ages and play Benjamin?

Dealer: ♠ AKJ7432
 West ♥ -
 N-S vul ♦ 8
 ♣ AJ876

Table A (Standard American)
 West North(A) East South
 pass 4♠ (1) all pass

♠ Q1098 N ♠ 65
 ♥ KJ432 W E ♥ 876
 ♦ A2 S ♦ 97543
 ♣ 94 ♣ 1032
 ♠ -
 ♥ AQ1094
 ♦ KQJ106
 ♣ KQ5

Table B (Standard American)
 West North(A) East South
 pass 1♠ (1) pass 2♦ (2)
 pass 3♣ (3) pass 3♥ (4)
 pass 4♠ (5) pass 5♣ (6)
 all pass

Table C (Standard American)
 West North(A) East South
 pass 2♣ (1) pass 2♥ (7)
 pass 2♠ (8) pass 3♦ (9)
 pass 4♠ (9) pass 4NT (10)
 pass 5♥ pass 6♦ (11)
 pass 6♠ (12) all pass

The ‘Benji’ Table

West	North(A)	East	South
2♣ (1) pass		2♦ (13) pass	
2♠ (14) pass		3♥ (14) pass	
3♣ (15) pass		4♣ (16) pass	
4♠ (17) pass		pass (18) pass	

Table A: (1) What did you open with this North hand A in this week’s quiz? This hand really is a bit too good for 4♠. A 4♠ opener is pre-emptive with (usually 8 ♠’s). And the other reason that I don’t like 4♠ is that there may be a ♣ slam.
 I prefer table B’s bid but the best solution is Benjamin.

Table B: (1) I too would open 1♠ if my partner was not enlightened enough to realise the benefits of playing Benjamin twos.
 (2) I would bid 2♥ - bid 5 card suits from the top down
 (3) Natural and game forcing
 (4) Presumably meant as natural. The problems are that (a) it’s the 4th suit and (b) even if partner thought it was natural he would never take it for an excellent 5-card suit.
 (5) A jump in a game forcing situation – so fast arrival, indicating that that’s where he wants to play.
 (6) But South preferred ♣’s. Pass may be preferable, especially at pairs scoring.

Table C: (1) Now the current trend in America seems to be to open 2♣ with a hand that is one trick short of game. This hand may be about 9 playing tricks but to open 2♣ with just 13 high card points is way too off-beat for me. We’ve met this problem before (news-sheet 152 - A 2♣ Opener? – part 1) when the very same player opened 2♣ with a strongish 2-suiter and again ended up in a hopeless slam when his partner had a monster with the other two suits. My personal opinion is that if 2♣ is your only strong bid then it needs to be at least 18-19 points. Of course the only real solution is to play Benjamin twos.
 (7) A positive in basic Standard American.
 (8) Natural and game forcing.
 (9) 2nd suit
 (10) Fast arrival. A jump to game in a game forcing situation indicates that that’s where you want to play.
 (11) But obviously South is pushing on if North has anything remotely resembling a 2♣ opening. Luckily there was an ace missing or South would have bid a grand slam.

- ‘Benji’ (1) 8-9 playing tricks in this instance.
 Table (13) Automatic relay
 (14) Natural
 (15) 2nd suit (a jump to 4♠ is also reasonable here, which would show a hand with playing strength in ♠’s but not much elsewhere)
 (16) I prefer ♣’s to ♠’s
 (17) But I have very good ♠’s and this is pairs scoring
 (18) OK. As it’s a mis-fit and you did not open 2♦ I’ll settle for 4♠.

And what happened? 3 pairs bid 4♠, the other 3 did not. 6♠ went minus one; it would have made on a ♠ lead and gone 2 down on a ♦ lead.

The bottom lines (assuming you play Standard American with just 2♣ as your strong bid): -

- Don’t open 2♣ with two-suiters.
- You need to set some sort of minimum point count for 2♣, I would say about 19+.
- Opening 2♣ with about 9 playing tricks but few points may be standard practice in the States, but there are certainly better ways and it can easily get out of control if partner has a good hand (and a mis-fit)! I said virtually the same thing in news-sheet 152 when something similar happened.
- Play Benjamin twos! – Then a 2♣ opener shows a good hand but not a load of points and 2♦ shows a very strong hand with points.

A real 2♣ opener?

- ♠ A8 I have been going through the old news sheets as I put them up on the web
 ♥ AJ and I found this Hand E from news-sheet 60/61. What did you open with
 ♦ AQJ108753 Hand E in this week’s quiz? Way back in 2003 I opened it with 2♣ and
 ♣ K received the usual criticism from Hans. Hans said that it was not good enough
 for 2♣ and that he would open it 1♦. What’s more, Chuck agreed with him!

To this day I don’t know if Chuck was serious or simply siding with Hans as a matter of course; but there is something wrong somewhere if one opens Hand A with 2♣ and not this one.

Agreed? Incidentally, there’s another entertaining article on 2♣ openings in news-sheet 61.

I really am finding some gems going through the old news sheets and putting them on the web – and I’m compiling an index while I’m doing it – it’ll take a week or two.

There's no negative double over a 1NT overcall

Board 9 from Monday 24th

Dealer: ♠ A654
North ♥ 104
E-W vul ♦ 75432
♣ K8

West	North	East	South
-	pass	1♠	1NT (1)
dbl (2)	pass	3♠ (3)	pass
pass	dbl	all pass	

♠ -	N	♠ KQ9872
♥ A9763	W E	♥ K52
♦ 98	S	♦ 10
♣ J109743		♣ A52
	♠ J103	
	♥ QJ8	
	♦ AKQJ6	
	♣ Q6	

- (1) 15-18 with a ♠ stop!?! I guess that J10x is close to a stop but 2♦ is a sound alternative.
- (2) Meant as negative (showing ♥'s). Unfortunately negative doubles do not apply when the overcall is 1NT. Double is penalties, about 9+ points. A suit bid here (2♣ or 2♥) is natural and non-forcing (with values West would double).
- (3) I would pass.

The bottom lines: -

- When partner opens and RHO overcalls 1NT (15-18) then double by you is penalties and any suit bid is weak – to play.

Double is 'automatic'

Board 22 from Monday 24th

Dealer: ♠ 72
East ♥ A432
E-W vul ♦ K94
♣ J854

West(B) North East(D) South
- - 1♦ 2♠ (1)
pass (2) pass pass (3)

♠ AJ65 N ♠ 94
♥ J975 W E ♥ 106
♦ 82 S ♦ AQ653
♣ Q97 ♣ AK106
♠ KQ1083
♥ KQ8
♦ J107
♣ 32

- (1) Exactly why South chose a 'weak' jump overcall rather than 1♠ will remain a mystery.
- (2) What did you bid with this West hand B in this week's quiz? Double would be negative (showing 4 ♥'s) and I too would pass and settle for the penalty after partner's 'automatic' double.
- (3) What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? I guess that I have not emphasised the 'automatic' re-opening double enough in the news sheets?

And what happened? 2♠ went minus two and the 100 to E-W was a near bottom for them. The 300 from 2♣ doubled would have been an outright top.

The bottom line: -

- Much the same as it has been nearly every week for the past 155 news-sheets, if you play negative doubles then re-open with a double if partner passes LHO's overcall.

When not to re-open with a double (when playing negative doubles)

As I have mentioned many times, the re-opening double is almost automatic but there are (very few) exceptions. Suppose you open 1♠ and RHO overcalls 2♥, love all: -

Hand A	Hand P	Hand Q	With Hand A bid 4♣, strong. There may be slam and this hand has little defence to ♥'s.
♠ AKJ7432	♠ AJ7432	♠ AJ743	
♥ -	♥ 8	♥ KJ109	
♦ 8	♦ Q	♦ Q7	With Hand P bid 3♣ showing a shapely weak hand. This is close and I would not argue with a double
♣ AJ876	♣ KJ876	♣ J8	

With hand Q, pass! It really is very unlikely for LHO to have a 2-level overcall and partner to have a penalty hand. Note that your trumps really do need to be about this good for this action – you'll be surprised at the rubbish that people overcall with these days!

Don't leap off when it's game forcing anyway

Board 15 from Monday 24th

Dealer: ♠ A
 South ♥ KQJ73
 N-S vul ♦ K109
 ♣ K942

♠ QJ104 N ♠ K76532
 ♥ 1062 W E ♥ 954
 ♦ 76 S ♦ 854
 ♣ AJ85 ♣ 6

♠ 98
 ♥ A8
 ♦ AQJ32
 ♣ Q1073

Table A

West	North	East	South(K)
-	-	-	1♦
pass	1♥	pass	1NT (1)
pass	3♣ (2)	pass	5♣ (3)
pass	6♣ (4)	pass	pass
dbl	all pass		

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♦
pass	1♥	pass	2♣ (1)
pass	2♠ (5)	pass	3♦ (6)
	etc to 6♦ (7)		

- Table A: (1) What did you rebid with this South hand K in this week's quiz? 1NT is 12-14 but, especially with nothing in ♠'s, 2♣ is best – show your shape.
 (2) Game forcing.
 (3) And this is also bad. Partner's 3♣ is game forcing and there is all the room on the world to find the best contract. Of course it's tricky because of the unwise 1NT at (1) but 3♦, 3♥, 3♠(4th suit) or 4♣ are all reasonable – there's no need to jump.
 (4) West knows that they have gone past 3NT and so punts the slam – that's also what I would have done at pairs scoring.

- Table B: (1) Life really is easier when you start off with the right bid.
 (5) 4th suit, in this case just to set up a game force.
 (6) No ♠ stop
 (7) North knows that there's a double fit (4-4 in ♣'s and 5-3 in ♦'s) and when your slamming suit quality counts, so he correctly chose ♦'s. I guess ♥'s would score more but nobody bid to 6♥.

And what happened. One pair bid 6♦ making, 6♥ would make but nobody bid it, two pairs bid 6♣ which didn't make. Other scores were all over the place.

The bottom lines: -

- I'm always harping on about the 4-4 fit, and it's usually better than 5-3. But when you are in slam you need good trumps and these ♣'s are not slam quality (the ♥'s are and the ♦'s are).
- Use 4th suit forcing to set up a game forcing situation. I like to play 4th suit as game forcing; it really does make life easy.
- Don't rebid 1NT to show your points if you have a more descriptive bid available.
- There's no need to leap off if you're in a game forcing auction, take it nice 'n easy.

Bidding after partner balances

Board 23 from Monday 24th

Dealer: ♠ J53
South ♥ 98654
Both vul ♦ 9
♣ 9842

♠ A64	N	♠ K2
♥ QJ107	W E	♥ 2
♦ AQ5	S	♦ K108432
♣ 1076		♣ AJ53
	♠ Q10987	
	♥ AK3	
	♦ J76	
	♣ KQ	

Table A

West(C)	North	East(F)	South
-	-	-	1♠
pass (1)	pass	2♦ (2)	pass
3NT (3)	all pass		

'Expert Table'

West(C)	North	East(F)	South
-	-	-	1♠
pass (1)	pass	2♦ (2)	pass
2NT (3)	pass	3NT (4)	all pass

- Table A: (1) I hoped you passed with this West hand C(a) in this week's quiz? There's nothing you can say.
- (2) What did you do with this East hand F in this week's quiz? Two players passed, it looks like a fairly clear 2♦ bid to me. I would make the same bid in the balancing seat without the ♣A. Note that 3♦ would be a strong bid (there's no such thing as a weak jump overcall in the balancing seat).
- (3) What did you bid with this West hand C(b) in this week's quiz? Somebody asked me on Monday, 3NT is an overbid – you may be punishing partner who has balanced on 8-9 points. Remember, partner in the balancing seat is bidding 3 of your points. An invitational 2NT is correct.
- 'Expert' (3) An invitational 2NT is correct.
- Table (4) And East has easily enough to raise to 3NT. He knows that the ♠K is useful as partner has promised a stop.

And what happened? They scored a top at table A as nobody else bid 3NT! There was 1♠ passed out (twice), 2NT and 3♦ (twice).

The bottom lines: -

- You do not need 11+ points to overcall at the two level in the balancing seat.
- Be aware that partner has 'borrowed' a king from your hand when he makes a balancing bid and don't leap about with 13 points.

KISS – Keep It Simple, StupidBoard 7 from Wednesday 26th

Dealer: ♠ AJ85
 South ♥ 62
 Both vul ♦ Q1072
 ♣ J54

West(G)	North	East	South
-	-	-	3♣ (1)
pass	4♣ (2)	dbl (3)	pass
4♠! (4)	all pass		

♠ K1043	N	♠ Q96
♥ 87543	W E	♥ AKQ10
♦ J65	S	♦ AK8
♣ 9		♣ 1086
	♠ 72	
	♥ J9	↑
	♦ 943	DUMMY
	♣ AKQ732	

- (1) Now some people may not like this 3♣ opener but I have no problem with it. Give it a 7th ♣ and it would be too good for 3♣!
- (2) This North reads the news-sheets and raised the anti – excellent. Make it difficult for E-W.
- (3) A clear-cut double. You cannot promise both majors when you double a minor and with no ♣ stop 4NT (to play) is out.
- (4) Now this West also ‘reads’ the news-sheets. If the bidding was at the 3♣ level he would have bid 4♣ - asking partner to choose the major. But at the 4 level he had to decide. What did you bid with this West hand G in this week’s quiz? Obviously 4♥ I presume – but not this West! He knew that partner may well have only 3 ♥’s and so chose the ‘4-4’ ♠ fit. – he knew that 4-4 is better than 5-3 and maybe better than 5-4. He was a little bit too ‘clever’ to realise that he might end up in a 4-3 fit!

And what happened? Everybody else ended up in a ♥ part-score by E-W. And at this table?

South	♠ J	
Both vul	♥ -	
	♦ Q1072	
	♣ J	
♠ -	N	♠ -
♥ 875	W E	♥ A10
♦ J65	S	♦ AK8
♣ -		♣ 10
	♠ -	
	♥ -	↑
	♦ 943	DUMMY
	♣ A73	

North led a ♣ and West ruffed the 2nd round. He successfully finessed the ♠9 and led a trump to the ♠K and ♠A. North switched a ♥ which was won in dummy. Declarer led a trump to the ♠K in the vain hope that they split – they did not. North led another ♥ won in dummy and Declarer led the ♠Q leaving North with the last trump. The ♥’s were led from dummy in this position and for some reason North did not ruff till the last one, he had thrown his ♣J(!) and was now end-played and had to lead from his ♦Q. With a little help West made the atrocious contract for a clear (well-deserved??) top!

The bottom lines: -

- 5-4 plays better than 4-3! 4♥ is an easy make; KISS.
- A contract that requires a finesse of the ♠9, North to mis-defend and North to have the ♦Q is somewhat against the odds.
- North should have easily defeated the contract of course, but didn’t West do well?

'Dig Up' a Minor

Board 18 from Wednesday 26th

Dealer: ♠ KJ9652

East ♥ A6

N-S vul ♦ A6

♣ K84

♠ 108

N

♠ Q743

♥ KQ95

W E

♥ J73

♦ 10753

S

♦ QJ94

♣ QJ3

♣ 62

♠ A

♥ 10842

♦ K82

♣ A10975

West	North(H)	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
pass	1♠	pass	2NT (1)
pass	3♠ (2)	pass	pass (3)
pass			

- (1) N-S play '2-way Reverse Drury' – no, I'm not joking – and so South could not bid 2♣ as both 2♣ and 2♦ are artificial here. Anyway, no problem as 2NT is 11-12.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand H in this week's quiz? The problem is that 3♠ is a weak bid and 4♠ may be a bit unilateral. I believe that 3♣ is the best bid here, I would play any bid other than 3♠ as forcing. Apparently North considered 3♣ but did not bid it because he was afraid of a 4♣ raise by South. Obviously he does not know his partner well enough, take it from me that South would never raise 3♣ to 4♣ if 3NT is a remotely viable alternative. Anyway, with this hand North could bid 4♠ over a possible 4♣ by South.
- (3) South is maximum for his bid but decided to trust partner who may well have a crappy 11 count with 6 ♠'s.

And what happened? 3♠ made +2. Game was bid at 3 tables; 4♠ twice and 3NT (+2) once.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't make a weak bid with game-going values.
- Very occasionally you may have to 'dig up' a minor suit – that is just another reason why I will very rarely go past 3NT into a minor in situations like this.

‘A Limit Raise or Better’

Now most people know how to invite game when partner opens 1♥/♠; normally a raise to 3♥/♠ is invitational. But when partner overcalls 1♥/♠ things are different. To start with partner may have anything from 7-16 points and a jump to 3♥/♠ may well be too high. Also, jumps to the 3-level are normally played as pre-emptive. The solution? – After a 1♥/♠ overcall from partner a cue bid of the opened suit shows a ‘limit raise or better’ – i.e. a sound raise to at least the 3-level. We had three instances on Wednesday: -

‘A Limit Raise or Better’ – part 1 Board 21 from Wednesday 26th

Dealer:	♠ AKJ		<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ K1084		West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ 9865		-	1♦	1♠	pass
	♣ Q3		4♠ (1)	all pass		
♠ Q8754	N	♠ 109632	<u>Table B</u>			
♥ 63	W E	♥ AJ5	West	North	East	South
♦ AK2	S	♦ Q73	-	1♦	1♠	pass
♣ 1082		♣ AK	2♦ (1)	pass	2NT(2)	pass
	♠ -		4♠ (3)	all pass		
	♥ Q972					
	♦ 104					
	♣ J97652					

Table A: (1) With 10 combined trumps West is prepared to bid 4♠ (The Law) but I prefer the bidding at Table B.

Table B: (1) A limit raise or better. This hand really is a bit too good for a direct 4♠.
 (2) With a sound overcall East is going to game (2♠ would be weak) but with all of his points outside ♠’s he suggested 3NT as an alternative contract as partner has only promised 3 ♠’s.
 (3) Obviously West bids game in the 5-5 fit.

And what happened? Every table but one bid 4♠ and all lost the obvious 4 tricks – very unlucky. One pair managed to stop in 2♠ and got a lucky top.

'A Limit Raise or Better' – part 2 Board 16 from Wednesday 26th

And here we see how 'limit raise or better' allows you to stay low when overcaller has a lousy hand: -

Dealer:	♠ KQJ92				
West	♥ 984	West	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ K105	1♥	1♠	pass	2♥ (1)
	♣ 93	pass	2♠ (2)	all pass	
♠ 1087	N	♠ A6			
♥ AJ1062	W E	♥ 5	(1) A limit raise (maybe a bit pushy)		
♦ AJ6	S	♦ 9874	(2) I have a minimal overcall		
♣ Q4		♣ KJ7652			
	♠ 543				
	♥ KQ73	And what happened? 2♠ made exactly and so a 3♠			
	♦ Q32	4♠ raise by South would have worked out very badly.			
	♣ A108				

'A Limit Raise or Better' – part 3 Board 10 from Wednesday 26th

Here we see how the 'limit raise or better' treatment gets to a decent game contract which was missed at most tables: -

Dealer:	♠ KQ4				
East	♥ K943	<u>Table A</u>	West	North(J)	East
Both vul	♦ J86		-	-	1♦
	♣ KJ10		pass	2♥ (1)	all pass
♠ 8752	N	♠ J1093	<u>Table B</u>	West	North(J)
♥ J8	W E	♥ Q10		-	-
♦ 74	S	♦ AKQ95		-	1♦
♣ Q9742		♣ 85		pass	2♦ (1)
	♠ A6			pass	4♥ (3)
	♥ A7652			pass	all pass
	♦ 1032				
	♣ A63				

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this North hand J in this week's quiz? It's best to play 3♥ and 4♥ as pre-emptive. Not knowing about the 'limit raise or better cue bid', North simply raised to 2♥ as South only promises 7 points for his overcall.

Table B: (1) A limit raise or better.
 (2) A decent hand on the border. South invited North with 3♥, he could just bid 4♥.
 (3) And North has easily enough to go to game.

And what happened? Only one pair bid 4♥; everybody made 10 tricks in ♥'s.

The bottom lines (for the last 3 deals): -

- When partner overcalls in a major suit, play the cue bid as 'limit raise or better', where by 'limit raise' I mean a sound raise to the 3 level.
- Thus a direct raise to 3 or 4 of partner's major is pre-emptive.
- And so note that in this situation the cue-bid is not asking for a stop although overcaller may wish to bid NT if he is accepting the game invitation with points outside trumps.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1♠ if playing Standard American or 2/1 with 2♣ as the only strong bid. I require much more in the way of high card strength for a 2♣ opening. Playing strong twos then open 2♠ and playing Benjamin open 2♣. I don't like 4♠ (or 4♦ playing Namyats) too much as it's a bit good, wrong shape, and you may miss a ♣ slam.
- Hand B: Pass. And pass partner's 'automatic' re-opening double when you play negative doubles. I think that this is the best chance for a good score; double (showing 4♥'s) is not a good bid as it's not strong enough for the 3-level. Settle for the money.
- Hand C: (a) Pass. It's too flat for double and there's no bid but pass.
(b) 2NT. Partner's 2♦ is in the balancing seat and he may have as few as 8 points, so an invitational 2NT is quite sufficient. Partner will bid game with 10+.
- Hand D: Dbl. 'Automatic' playing negative doubles.
- Hand E: 2♣. (or 2♦ if you play Benjamin). Clearly worth your strongest bid.
- Hand F: (a) 2♦. Looks fairly clear but two players did pass on Monday. 1NT (10-13) is also possible I suppose. Note that 3♦ here would show a much stronger hand as it's the pass-out seat.
(b) 3NT. Your initial 2♦ was in the pass-out (balancing seat) and could have been as few as 8 points and partner has around 13/14 – so accept.
- Hand G: 4♥, obviously.
- Hand H: 3♣ or 4♠. I would bid 3♣ (a partner who reads the news-sheets is unlikely to raise to 4♣ and go past a possible 3NT). I prefer 3♣ to 4♠ as 4♠ is a bit unilateral if partner has a small singleton ♠. 3♠ is a weak bid, I would take any bid other than 3♠ here as forcing.
- Hand J: 2♦. Showing a sound raise to 3♥ or better (limit raise or better). 2♥ is not enough and 3♥ and 4♥ are best played as pre-emptive.
- Hand K: 2♣. Show your shape rather than 1NT.
- Sequence L: A sound raise to 3♠ or better ('limit raise or better'). It is not asking for a stop when partner has overcalled in a major.
- Sequence M: Pre-emptive. With an invitational hand one would use the 'limit raise or better' cue bid.

Mon	31 st	N-S	1 st	Bob Short/Phil	63%	2 nd	Alan Purdy/Clive	59%
		E-W	1 st	Chuck/Terry	61%	2 nd	Gene/Richard = Bill/Dave	53%
Wed	2 nd		1 st	Bob P/Alan P	64%	2 nd	Gene/Richard	56%
Fri	4 th	N-S	1 st	Jan/Jim(Sco)	63%	2 nd	Alan Purdy/John Gavens	53%
		E-W	1 st	Chuck/Terry	60%	2 nd	Phil & Tomas	58%

NEW. When I expect a Mitchell movement all of the hands will be pre-dealt. You can pick up a leaflet with the hands or else they are on the web-site in with the results.

The standings in the Gold Cup competition are close; currently we have (best 30): -

1st **Chuck** 1876.6% 2nd **Dave** 1864.5% 3rd **Bob** 1849.4% 4th **Clive** 1799.3%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	What do you open with Hand A?
♠ KQ83	♠ Q8	(a) What do you open with Hand B?
♥ AQ5	♥ KQ2	(b) Suppose you choose 1♦, then what is your rebid after partner responds 1♠?
♦ A764	♦ KQ10754	
♣ 94	♣ Q3	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C partner opens 1♦, what do you bid?
♠ AJ1076	♠ J	With Hand D you open 1♦ and LHO overcalls 2♦ (Michaels).
♥ K8643	♥ K7	Partner passes and RHO bids 2♥, what do you do?
♦ -	♦ AK10763	
♣ J73	♣ KJ32	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E RHO opens 1♣. (a) what do you bid?
♠ AQ63	♠ Q9654	(b) suppose you double, then what do you do if partner bids 2♣?
♥ 8	♥ Q10842	With Hand F partner opens 1NT. Just for a change I won't ask
♦ AK10632	♦ 5	what you bid (if you try Stayman you get 2♦ and if you transfer
♣ KQ	♣ A2	into either suit partner simply accepts). The question is do you
		consider the hand (a) weak, (b) invitational or (c) game forcing.
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G LHO opens 1♣ which partner doubles, what do you bid?
♠ J109542	♠ 54	With Hand H you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♥, what do you bid?
♥ Q10654	♥ A85	
♦ -	♦ AK5	
♣ 65	♣ QJ753	
Hand J	Hand K	What do you open with Hand J?
♠ K10	♠ KQ1072	Hand K, this is an interesting one, so have a good think before
♥ K7	♥ A104	you come up with the "obvious" answer. You open 1♠, LHO
♦ AK43	♦ A75	overcalls 2♦ and partner doubles (negative), what do you bid?
♣ Q10753	♣ 65	

Index

Something new this week. I have compiled a comprehensive index to all of the news-sheets on the web. It is primarily for web use – searching for an item is so simple. But if you have no access to a computer and would like a print-out, let me know. Below is a sample of what you get – it's this week's index.

Page

- 2 So what do those bids mean? – splinter and cue bid? – Dunno.
3 1NT or support with 3 cards? 1♣ - 1♥ - ? , you have ♠ 54 ♥ A85 ♦AK5 ♣QJ753
4 A poor slam? for small slam you generally need about 33 points with no fit.
5 5-5 Come Alive – ♠AJ1076 ♥K8643 ♦ - ♣J73 is worth a move opposite a 1♦ opener.
5 Strong vs Weak NT-1 –you get the 15/16 point rebid problem less playing a strong NT.
6 Don't put Qx's on table! – try to be declarer.
6 The 2♣/♦ and the 2♥/♠ overcall of 1NT using Cappelletti/Multi Landy.
7 Don't bid 4♣/♦ if 3NT is a viable contract!
7 As an aside – when opponent bids Michaels over 1♣/♦, is a ♥ or ♠ bid asking or telling?
8 Michaels Again! – Michaels is (nearly always) a pre-empt.
8 A Word about Michaels and UNT – a few pointers on suit length.
9 Pick a major – bidding the opponent's ♣ suit is not natural, even if they play a short ♣.
10 Pick a major – 5-5 in the majors opposite 1NT.
9 Mobile phones – turn them off please!
10 Our 'Friendly' Club – everybody was asleep?
11 A negative double after partner pre-empts? – I don't think so.
11 A weak two opener? – ♠J109874 ♥86 ♦AQ7 ♣K2
12 Responding to partner's negative double – 1♠ 2♦ dbl pass 2NT is a good hand.
13 Strong vs Weak NT-2. – sometimes it works best to have a NT rebid as 15-16.
13 Contacting Others – there's a secure page on the web.

So what do those bids mean?

Board 28 from Friday 4th

North	South	North	South
♠ KQ9	♠ AJ1063	1♣	1♠
♥ K643	♥ A8	3♥ (1)	4♦ (2)
♦ AK2	♦ Q843	4♠	pass
♣ A84	♣ K6		

N-S were asked what the bids meant; the explanations given were (1) dunno, and (2) dunno.

Playing sensibly, 3♥ would be a splinter agreeing ♠'s and showing ♥ shortage and 4♦ would be a cue bid showing the ♦A.

And what happened? N-S scored a zero as all the other tables were in slam or else in 3NT.

And how should the hand be bid?

North	South	(3) 18-19 balanced
1♣	1♠	(4) NMF, some may prefer 3♣ CBS. Asks opener about his majors
2NT (3)	3♦ (4)	(5) 4♥'s, may or may not have 3♠'s.
3♥ (5)	3♠ (6)	(6) I have 5♠'s - forcing
4♠ (7)	4NT (8)	(7) I have 3♠'s.
etc to 6♠ or 6NT		(8) Whatever form of Blackwood you play.

Leading Quiz

Hand L	West	East	With this hand L you are South with this bidding. What do you lead?
♠ 854	-	1NT	
♥ K763	4♣	4♥	Answer next page.
♦ Q74	6NT	pass	
♣ K53			

1NT or support with 3 cards?

Board 7 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ A876
 South ♥ 107
 Both vul ♦ J932
 ♣ 1084

West(H)	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
1♣	pass	1♥	pass
1NT (1)	all pass		

♠ 54	N	♠ 1093
♥ A85	W E	♥ QJ942
♦ AK5	S	♦ 1074
♣ QJ753		♣ A4
	♠ KQJ2	
	♥ K86	
	♦ Q86	
	♣ 962	

(1) What did you bid with this West hand H in this week's quiz? With good 3-card support for partner and a weak doubleton I prefer 2♥ to 1NT. There are a few reasons why 2♥ is better than 1NT here: -

- (a) You will probably get a ♠ lead.
- (b) Partner may have 5 ♥'s
- (c) Even if it's a Moysian fit it should play well as you get a ruff with the short trumps.

♠ 1093 (d) East may have a hand like this – it's only slightly different. Over a 1NT
 ♥ QJ942 response (12-14) from partner, this hand should pass. But over a 2♥
 ♦ Q74 response it's worth an effort (say a 3♦ game try) and the excellent 4♥ is
 ♣ A4 then easily reached.

And what happened? For some strange reason the defence did not lead a ♠ and so declarer made 13 tricks. This scored about average as 4♥ was bid at 3 tables.

The bottom lines:-

- Support with support. I will always support with 3 decent trumps opposite possibly only 4 if I have a weak doubleton. Not everybody agrees with me and some will only do it with a singleton – different styles?
- If you have 14 points it's even more important to do so as 2 of partner's major is more encouraging than 1NT.
- This West hand has no tenaces and so it's probably best for partner to be declarer (he may have something like ♠Kx or ♠KJx or similar).
- There was a very similar article in news-sheet 65.

A Poor Slam?

Dealer: ♠ 9763
East ♥ J852
Both vul ♦ 1086
♣ 76

♠ Q102	N	♠ AKJ
♥ A9	W E	♥ Q104
♦ A952	S	♦ KJ3
♣ AQ82		♣ J1094
	♠ 854	
	♥ K763	
	♦ Q74	
	♣ K53	

Board 10 from Monday 31st

Table A(Standard American)

West	North	East	South(L)
-	-	1NT (1)	pass
4♣ (2)	pass	4♥ (3)	pass
6NT (4)	all pass		

Table B(Acol)

West(C)	North	East(A)	South(L)
-	-	1♣ (1)	pass
1♦	pass	1NT (5)	pass
4♣ (6)	pass	4♥	pass
6NT	all pass		

Table A: (1) What would you open with this East hand? You know me, knock off a point for the totally flat shape. Also, all but one of the points in the 'short' suits is bad. But on the other hand the hand has two 10's and the J109x combination is good. All-in-all it's borderline so I won't argue with 1NT this time.

- (2) Gerber (3) 1 ace
(4) Optimistic?

Table B: (1) Playing a weak NT ...
(2) ... so this NT rebid shows 15-16 playing Acol
(3) Gerber etc.

And what happened? With no established fit I think that 6NT is a very poor contract with a combined 31 points and no long suit. The same poor slam was bid at 6 out of the 7 tables on Monday. Does nobody realise that 31 points is not usually enough with no fit or long suit? But perhaps I have to eat my words? Because 12 tricks were made at 6 of the 7 tables!

How is that possible? It does not look possible to me unless the defence find a poor lead. What did you lead in this week's bidding quiz? At our table I was South and led the ♠8.

Why? Because I listened to the bidding and knew that partner had absolutely nothing – if the contract is to be set then the two tricks must come from my hand. In this situation you cannot afford to give a trick away on the opening lead and so lead from nothing.

So if 6NT is a poor contract, how should the bidding go? There are two possibilities (playing a strong NT):

- (a) 1NT – 4NT – pass Where 4NT is quantitative,
or (b) 1NT – 3NT – pass Where 3NT is perhaps a bit feeble.

The bottom lines: -

- To make a small slam you generally need about 33 points unless you have a fit (and play in it as trumps) or have a long suit.
- And the lead. Leading away from an honour is often the only way to set a contract – you hope to find partner with an honour in the suit. But if you know that partner is bust then don't lead away from an honour!

5-5 Come Alive

This one's left over from last week: -

Board 18 from Friday 28th

Dealer: ♠ 92
 East ♥ 972
 N-S vul ♦ QJ105
 ♣ Q652

♠ AJ1076 N ♠ KQ83
 ♥ K8643 W E ♥ AQ5
 ♦ - S ♦ A764
 ♣ J73 ♣ 94
 ♠ 54
 ♥ J10
 ♦ K9832
 ♣ AK108

Table A

West(C)	North	East(A)	South
-	-	1♦ (1)	pass
1♥ (2)	pass	1♠ (3)	pass
3♠ (4)	pass	4♠	all pass

Table B

West(C)	North	East(A)	South
-	-	1♦ (1)	pass
1♠ (2)	pass	2♠ (5)	pass
pass (6)	pass		

Table A: (1) What did you open with this East hand A in this week's quiz? A decent 15 count so 1NT looks obvious to me.

(4) And what did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? I bid 1♠ here, see Table B.

(5) Having not opened 1NT East can only really bid 1♠ here.

(6) But luckily West has great ♠ support and an easy invite.

Table B: (1) It's catching! I don't understand what's wrong with 1NT.

(2) This West correctly bid 1♠, intending 2♥ over partner's response.

(5) With great support for ♠'s, it's in between 2♠ and 3♠. I would not be in this predicament as I would have opened 1NT.

(6) Pathetic. A 3♥ try is in order. I understand that West was 'put off' because he had a void in partner's 'suit'.

And what happened? Everyone was in game except Table B, mostly making 11 or 12 tricks. At Table B West made all 13 tricks for a cold zero. I guess his play is better than his bidding?

The bottom lines: -

- Open 1NT with a balanced hand within your opening 1NT range.
- Open 1NT and you never have a rebid problem – and you make it easier for partner if he's having an off day!
- If you can describe your hand in one go – do so.
- 5-5 in the majors is good (and really good opposite a 1NT opening!).

♠ 102 East hand 7 from Friday 28th

♥ AQJ43

♦ KQ85 Incidentally, I know it was not the small doubleton that deterred East from opening

♣ K8 1NT at Table B, for in the same session he opened 1NT with this East hand!

Strong vs Weak NT – part 1.

And another incidentally: This deal demonstrates one of the advantages of the Strong NT over the weak NT. When you hold say 15-16 points and open one of a suit you are never quite sure whether to jump or not when you have a fit for responder's suit. This problem occurs less frequently when you play a strong NT.

Don't put Qx's on table!

Board 2 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ KJ6
East ♥ 86
N-S vul ♦ A863
♣ KJ86

Table A

West	North	East	South(B)
-	-	pass	1NT (1)
pass	3NT	all pass	

♠ A975	N	♠ 1043
♥ A75	W E	♥ J10943
♦ J2	S	♦ 9
♣ 972		♣ A1054
	♠ Q8	
	♥ KQ2	
	♦ KQ10754	
	♣ Q3	

- (1) What did you open with this South hand B in this week's quiz? This hand is easily worth a strong 1NT if you are happy with opening 1NT with two doubletons. I have no problem with it, provided that the doubletons are Qx or better. Actually, I have written about Qx a few times in the past – it is a holding that belongs in declarer's hand (rather than dummy) because if partner has Axx then the suit is immune from an opening lead. With two Qx's I most certainly want to be declarer.

And what happened? As I expected, NT played better from the South hand – but not because of either Qx but because of the ♥'s! If North is declarer then the obvious ♥ lead gives North problems.

3NT was bid three times and made +1 twice (going down once). Other contracts were 2♦, 3♦ and 4♦ (twice). Presumably the 4♦ bidders were not familiar with my frequently publicised doctrines about not bidding 4♣/♦ if 3NT is a viable contract?

The bottom lines: -

- Strive to be declarer with Qx in a suit
- If you have a 'balanced' hand within your opening 1NT range, then open 1NT.
- In my opinion a 6 card minor is OK for 1NT if both of the doubletons are Qx or better.
- If you open 1NT then you never have a rebid problem.
- Don't bid 4♣/♦ if 3NT is a viable contract.

The 2♣/♦ and the 2♥/♠ overall of 1NT using Cappelletti/Multi Landy

♠ 107 On Friday I witnessed a player overcall a weak NT with 2♦ playing Multi- Landy.

♥ Q10654 That shows a single suited hand. I said that I would bid 2♥ (♥'s and a minor),

♦ AQJ8 he countered that 2♥ promises 5-5. Who's right?

♣ A10 All of the books that I could find simply said that 2♥ was ♥'s and a minor.

However, **every** reference to Cappelletti or Multy Landy said that the single-suited bid (2♣/♦ resp) is a 6+ card suit. I found three fairly explicit references about 2♥ on the web.

Bridgeguys.com says it's 5 ♥'s and a 4 card minor. Slopín says it's 5 ♥'s and 5 (rarely 4) of the minor.

www.acbld22.com/unit537 says - '2♥ shows hearts and a minor; should be 5-5 but just could be 5-4 with 5 hearts'. With these great ♦'s and miserable ♥'s I believe that 2♥ is the bid if you don't like double. Nobody would seriously call this a single suited (♥) hand and later try to defend the bid, would they?

Don't bid 4♣/♦ if 3NT is a viable contract!

Board 8 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ 874
West ♥ A54
Love all ♦ QJ95
♣ Q109

West	North	East(D)	South
pass	pass	1♦	2♦ (1)
pass (2)	2♥	4♦ (3)	pass
5♦	all pass		

♠ AK94	N	♠ J
♥ Q1083	W E	♥ K7
♦ 42	S	♦ AK10763
♣ 865		♣ KJ32
	♠ Q10632	
	♥ J962	
	♦ 8	
	♣ A74	

- (1) A Michaels cue-bid. This is generally played as weak or very strong. And I happen to know that this South means *very* strong when he says that ('twas I) - not some crappy 14-15 count. I play Michaels as weak or game forcing if I bid again – so it's usually weak!
- (2) Now West really has to do something here. I would double and you can play that as you wish – I like to play it as having some values (say 6+) and being able to penalise at least one of RHO's suits.
- (3) I'm not exactly sure what this 4♦ bid meant. What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? E-W were a casual partnership so it's difficult, but assuming South has a weak hand then partner must have points. And what's more, he must have ♠'s (presumably at least four). I would chance 3NT here – if 3NT is the contract then East should be declarer to protect his ♥K. And in the (very unlikely) event that South actually has a rock crusher and doubles then East can happily retreat into the non-vul 4♦

And what happened? 5♦ was three down. 3NT made exactly at two other tables.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't bid 4♣/♦ if 3NT is a viable contract.

As an aside

What would bids of 2♠ or 3♥ by East at (3) mean? 3♥ would certainly be asking for a ♥ stop and since South is known to hold ♠'s and ♥'s then I suppose that 2♠ would be asking for a ♠ stop, or you could play it as showing a ♠ stop. But since East has to be declarer to protect his ♥K (he does not know that North has the ♥A) then I still think that East should gamble 3NT.

Michaels Again!

Board 12 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ 2
West ♥ A1072
N-S vul ♦ Q1096
♣ K1073

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♥	2♥ (1)
3♥ (2)	3NT (3)	pass	pass (4)
pass			

♠ A9765	N	♠ K84
♥ 853	W E	♥ KQJ96
♦ K54	S	♦ A82
♣ Q6		♣ 85
	♠ QJ103	
	♥ 4	
	♦ J73	
	♣ AJ942	

- (1) A Michaels cue-bid, showing ♠'s and a minor.
- (2) An overbid, but South's pre-empt has made it difficult for West.
- (3) Meant as asking partner to bid his minor. I am unsure about the wisdom of bidding here, partner's pre-empt may have caused West difficulties and E-W may well get too high in ♥'s and this ♥ holding may be awkward for East. Also, 4 of a minor is one above 'The Law' (it's only a 9 card minor suit fit) and unwise at this vulnerability.
- (4) But South also did not have his thinking cap on. Now if West had passed then 2NT from North would be asking for the minor. 3NT here must surely be to play – except that partner is a passed hand! He cannot have values for 3NT and so his 3NT bid must be asking for South's minor.

And what happened? 3NT went 3 down for a bottom to N-S. At other tables 4 E-W pairs played in ♥'s, making 7 tricks twice and 9 tricks twice. We'll never know if East would have pushed on to the miserable 4♥ if North had kept quiet – I bet he would have!

The bottom lines:-

- Obey The Law. Be very wary of oversteering the Law when vulnerable – especially if the opponents are not in game or may well be defeated.
- Now I can be quoted saying to raise partner's pre-empt with 3 card support (so a 2 opening to 3 or a 3 opening to 4) but that does not mean raise to 4 when partner has only 5 cards.
- Be aware that partner's pre-empt may have made it difficult for the opponents.

A Word about Michaels and UNT

5-5 or is a 4-card suit permissible? This is up to you, my personal opinion is as follows: -

- For 2♣/♦ over 1♣/♦ I only promise 5-4 or 4-5. Since partner only has to bid at the two level it is acceptable for one of the suits to be just 4-card.
- If partner has to go to the three level then I guarantee 5 cards there. Thus I am always 5-5 for the UNT and 1♠ - 2♠ promises 5 ♥'s and a 5 card minor.
- Thus 1♥ - 2♥ promises a 5 card minor but only 4 ♠'s (but if only 4 then they are good ones).
- Incidentally, I have written quite a bit about two-suited overcalls (it's on the web or ask me if you want a copy). Michaels/UNT are good but have problems; you cannot show all combinations (e.g. ♠'s and ♣'s over a 1♦ opening) and the minor suit is often ambiguous. These problems are solved with Questem or Ghestem whereby both suits are unambiguous but you have to utilise an artificial 3♣ bid. Look it up.

Pick a major – part 1

Board 22 from Wednesday 2nd (and Friday!)

Dealer: ♠ -
East ♥ J97
E-W vul ♦ QJ975
♣ J10987

♠ AQ63	N	♠ J109542
♥ 8	W E	♥ Q10654
♦ AK10632	S	♦ -
♣ KQ		♣ 65
	♠ K87	
	♥ AK32	
	♦ 84	
	♣ A432	

Table A

West(E)	North	East(G)	South
-	-	pass	1♣
2♦ (1)	pass	pass	pass (2)

Table B

West(E)	North	East(G)	South
-	-	pass	1♣
dbl (1)	pass (3)	2♣ (4)	pass
4♣ (5)	all pass		

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this West hand E(a) in this week's quiz? Even if you play strong jump overcalls I don't like 2♦ here as it is passable and you may miss a ♠ fit. The hand is obviously too strong for a simple 1♦ overcall.

(2) I would 'automatically' double here playing negative doubles.

Table B: (1) This hand really is too strong for a 1♦ overcall. So double and then bid ♦'s over partner's expected ♥ response.

(3) I would make it difficult for the opponents and bid 3♣ here.

(4) What did you bid with this East hand G in this week's quiz? Now partner's double of 1♣ does not necessarily guarantee both majors; so bid 2♣, which basically says 'pick a major and I'm happy with at least the two level'.

(5) What did you bid with this West hand E(b) in this week's quiz? I simply bid 4♣ here – keep it simple.

And what happened? 2♦ went 3 down for a poor score. It looks like 4♣ has an obvious 11 tricks to me but one West managed to go two down in 5♠ doubled and another was doubled in 4♣ and made exactly. Why don't people double me in these contracts?

The bottom lines:-

- Bidding the opponent's suit is not natural, even ♣'s when they play a short ♣.
- Do not simply overcall with a huge 18 count.
- A double of 1♣ is playable in the other 3 suits unless the hand is strong enough to bid again.

Incidentally, the board was mistakenly not re-dealt on Friday and so played again. This was not noticed until the very last round when Chuck and I picked up the E-W cards and remembered it from Wednesday. As nobody else seemed to have recognised it we got an average and I let the other results stand. 2nd time round only one pair reached game (5♠ doubled making) and another two pairs managed to land in 2♦ going down.

Mobile phones

Is it asking too much for people to switch off their mobile phones during the session? I note that one player on Friday, notorious for being the slowest player in the club, had a conversation on the phone and subsequently did not play a board as a result. Next time I'll give him an adjusted (unfavourable) score? What do you think?

Pick a major – part 2

Board 30 from Friday 4th

Dealer: ♠ A83
East ♥ AJ96
Love all ♦ J1072
♣ K9

West(F)	North	East(J)	South
-	-	1NT (1)	pass
3♠ (2)	pass	4♠ (3)	all pass

♠ Q9654	N	♠ K10
♥ Q10842	W E	♥ K7
♦ 5	S	♦ AK43
♣ A2		♣ Q10753
	♠ J72	
	♥ 53	
	♦ Q986	
	♣ J864	

- (1) What did you open with this East hand J in this week's quiz? With two tenaces to protect I totally agree with this 1NT opening.
- (2) And what did you do with this West hand K in this week's quiz? I consider it to be worth game and we play 3♠ to show a game-forcing 5-5 major suit hand.
- (3) I would bid 4♥ here, not necessarily because East is a better declarer than West, but because it's usually better for the stronger hand to be declarer. Maybe East forgot the system?

And what happened? 4♠ squeaked home despite East's poor major suit holdings.

The bottom lines: -

- 8 points is enough to insist upon game if you are 5-5 in the majors opposite a 1NT opener.
- It's up to you how you bid 5-5's in the majors opposite a 1NT opener. I prefer transferring but I will usually go along with anything sensible that partner wants to play.

Our 'Friendly' Club

Board 10 from Wednesday 3rd

South

♠ QJ10xxx
♥ AQxxx
♦ xx
♣ -

There was an 'incident' on Wednesday, I did not get involved as I was playing and Dave was in charge. This was the dummy and declarer was playing in a ♥ contract. Declarer called for the ♥A and then called for 'queen'. Apparently dummy played the ♠Q, the next hand played a ♠ without comment, declarer played a small ♥ (not noticing that dummy had played the wrong card – declarer's ♥'s were solid) and the 4th hand quickly 'over-ruffed'. I did not hear about the details until later in the day.

This would be my ruling: -

- (a) When declarer asks for a card without specifying the suit, it is the last suit he asked for. Thus the ♥Q was played from dummy. I assume that dummy (South) was asleep?
- (b) I really don't care what the rules say here – West should have brought the irregularity to declarer's attention. The ♥Q was the card declarer asked for.
- (c) Obviously declarer was also asleep – but we all have our off days.
- (d) East contended that everything was in order and that he should get his trick.
- (e) The director (Dave) was summoned, there was general ill-feeling at the table and the board was averaged.

My ruling would have been as follows: -

- Both defenders behaved badly, especially West.
- The play should have been reset to declarer playing the ♥Q from dummy.
- If East did not like that ruling and feels he is entitled to the trick then he should play elsewhere, that kind of attitude is not tolerated at this club.

A negative double after partner pre-empts? Board 24 from Friday 4th

I'll usually go along with partner (so play jumps to 3♥/♠ showing 5-5 if he really wants to waste these otherwise useful bids when there are better methods) but I draw the line here: -

Dealer:	♠ AQJ1032	West	North	East	South
West	♥ 1062	(me)	(Ian)	(Chuck)	
Love all	♦ 2	2♥	2♣	dbl (1)	pass
	♣ A64	pass (2)	pass (3)		

♠ 54	N	♠ K76	(1) East intended this as a negative double (showing the minors).
♥ KQ9854	W E	♥ J3	
♦ QJ4	S	♦ AK95	(2) After some thought I passed – we certainly had not discussed this sequence and I think that it has to be penalties.
♣ K7		♣ J1098	
	♠ 98		(3) Ian was irate about my pause – he would have called the director if he was not present. But we all know when to totally ignore Ian (most of the time).
	♥ A7		
	♦ 108763		
	♣ Q532		

So then – is dbl at (1) negative or penalties?

- I say it's penalties. West has described his hand and East is the captain. It should not be a negative double because when playing negative doubles you expect partner to re-open with a double when you have the penalty pass; he most certainly never will in this situation.
- Chuck say it's negative and with no 4-card minor I should simply revert to 3♥.

This is the 3rd time that Chuck and I have disagreed when there is obviously no book readily available to cover the particular sequence. So I have again written off to a Bridge magazine, does anybody want to lay any bets before the answer is public knowledge? What are the realistic odds of me being wrong? Having been proved to be correct twice it's time I was wrong? Any bets on it snowing in Pattaya next week?

A weak two opener?

Board 8 from Friday 4th

Dealer:	♠ Q653	West	North	East	South
West	♥ K754	(me)			
Love all	♦ J108	2♠ (1)	pass	pass	3♣ (2)
	♣ 65	all pass			

♠ J109874	N	♠ K	(1) I did not bother to put this one in the quiz as I'm pretty sure that there is only one person in the club who would not open this with 2♠. Fortunately he was sitting East.
♥ 86	W E	♥ AJ32	
♦ AQ7	S	♦ K954	
♣ K2		♣ Q943	
	♠ A2		(2) I cannot criticise this bid – it's difficult – that's what pre-empting is all about.
	♥ Q109		
	♦ 632		
	♣ AJ1087		

And what happened? Most E-W pairs played in 2♠ or 3♠ making 9 tricks. 3♣ went 4 down for a good score to E-W. The top E-W score was when South doubled at (2) and North bid 3♥, doubled for 500 away.

Responding to partner's negative double

Board 28 from Friday 4th

Dealer: ♠ KQ1072
West ♥ A104
Love all ♦ A75
♣ 65

♠ 864	N	♠ AJ9
♥ K976	W E	♥ 52
♦ 93	S	♦ KQ842
♣ Q1072		♣ 943
	♠ 53	
	♥ QJ83	
	♦ J106	
	♣ AKJ8	

Table A

West	North	East	South
pass	1♠	2♦ (1)	2♥ (2)
pass	3♥ (3)	pass	4♥
all pass			

'Expert Table'

West	North(K)	East	South
pass	1♠	2♦ (1)	dbl (2)
pass	2♥ (4)	pass	3♦ (5)
pass	3NT (6)	all pass	

- Table A: (1) A shade light for a two-level overcall, but with these ♠'s sitting over opener and at this vulnerability I think it's fine.
- (2) What would you bid with this South hand? It has the values for 2♥ but unfortunately that promises 5 ♥'s. See 'Expert Table'.
- (3) This is why the 2♥ bid has to guarantee 5 cards – because it uses up bidding space and partner has to know if it's safe to support with just 3 trumps.
- 'Expert' (2) A Negative Double, promising 4+ ♥'s and 6+ points (in my style).
- Table (4) Now this bid is interesting. What did you bid with this North hand K in this week's quiz? Partner has not responded at the two level and may possibly have as few as 6-7 points. 2NT would be incorrect here as it's too high if partner is weak. With this 13 count North has only two options - 2♥ or 2♠.
- (5) And our expert South knows that partner may have just 3 ♥'s, so he takes it slowly with a cue bid of the enemy suit.
- (6) And this expert North also knows what he's doing. Partner's cue bid is forcing to game, with 4 ♥'s he would bid 4♥ but with just 3 ♥'s and a ♦ stop he bids 3NT. With just 3 ♥'s and no ♦ stop he would bid 3♠ and leave it up to partner or else bid 4♥ if the Moysian fit looked the best bet.

And what happened? 4♥ was bid 3 times and went two or three down. 3NT was bid 3 times; -2, -1 or making. 3NT is not easy, but I suppose our experts would have made it?

The bottom lines: -

- A 2♥ bid over partner's 1♠ opening promises 5 ♥'s and 11+ points, whether or not there is an intervening overcall.
- With just 4 ♥'s it's different if there is an overcall or not: -
 - . If there is no overcall then bid 2♣/♦ (can be 4-card) – if partner has 4 ♥'s he will bid them and if he does not then there's no need to mention yours.
 - . If there is an overcall, then negative double to show 4 ♥'s.
- A negative double is unlimited in strength but only promises values to compete to cheapest level of the suit shown or to two of opener's suit (so 2♥/♠ here).
- If you have a 5 card ♥ suit but less than 11 points then it's not enough to bid a forcing 2♥ and so you have to negative double.

Strong vs Weak NT – part 2.

The sequence 1♠ 2♦ dbl pass 2NT is interesting. As I said above it's a problem playing a strong NT. But playing Acol there's no problem as a NT rebid would be 15-16 and so 2NT to deny 4♥'s and show a ♦ stop would usually be OK.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1NT. A balanced 15-17. Quite why at least two people chose 1♦ is beyond me.
- Hand B: (a) 1NT. This hand is well worth a strong 1NT and these Qx's belong in declarer's hand (not dummy).
(b) 2♦, I suppose, but it's a bit feeble. It's too good for 1NT (12-14). That's why I open 1NT – you don't have to worry about your rebid!
- Hand C: 1♠. Bid 5-5's from the top down. If partner responds 1NT or 2♦ then bid 2♥, (or maybe 3♥ over 1NT).
- Hand D: 3NT. Now partner has not made it easy for you (it would have been nice to hear a reassuring double from him to say that he has something) but you have to assume that LHO's Michaels is weak. 3NT is a possible final contract and with the ♥Kx that presumably needs protecting you simply have to gamble that partner has something in ♠'s (he surely has – as otherwise where are they all?).
- Hand E: (a) dbl. It's far too strong for a 1♦ overcall.
(b) 4♠. Anything else is not forcing.
- Hand F: (c), game forcing, is correct in my opinion. 8 points is usually just invitational, but with two 5-card major suits I consider it worth a game force.
- Hand G: 2♣. This is not natural. It asks partner to pick a (major) suit and promises values to compete to at least the two level.
- Hand H: 2♥. With a weak doubleton ♠ I prefer the possible 4-3 fit to 1NT, and partner may well have 5♥'s. Also, 2♥ is preferable as it's more encouraging than 1NT and if partner has say 9-10 points you want him to make a move – he will not over 1NT.
- Hand J: 1NT. With two tenaces to protect 1NT is best. 1♣ is also fine as you have a good rebid of 2♦ (a reverse) but with these major suit tenaces I prefer 1NT. With less points in the majors or one of them worse than Qx then I would go the reverse route.
- Hand K: 2♥. Yes, 2♥ and not the "obvious" 2NT. Why is that?
I suppose that it depends upon how you play your negative doubles, but I do not promise 11 points with the double of 2♦, only enough to compete to 2♥ or 2♠, and so 2NT may be too high. Partner must also realise that this may easily be a weakish hand with just 3♥'s and should not leap off to 4♥ on the assumption that you also have 4♥'s.

Leading A ♠. Partner is totally bust and so to set the contract you must get two tricks with no help from partner. Leading away from an honour will probably cost a trick

Quiz

Answer (as partner is bust) so lead from nothing – it cannot give anything away.

Contacting Others

We now have a list of some member's/guest's telephone/e-mail details on the web-site. When you open the main page, click on 'contact us' and then at the very bottom of that page you'll see a 'contact members' link. When you click that you'll be asked for a password. At the moment it contains 20 or so entries, if you would like your details included then give them or e-mail them to me (if I don't already have them) and I'll include them and tell/e-mail you the password.

		<u>Winner</u>		<u>Runner-up</u>			
Mon 7 th	N-S	1 st	Jean-Charles/Thorlief	62%	2 nd	Bob/Monte	57%
	E-W	1 st	Tomas/Philip	61%	2 nd	Phil/Tom	56%
Wed 9 th	N-S	1 st	Chuck/Terry	56%	2 nd	Alan/Bob P	55%
	E-W	1 st	Bob Short/Jim(Sco)	66%	2 nd	Gene/Richard	59%
Fri 11 th	N-S	1 st	Jim(Sco)/John Gavens	62%	2 nd	Chuck/Terry	59%
	E-W	1 st	Bill/Bob P	62%	2 nd	Paul Scully/Keith	55%

The standings in the Gold Cup competition are close; currently we have (best 30): -

1st **Chuck** 1877.2% 2nd **Dave** 1864.5% 3rd **Bob** 1851.9% 4th Clive 1799.3%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	A trivial one to start with, what do you open with Hand A?
♠ J862	♠ 65	With Hand B LHO opens 2♦, partner bids 2♠ and RHO ...
♥ A85	♥ AKJ3	(a) RHO bids 3♦, what do you do?
♦ K4	♦ Q3	(b) RHO bids 4♦, what do you do?
♣ AK32	♣ KQJ72	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C partner opens 1♦, what do you bid?
♠ Q1054	♠ AK10	With Hand D you open 1NT. Partner bids 2♣. You bid 2♦.
♥ Q	♥ A105	And Partner bids 2♥, showing a weak hand with 5 ♥'s and 4 ♠'s
♦ K73	♦ 982	What do you do?
♣ AQ432	♣ AQ97	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1NT, what do you do?
♠ J762	♠ J93	
♥ KJ42	♥ J10953	With Hand F LHO opens 1♦, partner passes, and RHO responds
♦ 3	♦ AK	1♠, what do you do?
♣ 10652	♣ AK2	

Is it forcing?

What does 4♠ mean in this sequence, and is it forcing?
1♦ - 2♣ - 3NT - 4♠ ?

Leading Quiz

Hand G	West	North	East	South	
♠ K43	pass	1♣	pass	1♥	With this Hand G you are East with this bidding. What do you lead? Answer next page.
♥ J109	1♠	1NT	all pass		
♦ A105					
♣ Q854					

With a balanced 15-17, open 1NT!

Board 15 from Monday 7th

Dealer: ♠ J862
South ♥ A85
N-S vul ♦ K4
♣ AK32

♠ AQ1095	N	♠ K43
♥ Q6	W E	♥ J109
♦ Q62	S	♦ A105
♣ 1096		♣ Q854
	♠ 7	
	♥ K7432	
	♦ J9873	
	♣ J7	

Table A

West	North(A)	East(G)	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	1♣ (1)	pass	1♥
1♠ (2)	1NT (3)	pass	pass (4)

Table B

West	North(A)	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	1NT (1)	pass	2♦ (5)
pass (6)	2♥	pass	pass
pass (7)			

- Table A: (1) What did you open with this North hand A in this week's quiz? See Table B.
(2) North's poor opening choice has let West in cheaply.
(3) North had intended a 1♠ rebid. 1NT is a poor bid as it promises 12-14 with a ♠ stop – the hand has no ♠ stop and is not 12-14; that just one of the problem with not opening 1NT with a balanced hand within your 1NT opening range – you usually have no sensible rebid.
(4) Unfortunately South could not bid 2♦ now as that would have been conventional in their system – NMF.

- Table B: (1) It's a balanced 15 count and 1NT is totally obvious. See bottom lines. Note that this is **not** a flat type 4333 hand and should not devalue. The shape is average and the ♣AKxx are good. Anything other than a strong 1NT is silly.
(5) Transfer
(6) West would now have to come in at the two level; with a strong NT opener sitting over them ½ of the field chose not to. And even if he did South would compete to 3♥ opposite a 1NT opener.
(7) Since the auction had died, I would bid 2♠ here – but then South would bid 3♦ to show his 2nd suit and N-S end up in ♥'s anyway.

Onto the play. What did you lead in the lead quiz? Obviously a ♠, but the ♠K is incorrect – you should lead small from an honour. In this situation that would mean that E-W may well pick up the whole ♠ suit and North score no ♠ whatsoever. This East incorrectly led the ♠K and North scrambled home in his poor 1NT contract.

And what happened? 1NT making was a very poor score for N-S. All but one of the other tables were in 2♥ or 3♥ by North, everybody making 9 tricks– so they all knew when to open 1NT and when to transfer.

The bottom lines: -

- If you can describe your hand in one go, do so.
- Opening 1NT makes it easy for partner.
- Opening 1NT makes it difficult for the opponents.
- Opening 1NT means you never have a rebid problem.
- If you have a Kx holding try to open 1NT so that you can to protect it.
- **In Fact** – it's usually best to open 1NT whenever you can! It makes it easy for partner and difficult for opponents.

Double is take-outBoard 18 from Monday 7th

Dealer: ♠ 65
 East ♥ AKJ3
 N-S vul ♦ Q3
 ♣ KQJ72

♠ Q103	N	♠ K94
♥ 10642	W E	♥ 8
♦ A987	S	♦ KJ1064
♣ 63		♣ 10985
	♠ AJ8742	
	♥ Q975	
	♦ 5	
	♣ A4	

Table A

West	North(B)	East	South
-	-	2♦	2♠ (1)
3♦ (2)	3♠ (3)	pass	4♠
all pass			

Table B

West	North(B)	East	South
-	-	2♦	2♠ (1)
4♦ (2)	4♣ (4)	pass (5)	4♥ (6)
all pass			

Table A: (1) With a decent 6 card ♠ suit, I prefer 2♠ to double.
 (2) With 4 ♦'s a raise to 4♦ will make it more difficult for North (The Law).
 (3) What did you bid with this North hand B(a) in this week's quiz? I would double (showing ♣'s and ♥'s) with 4♣ as my 2nd choice. This North just supported ♠'s.

Table B: (2) This West knew about The Law.
 (4) What did you bid with this North hand B(b) in this week's quiz? This time you are a level higher and it's not so easy (that's why West should bid 4♦). The only sensible bid for North now is double. He chose 4♣ ...
 (5) ... and fortunately for North, East pulled out the pass card before the insufficient bid was noted.
 (6) And so N-S managed to end up in the top spot. If E-W had noted the insufficient bid then North would have had no real option but to bid the poor 4♠ as South is barred from the auction if North bids anything but 5♣.

And what happened? 4♠ was bid 4 times, making 9 or 10 tricks. 4♥ was bid 3 times, making 11 tricks and the pair in 6♥ went one down.

The bottom lines: -

- Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit of The Law.
- Look for the 4-4 fit; 4-4 is better than 6-2.
- A ♠ overcall does not necessarily deny 4 ♥'s.
- When the opponent's bid and support a suit then dbl is usually for take-out. It certainly is in both of the situations for North above.

Got no stop?

Board 16 from Monday 7th

I have covered asking for a stop (cue bid the enemy suit, 4th suit forcing etc.) many times in the news-sheets. Here we have an example where showing a stop (and thus asking for a stop in another suit) is a possibility: -

Dealer:	♠ Q42				
West	♥ 985	West	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ 8	1♦	3♣ (1)	3♥ (2)	pass
	♣ KJ9853	pass (3)	pass		
♠ A105	N	♠ 73			
♥ J	W E	♥ AQ762			
♦ AKQ7532	S	♦ J109			
♣ Q6		♣ A107			
	♠ KJ986				
	♥ K1043				
	♦ 64				
	♣ 42				

- (1) An excellent example of a weak jump overcall.
- (2) This is forcing unless you have an agreement (negative free bids) to the contrary.
- (3) But West has a problem here, North's pre-empt has used up space. A cue bid of 4♣ would ask for a stop – but it's gone past 3NT. One option is to bid 3♣. This is not natural because partner had denied 4 ♠'s (with ♥'s and ♠'s he would have negative doubled). So 3♣ is showing something in the ♠ suit and asking partner to bid 3NT with a ♣ stop. Now this is all very well, but there are a couple of problems. As little as ♣Jxx from partner will do and also if partner has ♣Ax(x) then the wrong hand is declarer – I wrote only last week about Qx belonging in declarer's hand – and with this hand it would be crucial if there were not 10 top tricks. West has a big hand and cannot pass (even if partner's 3♥ was not forcing) and I would simply bid 3NT and hope partner has something in ♣'s – but you all know me, if 3NT is a viable option, then bid it. Who knows, even if there was no ♣ stop North may not lead one (hoping to get South in for a ♣ through).

And what happened?

Nobody found 3NT! Six pairs played in 5♦ usually making 11 or 12 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit of The Law.
- 3NT+1 scores more than 5♣/♦.
- Sometimes you simply have to gamble.
- You can bid a suit that partner has denied in order to get him to bid NT with a stop in the opponent's suit (this tactic is used when the cue bid ask is above 3NT).
- Qx usually belongs in declarer's hand, not dummy.

Redouble is for blood!

Board 13 from Monday 7th

Dealer: ♠ 985
North ♥ J95
Both vul ♦ 974
♣ Q975

♠ 42	N	♠ QJ106
♥ A743	W E	♥ K10862
♦ Q3	S	♦ AK5
♣ A8632		♣ K
	♠ AK73	
	♥ Q	
	♦ J10862	
	♣ J104	

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	pass	1♥	dbl
redbl (1)	pass (2)	1♠ (3)	pass (4)
3♥	pass	4♥	all pass

'Expert' Table

West	North	East	South
-	pass	1♥	dbl
redbl (1)	pass (2)	pass (3)	1♠ (5)
pass (6)	pass	dbl (7)	2♦ (8)
pass (9)	pass	dbl (10)	pass (11)

- Table A: (1) 10+ points. It's often a mis-fit for partner. As this hand is short in ♦'s and ♠'s an alternative bid would be 2NT – Truscott or Jordan 2NT, showing a sound raise to 3♥ (a direct 3♥ is pre-emptive after a double)
- (2) North knows that his side is in trouble. In this sort of situation he has to look for the least expensive spot. With 4 ♠'s it would be best to bid 1♠ and with a 5 card ♣ or ♦ suit he would bid that. With nowhere to run to he correctly leaves it to partner to find a spot.
- (3) What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? This is a terrible bid.
- 'Expert' Table (3) This expert knows exactly what to do. LHO normally has ♠'s for his double – so wait for him to bid them and then double him for penalties. Pass is correct.
- (5) South knows he's in trouble – but there's no harm in trying ♠'s before retreating into 2♦.
- (6) West cannot penalise ♠'s, so he passes in case partner can. This pass is forcing, partner must either double or bid.
- (7) I like big penalties.
- (8) OK, let's try the ♦'s then.
- (9) Another forcing pass.
- (10) We may or may not have game, but the vulnerable penalty looks a good bet.

And what happened? 3♥ made exactly for an average. 2♦ doubled would have gone for 800.

The bottom lines: -

- Redouble shows 10+ points and is often a mis-fit. It is frequently looking for a penalty and opener is expected to pass.
- If the next hand bids, then opener should either double (penalties) or pass.
- Do not bid after partner re-doubles unless you have a very shapely hand.
- And note the forcing pass at (6). Opener is not allowed to pass – if he can (and wishes to) penalise 2♦ he should do so, otherwise he has to bid.
- With a sound raise to 3♥/♠ of partner's 1♥/♠ opener, bid 2NT over a double (Truscott/Jordan 2NT).

♠ 9842
♥ A
♦ Q973
♣ AQ86

Note: This particular deal is not a perfect example of why E-W should look for the penalty. But change West's hand slightly to something like this (a more typical redouble) this and it's a different story, with N-S going for a huge number.

Responding with (sub)minimal values

Board 23 from Monday 7th

Dealer: ♠ J109
South ♥ AJ
Both vul ♦ J84
♣ 86432

Table A
West North East South
1♠ (1) pass pass (2) pass (3)

♠ KQ873 N ♠ -
♥ K94 W E ♥ Q86532
♦ AKQ5 S ♦ 762
♣ Q ♣ K1097
♠ A6542
♥ 107
♦ 1093
♣ AJ5

Table B
West North East South
1♠ (1) pass 1NT (2) pass
3♦ (4) pass pass (5) pass

- Table A: (1) What would you open with this West hand? It's not strong enough for 2♣ and I don't think it's good enough for a strong or Benji two either. So it's 1♠ and hope.
(2) I would never pass here. Actually this hand is a nice 5-count, but partner's ♠ opening has not improved it. I would still bid, however. 1NT is the bid, followed by 2♥ if partner bids 2♣/♦.
(3) South had a think here, but with length in the suit opened I think that pass is usually correct.

- Table B: (1) East got it right – 1NT.
(4) A sigh of relief, 1♠ was not passed out.
(5) But unfortunately this East fell from grace by passing partner's forcing bid. He should bid 3♥ here.

And what happened? The results really were all over the place! Varying from 6♥ doubled minus one to 1♠ (twice) and 3♦ twice. The best spot looks like 4♥ to me but nobody out of 8 tables found it!

The bottom lines: -

- Don't pass partner with a void in his suit if you can possibly muster up a bid.
- 1NT followed by a new suit is weak.
- 1x – 1NT – 3y is game forcing.
- Don't pass partner's forcing bids.
- Slam is not usually a good bet with three aces missing.

As nobody found 4♥, I had to call in the experts: -

West	East	and it's so simple that I don't even have to add any comments.
1♠	1NT	Just one pair found the ♥ fit, but I don't know why they bid 6♥,
3♦	3♥	especially with 3 aces missing.
4♥	pass	

Don't make a weak bid with game-forcing values Board 10 from Wednesday 9th

Dealer: ♠ A9862
 East ♥ J8643
 Both vul ♦ 8
 ♣ 85

West(C)	North	East	South
-	-	1♦	pass
1♠ (1)	pass	1NT (2)	pass
2♣ (3)	pass	2NT (4)	pass
3NT	all pass		

♠ Q1054 N ♠ J3
 ♥ Q W E ♥ AK75
 ♦ K73 S ♦ QJ42
 ♣ AQ432 ♣ K97
 ♠ K7
 ♥ 1092
 ♦ A10965
 ♣ J106

West(C)	North	East	South
-	-	1♦	pass
2♣ (1)	pass	2NT (5)	pass
3♠ (6)	pass	3NT	all pass

- Table A: (1) What did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? Seen 'Expert' Table
 (2) 1NT, 12-14, is correct here. 2♥ would be incorrect as it's a reverse showing about 15+ points and 5 ♦'s.
 (3) Now West is in a spot – he wants to show his ♣ suit but unfortunately 2♣ is not forcing here unless you have a specific agreement (like CBS or NMF).
 (4) Fortunately East bid – I would have passed.
- 'Expert' Table (1) This is correct – bid out your shape. With game forcing values you can bid 2♣ and then bid ♠'s next go.
 (5) I think that 2NT is best here – it's still 12-14.
 (6) And West bids out his shape – forcing.

And what happened? Just about everybody reached 3NT, making +1 or +2.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't make a weak bid with a game forcing hand.
- As responder with a 5 card minor and a 4 card major, bid the minor first if you have game going values.
- After a sequence like 1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT, 2♣ is simply weak, saying you don't like 1NT, unless you agree to play it as conventional.

'Denying' a 4 card major

As I said above, there's no problem with by-passing a 4 card major if you intend to bid it next go. But what if partner is inconsiderate enough to rebid 3NT – what would you then bid with this West hand in the sequence 1♦ - 2♣ - 3NT - ?

Actually there is no problem. Partner has shown a big hand (18+ or else a good long ♦ suit) and so slam will be there. So simply bid 4♠, this is natural, absolutely forcing, and looking for slam.

Open 1NT and you've said it all

Board 7 from Wednesday 9th

Dealer: ♠ AK10
South ♥ A105
Both vul ♦ 982
♣ AQ97

♠ Q94	N	♠ 853
♥ Q8	W E	♥ 9763
♦ J1064	S	♦ AKQ75
♣ KJ84		♣ 3

♠ J762
♥ KJ42
♦ 3
♣ 10652

West	North(D)	East	South(E)
-	-	-	pass
pass	1NT	pass	2♣ (1)
pass	2♦	pass	2♥ (2)
pass	3♥ (3)	all pass	

- (1) South took a view here. With a singleton ♦ 1NT did not look attractive, and if partner has a 4 card major (or even a 5-card major) then 1NT would be a very silly contract indeed. Now for this 'Garbage' Stayman bid you really should be 54xx, 45xx or 4441 (short ♣'s) but South took a reasonable gamble – if partner did not have a 4-card major then he would bid 2♥ (although it's promising 5) and hope that that was a decent spot.
- (2) And that's what happened.
- (3) Now South has shown 4 ♠'s, 5 ♥'s and a weak hand. His range is around 0-7 so the average is about 4 points. North decided that his flat hand was worth a try for game. My opinion is that this is not a 'view' but simply a very poor bid. Opposite partner's advertised weak hand you will go off in 3♥ most of the time and partner will need a super maximum to make game. The problem is that this North hand has only 3 trumps and is also totally flat – it is way against the odds to bid on and risk going down.

And what happened? 3♥ went minus one for a poor score. 2♥ making would have been a good score. At other tables there were the usual spurious results but 1NT made exactly and 2NT was 3 down. Looks like 2♥ would have been a great spot. The bottom lines: -

- Deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape – it does not generate tricks!!
- Take note of the above sentence – I've written it in just about every news-sheet that I've ever written but even one of the 'best' players in the club seems to fail to comprehend it.
- Don't convert partner's top into a bottom by trying for a very pushy game – especially at pairs scoring. And don't try to blame partner when it's you who blew it!
- Taking a view which probably has a greater than 50% chance of working is reasonable.
- Taking a 'view' which has about a zero to 5% chance of working is not reasonable.
- When you open 1NT you have said it all – partner is the captain.
- The sequence 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥/♠ is weak and opener should pass.
- The above sequence shows 5 cards in the major bid – it is taking a view if you have only 4 and obviously you should just ride it out in a silly 1NT if partner is likely to bid on.
- Obey The LAW. $5 + 3 = 8$, so the two level. Bidding 3 is asking for a minus.

And just a word about 5-4 major suit hands opposite 1NT. With a weak hand, bid as above (Stayman and then the 5 card suit). With a strong hand you can bid Stayman and then jump or else you can use a transfer and then bid the 4 card major. Both of these are generally considered to be game forcing but I guess that you could use one of them as invitational if you have another way to show 5-5 in the majors. The 'best' solution is to play Quest transfers.

Being sandwiched – part 1

Board 11 from Wednesday 9th

Dealer: ♠ A82
South ♥ AQ742
Love all ♦ 96
♣ Q73

♠ 10765	N	♠ J93
♥ 86	W E	♥ J10953
♦ 854	S	♦ AK
♣ J1098		♣ AK2

♠ KQ4
♥ K
♦ QJ10732
♣ 654

West	North	East(F)	South
-	-	-	1♦
pass	1♥	1NT (1)	pass (2)
pass	dbl (3)	pass	pass
pass (4)			

- (1) What did you bid with this East hand F in this week's quiz? Now a 1NT overcall of an opening bid is 15-18 and this would be a reasonable bid over a 1♥ opening. But the situation here is different – it is LHO who has opened and RHO has bid. Bidding a natural 1NT here is very dangerous – you are 'sandwiched' between two unlimited hands opposite a passed partner. It's a recipe for disaster – either one can double you for penalties.
- (2) With a minimal opener, South passes. To bid (2♦) would be a poor bid as partner may be able to chop 1NT.
- (3) Chop, chop.
- (4) West could redouble here (SOS) but it's a lost cause whatever he does.

And what happened? It was a disaster for East, minus 3 and 500 away. And at other tables? Two N-S's bid 3NT making exactly. At another table East decided to double the freely bid 3NT, exactly why he thought he could defeat it is a mystery to me.

The bottom lines: -

- Be wary about bidding in the 'Sandwich' position, and don't bid 1NT with a balanced 15-18 points as you may well get clobbered.
- In fact there is a special meaning for 1NT in this position, it's not surprisingly called the Sandwich NT! It is a take-out bid, not strong enough for double but not shapely enough for a jump to 2NT (the UNT, which would have to be extremely shapely indeed in this position – say 6-6). But it should be shapely (5-5), because as we saw above, you'll get clobbered if it's a flat hand.
- Don't double the opponents in a freely bid 3NT just because you have 4 tricks unless you think that you can generate another trick or have reason to believe that partner has something.

Being sandwiched – part 2

Board 2 from Wednesday 9th

And we have much the same thing here, where a 1NT bid in the sandwich position should have been a disaster again. Fortunately for North E-W were beginners: -

Dealer:	♠ QJ5				
East	♥ KQ62	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ J976	-	-	1♣ (1)	pass
	♣ K7	1♠	1NT (2)	2♥ (3)	pass
		pass (4)			
♠ AK1042	N	♠ 97			
♥ 9	W E	♥ AJ873			
♦ AK32	S	♦ Q105			
♣ 1062		♣ AJ4			
	♠ 863				
	♥ 1054				
	♦ 84				
	♣ Q9853				

- (1) Obviously he should have opened 1♥
- (2) A 'Sandwich NT'. Showing the two unbid suits. Unfortunately this hand really is lousy shape for the bid and it should have been punished.
- (3) South did alert the 1NT bid, but East did not bother to ask and simply bid his ♥'s. Had he asked and learnt that North has the red suits then double would have been very profitable.
- (4) Quite why West did not bid game is also mysterious – perhaps he thought that North had 15-18 points and partner was a bit light?

And what happened? 2♥ made +2 and scored about average. At other tables 3 E-W pairs found 3NT scoring 400 or 430. Obviously if North was doubled at this vulnerability it would have been a completely deserved absolute bottom.

The bottom lines: -

- If the opponent's alert a bid which appears to be natural – then ask! Some people do play (and abuse) the weirdest of conventions.
- Be wary of bidding in the 'sandwich seat'.
- Look for the penalty if somebody bids NT in the sandwich seat.

This time we have a slightly more reasonable ‘Sandwich NT’ bid: -

Dealer:	♠ J3				
West	♥ K864	West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ KJ10983	1♣	pass (1)	1♥ (2)	1NT (3)
	♣ 2	2♣ (4)	3♦ (5)	3♠ (6)	pass
		4NT (7)	pass	5♦	pass
♠ K106	N	6♠	pass	pass	dbl (8)
♥ A3	W E	all pass			
♦ -	S				
♣ KQJ98753					
	♠ Q876				
	♥ 10952				
	♦ Q4				
	♣ A64				
	♠ A952				
	♥ QJ7				
	♦ A7652				
	♣ 10				

- (1) A weak 3♦ is not really a good bid here as the hand has a 4 card ♥ suit.
- (2) Correct, always bid 4 card majors up the line
- (3) The dreaded Sandwich NT – showing the two unbid suits. But this time it’s a better example. This hand is nowhere near shapely enough for a pre-emptive 2NT in this ‘vulnerable’ position and double should show a better hand in this ‘vulnerable’ position. I think that one should have 5 cards in both of the suits but I guess that 4 ♠’s here is just about OK(?) as that would be at the one level.
- (4) Brushing the overall aside without bothering to ask what it was (North did alert the bid). I would play 2♣ here as a weak bid and would start off with a double.
- (5) Pre-emptive, North knows that South has ♦’s and ♠’s.
- (6) And this East bid his ♠ suit, oblivious to the fact that South has ‘bid’ them.
- (7) With reasonable ♠’s West decided to go slamming. I don’t like bidding Blackwood with a void, but I guess that it’s a reasonable bet that N-S have the ♦ ace.
- (8) Since nobody bother to ask my partner what I had, I’ll tell you.

And what happened? 6♠ doubled went 5 down for an absolute bottom to E-W. One N-S pair reached 5♦ which made. One West bid 6♣ but that went one down. The bottom lines: -

- If an opponent alerts, then ask what it means if you are not sure.
- K106 is not a slam quality suit opposite just 4 cards.

The Sandwich NT

Bidding 1NT in the ‘Sandwich’ position is dangerous. Do not do it with the ‘traditional’ 15-18 balanced (but pass). I cannot really recommend the ‘Sandwich NT’ bid (showing the other two suits) to inexperienced pairs as it’s very dangerous and too easily abused. Here’s a definition from the internet: -

Sandwich No Trump – ‘This term refers to the bid of No Trump, generally on the one level, of a player made between two bidding opponents after two suits have been mentioned. This bid describes a distribution of 5-5 in the other two unbid suits’.

Contacting Others

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Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: 1NT. No other sensible option.

Hand B: (a) Dbl or 4♣. I prefer double (take-out).

(b) Dbl. Take-out. You don't mind if partner bids 4♥, 4♠ or 5♣. In situations like this where the opponents have bid and agreed a suit double is generally for take-out.

Hand C: 2♣. In this situation you can 'deny' a 4 card major as you are going to bid it next time. You should only do this with game forcing values.

Hand D: Pass. You have said your hand and partner wants to play in 2♥. A raise to 3♥ is totally unwarranted as it overtreads the Law (without being pushed) and it's very likely to go down as partner has promised zero points and this hand has the worst shape possible.

Hand E: Pass or 2♣? Pass is the 'correct' bid, but won't you look silly when they run their 5 or 6 ♦ tricks and partner has a 4 (or even 5) card major suit? Now to bid Garbage Stayman here is not perfect – it's great if partner turns up with a major suit (about a 50% chance) but even if he doesn't have one then 2♥ may still be the best spot. It's a gamble, but one that may be worth taking as you have a reasonable spot in 2♥ when it fails (when partner has no 4 or 5 card major).

Hand F: Pass. A traditional 1NT overcall (15-18) is very dangerous opposite a passed partner when both opponents have bid. If you advertise a flat hand then either opponent can easily double you if they know that they have the balance of power; opposite a passed partner you could easily go for a big number.

Is it Forcing? 1♦ - 2♣ - 3NT - 4♠ ? 4♠ here is natural and absolutely forcing. Responder has 12+ points with 5+ ♣'s and 4 ♠'s and is looking for slam. Hand C fits the bill. He bid ♣'s first to show his shape and now bids his ♠'s because opener has not denied 4 ♠'s with his 3NT bid (it could easily be a balanced 18-19 points with 4 ♠'s).

Leading Quiz A low ♠. Do not lead the ♠K, declarer is marked with a ♠ honour and if it is Qxx or Jxxx then a low ♠ may enable your side to pick up the whole ♠ suit. Don't listen to people to say to lead an honour in partner's suit, that's with Ax, Kx or Qx.

		<u>Winner</u>		<u>Runner-up</u>			
Mon 14 th	N-S	1 st	Paul(Ire)/Henrik	63%	2 nd	Keith/Mike	56%
	E-W	1 st	Alan/Gerry	64%	2 nd	Knud/Lars	59%
Wed 16 th	N-S	1 st	JohnGavens/Terry	55%	2 nd	Ursula/Bessy	54%
	E-W	1 st	Chuck/Dave	63%	2 nd	Paul(Ire)/Henrik	62%
Fri 18 th	N-S	1 st	Alan/Bob	64%	2 nd	Jean-C/Thorlief	58%
	E-W	1 st	Paul Kelly/Dave	62%	2 nd	Ian/Terry/Ron	56%

The strange entry of Ian/Terry/Ron is because Ian rudely walked out on his partner after just 4 boards. Seems he got one his better results when he did not actually play?

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A it is unfavourable vulnerability: - (a) What do you open in 1 st seat? (b) What do you open if you play strong twos?
♠ A74	♠ 7	
♥ KQ10984	♥ KJ83	
♦ -	♦ A6542	With Hand B partner opens 1♥, what do you bid?
♣ 9842	♣ A93	
Hand C	Hand D	What do you open with Hand C?
♠ 96	♠ 873	
♥ AKQ8	♥ A874	With Hand D LHO opens 1♣, partner overcalls 1♥ and RHO bids 2♦, what do you do?
♦ 764	♦ 8653	
♣ AK75	♣ 92	
Hand E	Hand F	What do you open with Hand E?
♠ J10	♠ J	
♥ KJ92	♥ 7	What do you open with Hand F?
♦ AKQ10	♦ 973	
♣ J42	♣ AKQJ10532	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1NT, what do you bid?
♠ K983	♠ AK96	
♥ A53	♥ AKQ102	With Hand H partner opens a gambling 3NT – showing a long solid minor suit with no outside ace or king.
♦ J75	♦ 86	What do you bid?
♣ 975	♣ 87	

Pre-empt in 5th seat?

Board 12 from Monday 14th

Dealer: ♠ A74
West ♥ KQ10984
N-S vul ♦ -
♣ 9842

West	North(A)	East	South
-	pass (1)	1♦ (2)	pass
1♠	3♥ (3)	pass	pass
dbl	all pass		

♠ QJ32	N	♠ 85
♥ 72	W E	♥ AJ653
♦ Q86	S	♦ KJ943
♣ AQJ6		♣ K
	♠ K1096	
	♥ -	
	♦ A10752	
	♣ 10753	

- (1) What did you open with this North hand A in this week's quiz? Playing weak twos then I guess that 2♥ would be the favourite. With this good suit and a void I would not argue with 3♥; and if playing strong twos then pass, 3♥ and 1♥ are all worth considering. Anyway, this North plays strong twos and passed, no problem.
- (2) Quite why East opened 1♦ instead of 1♥ is a mystery.
- (3) This is incredibly silly. Now I said that I would not argue with it as an opening bid, but to come in the 'sandwich seat' at the three level at unfavourable vulnerability is sheer lunacy. Both opponents have bid and exchanged information – it's too late for a pre-empt now. His 'excuse' that the hand was too good for an initial 3♥!! Quite how good a vulnerable opening 3♥ is meant to be was not stated. I asked why not 2♥ now if you really have to bid? There were some muttering about 'strong', but by a passed hand I did not bother to enquire further. The only logical reason that I can see for passing and then coming in with 3♥ is that it's a decent hand with 4 ♠'s – not the case here. And what happened? 800 away and a well deserved total zero.
The bottom lines: -
 - Pre-empt to the limit first go and do not bid again later.
 - Whatever system you play, a jump overcall by a passed hand cannot be strong.
 - It's too late later.
 - Passing and subsequently 'pre-empting' is something totally new to me. 5th seat bidding?
 - Actually, there is a situation where pre-empting later is sensible – that's when you have an outside 4 card major and so should not normally open with a pre-empt.

No super-accept available?

Board 23 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer: ♠ Q
South ♥ QJ7632
Both vul ♦ 109
♣ AJ54

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1NT (1)
pass	2♦	pass	2♥ (2)
pass	pass (3)	pass	

♠ J853	N	♠ K762
♥ A8	W E	♥ 9
♦ AQ65	S	♦ J873
♣ 1097		♣ K863
	♠ A1094	
	♥ K1054	
	♦ K42	
	♣ Q2	

- (1) Weak, so 12-14.
- (2) If this South hand was about 4 points stronger and I was playing a strong NT, then I would super accept (I super-accept with a non-min and 4 trumps). But playing a weak NT super-accepting is unsound as partner has promised no points.
- (3) Playing a weak NT you need about 11 points to invite. This hand is borderline – 6 ♥’s is great but the singleton Q is not. However, singleton honours are no so bad when partner has opened NT and 3 ♥ would be a reasonable gamble. But with just 12 points South would probably decline the invitation anyway.

And what happened? South made 11 tricks (the defence was not perfect) and scored a joint top. And at other tables? Two did bid 4♥ but they both went one down; two tables stopped in 3♥ but they both made +1 and there were the usual spurious results.

The bottom lines: -

- When you open 1NT and partner transfers, then you can super-accept with 4 trumps. I prefer to be non-min (so 16-17) and I do not consider super-accepting to be sound when playing a weak NT.

A cold slam – but difficult to bid?Board 10 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer: ♠ 7
 East ♥ KJ83
 Both vul ♦ A6542
 ♣ A93

Table A

West	North(B)	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
pass	4♥ (1)	pass	pass (2)
pass			

♠ KQ863	N	♠ AJ104
♥ 106	W E	♥ 5
♦ 973	S	♦ QJ10
♣ 864		♣ J10752
	♠ 952	
	♥ AQ9742	
	♦ K8	
	♣ KQ	

'Table Expert'

West	North(B)	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
pass	3♠ (1)	pass	4NT (3)
pass	5♣ (4)	pass	6♥ (5)
all pass			

- Table A: (1) What did you bid with this North hand B in this week's quiz? 4♥ is a very poor bid. The best bid is that made at our 'Experts' table; but playing simple methods you should bid 2♦ and then bid 4♥ next go – this is a 'delayed game raise' and shows a sound raise to 4♥ as opposed to a direct raise which is pre-emptive.
- (2) Obviously South passes opposites the advertised weak response.
- 'Expert' (1) This is the correct bid – a splinter. It sets ♥'s as trumps and shows ♠ shortage;
 Table: it is a hand with values for a sound raise to 4♥ and slam aspirations.
- (3) And now it's as easy as pie. South only needs to know about aces and the king of trumps – so RKCB.
- (4) Playing standard 0314 responses this shows 3 key cards.
- (5) That's all South needs to know.

And what happened? Only one table out of 7 found the slam.

The bottom lines: -

- Considering how many times I have written about splinters it is disappointing that only one pair found this 'trivial' slam. – It really is trivial playing splinters.
- And playing RKCB also helps.
- I keep on about how 31 points is not enough for slam without a fit or a long suit, and this deal shows just how important a fit and shape are. It's a lay-down slam with just 26 combined points.
- Shortage with a fit for partner is excellent if partner has no wasted values in the suit, and the way to tell him is to splinter.

Obey the Law

Board 8 from Friday 18th

Dealer: ♠ AKQ9
West ♥ Q3
Love all ♦ 10
♣ KJ10543

Table A

West(D)	North	East	South
pass	1♣	1♥	2♦
pass (1)	3♣	all pass	

♠ 873 N ♠ 1054
♥ A874 W E ♥ KJ652
♦ 8653 S ♦ A7
♣ 92 ♣ AQ8

Table B

West(D)	North	East	South
pass	1♣	1♥	2♦
2♥ (1)	3♣	3♥ (2)	all pass

♠ J62
♥ 109
♦ KQJ942
♣ 76

Table A (1) What did you bid with this West hand D in this week's quiz? It's only 4 points but that's not what matters, with 4 ♥'s you have to support partner. The best bid here is actually 3♥ - go to the limit of the Law (9 trumps). This is a weak bid, as with a sound raise to 3♥ or better you would cue bid the opponent's suit.

Table B (1) Now actually I was West here but I did not bid 3♥ as my partner was not experienced and I assumed he would take it as a good hand. But I still had to bid, and so I chose 2♥ with the intention of bidding 3♥ later if necessary.
(2) This bid is probably unsound (one above the Law) but it's reasonable; I would pass (you all know about me and the Law) but then West (the real me) would have bid 3♥ anyway.

And what happened? Only two E-W pairs competed to 3♥, making exactly for a shared top. At other tables N-S were usually down in ♣ or ♦ contracts but 50 or 100 to E-W did not beat 140 for 3♥ making. The bottom lines: -

- Obey the Law – compete to the total number of trumps. In the above example it is West who knows that there are 9 trumps and it should be him (not East) who goes to the 3 level. Points are largely irrelevant in these competitive situations.
- A jump raise to 3 of partner's 1♥/♠ overcall is best played as pre-emptive.
- With a sound limit raise or better, cue bid the opponent's suit.

The Gambling 3NT

Board 18 from Friday 18th

Dealer: ♠ 10854
East ♥ J6
N-S vul ♦ KQ10542
♣ 9

Table A

West	North	East(E)	South
-	-	3NT (1)	pass
6NT (2)	all pass		

♠ AK96	N	♠ J
♥ AKQ102	W E	♥ 7
♦ 86	S	♦ 973
♣ 87		♣ AKQJ10532
	♠ Q732	
	♥ 98543	
	♦ AJ	
	♣ 64	

Expert Table

West(H)	North	East(E)	South
-	-	3NT (1)	pass
5♣ (2)	all pass		

- Table A (1) What did you open with this East hand E in this week's quiz? It's far too good for a 3♣ pre-empt and actually there is a bid for specifically this hand type – 3NT. An opening 3NT bid is best played as the gambling 3NT – showing a solid 7, 8 or 9 card minor suit. There are variation as to how much is allowed outside and the best treatment is to play absolutely nothing outside. Thus the bid is not actually gambling at all – you've told partner exactly what you have.
- (2) But this is gambling of course. But this E-W pair were an unfamiliar partnership and West did not know if East promised something outside for the bid.
- 'Expert' Table (1) Our experts have discussed it and play the best variation if the gambling 3NT – absolutely guaranteeing no outside ace or king.
- (2) And now it's as easy as pie (for our experts). West knows that there are just two losers – in the minor that East does not have, so he bids 5♣ which is pass or correct. Actually, there is a slight improvement on this bidding. 4♣ would be pass or correct and 4♦ is conventional – asking partner to bid a singleton/void if he has one as there would be slam opposite ♦ shortage but I won't go into that here and it's slightly complex when opener's shortage is in the other minor and you need a conventional bid (4NT) with no shortage.

And what happened? A ♦ lead would be obvious from the North hand; and with this South hand I would lead the ♦A against this bidding. South at Table A chose something else and E-W scored a lucky 13 tricks. Other results were all over the place, with just 3NT going two down at one table.

The bottom lines: -

- Play the gambling 3NT
- And it's best to play it with nothing outside.
- Lead an ace against 6NT when an opponent is known to have a long solid suit – if you don't lead it you may not get it later; and who knows – maybe partner has the king.

We've seen this hand before (news-sheet 79) but it reappears for a couple of reasons. It recently appeared in my column in the Pattaya Mail and Henrik (a top-flight visitor from Norway) came up to me on Wednesday and asked if I wrote the articles. I admitted my guilt and he then said that he totally agreed with me. He added that if anybody did not open 1NT and then produced the absurd sequence of East below he would be laughed out of their club. The second reason for repeating it was that there was a similar hand on Friday (next page).

In the article I said that I would open 1NT but that not a single person in the club agreed with me. Henrik is the first. Perhaps others will realize the wisdom of our ways when they review the bidding below and that of the next deal. I won't mention any names, but the 'laughable' East (Henrik's words, not mine) was somebody who is always criticizing others and lately continually trying to find fault with my bidding!

West	East	West	North	East(C)	South
♠ QJ85	♠ 96	-	-	-	pass
♥ -	♥ AKQ8	pass	pass	1♣ (1)	pass
♦ AJ832	♦ 764	1♦ (2)	pass	1♥ (3)	pass
♣ 10943	♣ AK75	1♠ (4)	pass	1NT (5)	pass
		2♣ (6)	pass	3NT (7)	all pass

I won't bother to go into all of the bids again, the pertinent points are: -

- (5) 12-14
- (6) I don't like NT
- (7) 18-19

And how should the bidding go? Easy: 1NT - 2♣ - 2♥ - 2NT - 3NT.

The bottom lines: -

- With a balanced hand within your opening 1NT range.
- Do not lie about your strength with your NT rebid.
- You do not guarantee honours in all suits when you open 1NT and, indeed, you may sometimes have two weak suits.
- Think about your rebid(s) before you open.
- Open 1NT and you never have a rebid problem.

With a balanced hand, open 1NT – part 2

Board 21 from Friday 18th

Dealer: ♠ A752
North ♥ 1084
N-S vul ♦ 83
♣ KQ108

♠ J10	N	♠ K983
♥ KJ92	W E	♥ A53
♦ AKQ10	S	♦ J75
♣ J42		♣ 976
	♠ Q64	
	♥ Q76	
	♦ 9742	
	♣ A53	

Table A

West(E)	North	East(G)	South
-	pass	pass	pass
1♦ (1)	pass	1♠	pass
2NT (2)	pass	3NT (3)	all pass

Table B

West(E)	North	East(G)	South
-	pass	pass	pass
1NT (1)	pass	2♣ (4)	pass
2♦	pass	2NT (4)	pass
			all pass

- Table A (1) What did you open with this West hand E in this week's quiz? It's much the same as Hand C – you should open 1NT as otherwise you have rebid problems.
- (2) And, lo and behold, West has no rebid! 2NT here is 18-19 and is a gross overbid. 1NT would be 12-14 and is an underbid. The only remotely sensible bid is a reverse into 2♥ but I would like a stronger/more shapely hand and the reverse promises 5+ ♦'s in any case. No, there is no sensible rebid having failed to open 1NT. It's a shame that this West had not noted my article in the Pattaya Mail – or maybe he simply disagrees with me?
- (3) East obviously has game opposite 18-19 and 3NT is correct.
- Table B (1) This West reads the news-sheets (well actually he writes them, 'twas I). Seems I do practice what I preach.
- (4) What did you bid with this East hand G in this week's quiz? 2♣ followed by 2NT is fine with 8 points, but this flat (4333) hand is not worth 8 points and I would pass.

And what happened? 3NT deservedly went two down. One pair stopped in 1NT and 2NT was usually made on the nail.

The bottom lines: -

- With a balanced hand within your opening 1NT range, open 1NT.
- Do not lie about your strength with your NT rebids.
- Downgrade a hand with 4333 type shape

Incidentally, what would you lead with this North hand? The ♣K looks right to me – top of a (near) sequence. This lead promises the queen and the jack or ten. South should overtake and push another ♣ through declarer. Note that South really should do this as if South plays the ♣5 or ♣3 on the first trick North will probably take it as discouraging, placing declarer with ♣AJ and will not continue the suit.

Contacting Others

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Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 2♥. With this nice shape 3♥ is possible, but at this vulnerability 2♥ must be best.
(b) pass or 3♥ or even 1♥ are possible. With no weak 2♥ available I guess that some may choose 3♥. And an aggressive player may choose 1♥ - it's only 19 for the rule of 20 but 1098 in your long suit are worth a point. I would not argue with any of these options – but I would argue if you decided to pass and then 'pre-empt' later!
- Hand B: 3♠. A splinter agreeing ♥'s and showing a sound raise to 4♥ with ♠ shortage.
If you do not play splinters, then bid 2♦ followed by 4♥ - this is a 'delayed game raise' and shows a sound raise to 4♥. A direct 4♥ bid here is pre-emptive.
- Hand C: 1NT. Don't worry about the weak suits. If you don't open 1NT with a balanced hand smack in the middle of your 1NT opening range it will be impossible to find sensible bids later.
- Hand D: 3♥. This is best played as pre-emptive. With a sound raise to 3♥ it's best to cue bid with 3♦. If you/your partner do not play this scheme then you cannot pass with 4 card support – so bid 2♥ with the intention of bidding 3♥ later if necessary.
- Hand E: 1NT. Same comments as Hand C.
- Hand F: 3NT. The gambling 3NT. If you play this convention this hand is perfect – promising a long solid minor with absolutely nothing outside.
- Hand G: Pass. With 8 points 2♣ followed by 2NT if partner does not bid ♠'s is fine. But this hand, with it's totally flat 4333 shape, is not worth 8 points.
- Hand H: 5♣, pass or correct. You know that there are just two losers in a minor and this bid asks partner to pass if his suit is ♣'s or else to correct to 5♦. There is actually a more precise bid here (4♦ to ask about partner's shape in case there is a slam) but I won't go into that now.

		<u>Winner</u>		<u>Runner-up</u>		
Mon 21 st	N-S 1 st	Knud/Lars	66%	2 nd	Jan/Tomas	61%
	E-W 1 st	Paul(Irl)/Henrik	68%	2 nd	Mike/Terry	56%
Wed 23 rd	N-S 1 st	Albert/Jacques	56%	2 nd	John G/Emil	55%
	E-W 1 st	Gerald/Derek	57%	2 nd	Jan/Knud	55%
Fri 25 th	N-S 1 st	Chuck/Henrik	62%	2 nd	Mike/Angels P.	59%
	E-W 1 st	Dave/Gerry	67%	2 nd	Jim(Sco)/Phil	64%

The standings in the Gold Cup competition are now very close; currently we have (best 30): -

1st Chuck 1884.1% **2nd Dave** 1883.8% **3rd Bob** 1851.9% 4th Clive 1799.3%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A RHO opens 1♠. (a) What do you do? Suppose you pass, LHO bids 2♠ and this is passed round to you (b) then what do you do?
♠ 9	♠ AQ6	
♥ A1054	♥ K52	
♦ 63	♦ Q875	With Hand B RHO opens 1♠ and this goes round to partner who doubles. What do you bid?
♣ KQ10843	♣ 965	
Hand C	Hand D	What do you open with hand C?
♠ 8742	♠ 954	
♥ AQ9732	♥ 1053	With Hand D it's love all. Partner opens 1♠ (could be 4 card), what do you bid ?
♦ 74	♦ A76	
♣ 7	♣ Q754	
Hand E	Hand F	What do you open with Hand E?
♠ KQ104	♠ 10	
♥ AK	♥ K105	With Hand F you open 1♦, partner bids 1♠ and RHO bids 2♥, what do you bid?
♦ Q873	♦ KQJ962	
♣ A108	♣ K98	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1NT, what do you do?
♠ 986	♠ K63	
♥ J86	♥ KQ72	With Hand H partner opens 1♥, what do you bid.
♦ J62	♦ QJ2	
♣ KQJ4	♣ J105	
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J RHO opens 1♥, what do you bid?
♠ AK10952	♠ 2	
♥ -	♥ AK102	What do you open with Hand K?
♦ KJ8732	♦ 10876542	
♣ 4	♣ 3	

Rudeness

Being rude to partner (and others) and excessive raising of the voice will not be tolerated at this club. Dave and I agree that if there is any further problem from Thorlief or Ian then they will be banned from both clubs.

For reference, the players currently 'on notice' (they will be suspended/banned for any further infraction) are now: Thorlief, Ian, Alex and Jeff. There are a number of others who should be 'careful' but I won't name them, obviously this includes the three other people who have previously been suspended.

Now I wrote the above before two further 'incidents' occurred: -

- a) John Gavens distributed a leaflet around in which he was rather rude about me. More of this later.
- b) I received complaints from regulars about the aggressive attitude of a visitor.

It's time to make the club policy on a few points very clear: -

1. Rudeness and aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated. The *only* exception is that I don't really care what anybody calls me. I generally answer back with a logical reply in the news-sheet (John Gavens gets what's coming later).
2. The aim of this club is that it is a **friendly** club and the strict laws of bridge may not apply. There is a copy of the local rules around or it's on the web-site. The attitude should be to get a friendly game – not to try to get a top on every board by intimidating the opponents.
3. If an experienced player is playing a scratch partnership and asks what a double means and gets the reply 'I don't know' then that is good enough at this club. He most certainly should not be rude/aggressive about it.
4. Towards the end of a competitive auction, if you bid, LHO pauses and eventually passes and partner passes then it is impolite (and incorrect) to pack up your bidding cards saying that RHO cannot bid. This is extremely rude (and wrong) and this type of arrogant attitude will not be tolerated at this club.
5. Anybody who 'ticks off' an opponent because of the way the stop card is played is simply being rude. You are asking to be thrown out.
6. The bridge sessions start at 1.00. It is polite to turn up at least 10 minutes before play starts so the director can gauge how many tables and decide upon the movement. Turning up at 1.02 two times running is rude/arrogant and totally unacceptable. Do it again and you won't get a game.
7. Experienced players have to adapt to this club where not everybody is international standard. Chuck learnt this the hard way. Anybody else who upsets people will simply be asked to leave the club. Since points 2-6 were all by the same visitor this week he should take note (I won't name him but I have spoken to him). Any more complaints and he will be asked to leave.

There are a couple of deals about play this week, let's start with a great example of the need to unblock: -

Unblock

Board 9 from Monday 21st

Dealer:	♠ 2				
North	♥ AK102	West	North(K)	East	South
E-W vul	♦ 10876542	-	pass (1)	1♠	pass
	♣ 3	2♣	dbl (2)	3NT (3)	pass
		pass	4♦ (4)	4♠	dbl
♠ -	N	♠ AKQJ98	pass	pass	4NT (5) dbl
♥ Q953	W E	♥ J874	pass		
♦ A93	S	♦ -	all pass		
♣ AKQ975		♣ 1082			
	♠ 1076543				
↑	♥ 6				
DUMMY	♦ KQJ				
	♣ J64				

- (1) What did you open with this North hand K in this week's quiz? Pass is correct, it's a poor bid to pre-empt with a 4 card major.
- (2) From a passed hand partner will not expect much more than this. It shows the red suits.
- (3) I can't see the ♦ stop.
- (4) North considered his shape worth another noise – especially at this vulnerability.
- (5) I still can't see the ♦ stop.

Anyway, the bidding is not the point. South led the ♦K which was won in dummy with the ♦A. Declarer reeled off the six ♣'s – what three cards should South throw?

South can play it pretty much double dummy – He knows that partner has 6 ♦'s left and it is imperative that he throws his two remaining high ♦'s away. South knows North's ♦ holding and has to hope that North also has the ♥AK (very likely on the bidding). In actual fact (at this table and one other in 3NT) South threw his ♥, a ♠ and a ♦. The point is that if South keeps even one high ♦ then dummy exits with a ♥, North wins, plays a ♦ and south then has to let declarer in with a ♠.

Now just suppose that South does correctly pitch a high ♦ on the 4th ♣, can declarer foil this excellent defence?

Yes! His only hope is that south has a singleton or void ♥ (very likely on the bidding). He should immediately stop with the ♣'s and exit with a ♥. North wins but South still has one high ♦ left. North leads a ♦ which South has to win and with nothing but ♠'s left he has to give declarer 5 ♠ tricks. Probably even better is for declarer to cash only 3 ♣'s before switching to a ♦ as it's possible that South started with just two ♦'s.

The bottom lines.

- If you have the top cards in a suit in which partner has more (and also the next top card(s), then throw your cards away to unblock.
- Throw your winner(s) away if you know that you will be end-played to concede (5!) tricks.

Here's the second of our deals on the play: -

Aces are for taking kings

Board 30 from Monday 21st

Dealer: ♠ A10752
 East ♥ Q
 Love all ♦ Q
 ♣ AJ9852

♠ K6 N ♠ QJ84
 ♥ KJ7652 W E ♥ A
 ♦ A765 S ♦ J942
 ♣ K ♣ Q1063

♠ 93
 ↑ ♥ 109843
 DUMMY ♦ K1083
 ♣ 74

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
1♥	pass (1)	1♠	pass
2♦	pass	2NT	pass
3NT	al pass		

(1) I would have bid a Michaels 2♥ (♠'s and a minor) here.

Anyway, it's not about the bidding, but the play. South led the ♥10 and declarer won per force. A ♦ was then led to dummy's ♦A and a ♦ came back to declarer's ♦J and South's ♦K

♠ A10752
 ♥ -
 ♦ -
 ♣ AJ985

♠ K6 N ♠ QJ84
 ♥ KJ765 W E ♥ -
 ♦ 76 S ♦ 94
 ♣ K ♣ Q1063

♠ 93
 ↑ ♥ 9843
 DUMMY ♦ 108
 ♣ 74

South cannot lead a red suit in this position and chose the ♠9. Dummy played low – what card should North play?

The answer is that, as usual, you should look at what partner has led. The ♠9 is surely top of nothing and North should simply play low, holding back with his ♠A to fell dummy's ♠K later.

And what happened? North went up with the ♠A and declarer then had 3 ♠ tricks and made his contract exactly. 3NT went one down at another table.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't waste an ace on this air if you know it can capture an honour later.
- Michaels is weak or *very* strong; 5-5 or better shape is ideal.

Balancing - part 1

Board 1 from Monday 21st

Dealer: ♠ 765
North ♥ 963
Love all ♦ AJ104
♣ A76

West	North	East	South(A)
-	pass	1♠	pass (1)
2♠	pass	pass	pass (2)

♠ QJ43	N	♠ AK1082
♥ Q82	W E	♥ KJ7
♦ K952	S	♦ Q87
♣ 52		♣ J9
	♠ 9	
	♥ A1054	
	♦ 63	
	♣ KQ10843	

(1) What did you bid with this South hand A(a) in this week's quiz? I would overcall 2♣.

(2) What did you bid with this South hand A(b) in this week's quiz?

This is the balancing seat – the bidding has died at a low level and partner must have values. Double is possible (but a 3♦ response would be awkward) so I think that South should bid 3♣.

And what happened? 2♠ made exactly for a top to E-W. At other tables E-W were pushed up and went down or else N-S were making 3♣.

The bottom line. Understand balancing – don't let the opponents play in a comfortable contract if you can compete.

Balancing - part 2

Board 23 from Wednesday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ K94
South ♥ 876
Love all ♦ 1042
♣ 10873

West(B)	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
pass	pass	dbl	pass
1NT (1)	pass	pass (2)	pass

♠ AQ6	N	♠ 52
♥ K52	W E	♥ QJ93
♦ Q875	S	♦ A93
♣ 965		♣ AKJ2
	♠ J10873	
	♥ A104	
	♦ KJ6	
	♣ Q4	

(1) What did you bid with this West hand B in this week's quiz? When partner has made a balancing double you should assume that he is bidding 3 of your points and so deduct 3 points from your hand. Thus 1NT in this position is about 9-12 as partner may have as few as 8 points for his double. I was West and bid 1NT here.

(2) Chuck was East. He knew exactly what my bid was (he too understands balancing). He said later that he was close to a raise to 2NT and would have bid on if West has jumped in ♥'s. But with lousy ♠'s and no fit he decided not to raise 1NT to 2NT. I totally agree.

And what happened? 1NT made +1 for a top to E-W. At other tables E-W usually bid to 3NT going 1 or 2 down

The bottom line. Understand balancing: –

- 1NT opposite partner's balancing double is about 9-12.

Something Different

And now it's time for something completely different – we have an input from another player. Now I'll start with a little background. The Wednesday club is run by Dave and so I have a 'day off'. I generally do this with a relaxing game with Chuck.

That means that Dave has to be the odd one out and play with anybody left over. On Wednesday 16th John Gavens was left over. Now a year or two back John was extremely rude to Dave and Dave has refused to ever play with him again. So Chuck and I had to put ourselves out – I played with John Gavens and Chuck played with Dave.

Now I have made my policy on not mentioning names very clear. If somebody makes a foolish bid or play then I may or may not write it up but I won't mention names. But if somebody makes a foolish bid/play and then tries to blame me at the table, then the gloves are off. Here is another typical John Gavens classic blunder/try to blame partner. I wrote up the hand but did not publish it – I simply gave a copy to John and expected a simple acceptance that he had made a mistake. How silly of me! John Gaven never makes mistakes, and he gave me his written answer, distributed it around the club, and insisted I print in full (it appears later). Anyway, have a look at these two problems first, it's the same bidding. N-S were playing a weak NT and 4 card majors – hence the 1♠ opening: -

	DUMMY ↓	West	North	East	South
		-	-	-	1♠
N	♠ 63	pass	pass	dbl	pass
W E	♥ AKQ98	1NT	all pass		
S	♦ 853				
	♣ J108				
♠ QJ107					
♥ J4	<u>Problem 1</u>	You are South. Partner leads the ♠9, you play the ♠7 and declarer (West) wins with the ♠A. He leads a ♥ to the ♥Q and then the ♦3 from table, what card do you play?			
♦ KJ42					
♣ AK2					
<hr/>					
♠ 954	<u>Problem 2</u>	You are North, same bidding as above. You lead the ♠9 which declarer (West) wins with the ♠A. He leads a ♥ to the ♥Q and then the ♦3 from table, ♦4 from partner, ♦9 from declarer, what card do you play?			
♥ 1053					
♦ A76					
♣ Q754	DUMMY ↓				
N	♠ 63				
W E	♥ AKQ98				
S	♦ 853				
	♣ J108				

- Answers next pages. There is no catch – these really are the trivial problems that they appear to be, but there are an amusing couple of pages ahead.

Blame me for your blunder

Dealer: ♠ 954
South ♥ 1053
Love all ♦ A76
♣ Q754

♠ AK82	N	♠ 63
♥ 762	W E	♥ AKQ98
♦ Q109	S	♦ 853
♣ 963		♣ J108

♠ QJ107
♥ J4
♦ KJ42
♣ AK2

♠ 54
♦ A7
♥ 105
♣ Q754

DUMMY
↓

♠ K82	N	♠ 6
♥ 76	W E	♥ AK98
♦ Q10	S	♦ 85
♣ 963		♣ J108

♠ QJ10
♥ J
♦ KJ2
♣ AK2

Board 11 from Wednesday 16th

West	North(D)	East	South(me)
-	-	-	1♠ (1)
pass	pass (2)	dbl (3)	pass
1NT	all pass		

The bidding is not important, N-S were playing 4 card majors and a weak NT and South elected to open 1♠ at (1). North chose to pass at (2) – 1NT is an alternative. East doubled at (3) and a final contract if 1NT by E-W was reached.

And now onto the play: -

North led the ♠9 which ran round to declarer's ♠A.

Declarer has 7 tricks – but why not try for an extra one? - who knows, the defence may do something stupid?!

So West led a ♥ to dummy's ♥Q and led a ♦ back, inserting the ♦9 when South played low, and North ducked!

So West has now got his 8th trick and is ensured of a top.

Obviously if North had simply taken the ♦A and led another ♠ then N-S get 2♠'s, 2♦'s and 2♣'s.

So West has now **already got** his absolute top but there is still 'worse' to come: -

Declarer rattled off 4 ♥ tricks and South was 'squeezed'. He 'knew' that declarer had ♦AQ10 (since partner could not beat the ♦9) and so had to keep his ♦KJ2. So on the ♥'s he had to throw the ♣2, ♠10 and ♣K!

Declarer then led a ♦ from table and South covered. Since West is known to hold ♦AQ10 it made no difference which card he played – he (I) played the ♦K which partner took with his now bear ♦A. The ♦Q gave West an (unneeded) 2nd overtrick.

Now I had said nothing, but then John commented on my 'silly' play of the ♦K. This really is rather stupid – John had already gifted them the top with his bad bid and bad play and then tried to blame me! He added that I should not try to blame partner for my mistakes!!

And what happened? E-W got 150 for a complete top, the next highest score was 100 their way. 1NT making exactly would have been about average. Had North bid 1NT then N-S get a good score whatever, if East competed to 2♥ then that goes down and if North is left in 1NT then one down is just 50 away.

The bottom lines: If you have made a stupid play (so John Gavens here) then you should either apologise (a simple 'sorry partner' is fine) or else keep quiet. Try to blame partner with a load of twaddle then expect to be written up – with names.

I gave the previous page to John Gavens, expecting that he graciously accept that he had made a mistake. I print his reply in full, as he insists. He wrote it in capitals and I keep them so that you can distinguish his writings from mine. The bracketed numbers are my addition:

I WILL USE CAPITALS WHICH MAY HELP YOU UNDERSTAND THE 'CLASSIC BLUNDER' WAS ENTIRELY YOURS (so John means Terry). THE OPENING LEAD DREW THE ♠A – DAVE(1) IS GETTING FAR TOO GOOD NOT TO HOLD UP UNLESS HE HAD ANOTHER STOP – WHICH COULD ONLY BE THE KING – ACCORDING TO YOUR OWN HAND – AND HE CROSSED TO THE ♥'S WHICH HE WOULD HAVE RUN HAD THE ♠A BEEN SINGLETON. HE DID NOT BUT LED A SMALL ♦ – BE YOUR AGE TERRY – 11 POINTS IS MOST UNUSUAL FOR 1NT (2) – SO UP WITH THE ♦K, SHOW THE ♣A, GET A POSITIVE AND WE COME TO 6 TRICKS.

YOU MAY BE A GRAND MASTER OF HINDSIGHT BUT YOU ARE OBVIOUSLY NOT A G.M. AT THE TABLE. BLIND TO THE MENACE OF A ♥ SUIT WITH JUST A DOUBLETON – AND YOU HAVE THE TEMERITY TO TRY TO BLAME ME(3)!

(4) A TWO PAGE LETTER POINTING OUT WHY I PLAYED A CERTAIN HAND INCORRECTLY INITIALLY CALLED FOR NO COMMENT – NOT EVEN YOUR DANCING ON YOUR SEAT WITH RAGE, WHICH CONTRIBUTED TO MY LATER GROSS ERROR.

(4) WHEN I CALLED FOR A ♦ ON ANOTHER OCASSION YOU HAD THE GALL TO TELL ME THAT I DIDN'T KNOW THAT YOU HAD NO MORE ♥'S.

YOUR PARANOIA TO CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM LOWERS YOUR STANDARDS.

(5) PERHAPS YOU WILL CARE TO PUBLISH YOUR LETTER AND MY COMPLETE ANSWER.

(6) YOUR 'BOTTOM LINE' COMMENT IS COMPLETELY TRUE – SO WRITE IT WITH NAMES AND LOOK A COMPLETE PRATT!

JOHN GAVENS.

Now I won't bother to reply to this drivel, but I will correct the obvious & clarify a point or two:

- (1) I don't dispute that Dave is a fine player. That, however, is irrelevant as declarer was Gerry and Dave was not at the table – he was playing with Chuck elsewhere as Chuck and I had put ourselves out to ensure that John got a game.
- (2) If you understand balancing then declarer is indeed marked with about 11 points.
- (3) I only 'blamed' John *after* he had criticised my play.
- (4) I have no idea what these two paragraphs are referring to, presumably they are references to earlier John Gavens errors, but John did ask me to print his letter in full.
- (5) Done, and (6) done (I added his name to the 'bottom lines').

Who's the 'Pratt'?

Everybody makes mistakes. One of the main reasons that I enjoy playing with Chuck is that he is good enough to (politely) point out my mistakes, and I appreciate this (and it goes the other way round also). I simply cannot comprehend the mentality of somebody who simply refuses to accept that they have made the most obvious of errors (plural) and then tries to blame it on partner.

As I said, I won't even bother to answer John's nonsense. There's a free beer on offer for anybody who can come up with a logical reason for not bidding and for not playing the ♦A. But I did give the 'problems' 1&2 to members of the club...

Everybody said that they would have bid with the North hand (and then there would be no problem). **Everybody** played a low ♦ (as I did) for problem 1. Chuck at first considered playing the ♦K but then accepted that it could never gain and could be disastrous if declarer held something like ♠AK82 ♥76 ♦Q10976 ♣96 (or any hand where partner has a singleton ♦A or ♦Q – quite likely as declarer is playing on ♦'s). **Everybody** played the ♦A as John did not for problem 2. When I asked for a comment on ducking the ♦A the answers I got were varied, some unprintable. Absurd was typical for the milder comments.

Gerry diplomatically did not answer the questions. He simply correctly stated that there would be no problem had North bid 1NT.

I asked Chuck what he would say to partner if he was South, played a low ♦ and North failed to play the ♦A. Chuck said that he would say nothing (as did I). I then asked him what he would say if partner then tried to blame him for the bottom on the board. His answer was *'If you want to know the source of your problems, John, then look in the mirror'*.

So, according to John it seems that **everybody** in the club except John Gavens is a 'pratt'!

So, John. I gave you the sheet privately to politely point out the errors of your ways – repeatedly blaming partner when you made beginner's mistakes. You insisted upon my printing it together with your ridiculous reply in order to be rude and make me look a 'pratt'. Seems to have mis-fired somewhat, eh?

The bottom lines: -

- Don't blame partner when you have made a silly bid.
- Don't blame partner when you have made a silly play.
- Don't blame partner when you have done both of the above on the same deal!
- I really cannot see the point in publicly being rude to somebody who has gone to the trouble of writing up a hand to privately inform you of the errors of your ways.
- Do not pass partner's opening with 6 points, especially with 3 card support for his major.
- Generally speaking (unless there is a *very* good reason to do otherwise), 2nd hand plays low and 4th hand wins.
- 1NT opposite partner's balancing double is about 9-12 pts.
- Accepts you mistakes graciously.
- John has an excellent command of the English language, including a few words that I would never use. It's a shame that 'sorry partner' are not in his vocabulary.
- And finally, as Chuck says, *'Look in the mirror'* before you rudely open your mouth?

Incidentally, this is by no means the first time that this sort of thing has happened. John Bourne, Dave and Sid have all refused to play with John G because of his rudeness and repeatedly incorrectly criticising partner. He knows that he will be kicked out of the club if I get another complaint. Luckily for him I do not mind if people are rude to me – I simply turn it against them.

Well, wasn't that fun! Isn't it refreshing to have somebody else's opinions even if they are rude garbage? Not quite the general tone of the news-sheets (I am rarely rude to people, especially in print) but I guess others have their own idiosyncrasies. Let's get back to reality, and my usual polite jovial self: -

Shape is more important than points Board 10 from Wednesday 23rd

Dealer:	♠ J7	West(J)	North	East	South
East	♥ 98653	-	-	pass	1♥
Both vul	♦ Q4	dbl (1)	4♥ (2)	dbl (3)	pass
	♣ QJ108	4♠ (4)	pass	pass	dbl (5)
		all pass			

♠ AK10952	N	♠ 32
♥ -	W E	♥ QJ10
♦ KJ8732	S	♦ 105
♣ 4		♣ A97653
	♠ Q86	
	♥ AK742	
	♦ A96	
	♣ K2	

- (1) What did you bid with this West hand J in this week's quiz? A Michaels 2♥ perhaps? Now a Michaels bid would show 5-5 in ♠'s and a minor and is best played as either weak or VERY strong. In my opinion this hand is in-between – I only play the strong version with a VERY strong hand. So I believe that double is best – and if partner bids ♣'s then bid ♠'s. Anyway, these are my personal opinions and I was West so I doubled.
- (2) Excellent bid. Weak, 5 ♥'s and a singleton. Even Chuck approved.
- (3) With two defensive tricks this is also excellent bidding.
- (4) But with 6-6 shape I did not fancy defending, especially at this vulnerability.
- (5) 16 points, so double? Actually it made little difference if South doubled or not as West has found the top spot.

And what happened? 4♠ doubled made +1 for the E-W top. Two other E-W's found 4♠ and made exactly for good scores. South was allowed to play in 4♥ four times (3 times not even doubled). Do people not realise the trick making potential of a decent 6-6 shape? 4♥ went just one down for good scores to N-S.

The bottom lines: -

- It's usually best to be declarer when 6-6 with all of the points in these suits.
- A double followed by a pull of partner's penalty double at the 4 level shows a very shapely hand, so don't double it expecting to make AK of your suit, declarer is surely void.
- Michaels is weak or *very* strong; 5-5 or better shape is ideal.

Being Devious

Board 25 from Wednesday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ 10842
North ♥ 96
E-W vul ♦ AK954
♣ 64

♠ K63	N	♠ AQ
♥ KQ72	W E	♥ AJ1084
♦ QJ2	S	♦ 7
♣ J105		♣ AKQ97
	♠ J975	
	♥ 53	
	♦ 10863	
	♣ 832	

West(H)	North	East	South
-	pass	1♥	pass
2NT (1)	pass	3♣ (2)	pass
3♥ (3)	pass	3♠ (4)	pass
4♠ (5)	pass	4NT (6)	pass
5♣ (7)	pass	6♥	all pass

- (1) Jacoby 2NT, game forcing
- (2) singleton or void ♣
- (3) no ace to cue
- (4) cue bid (ace)
- (5) cue bid (king)
- (6) RKCB
- (7) 1 key card (1430)

Obviously the auction needs explaining: -

- (1) What did you bid with this West hand H in this week's quiz. A direct 4♥ is best played as weak and the best treatment is to play Jacoby 2NT: Promising 4♥'s, a sound raise to 4♥ or better and no singleton/void.
- (2) A singleton/void ♣! No, this was not a matter of pulling the wrong card; it was Chuck being ultra devious. He was always going to slam and so 'invented' ♣ shortage hoping for a ♣ lead rather than a ♦.

And what happened? Despite Chuck's finest effort, South led a ♦ anyway! So 6♥ made exactly, scoring just a bit above average as two Easts also bid the slam but did not get a ♦ lead.

The bottom line.

- You can deceive partner and lie with your bidding if you are in charge.

Pass for penalties?

Board 18 from Wednesday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ AJ95
East ♥ 4
N-S vul ♦ A853
♣ AJ106

West	North	East(C)	South(F)
-	-	pass (1)	1♦
pass	1♠	2♥ (2)	pass (3)
pass	dbl (4)	pass	pass (5)
pass			

♠ KQ63	N	♠ 8742
♥ J86	W E	♥ AQ9732
♦ 10	S	♦ 74
♣ Q5432		♣ 7
	♠ 10	
	♥ K105	
	♦ KQJ962	
	♣ K98	

- (1) What did you open with this East hand C in this week's quiz? Pass is best – it is usually best not to pre-empt (so 2♥ here) with a 4 card major.
- (2) A bit on the weak side for a two level overcall, but the vulnerability is right, and partner knows that you are a passed hand.
- (3) What did you bid with this South hand F in this week's quiz? Pass is correct. 2NT is wrong as that would show a much stronger hand since partner has only promised 6 points. With no other agreement (such as the Support Double), double here would be for penalties (shows a 4 card ♥ suit).
- (4) North's bid here is not that easy. Double is forward going but passable; it is not for penalties but in principle offers the possibility of penalising the opponents. I would not double because I would not like to defend 2♥ when partner is known to have a maximum of three ♥'s and at this vulnerability N-S should bid game rather than defend. I would bid 3♥ - asking partner for a ♥ stop.
- (5) Over the double South has a tricky decision. Since (I assume in their methods) South has denied 4 ♥'s then passing looks reasonable to me (presumably North has something in ♥'s when he doubled?) although I would certainly not argue with 2NT and at this vulnerability it may be best to bid.

And what happened? 2♥ doubled was just one down and scored a top for E-W as N-S bid game at most tables.

Contacting Others

We now have a list of some member's/guest's telephone/e-mail details on the web-site. When you open the main page there is a 'contact members' link in the left column. When you click that you'll be asked for a password. At the moment it contains 20+ entries, if you would like your details included then give them or e-mail them to me and I'll include them and tell/e-mail you the password.

Deduct a point for 4333 and miss game?

Board 17 from Friday 23rd

I was approached by someone on Friday who said that a reasonable game was missed because his partner took my advice and devalued a 4333 type hand. Let's have a look: -

Dealer:	♠ 986	West	North(G)	East	South(E)
North	♥ J86	-	pass	pass	1NT (1)
Love all	♦ J62	pass	pass (2)	pass	
	♣ KQJ4				

♠ AJ532	N	♠ 7
♥ Q3	W E	♥ 1097542
♦ K954	S	♦ A10
♣ 95		♣ 7632
	♠ KQ104	
	♥ AK	
	♦ Q873	
	♣ A108	

- (1) What did you open with this South hand E in this week's quiz? More than one player opened 1NT. It's 18 points with OK shape and two tens – it really is too good for 1NT.
- (2) What did you bid with this North hand G in this week's quiz? I too would pass.

And what happened? 4 pairs bid 3NT, mostly making or making +1 and everybody in 1NT made 9 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- A decent 18 count with two tens is too good for 1NT. Open a minor and then bid 2NT.
- As always, it's correct to knock off a point for a 4333 type shape hand.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 2♣. I would overcall with this decent 6-carder. I don't like double because 2♦ from partner will be awkward. Pass is a reasonable alternative.
(b) 3♣. This time you are in the balancing seat and really have to say something. Again, I don't like double because of a possible 2♦ reply (I would double if the ♠'s and ♦'s were reversed) so 3♣ must be best now.
- Hand B: 1NT. This shows around 9-12 opposite a balancing double.
- Hand C: Pass. It's usually best not to open with a pre-empt when you hold a 4 card major.
- Hand D: 1NT. Even though it's totally flat you clearly have to bid, especially as you have 3 card support for partner's major and you are non-vul.
- Hand E: 1♦ (with a view to rebidding 2NT). It's too good for 1NT.
- Hand F: Pass. 2NT is incorrect as it shows a better hand because partner may have as few as 6 points.
- Hand G: Pass. Knock off a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape and it's not worth an invitational 2NT.
- Hand H: 2NT, Jacoby. If you don't play Jacoby 2NT then you have to fall back on bidding 2♣ and 4♥ next go. A direct 4♥ is played as weak.
- Hand J: dbl. I will not bid Michaels 2♥ (♠'s and a minor) with a hand of this strength. For me Michaels is either weak or *very* strong.
- Hand K: Pass. It's best not to pre-empt with a 4 card major, especially one this good.

		<u>Winner</u>		<u>Runner-up</u>	
Mon 28 th	N-S	1 st Kenneth/David	61%	2 nd Thorlief/Tom	57%
	E-W	1 st Gerald/Derek	63%	2 nd Richard/Gene	59%
Wed 30 th		1 st Bill/Mike	66%	2 nd Jim(Sco)/Dave	62%
Fri 2 nd	N-S	1 st Chuck/Paul K	75%	2 nd Bill/Ian	56%
	E-W	1 st Dave/Marg	61%	2 nd Tomas/Phil	58%

I'm afraid that the news-sheet is a bit short this week. My heart was not in it due to some happenings which are fully detailed on the next page.

The Gold Cup competition is getting very interesting. Dave overtook Chuck for the lead on Wednesday. But Chuck then came right back with a 75% game on Friday. That meant a 14 point jump for Chuck and he now leads Dave by 9 points. However, it's the 30 best results that count and if they both continue to get equally good results then Dave may well win as his 'poor' scores (so the ones that drop off) are worse than Chuck's. Currently we have: -

1st **Chuck** 1898.2% 2nd **Dave** 1889.0% 3rd **Bob** 1856.6% 4th **Clive** 1799.3%

in the Silver Plate competition (best 10) we have 1st Ken Judson 2nd Clive
and in the Bronze Medal competition (best 5) we have 1st Gerald/Derek 2nd Paul K

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A partner opens 1♠, what do you bid?
♠ K986	♠ K108	With Hand B partner opens 1♦. (a) what do you bid?
♥ -	♥ AKQ974	Suppose you choose 1♥ then what if: -
♦ 7	♦ A654	(b) partner bids 2♣, what do you do?
♣ AK987532	♣ -	(c) partner bids 2♦, what do you do?
Hand C	Hand D	(a) What do you open with Hand C? Suppose you open 1♦ and partner responds 1♥, then (b) what do you bid?
♠ Q5	♠ K3	With Hand D RHO opens 1♣ and you overcall 1NT. Partner bids 2♠, natural and weak. (a) what do you do?
♥ A92	♥ AJ7	(b) What would you do if partner had given an explanation that your 1NT bid was 12-14?
♦ AKJ763	♦ AK96	
♣ K10	♣ J1083	

What's your lead?

♥ 9642 You are on lead against a NT contract and elect to lead this suit, which card do you lead?

What is 3♣?

1NT - 2♦ - 3♣?

I understand that this sequence (no interference) occurred in the ASEAN teams (see next page). The 2♦ bidder was asked what 3♣ meant and replied 'no idea'. You can be sure that Chuck and I know **exactly** what this means, but then we were not playing.

The Teams Sham

In last week's news-sheet I wrote an article about rudeness at this club. In particular, I mentioned one visitor who had upset **a number** of people. I did not name him (it was Henrik) but said that he would be warned.

However, this was overtaken by events: -

Last week the ASEAN bridge games were held in Pattaya. Dave and I had decided to enter a team which would be sponsored (by as much as the club could afford) by the club funds. It's a long story, with people saying that they would play and then dropping out etc. but eventually the team of 6 was Me/Chuck, Dave/Hans and Alan/Gerry (the Acol pair).

About a week before the event Alan said that Henrik wanted to join our team or else Alan would withdraw and play with Henrik in another team. As the Monday club is now very busy (and because I did not want the team breaking up yet again) I said that I would stand down and just play on the Tuesday if 7 players were allowed.

We had a 'team' meeting and I made it very clear that the partnerships were set (Henrik to play with Chuck) and that any messing about with the pairings would not be a good idea. I also made it **very** clear that if possible I wanted to play on Tuesday with Chuck. Henrik also made it very clear that that would not be possible as we could only have 6 people on the team.

And then what happened? The first day (Monday) did not go well. **Henrik** did not get on well with Chuck. **Henrik** decided to split up the established Dave/Hans partnership. **Henrik** then decided that on the Tuesday he wanted to play with Paul (a visitor) and so invited in a 7th player anyway, in the **full knowledge** I wanted to play with Chuck if possible. **Nobody** even bothered to get in touch with me although **everybody** knew that I really wanted to play (and the team was being subsidised by money that **Dave and myself** had accumulated).

Obviously things just went from bad to worse. At the end of the Tuesday both Chuck and Dave were thoroughly fed up and neither played on the Wednesday.

Anyway, it was Henrik who I mentioned last week who's rudeness and supercilious attitude had upset a number of players in the club (quite an amazing feat, to upset at least 6 people in just 4 appearances at the club). I was going to warn him but after I learnt of his incredible selfish and arrogant behaviour in the teams I decided that he should simply be thrown out of the club for ever. We most certainly can do without people like him. The vast majority of the club have expressed their sympathy at the way I was treated and said that Henrik's behaviour was appalling and that he should most certainly be banned.

I had been looking forward to playing in this event for months and am still very upset that I let this ignorant individual spoil it for me. Gerry and Dave both subsequently apologised to me for not contacting me and letting it get out of control. I do not expect any other members of the team to even think of apologising – that is just the way they are.

The bottom lines: Dave and I subsidised the event. I did not get to play but an uninvited visitor got to play instead. Dave got to play with his partner on just one day. Chuck was upset. Dave was very upset. Words cannot express how upset I was (and still am). Henrik got to play throughout but will **never** play (and annoy people) at this club ever again.

I don't suppose that I will ever get a chance to play in a big tournament like this again.

The jump rebid is not forcing

Board 23 from Monday 28th

Dealer: ♠ K108
South ♥ AKQ974
Both vul ♦ A654
♣ -

♠ QJ642	N	♠ 953
♥ 82	W E	♥ J103
♦ 103	S	♦ J2
♣ Q864		♣ A7542
	♠ A7	
	♥ 65	
	♦ KQ987	
	♣ KJ93	

West	North(B)	East	South
-	-	-	1♦
pass	1♥ (1)	pass	2♣
pass	3♥ (2)	pass	pass (3)
pass			

- (6) What did you bid with this North hand B(a) in this week's quiz? 2♥ is best - provided that you pay it as strong which is 'standard'. Bid 2♥ here and you have no problem later in the auction.
- (7) What did you bid with this North hand B(b) in this week's quiz? The problem here is that 3♥ is not forcing and this is why 2♥ at (1) is simplest. The best bid now is 2♠, 4th suit forcing. I think it's best to play it as game forcing and then a subsequent ♥ bid would be forcing.
- (8) With two small ♥'s, a pass of the 3♥ jump is very reasonable.

And what happened? The results were all over the place, but two pairs did bid 6♥ making 13 tricks. The bottom lines.

- A jump in a new suit over partner's opening shows a very strong hand/suit unless you have an agreement to the contrary.
- In most sequences, a jump rebid (by either opener or responder) is highly invitational but not forcing.
- To make the sequence forcing there are usually options; including 4th suit forcing, a reverse, or a new suit at the 3 level.

Which card do you play?

♥ J83 ← DUMMY

N	YOU ↓
W E	♥ AQ105
S	

DECLARER

Those present may recall that there were a number of noisy exchanges between John Gavens and Emil on Monday. Emil did not turn up on Wednesday and so I had the undoubted pleasure of partnering John and he told me about his partner's 'terrible' play on this deal. You (John G) are East and partner leads the ♥2 against 3NT. Which card do you play when dummy plays low? Answer next page.

Which card do you play? – answer

DUMMY→ ♥ J83 YOU ↓
 N
 ♥ 9642 W E ♥ AQ105
 S
 ♥ K7

You are East, defending 3NT; which card did you play when partner led the ♥2 and dummy played low? ‘Obviously’ you should play the ♥10. Partner’s ♥2 is 4th best so he has exactly four ♥’s which may, or may not, include the ♥K. Playing the ♥10 cannot lose, going up with the ♥A followed by the ♥Q as John did loses in the actual position. John Gavens went to great lengths to explain to me how his play of the ♥A and then ♥Q was correct and how his partner’s lead was the problem. I’m with Emil here.

A Jump Rebid?

Dealer: ♠ 10742
 West ♥ K10865
 Love all ♦ 2
 ♣ AJ2

♠ A96 N ♠ KJ83
 ♥ 43 W E ♥ QJ7
 ♦ 10954 S ♦ Q8
 ♣ Q865 ♣ 9743

♠ Q5
 ♥ A92
 ♦ AKJ763
 ♣ K10

Board 24 from Wednesday 2nd

Table A

West	North	East	South(C)
pass	pass	pass	1♦ (1)
pass	1♥	pass	2♦ (2)
pass	pass (3)	pass	

Table B

West	North	East	South(C)
pass	pass	pass	1NT (1)
pass	2♦	pass	2♥
pass	2♠ (2)	pass	4♥ (3)
all pass			

- Table A: (1) What did you open with this South hand C(a) in this week’s quiz? I think that 1♦ is indeed best.
 (2) What did you bid with this South hand C(b) in this week’s quiz? This hand is far too good for a miserable 2♦. With decent 3 card support, 2♥ is possible but I think that a jump to 2NT or else 3♦ are better.
 (3) With a presumed mis-fit, North reasonably passed.
- Table B: (1) This South decided to open 1NT. Now I have no problem opening 1NT with a 6 card minor suit as long as both doubletons are reasonable (Qx or better) and I will not argue too much with this 1NT opening. However, I would not personally open 1NT as I think it’s too good! AKJxxx is worth far more than 8 points. I would open 1♦ and then jump to 2NT over a 1♥/♠ response although 3♦ would also be reasonable.
 (2) Game forcing, showing 5 ♥’s and 4 ♠’s in their methods.
 (3) With decent ♥’s and two doubletons this must be the best bid (rather than 3NT).

And what happened? 4♥ was the top spot. The computer says that South should make 10 tricks, Chuck made 12 (don’t ask me how) on his way to that 75% result.

The bottom line.

- A super dooper 17 count if far too good for 1♦ followed by 2♦.
- And it’s also a bit too good for a 1NT opener in my opinion.

John Gavens has asked me to include his name whenever I write up an incident involving him. This is presumably because he is always right and I will look foolish if I criticise him. So here's my 2nd effort at looking foolish under these 'new guidelines': -

Dealer:	♠ K3				
South	♥ AJ7	West	North(D)	East	South
Both vul	♦ AK96	-	-	-	pass
	♣ J1083	1♣	1NT (1)	pass (2)	2♠ (3)
		pass	2NT (4)	all pass	
♠ A	N	♠ Q942			
♥ Q102	W E	♥ 9843			
♦ Q1032	S	♦ J54			
♣ AKQ65		♣ 92			
	♠ J108765				
	♥ K65				
	♦ 87				
	♣ 74				

- (1) Generally played as 15-18
- (2) East asked what range 1NT was and received the (incorrect) reply of 12-14 from South.
- (3) With no agreement to the contrary, this bid is weak and to play.
- (4) Absurd.

Now I just happened to witness this auction. And before the opening lead I informed John (North) that it was his duty to tell the opponents if there had been an incorrect explanation. John stated that his bid showed 15-16, fine.

But what was this absurd 2NT bid at (4) when partner had taken out 1NT? I did not ask, but North has shown his hand with his 1NT overcall and South is the 'captain' – North should most certainly pass. Did he bid 2NT because he knew that his partner thought that he had 12-14 points? If so that is against the rules – you are not allowed to act upon information that partner has given the opponents. Either way, 2NT was ridiculous.

And what happened? 2NT was two down for a poor score. 2♠ making would have been a good score. The bottom lines.

- Once you have opened or overcalled 1NT then partner is the 'captain'.
- To bid 2NT over partner's weak take out of 1NT is 'absurd'.
- You are not allowed to let partner's explanation of your bid affect your bidding or play.

What is a psyche?

There's an interesting opinion about a bid being a psyche on the next page. Here's a definition from the Official Bridge Encyclopedia: -

'Psyche - generally meaning bluffing calls to create the illusion of strength or length in a particular suit in order to conceal weakness.'

Was it a Psyche?

♠ AQ Remember this hand from last week's news-sheet? Chuck opened 1♥ and
♥ AJ1084 got a conventional 2NT (Jacoby) response. He replied 3♣, showing ♣
♦ 7 shortage. Now I wrote up the hand, congratulating Chuck on his very
♣ AKQ97 devious bid.

But Ian saw it another way – he said it was a psyche! And since I have made my zero tolerance policy on psyches very clear then Chuck should be

Is Ian right? Well I suppose he has a point. If partner had responded 1♠ and this hand bid 2♦ then that is certainly a psyche. In this case Chuck did not lie about his minor suit distribution in order to stop the opponents from finding a possible ♦ fit/contract and since Chuck's bid certainly did not conceal weakness (see previous definition) I think it's fine. But I also accept that Ian has a point. What do you think?

Know your splinters, cue bids etc.– part 1

Board 24 from Monday 28th

Dealer: ♠ QJ
West ♥ QJ92
Love all ♦ 98532
 ♣ J10

West	North	East(A)	South
1♠	pass	3♥ (1)	pass
4♥	pass	???	

♠ A10742	N	♠ K986
♥ 7653	W E	♥ -
♦ AK4	S	♦ 7
♣ Q		♣ AK987532
	♠ 53	
	♥ AK1084	
	♦ QJ106	
	♣ 64	

Unfortunately this E-W pair ran out of time and the board was averaged, so we'll never know if they would have recovered from this misunderstanding. So what is 3♥ at (1)? And what did you bid at (1) with this East hand A in this week's quiz?

In standard, it's much the same as the jump to 2♥ that I recommended a couple of pages back – strong and natural. However, I don't really like it here as it takes up so much room (and I prefer to play 2/1 anyway when a simple 2♥ is game forcing).

So given that you play standard methods, what should East bid at (1)? I would not bother with a splinter but bid a natural 2♣. The auction could develop in any number of ways but it would be child's play playing 2/1 as then a subsequent ♠ bid by East would set ♠'s as trumps and be game forcing. If not playing 2/1 then I guess that East would have to jump at some stage or introduce some sort of artificial bid and it may be awkward after N-S ♥ interference. Life really is easy playing 2/1.

And what happened? 5 pairs bid 6♠, one pair bid 6♣.

The bottom lines: -

- Go for the major suit 5-4 fit game/slam rather than a long ♣ suit.
- Don't splinter if it takes up too much room.
- Learn 2/1 – it really makes life easier as you do not have to make artificial 4th suit bids or whatever to set up a game force after a two level response.

Know your splinters, cue bids etc.– part 2

Board 27 from Monday 28th

Dealer: ♠ A1054
South ♥ 53
Love all ♦ AJ1075
♣ 76

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
pass	1♠	pass	4♣ (1)
pass	4♠ (2)	pass	pass (3)
pass			

♠ J762	N	♠ 2
♥ Q984	W E	♥ J7
♦ K8	S	♦ 97432
♣ J104		♣ KQ985
	♠ KQ98	
	♥ AK1062	
	♦ Q	
	♣ A32	

- (1) South did not know what to bid here, he eventually chose 4♣ in the belief that it agreed ♠'s and showed the ♣A. Actually, it is best played as a splinter, showing ♣ shortage.
- (2) Whatever 4♣ was meant to mean, I would cue bid with 4♦ here.

And what happened? 4♠ was bid at all but one table and made 10 or 11 tricks. 6♣ was bid once and went one down. One pair managed to stop in 2♠(!) but they made 12 tricks!

It looks like 6♠ should make even with the bad break (and that's what the computer says).

The bottom lines: -

- When partner bids a major, then an unnecessary jump is a splinter.
- Cue bids are never jumps

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: 2♣. Now you have excellent ♠ support and are obviously going to game or slam; you could splinter (3♥) but that takes up an awful lot of bidding space so I prefer 2♣. This would be a great hand for 2/1 as you don't have to do anything other than support ♠'s at the lowest level next go when playing 2/1.

Hand B: (a) 2♥. Unless you have an agreement to the contrary, a jump shift like this is strong. In a major it shows a virtually self-sufficient suit; at least 5 cards, usually 6; and is game forcing and slam seeking.
(b) 2♠. 4th suit forcing. A subsequent ♥ bid would then be game forcing. A direct 3♥ bid over 2♦ is strong but not forcing (it's highly invitational).
(c) 2♠. A reverse. Partner has denied 4 ♠'s and so this 'lie' is relatively safe. The point is that 3♥ is not forcing.

Hand C: (a) 1♦. 1NT is reasonable but I think it's a bit too good (that ♦AKJxxx is huge).
(b) 2NT or 3♦. The hand is far too good for a simple 2♦.

Hand D: (a) Pass. You have said you hand and partner wants to play in 2♠.
(b) Pass. You are not allowed partner's explanation to affect your bid.

What's your lead - answer?

From ♥ 9642 I would lead the ♥2 against a NT contract, although I would not criticise another card. Against a suit contract I would lead the ♥6 (usually followed by the ♥9 next go – MUD) as I like to play that a low card promises an honour against a suit contract. Against NT I lead 4th best and that does not necessarily promise an honour. I don't mind if you play differently or disagree, but I don't think that anybody should criticise the ♥2 lead against NT.

		<u>Winner</u>		<u>Runner-up</u>	
Mon 5 th	N-S 1 st	Bengt/Bob	59%	2 nd	Sally/Jeremy 52%
	E-W 1 st	Paul Scully/Richard	62%	2 nd	Jan/Knud 61%
Wed 7 th	N-S 1 st	Bob/Terry	60%	2 nd	Chuck/Tom 59%
	E-W 1 st	Gerard/Derek	68%	2 nd	Kenneth/John 65%
Fri 9 th	N-S 1 st	Bob/Albert	58%	2 nd	Neil/Terry 58%
	E-W 1 st	Dave/Tomas	60%	2 nd	Anne/Barry 58%

Well done Bob, I note that you achieved the elusive triple (with 3 different partners). The Gold Cup competition is still close, but Chuck has a fairly decent lead. Currently we have: -

1st Chuck 1898.2% **2nd Dave** 1890.2% **3rd Bob** 1858.9% **4th Clive** 1799.3%

in the Silver Plate competition (best 10) we have 1st Ken Judson 2nd Clive
and in the Bronze Medal competition (best 5) we have 1st Gerald/Derek 2nd Paul K

There's a new bridge club in town! As I understand it, it's on Tuesdays and Saturdays. There will be a couple of sessions this year but in order to avoid Christmas and new year they will start in earnest next year. I'm sure that everybody will join me in wishing them (and all of the people who are unable to play at our club for one reason or another) success.

This new club is absolutely nothing to do with Dave or myself and our club is still 3 days every week regardless of Christmas, new year, Soncran or whatever.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A partner opens 1♣, what do you bid?
♠ AKQ7	♠ J98432	With Hand B partner opens 1NT. You transfer and partner obediently bids 2♠, what do you do now?
♥ QJ10964	♥ AQ9	
♦ A7	♦ 75	
♣ 7	♣ 76	
Hand C	Hand D	What do you open with Hand C?
♠ 86	♠ 8	With Hand D LHO opens 1♠, partner overcalls 2♦ and RHO bids 2♠, what do you do?
♥ AKQ1073	♥ A10965	
♦ A	♦ K2	
♣ K1063	♣ AQ985	
Hand E	Hand F	What do you open with Hand E?
♠ 75	♠ AKQ96	With Hand F partner opens 1NT. What do you bid and what do you plan to do next go (partner will simply accept a transfer or will bid 2♦ over Stayman).
♥ KQ84	♥ Q1097	
♦ AJ	♦ -	
♣ AQJ86	♣ 10965	

What is 2NT? Some players in the club play weak jump shifts. So in an uninterrupted sequence like 1♣ - 2♥ - 2NT where 2♥ is weak, what is 2NT?

The Jump Shift

Board 4 from Monday 5th

Dealer: ♠ 963
West ♥ 87
Love all ♦ J1098
♣ QJ53

♠ J6	N	♠ AKQ7
♥ A532	W E	♥ QJ10964
♦ Q32	S	♦ A7
♣ AK104		♣ 7

♠ 10842
♥ K
♦ K654
♣ 9862

Table A

West	North	East(A)	South
1♣	pass	2♥ (1)	pass
4♥ (2)	pass	pass (3)	pass

Table B

West	North	East(A)	South
1♣	pass	2♥ (1)	pass
pass (2)	pass		

- Table A: (1) What did you bid with this East hand A in this week's quiz. This particular East at Table A was a beginner and I suggested 2♥ - a strong jump shift. I covered a similar hand just last week and with these powerful hands it really is best to make a jump shift with a good suit – otherwise you may well have problems finding a suitable forcing bid next go(es). With this particular hand you could just respond 1♥ and then reverse into ♠'s next go, but for inexperienced pairs it's so much simpler to start with a strong jump shift.
- (4) Now a jump shift from partner is game forcing and interested in slam. With good 4 card support East should co-operate with a 3♥ bid (slow arrival). This jump to 4♥ is unnecessary and I would take it as a very weak opener with minimal ♥ support.
- (5) East could make another effort, but I sympathise with pass.

- Table B: (1) Another player correctly chose the jump shift.
- (5) But unfortunately his partner thought it was weak and passed. Even if 2♥ was weak, I would still bid with this West hand – with 10 combined trumps West should raise the 'pre-empt'.

And what happened? Most pairs bid 4♥. Just one pair bid 6♥ and 13 tricks were pretty easy.

Now I really have to say something about the jump shift. I stated just last week 'A jump in a new suit over partner's opening shows a very strong hand/suit unless you have an agreement to the contrary'. A weak jump shift is most certainly not standard. One distinguished club member apparently disagreed with this statement and wandered off in order to find some sort of documentation to prove me wrong, muttering '*I know more about Standard than anybody else in this club*'. I'll save him the bother of any more searching – here is an extract from the latest ACBL notes on alerts etc: -'**Weak jump shifts are unexpected and therefore Alertable.**'

Person(s?) who believe that I don't know what I am talking about and believe that they know more about 'Standard' than anyone else in the club may also like to look at an ACBL convention card. Weak jump shifts not in competition are in red and thus alertable. So the weak jump shift is most certainly not standard and I agree with the ACBL that it should be alerted.

What's more, I do not recommend playing the weak jump shift to any but the most experienced pairs. To start with, it is usually abused (bid with a hand far too strong) but more importantly if you do not play strong jump shifts then responder will often have problems later in the auction in finding a suitable forcing bid at every turn. If you really do want to play the weak jump shift I have produced a few pages on it and it's on the web.

Now there are, as our distinguished member points out, a number of pairs who do use (and abuse) the weak jump shift. I advise against it and it is **not** standard and **needs alerting**.

Weak Jump Shifts

The weak Jump Shift is not standard and is alertable. That is also clearly stated in our club rules (and has been for a long time). If you want to play the weak jump shift then it is best played as a very weak hand (about 2-5 points) which is too weak for a normal response to partner's opening.

Now anybody who reads the news-sheets fairly regularly should know about strong/weak jump shifts. Here are a few excerpts from past news-sheets: -

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| News Sheet 4 | Playing weak jump shifts, 2♠ (2-5 points, 6 card suit) is an alternative. |
| News Sheet 64 | Weak Jump shifts are alertable. |
| News Sheet 82 | The weak jump shift can be a very useful bid. Some play it only after a double, others play it even without interference (strong is standard). |
| News Sheet 102 | In Standard American, a jump shift shows a good suit and is game forcing. Many more advanced players prefer to play the jump shift as weak but then you have to know how to show a game forcing hand (often via 4 th suit). |
| News Sheet 103 | A word about the weak jump response. This is not standard, but some more experienced players play that when partner opens with 1♣/♦ then a jump to 2♥/♠ is pre-emptive. And by pre-emptive it is meant a 6 or 7 card suit that is too weak to reply at the one level; so about 2-5 points.
The weak jump shift is <i>weak</i> , it is much weaker than an opening 2♥/♠ since partner has opened. |
| News Sheet 135 | A weak jump shift (2♥) is an option here – ♠but only if you have agreed it!
Standard is that a jump shows a good hand and a good suit. |
| News Sheet 161 | 1♦ - 2♥. Unless you have an agreement to the contrary, a jump shift like this is strong. |

So it looks like I've been saying the same thing pretty regularly for the last 3 years. Funny how some people like to dispute the most basic of **facts**.

Anyway, as I mentioned, I do not recommend weak jump shifts to anyone but experienced/established pairs as you have to know how to show a very strong responding hand by other methods - often via 4th suit forcing or by manufacturing a reverse or bidding a non-existent suit.

But for those of you who really do wish to play them I have written a few special sheets (and I've put it up on the web) as I don't believe that many players know what opener should do opposite partner's weak jump shift (as demonstrated by the West at Table B).

For example, what is 2NT in this sequence 1♣ - 2♥ - 2NT ? where 2♥ is a weak jump shift. I bet you don't know! Answer at the end of this news-sheet. And 'obviously' if your partner makes a weak jump shift and you have 3 or more card support then you should raise just as you would opposite a weak two opening.

Who should make the effort?

Board 16 from Monday 5th

Dealer: ♠ A
West ♥ K10853
E-W vul ♦ QJ4
♣ 9842

♠ KQ105	N	♠ J98432
♥ J64	W E	♥ AQ9
♦ K92	S	♦ 75
♣ AQ10		♣ 76
	♠ 76	
	♥ 72	
	♦ A10863	
	♣ KJ53	

Table A

West	North	East(B)	South
1NT (1)	pass	2♥	pass
2♠ (2)	pass	4♠ (3)	all pass

Table B

West	North	East(B)	South
1NT (1)	pass	2♥	pass
2♠ (2)	pass	pass (3)	

- Table A: (1) It's totally flat, but with the two 10's 1NT is fine.
(2) Now here's the first question – should West super-accept or not. Views on what type of hand you need for a super-accept vary. My personal opinion is that I need 4 trumps and a non-minimum. Now this hand is about minimum but I would super-accept because of the excellent ♠'s.
Change the hand to something like ♠J532 ♥KQ10 ♦K92 ♣AQ10 and I would not super-accept.
(3) What did you bid with this East hand B in this week's quiz? I was kibitzing behind this East and wondered if he would pass or bid 3♠. I think that 4♠ is a bit pushy but not too bad (much better than pass!), I would bid 3♠.

- Table B: (2) As I said, I would super accept if you play super-accepts
(3) This is far too feeble for me. A six card major suit opposite a 1NT opener (so guaranteed at least an 8 card fit) is a big plus. An invitational 3♠ looks right to me.

How should the bidding go assuming that West does not super-accept? How about 1NT - 2♥ - 2♠ - 3♠ - 4♠. With these great trumps West should accept the invitation. And what happened? 4 pairs reached the excellent 4♠, 4 pairs did not.

The bottom lines: -

- Play super-accepts
- Upgrade a hand with a 6 card major opposite a 1NT opener.
- If the decision to super-accept is close, then look at the quality of your trump support.
- Two tens are often two good cards.

And to answer the question (who should make the effort?) – both (or either)! East should invite and West accept. If you play super-accepts then West should invite (super-accept) and East should accept.

A strong two opener?

Board 12 from Monday 5th

Dealer: ♠ 86
West ♥ AKQ1073
N-S vul ♦ A
♣ K1063

West	North(C)	East	South
pass	1♥ (1)	pass	1♠
pass	3♥	pass	4♥
all pass			

♠ K32	N	♠ J754
♥ 9652	W E	♥ 8
♦ KJ5	S	♦ Q1094
♣ 872		♣ QJ94
	♠ AQ109	
	♥ J4	
	♦ 87632	
	♣ A5	

This was the bidding at most tables and I can't really fault it. One pair did manage to bid the good 6♥ slam. But I do have one question, what did you open with this North hand C in this week's quiz? Playing Standard American then 1♥ is clear but if playing Benjamin I would open 2♣ (so 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥) to show a strong 2♥ hand (I did note one Benjamin pair not open 2♣ and had the above auction to 4♥). I evaluate this North hand at about 8½ playing tricks and well worth a strong two. Slam probably then has more chance of being reached. If North opens a strong two (via Benji if you play that) then South should support with 3♥ if you play that as forcing and a couple of cue bids later slam is easily reached.

And what happened? Just one table out of 7 reached slam.

Dealer: ♠ 8		
West ♥ AK1073		
N-S vul ♦ A		
♣ K1063		
♠ 32	N	♠ J75
♥ 652	W E	♥ -
♦ KJ5	S	♦ Q1094
♣ 872		♣ QJ94
	♠ AQ10	
	♥ J	
	♦ 87632	
	♣ A5	

Now the computer says the 6♥ makes, but there was some discussion as to whether it does on a trump lead. On a non-trump lead declarer simply ruffs two ♣'s in the South hand; on a trump lead that is not possible.

Now I do not pretend to be an expert here, but it looks like most lines of play actually work. You can ruff the 3rd round of ♣'s with dummy's last trump and then take a losing ♠ finesse which gets you home because West has no ♣ left. So the other ♣ loser goes away on a ♠ after a drawing trumps and a successful 2nd ♠ finesse. There may be better ways?

The bottom lines: -

- Play Benjamin twos.
- If do you play Benjamin twos – then open 2♣ with 8+ playing tricks in a major.

The Competitive Double

Board 3 from Wednesday 7th

Dealer: ♠ KQ4
 South ♥ J7
 E-W vul ♦ 10864
 ♣ 10732

♠ 9754	N	♠ 8
♥ 8	W E	♥ A10965
♦ AQ975	S	♦ K2
♣ KJ6		♣ AQ985
	♠ AJ1063	
	♥ KQ432	
	♦ J3	
	♣ 4	

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
2♦	2♠	3♥ (1)	pass (2)
pass	pass		

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
2♦	2♠	3♥ (1)	dbl (2)
pass (3)	pass	pass (4)	

'Expert Table'

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
2♦	2♠	dbl (1)	pass
3♣	pass	? (5)	

- Table A: (1) What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? You have a nice hand opposite partner's 2 level overcall (so presumably 10+ points) and should clearly bid. But I don't like 3♥, it is not forcing and you may well miss a better ♣ or ♦ fit. See the 'Expert' table for the correct bid.
- (2) I was South at this table. Double would be for penalties but I did not double as I know that the opponents may well have more points than us and they may have a safe spot in a minor suit (indeed, the computer says that 5♣ and 4♦ are both making).
- Table B: (1) This poor 3♥ bid was found at a total of 4 tables!
- (2) And this South was greedy. Indeed, two E-W pairs went for 800.
- (3) West could try an SOS redouble here.
- (4) East should try an SOS redouble. With a good ♣ suit, reasonable ♦'s and 13 points opposite partner's two level overcall there is every reason to believe that a minor suit contract will make.
- 'Expert' Table (1) This is East's best bid – a competitive double – showing the two unbid suits and (usually) tolerance for partner's suit.
- (5) And whether East presses on or not will not matter as 3♣ + 2 would have got a good score.

And what happened? No less than 4 out of 8 East's landed in the miserable 3♥, with 3 of them being doubled and usually going 3 down.

The bottom line: -

- Play Competitive Doubles.
- When the opponents bid and support a suit then double is for take-out in most situations. The Competitive double is simply one case of this.

Which Slam?

Board 6 from Wednesday 7th

I was asked about this board; and as it happens I already had it on my list to write up because of the interesting bidding at our table and next door's.

Dealer: ♠ J10932
East ♥ J
E-W vul ♦ Q9832
♣ 102

♠ AKQ84 N ♠ 75
♥ A732 W E ♥ KQ84
♦ - S ♦ AJ
♣ 9743 ♣ AQJ86
♠ 6
♥ 10965
♦ K107654
♣ K5

Table A

West	North	East(E)	South
-	-	1NT (1)	3♦ (2)
4♦ (3)	dbl (4)	4♥ (5)	pass
5♥ (6)	pass	pass (7)	pass

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♣ (1)	2♦ (8)
2♠ (9)	5♦ (10)	dbl (11)	pass
pass (12)			

- Table A: (1) What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? I prefer the 1♣ opening chosen at table B.
(2) It looks like this pair play this a weak.
(3) This is best played as Stayman, a nice bid.
(4) Now I see this sort of thing a lot and I really don't understand it, what is the rational behind a double here? Surely it's best to throw a spanner in the works with 5♦, especially at this vulnerability.
(5) With North's feeble bid, East now has an easy 4♥ bid.
(6) Another nice bid from West – slam invitational.
(7) With a super maximum I don't know why East did not bid 6♥.
- Table B: (1) I too would open 1♣ as I think it's a bit good for 1NT and there is no rebid problem (bid 2♥ next go over most responses).
(8) A weak jump overcall. Some may frown upon this with a 4 card major but I think it's acceptable here.
(9) This must be right. Bid the ♠'s with a view to bidding the ♥'s next go.
(10) Nice one Bob. I was South and this is the sort of bid that my partner (Bob) is renowned for – no holding back. I bet he would have bid 6♦ if pushed.
(11) East is a bit fixed now.
(12) And the level is now really too high for West to introduce the ♥ suit.

And what happened? 5♦ doubled cost just 300. 4♥ making or +1 was a popular spot. 6♣ makes but only one pair found a ♣ slam - 7♣ going 4 down doubled!

Now I was asked about this deal; the question being how to bid the making 6♣ and not the un-making 6♥? Now obviously it's difficult to accurately bid a slam if Bob is the opposition! If N-S stick their ♦'s in it's very difficult. But say there was no violent opposition - then I would want to be in 6♥ with the E-W cards! It looks like a great contract to me and only fails because of the bad breaks and the ♠K offside.

With no opposition bidding, it could go something like: -

1♣ - 1♠ - 2♥ (reverse) - 4♦ (splinter) – 4NT etc to 6♥ which would normally be a great spot. With these E-W cards I think that 6♥ is a better slam than 6♣, especially at pairs. The bidding at Table A was also good if you like the 1NT opener and if East had bid 6♥ at (7).

How do you find a minor suit slam after Stayman?

Board 14 from Friday 9th

Dealer: ♠ AKQ96
East ♥ Q1097
Love all ♦ -
♣ 10965

♠ J102	N	♠ 873
♥ KJ5	W E	♥ 864
♦ J974	S	♦ KQ865
♣ 873		♣ J4

♠ 54
♥ A32
♦ A1032
♣ AKQ2

Table A

West	North(F)	East	South
-	-	pass	1NT
pass	2♥ (1)	pass	2♠
pass	3♥ (2)	pass	3NT
pass	4♣ (3)		

'Expert' Table

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	1NT
pass	2♣ (1)	pass	2♦
pass	3♣ (4)	pass	3NT (5)
pass	4♣ etc to 6♣ (6)		

- Table A: (1) What did you bid with this North hand F in this week's quiz? It's up to you how you bid 5-4 major suited hands after partner opens 1NT.
(2) A 2nd suit after transferring is best played as natural and game forcing.
(3) I guess that North could try 4♣ here but it was an unfamiliar partnership. With the ♦ void North did not fancy 3NT and so understandably went for the 5-2 ♠ fit.
- 'Expert' Table (1) Our experts use Stayman here.
(4) But this may be new to many of you. How do you play 3♣ after Stayman has received a negative response? 'Standard' is that it's a good 5+ card ♣ suit and forcing but that is not the best way to play it if you play 4-way transfers. Finding a 4-4 minor suit fit for slam after a 1NT opening is difficult and undoubtedly the best method is SARS (Shape Asking Relays after Stayman). It is, I believe, a Dutch invention and it's all written up in the NT bidding book on the web.
(5) Showing both minors when playing SARS.
(6) 4♣ is best played as RKCB agreeing ♣'s here but the excellent 6♣ is reached whatever.

And what happened? One pair did find the excellent 6♣. 4♥/♠ +2 were popular spots.

The bottom lines: -

- It's up to individual partnerships how you deal with 5-4's in the majors opposite a 1NT opening. Some transfer, some use Stayman. My preferred method is Stayman.
- But whatever scheme you do use, are you able to distinguish between weak, invitational and game forcing hands and also differentiate between 5-4's and 5-5's? One scheme is recommended in the NT bidding book but it's all a bit advanced.
- Finding minor suit slams is always difficult; and it's especially difficult after a 1NT opening. MSS (2♠ as Minor Suit Stayman) is one possibility but you cannot use it if responder has a major suit (as he would try Stayman) and MSS is not that efficient anyway.
- SARS solves everything, whether responder has a 4 card major or not, but it is not that well known. Established/experienced pairs may wish to check it out – it's on the web.
- Another possibility with this North hand is to splinter. But I don't think it's really suitable with this great ♠ suit and not many people play splinters over a 1NT opening. There is a somewhat advanced scheme described in the NT bidding book but this hand is not really suitable and SARS solves everything anyway.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 2♥. Strong (game forcing and usually slam seeking) with a very good suit. This is the standard use of the jump shift. A strong 2♥ really makes life easy as you never have to look for strange forcing bids later. With this particular hand a 1♥ response is also fine as you can reverse into ♠'s next go.
- Hand B: 3♠, invitational. Do not listen to the 'points pundits' who say it's 'only 7 points'. A 6 card major opposite a 1NT opener is a huge plus and this hand is easily worth an invitation in my opinion.
- Hand C: 1♥, obviously. But playing Benjamin twos then open 2♣, this hand is easily worth a strong two in ♥'s.
- Hand D: Dbl. This is a competitive double, showing the two unbid suits and usually tolerance for partner's suit. With ♦Kx this bid is ideal. A 3♥ bid is very dangerous as partner will pass with nothing much in ♥'s (a new suit opposite an overcall is generally played as constructive but not forcing) and it may also be that ♣'s or ♦'s may play better.
- Hand E: 1♣. Now I guess that 1NT is possible, but I do not like it because with two doubletons I only really like to open 1NT if they are both reasonable (Qx or better). Also, I think that this hand is a bit too good for 1NT and you have no rebid problem if you open 1♣ (bid 2♥ over either a 1♦ or 1♠ or 1NT response).
- Hand F: It's up to your partnership how you bid major suited hands over 1NT.
- (a) If you elect to transfer (so 2♥) then bid 3♥ next go, promising 5 ♠'s, 4 ♥'s and game forcing unless you have another agreement.
 - (b) If you elect to bid Stayman then you have more options after partner's 2♦ response. 'Standard' is to jump to 3♠ showing 5 ♠'s and 4 ♥'s. It is played as game forcing in the States (some play Smolen) but some Europeans play it as just invitational. 3♣ after bidding Stayman is often played as a good ♣ suit but the best solution is SARS which is written up in the NT bidding book.

What is 2NT? In an uninterrupted sequence like 1♣ - 2♥ - 2NT where 2♥ is played as weak (that is not standard), 2NT is best played as Ogust (or whatever you play 2NT as opposite a weak two opener).

		<u>Winner</u>		<u>Runner-up</u>	
Mon 12 th	N-S 1 st	Neil/Barry	63%	2 nd	Paul Kelly/Alan 62%
	E-W 1 st	Jan/Philip	59%	2 nd	Gerard/Derek 56%
Wed 14 th	N-S 1 st	Chuck/Terry	66%	2 nd	Paul Kelly/Hans 54%
	E-W 1 st	Bob P/Jan	59%	2 nd	Gerard/Derek 57%
Fri 16 th	N-S 1 st	Paul Kelly/Chuck	67%	2 nd	Mike(Can)/Bill 52%
	E-W 1 st	Dave/Hans	61%	2 nd	Angela/Mike P 60%

The Gold Cup is pretty much decided now, current standings are: -

1st Chuck 1911.2% **2nd Dave** 1892.2% **3rd Bob** 1859.7% 4th Clive 1799.3%

in the Silver Plate competition (best 10) we have 1st **Clive** 2nd Gerald/Derek
and in the Bronze Medal competition (best 5) we have 1st **Gerald/Derek** 2nd Paul K

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	What do you open with Hand A?
♠ AKQ43	♠ A9	
♥ 7	♥ QJ10972	With Hand B partner opens 1♣. (a) what do you bid?
♦ KJ54	♦ K765	Suppose you bid 1♥ and partner jumps to 3♣,
♣ AKQ	♣ K	(b) what now?, and (c) would 3♥ now be forcing?
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C partner opens 1♦, what do you bid?
♠ K6	♠ AK4	
♥ AK8	♥ K1063	With Hand D partner opens 1♣, what do you bid?
♦ 1083	♦ 10985	
♣ J9643	♣ AK	
Hand E	Hand F	What do you open with Hand E?
♠ AKQ	♠ KJ94	
♥ J76	♥ J53	With hand F partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls a
♦ AK95	♦ A9543	weak 2♥. What do you bid?
♣ K54	♣ 9	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1♠, what do you bid?
♠ KQ965	♣ J6	
♥ J	♥ J109832	Hand H – a tricky one to finish with. LHO opens 1♦, partner
♦ KQ	♦ 106	overalls 1nT and RHO bids 2♠. What do you do?
♠ K9853	♣ 942	

Suitable for Jacoby 2NT? – part 1Board 11 from Friday 16th

Dealer: ♠ KQ965
 South ♥ J
 Both vul ♦ KQ
 ♣ K9853

♠ J8 N ♠ 3
 ♥ K8654 W E ♥ 10973
 ♦ 1075 S ♦ J982
 ♣ J72 ♣ AQ64

♠ A10742
 ♥ AQ2
 ♦ A643
 ♣ 10

Table A

West	North(G)	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
pass	2NT (1)	pass	3♦ (2)
pass	4NT (3)	pass	5♦ (4)
pass	6♠	dbl (5)	pass
pass			

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
pass	3♥ (1)	pass	4♥ (6)
pass	4♠ (7)	pass	pass (8)

- Table A: (1) This deal generated a lot of discussion on Friday. What did you bid with this North hand G in this week's quiz? NT here was Jacoby 2NT, promising 4 card ♠ support and at least values for game. I don't like the bid here as Jacoby is generally a balanced hand with no shortage - as with shortage you would splinter. So what should North bid? I would bid 2♣, especially if playing 2/1 as the subsequent auction is then easy. If not playing 2/1 and it goes 1♠ - 2♣ - 2♦ then North would then presumably bid 2♥, 4th suit, to get a game-going auction. There are other good alternatives; a simple 4NT (RKCB) is sensible as all North really wants to know is how many aces South has. The problem with this (and the subsequent 4NT later bid by this North) is that you get too high if partner turns out to have just one ace! Is there a real solution? Yes – see Bidding Quiz answers at the end.
- (2) I have covered Jacoby 2NT in lessons. It's on the web and there is a leaflet on in the conventions folder. 3♦ here should show ♦ shortage.
- (3) As I said above, there is little point in bidding Jacoby 2NT – especially if partner does not know it. This North then simply launched into RKCB regardless.
- (4) 3 key cards playing 1430.
- (5) Quite why East doubled is a mystery. Perhaps South's 'psychic?' 3♦ bid leaned him towards thinking that he may score the ♣AQ?
- Table B: (1) This West chose to splinter. Now some players (especially 2/1 players) do play 3♥ as a splinter here but that is not standard. Standard is that 3♥ is a strong jump shift, showing a good hand with good ♥'s.
- (6) And that's what South assumed and correctly bid 4♥
- (7) Meant as natural and to play.
- (8) South passed here, but later asked be about the ethics in this situation. When North bid 4♠ South then thought that North had made a mistake with his splinters and wondered if he could ethically bid on?

My answer (others may disagree?): - In a genuine established partnership where 3♥ is definitely strong then 4♠ at (7) would be a cue bid looking for a ♥ slam and South is obliged to bid. In a casual partnership I think it's very reasonable for South to assume that North has made the wrong bid and indeed had ♥ shortage. There is nothing unethical about bidding on here and I would bid 5♦ (a cue bid) which actually is the same bid I would make if 3♥ was natural.

Suitable for Jacoby 2NT? – part 2

Board 1 from Monday 12th

Dealer: ♠ AK752
North ♥ QJ73
Love all ♦ 84
♣ A7

West	North	East	South
-	1♠	pass	2NT (1)
pass	4♠ (2)	pass	4NT (3)
etc to 6♠			

♠ Q86	N	♠ -
♥ 1082	W E	♥ K985
♦ K75	S	♦ 1032
♣ K1064		♣ Q98532
	♠ J10943	
	♥ A4	
	♦ AQJ96	
	♣ J	

- (1) Now this pair were playing 2/1 and the Jacoby 2NT convention. South chose a Jacoby 2NT but that would not be my choice. The Jacoby 2NT promises 4 card support and at least game going values, but it is in principle a balanced hand. With a singleton one usually prefers to splinter. Having said that, some may prefer not to splinter as it takes up a lot of room and may prefer to show this great ♦ suit. Playing 2/1 it's easy, bid 2♦.
- (2) And I don't like this response to the Jacoby 2NT either. Playing Jacoby 2NT the jump to 4♠ shows a weak opener and this hand is too good.
- (3) Fortunately South had a hand good enough to press on anyway.

And what happened? Nearly everybody bid the slam, making 12 tricks.

And how should the hand be bid? Playing 2/1 I would recommend:

1♠ - 2♦(game forcing) - 2♥ - 2♠ - 3♣ (cue) - 3♦ (cue) - 3♠ - 4NT etc. to 6♠.

Now the play is also fairly interesting. Obviously declarer easily picks up the ♠'s and then takes a losing ♦ finesse. But I did see one declarer then take the ♥ finesse. This is poor technique and the contract fails if the ♥K was offside. You should combine your chances and try for the 3-3 ♦ split (or the ♦10 falling) and then 3 losing ♥'s can be thrown on three good ♦'s. If the ♦'s did not behave you can always fall back on the ♥ finesse.

The bottom lines (for the previous two articles): -

- Jacoby 2NT should have 4(+) card support and be balanced. With a shortage one normally prefers a splinter and with a two-suiter it may be better to bid the other suit, especially if you play 2/1.
- Some players put an upper limit on the point range for Jacoby, but then you really have to play something like Swiss which I will get round to at a much later date.

Play Strong Jump Shifts!

Board 3 from Monday 12th

Dealer: ♠ A9
South ♥ QJ10972
E-W vul ♦ K765
♣ K

♠ KQ5	N	♠ 87642
♥ 653	W E	♥ 4
♦ 103	S	♦ AJ9842
♣ J7642		♣ 5
	♠ J103	
	♥ AK8	
	♦ Q	
	♣ AQ10983	

Table A

West	North(B)	East	South
-	-	-	1♣
pass	1♥ (1)	pass	3♣ (2)
pass	3NT (3)	all pass	

Table B

West	North(B)	East	South
-	-	-	1♣
pass	1♥ (1)	pass	3♣ (2)
pass	3♥ (3)	pass	4♥ (4)
pass	pass (5)		

'Expert Table'

West	North(B)	East	South
-	-	-	1♣
pass	2♥ (1)	pass	3♥
pass	3♠ (6)	pass	4♣ (6)
pass	etc (7) to 6♥		

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this North hand B(a) in this week's quiz? It seems to be a recurring theme recently. I would bid 2♥ - strong with a good suit. As I have frequently said, I think that this is the best use of the jump shift as you may otherwise have problems telling partner how good your hand is. And this deal is just another example where nobody let partner know how good their hand was. Anyway, as far as I know, everybody in the club bid just 1♥.

(2) This looks spot on to me.

(3) Now what did you bid with this North hand B(b) in this week's quiz. Obviously you have game forcing values (and more!) but is 3♥ forcing? I assume that this North was not sure and so bid 3NT.

Table B: (3) So is 3♥ here forcing?

Yes! I've been all through this before (news-sheets 51 & 66). The best bid now is 3♥. 3♦ is also forcing but I much prefer to rebid this great ♥ suit.

(4) With no reason to expect a monster opposite, South obviously bids 4♥.

(5) And it's really too late for North to press on.

'Expert' (1) Our experts like an easy life and play strong jump shifts.

Table: (6) cue bids.

(7) and N-S have various routes to the excellent 6♥ slam.

And what happened? 3NT made +2 but scored badly. Everybody else bid 4♥.

The bottom lines: -

- Play strong jump shifts! Nobody found the easy slam, and I believe it was because North simply did not show what a great hand he had! After South has shown a good hand it's then difficult for North having not jump shifted immediately. The fact that **nobody** even had a sniff at slam bears this out!
- The strong jump shift really makes life easier.

Strong or weak? – play Lebensohl

Board 31 from Monday 12th

Dealer: ♠ Q98
South ♥ A75
N-S vul ♦ AK853
♣ KQ

♠ A73	N	♠ K10542
♥ K4	W E	♥ Q6
♦ J742	S	♦ Q9
♣ A865		♣ J1073
	♠ J6	
	♥ J109832	
	♦ 106	
	♣ 942	

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
1NT (1)	dbl	pass	2♥ (2)
pass	4♥ (3)	dbl	all pass

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
1♦	1NT (4)	2♠ (5)	pass (6)
pass	pass		

'Expert Table'

West	North	East	South(H)
-	-	-	pass
1♦	1NT (4)	2♠ (5)	2NT (6)
pass	3♣ (6)	pass	3♥ (6)
			all pass

Table A: (1) This pair play a weak NT, so 12-14 .

(2) weak, to play.

(3) South's bid is weak (about 0-5 pts) and North should pass.

Table B: (4) 15-18

(5) weak, to play.

(6) with no agreement, South cannot bid as 3♥ would presumably be forcing

'Expert' Table (6) But our experts do have a conventional bid here – Lebensohl. South wants to play in 3♥ and does not want to hear a raise from partner. So he bids 2NT – Lebensohl, which demands that partner bid 3♣. South then bids 3♥, to play. With a strong hand, South would have bid a direct 3♥, forcing.

And what happened? 4♥ doubled went one down for a poor score, 3♥ making would have got a good score. 2♠ by East was a good score for him.

The bottom lines: -

- When partner doubles 1NT, then pass with 6 or more points, with less bid your best suit.
- When you double RHO's 1NT opening and partner bids – he has nothing! (5 or less points).
- Play Lebensohl

A 2♣ opener?

Board 17 from Wednesday 14th

Now just last week I mentioned a hand ♠86 ♥AKQ1073 ♦A ♣K1062 and said that it was about 8½ playing tricks; I was asked how I arrived at this figure. Now I have actually written a few pages on playing tricks and it's on the web. With this hand there are the obvious 7 red playing tricks; the ♣K is ½ a playing trick and a 4 card suit is worth one additional playing trick – so it's 8½. Now the reason I'm mentioning this is that a hand came up on Wednesday that I evaluated as 9½ playing tricks and thus opened 2♣ (our strongest bid). But as nobody else bid slam I am wondering if nobody else thought this North hand A worth a 2♣ opener (or 2♦ playing Benjamin twos)?

Dealer:	♠ AKQ43	West	North(A)	East	South
North	♥ 7		(me)		(Chuck)
Love all	♦ KJ54	-	2♣ (1)	pass	2♦ (2)
	♣ AKQ	pass	2♠	pass	3♠ (3)
		pass	4♣ (4)	pass	4♥ (4)
		pass	6♠ (5)	all pass	
♠ 102	N	♠ 965			
♥ Q32	W E	♥ KJ10865			
♦ A98	S	♦ 103			
♣ 87653		♣ 109			
	♠ J87				
	♥ A94				
	♦ Q762				
	♣ J42				

- (1) What did you open with this North hand A in this week's quiz? I make it 9½ playing tricks (5 in ♠'s, 3 in ♣'s, ½ for the ♦K and one for the 4 card ♦ suit). The 'modern' 'norm' for opening 2♣ in Standard American (or 2/1) is one trick short of game in your hand. Now I personally do actually like to have some sort of minimum point range (say about 17+ points – for example I will not open 2♣ with 9 playing tricks but only 14 points). Anyway, this North hand easily qualifies for 2♣ in the modern style.
- (2) We play this as a 'waiting' positive (2♥ is the negative in our system).
- (3) Slow arrival, so decent ♠ support.
- (4) Cue bids
- (5) North knows that just the ♦A is missing so there is no need for any further messing about.

And what happened? Just this one table out of six bid 6♠, the rest were in 4♠ making +2.

The bottom lines: -

- If you do not play Benjamin twos, then play 2♦ waiting and 2♥ negative over 2♣, it really is the best scheme for non Benjaminites. It's written up on the web.
- And 9½ playing tricks is a clear 2♣ opener in Standard American these days.
- Playing Benjamin this hand is perhaps borderline between a 2♣ or 2♦ opener. I would not argue with either but you will probably miss slam if you start 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♠ playing Benjamin and I would prefer a 6 card suit for 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♠. So I would open a Benji 2♦.

If a NT bid describes your hand – then bid NT!Board 17 from Wednesday 14th

Dealer: ♠ A75
 North ♥ J9
 Love all ♦ AQJ54
 ♣ AK10

♠ Q982 N ♠ J1043
 ♥ Q65 W E ♥ 107432
 ♦ K92 S ♦ 76
 ♣ Q72 ♣ 85
 ♠ K6
 ♥ AK8
 ♦ 1083
 ♣ J9643

Table A

West	North	East	South(C)
-	1♦	pass	2♣ (1)
pass	3NT (2)	pass	pass (3)
pass			

Table B

West	North	East	South(C)
-	1♦	pass	2NT (1)
pass	4NT (4)	pass	6NT (5)
all pass			

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this South hand C in this week's quiz? I do not like 2♣ with 11 point hands like this – basically because you are fixed over 2NT (12-14) from partner (and also over 3NT).

(2) Now there has been a 'debate' in an earlier news-sheet about what 3NT here shows. I am a firm believer that NT bids should have a fixed point range and think that it's 18-19. Chuck correctly stated that *some* experts play it as weaker. I don't see the point and think that 3NT here is correct.

(3) And whatever 3NT meant, South really has no option but pass.

Table B: (1) Now Chuck and I were actually S-N at this table; and Chuck correctly bid 2NT – not necessarily because he is a better declarer than me, but because it is the best bid. It shows +- 11 points and no 4 card major and is a far better bid than 2♣.

(4) Invitational. 4NT after a natural 2NT (or 1NT or 3NT) from partner is simply inviting slam and is passable. I think that this North hand is worth an invite because of the good 5 card suit.

(5) South has shown his hand pretty exactly and with a 5 card suit, good top cards and good intermediates he correctly accepted.

And what happened? 3 tables bid 6NT, 3 tables stopped in 3NT. 3 tables made 12 tricks and 3 tables made 13 tricks. I can see no other reasonable line than taking both minor suit finesses (after the first one works) and 13 tricks are easy.

The bottom lines: -

- 5 card suits are a + factor. Both N and S upgraded and found the good slam.
- With a balanced 11 points (and no 4 card major) respond 2NT to partner's 1 level opening rather than 2♣.
- Only respond with a suit at the two level if you know what to do with a 2NT rebid.
- 4NT over 3NT or 2NT or 1NT is quantitative.

A poor 2NT opener?

Board 26 from Friday 16th

I overheard this comment as one North unravelled the score traveller and observed that another North competitor had achieved a +ve score on this board – ‘*How can anybody open 1♦ with this hand? – everybody should open 2NT and accept his defeat like a man*’.

Dealer: ♠ AKQ
East ♥ J76
Both vul ♦ AK95
♣ K54

Table A

West	North(E)	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
pass	2NT (1)	all pass	

♠ 875	N	♠ 10964
♥ K1052	W E	♥ AQ98
♦ Q64	S	♦ J87
♣ A62		♣ Q10
	♠ J32	
	♥ 43	
	♦ 1032	
	♣ J9873	

Table B

West	North	East	South(C)
-	-	pass	pass
pass	1♦ (1)	all pass	

Table A: (1) What did you open with this North hand E in this week’s quiz? It really is very simple, especially if you heed my continual advice in the news sheets. This hand is 20 points, but knock off a point for the totally flat 3343 shape – so it’s really 19; and bearing in mind that AKQ triplet is a very poor holding the hand is nowhere near a 2NT opener. If 2NT (or more) is going to make then partner must have enough points to respond, if 1♦ is passed out then that will score better than 2NT going down. This poor 2NT opening was chosen at most tables.

Table B: (1) I believe that only one North (whoever was North from Jim/Tom) found this excellent 1♦ opening.

And what happened? 2NT was -1 at most tables and scored a joint bottom. 1♦ made exactly and scored a near top.

The bottom lines: -

- Same as ever, knock off a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape.
- AKQ bare is a very poor 9 points – degrade it unless partner has bid the suit.
- Quite simply, this North hand is nowhere near worth a 2NT opener!

There were three examples from Friday where a 4-4 ♥ fit was ignored – with varying success: -

Ignoring the 4-4 ♥ fit - part 1

Board 20 from Friday 16th

Dealer: ♠ 842
 West ♥ J753
 Both vul ♦ 852
 ♣ 654

♠ 10	N	♠ AJ6
♥ KQ64	W E	♥ A1092
♦ AKQ976	S	♦ J
♣ KQ		♣ AJ982
	♠ KQ9753	
	♥ 8	
	♦ 1043	
	♣ 1073	

Table A

West	North	East	South
2♣	pass	2♦	(1) pass
3♦	pass	4NT	(2) pass
5♠ (3)	pass	7NT	(4) all pass

Table B

West	North	East	South(C)
1♦ (5)	pass	1♥	pass
3♣ (6)	pass	3♠ (7)	pass
4♥ (8)	pass	pass (9)	pass

Table A: (1) Presumably waiting.

(2) Not waiting any more, RKCB for ♦'s.

(3) 2 keycards (♦A,K) plus the ♦Q.

(4) Looks like my ♦J is a great card.

Table B: (5) I agree with table A that it's a 2♣ opener.

(6) West decided to show strength by inventing a suit.

(7) Since the auction is game forcing I see little point in 4th suit here as East has the ♠'s stopped.

(8) Showing his ♥ support eventually.

(9) Obviously East should be looking for a small slam, but the grand is probably not biddable after West's failure to open 2♣.

And what happened? With 16 top tricks most players claimed a modest 13 fairly quickly after they had demonstrated their ability to not get blocked. One player did indeed try to go down but with both minor suits splitting that was impossible even having blocked himself.

The bottom lines: -

- You can ignore 4-4 fits if you have all the available tricks without a ruff.
- Note the nice bidding at table A – RKCB really worked a treat here.

Ignoring the 4-4 ♥ fit - part 2

Board 17 from Friday 16th

Dealer: ♠ AK106
North ♥ 82
Love all ♦ 9874
♣ 1063

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	1NT (1)
pass	3NT (2)	all pass	

♠ J82	N	♠ Q5
♥ A543	W E	♥ K976
♦ KJ1066	S	♦ AQ532
♣ K3		♣ A4
	♠ 9743	
	♥ QJ10	
	♦ -	
	♣ QJ9872	

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	1♦ (1)
pass	1♥	pass	2♥ (3)
pass	4♥	pass	

Table A: (1) I have no problem with 1NT here, both doubletons being good enough.
(2) 'Obviously' West should try Stayman before bidding game

Table B: (1) But I also think that a 1♦ opening is fine.
(6) West decided to show strength by inventing a suit.
(7) and 4♥ is reached whether East bids 2♥ or overbids with 3♥ here.

South at Table A elected to lead the ♥Q and when dummy came down North exclaimed '*fixed again*'. And so he would have been had declarer been on the ball: -

This declarer simply took his 9 top tricks and gave up – stating that he was '*afraid of the ♠'s*'. How would you play in 3NT as declarer in the East seat after the ♥Q lead?

You can mess about taking a few top tricks first if you wish, but before you relinquish control of the ♣ suit you should lead another ♥ - a 3-2 break in that suit will give you a 10th trick and a top board. You should lead a low ♥ and duck it (or not – it does not really matter – you could equally well have ducked the opening lead). If both follow to this 2nd round of ♥'s then you have two top ♥'s left and are assured of 10 tricks for a good score – note that the ♠'s are not a problem as the opponents can cash only two tricks in the suit – Qx opposite Jxx is a guaranteed stop on any distribution.

And what happened? Everybody else was in 4♥, usually making exactly. This E-W had 'fortunately' landed in a lucky 3NT which happened to be cold for 10 tricks on any lead but declarer failed to take advantage of it.

- It's virtually always best to bid Stayman with a 4 card major.
- Qx opposite Jxx is always a stop.

Ignoring the 4-4 ♥ fit - part 3

Board 23 from Friday 16th

Dealer:	♠ 7	
South	♥ A72	
Both vul	♦ QJ764	
	♣ 7632	
♠ Q109	N	♠ AK4
♥ J854	W E	♥ K1063
♦ AK2	S	♦ 10985
♣ Q85		♣ AK
	♠ J86532	
	♥ Q9	
	♦ 3	
	♣ J1094	

Table A

West	North	East(D)	South
-	-	-	pass
1♣ (1)	pass	1♦ (2)	pass
1♥	pass	1♠ (3)	pass
1NT	pass	4NT (4)	pass
pass (2)	pass		

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass (1)	pass	1NT	pass
2♣	pass	2♥	pass
4♥	all pass		

- Table A: (1) A dubious opener. I would pass (knock off a point for the 4333 type shape).
 (2) What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? Most players bid 'up the line – so 1♦ here' without even thinking. But with a strong (slam going) hand it's sometimes best to think. If you bid 1♦ and partner responds 1♥ then what are you going to do? Are you/your partner happy about forcing sequences in this situation? Obviously this pair were not – read on.
 (3) 4th suit? This is the very first problem – is 1♠ natural or 4th suit in this sequence? Expert opinion is divided but with no other agreement it's best to play 1♠ as natural here and a jump to 2♠ as 4th suit. I have no idea what this East plays nor what he considered 1♠ to be. The problem that East has here is that any ♥ bid is not forcing.
 (4) With 17 points, a decent 4 card fit for partner and excellent intermediates East is obviously looking for 6♥ (it's a shame that West did not have a real opener). Apparently East meant this as Blackwood on the way to the doomed slam. Obviously everything is a total mess now. E-W play RKCB but there is no remotely agreed suit and 4NT after a natural 1NT bid is quantitative. 4♣ would be the ace ask. Obviously there would have been no problem has East simply bid 1♥ at (2). There are actually ways out of the 'mess'; jump to 3♥ now – this would confirm that 1♠ was indeed 4th suit and 3♥ is thus forcing; or 4♣ Gerber.
 (5) West correctly took this 4NT as quantitative and finally found one of the pass cards in his box and so they luckily avoided the ♥ slam.

Table B: (1) It's easy after West does not open this flat hand.

And what happened? 4NT luckily scored about average. I note that 2 other pairs also somehow managed to miss the 4-4 ♥ fit and land in 3NT. The bottom lines: -

- look for the 4-4 major suit fit.
- After partner's last bid was 1NT or 2NT, then 4♣ is the ace ask and 4NT is quantitative .
- The sequence 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ has to be defined. Chuck and I have defined it as natural with a jump to 2♠ being the 4th suit bid (this is a fairly common treatment). Others play that it may or may not be natural. Others have no idea what they are doing.
- If you/your partner are not totally sure about 4th suit forcing sequences, then try another method if there is one (that's just one reason that I continually recommend playing strong jump shifts rather than weak ones).

4th Suit Forcing

It is apparent that even some of the club's more experienced players have trouble with 4th suit forcing. So I have written a few extra sheets about it'll be on the web soon.

Negative doubles still apply over weak jump overcalls

Board 6 from Friday 16th

Dealer:	♠ KJ94	<u>Table A</u>			
East	♥ J53	West	North(F)	East	South
E-W vul	♦ A9543	-	-	pass	1♦
	♣ 9	2♥ (1)	3♦ (2)	3♥ (3)	4♦ (4)
		all pass			
♠ A86	N	♠ 43			
♥ Q107642	W E	♥ K8			
♦ -	S	♦ 10872			
♣ Q864		♣ AK532			
	♠ Q1075				
	♥ A9				
	♦ KQJ6				
	♣ J107				

(1) Weak

(2) What did you bid with this North hand F in this week's quiz? With no interference it would be 1♠ but the hand is not good enough for 2♠ (forcing) now and that would promise a 5 card ♠ suit anyway. The best bid is double – negative and promising just 4 ♠'s. 3♦ would be reasonable without the 4 ♠'s.

(3) Not much point (zero pre-emptive value), but I guess it's lead directional.

(4) For South to bid 3♠ now would show a big hand.

And what happened? 4♦ made at one table and went down at another. Most N-S's knew about negative doubles; reaching ♠ contracts usually making 10 or 11 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- Look for the 4-4 major suit fit (same old broken record).
- Negative doubles still apply over weak jump overcalls.

SOS redouble?

Board 7 from Friday 16th

Dealer: ♠ AK4
South ♥ QJ
Both vul ♦ KJ76
♣ J853

♠ 2	N	♠ Q1086
♥ K84	W E	♥ A762
♦ 98543	S	♦ AQ
♣ A96		♣ K107
	♠ J9753	
	♥ 1095	
	♦ 107	
	♣ Q42	

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
pass	2NT (1)	pass	3♦ (2)
pass	4NT (3)	pass	5♦ (4)
pass	6♠	dbl (5)	pass
pass			

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
pass	3♥ (1)	pass	4♥ (6)
pass	4♠ (7)	pass	pass (8)

- Table A: (1) What would you open with this North hand? It is 15 points but a QJ doubleton is a poor holding. Having said that, it is not usually as poor in NT as in a suit contract. The hand has reasonable shape and I would not argue with a 1NT opener nor with 1♣/♦. Also, I would not criticise partner whatever he chose. Anyway, this North chose 1NT and all went pretty smoothly.
- (2) With a 15 count one can double a 1NT opening, but with no obviously good lead I think that pass is fine here.
- Table B: (1) This North chose not to open 1NT and I have absolutely no problem with that. Open 1♣/♦ and rebid 1NT (12-14). So which minor do you open when 4-4? I've been through this a few times. In Standard American 'better minor' you open your 'better' minor, so 1♦ here. But, although I am prepared to play 'better minor', I personally will always open 1♣ when equal length in the minors (3-3 or 4-4) regardless of relative strengths. But this is a personal preference and up to you/partnership agreement.
- (3) With both majors I prefer dbl to 1NT, although 1NT (15-18) is acceptable.
- (4) Unfortunately 1♠ here is usually played as forcing.
- (5) A dubious decision (I would like better ♦'s) that worked. I would bid 1♥.
- (6) Now this pass generated some discussion. South suggested that North should bid 1NT and then South could escape with a 2♠ bid. I would not bid 1NT, but redouble (SOS) is an alternative. But with 4 decent ♦'s I would also not argue with pass. The redouble would enable N-S to play in 1♠, a nice spot.

And what happened? 1♦ doubled went for 500, as did 1NT doubled at another table. Most N-S's ended up in 2♠ undoubled, 200 away for about average.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't criticise partner when he has made reasonable decisions that just happened to turn out badly?
- However, if your partnership agreement has an understanding that you open 1♣ when 3-3 or 4-4 in the minors, then stick to that agreement (it's a good one in my biased opinion).

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: 2♣ (or 2♦ if you play Benjamin twos). It's 9½ playing tricks and worth your strongest bid.

Hand B: (a) 2♥, a strong jump shift. If you do not start with this strong bid then you may well have problems later getting across the length/strength of this ♥ suit.

(b) 3♥. Show this great suit.

(c) Yes, 1♣ - 1♥ - 3♣ - 3♥ is forcing.

Hand C: 2NT, +-11 points with no 4 card major. I do not like to bid 2♣ with hands like this because you are then fixed over a 2NT rebid (12-14) from partner – you have no idea if you should bid on or not as it is the wrong man making the decision (it's your partner who has the 3 point spread and it's he who should be deciding). And there is also the problem which actually occurred with this hand – what do you do if you reply 2♣ and partner bids 3NT? 'Obviously' pass – but you may miss slam. If you can describe your hand in one bid, then do so; and 2NT does that with this hand.

Note. A 2NT response to 1♣/♦ of +-11 is 'standard' and is what most people play (perhaps because of the reasons I stated above). But in SAYC it is defined as 13-15, this is because SAYC is a bit basic and a 13-15 2NT response is sometimes handy if you do not play inverted minors. Anyway, that's for another day and I suggest that everybody at the club plays the 2NT response as +-11.

Hand D: 1♥. Whether you respond 1♦ or 1♥ when 4-4 is a matter of personal/partnership preference. But there are situations where you have to think. If you respond 1♦ here then what will you bid over 1♥ from partner? It's too good for 4♥ and are you/your partner sure about your 4th suit forcing sequences? If not, KISS and bid 1♥.

Hand E: 1♦ (with a 2NT, 18-19, rebid in mind). This flat hand is nowhere near worth a 20-21 2NT opener.

Hand F: Dbl. Negative, promising values (about 6+, some prefer 8+) and 4 ♠'s.

Hand G: 2♣, especially if you play 2/1. But if you do not play 2/1 I have a lot of sympathy for the straightforward 4NT ace ask – that's all you really need to know.

But there is a problem with this type of hand – very strong but aceless. If partner replies 1 ace (certainly very possible) then you are too high!

The solution. **3NT** – Baby Blackwood! I wrote up Baby Blackwood in news-sheet 153. It's on the web and in the conventions folder but is something that certainly is not standard and would have to be agreed.

		<u>Winner</u>		<u>Runner-up</u>	
Mon 19 th	N-S 1 st	Chuck/Jan	63%	2 nd	Bill/Mike(Can) 60%
	E-W 1 st	Alan/Hans	62%	2 nd	Gerard/Derek 61%
Wed 21 st	N-S 1 st	Bjorn/Kees	60%	2 nd	John B/Ian 56%
	E-W 1 st	Dave/Alan	62%	2 nd	Britta/Margit 59%
Fri 23 rd	N-S 1 st	Bill/Mike(Can)	62%	2 nd	Chuck/Jan 61%
	E-W 1 st	Arne/Ruth	64%	2 nd	Alan/Tomas 57%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	What do you open with Hand A?
♠ KQJ9874	♠ J943	With Hand B RHO opens 1♦, you pass, LHO bids 1NT and partner doubles. What do you do after RHO passes?
♥ AQ107	♥ 1063	
♦ -	♦ 42	
♣ QJ	♣ AJ52	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C you open 1♥ and partner responds 2♦. What now?
♠ A653	♠ A98	With Hand D you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♠, what do you bid?
♥ AK976	♥ 53	
♦ 6	♦ KQ64	
♣ A32	♣ A642	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E it is favourable vulnerability and partner opens a weak 2♦ which RHO doubles, what do you do?
♠ AQ9	♠ KQJ72	With Hand F partner opens 1♣ and you respond 1♠. Partner then bids 1NT (12-14), what do you bid?
♥ QJ53	♥ 62	
♦ AJ9	♦ A2	
♣ A32	♣ KQ98	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1♠ and you decide to bid 1NT. Partner then bids 2♣, what do you do?
♠ 103	♠ KJ742	With Hand H RHO opens 2♦ and you double. Partner bids 2♥, what do you bid?
♥ QJ9872	♥ AK86	
♦ J73	♦ -	
♣ J4	♣ J974	
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J you open 1NT and partner transfers with 2♥, what do you bid?
♠ AJ83	♠ K54	With Hand K partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 1♠, what do you do?
♥ J3	♥ A107432	
♦ KQ6	♦ 8	
♣ A983	♣ 872	

Editorial

A few things to say: -

1. Happy new year!
2. Club subscriptions are due in January. It's 1000 bht a year or 150 bht a month. This bargain price allows you to play Monday, Wednesday and Friday for just 50 bht a session; with free news-sheets; copies of hands with makeable contracts shown; leaflets on conventions etc; free beginner or intermediate lessons upon request; magazines, books, DVD's and Jack to borrow; and a web site to access with the results usually appearing that evening (subject to the TOT). What a bargain! The fee for non-members is 100 bht per session.
3. I was 'asked' how random the computer deals are. They are truly random but I do set a couple of parameters. Since we have Mitchell movements all the time now, I tell the computer to arrange it so that at the end of the day N-S and E-W have roughly the same number of high cards points. I also tell the computer to have at least one hand with 12+ points so that we do not get pass-outs. Also, I get 36 boards dealt and if there are any really wild distributions then I throw them out (people don't like them) to end up with 32 boards.
4. One pair were kind enough to donate a timer for the Friday club. I set it up with 8 minutes a board (should be ample). Just one pair missed a board on Friday – still, if you are always last and have just started your 3rd board out of four when most players have already finished or else are well into the last board then I feel that most people will agree that you should not play the last board. This continual extremely slow play by one individual irritates others.
Now some people like to have a timer and others don't; some player(s) are very slow, others are irritated by slow player(s); some like to have slow players so that they have time to go out for a smoke, some don't like sitting around twiddling their thumbs waiting for the slow player(s). Even I can't please all of the people all of the time and so we'll have a timer just on Fridays.
5. 'Experienced' players should not 'fiddle about' in the bidding box, taking out a card, putting it back etc. This is acceptable for less experienced players but somebody who has been around for years should know better – make up your mind before you pull out a card. It will probably come as no surprise to know that this player is the same as the slow one in the paragraph above.
6. The Gold Cup is pretty much decided now, current standings are: -

1st Chuck 1915.7% **2nd Dave** 1895.4% **3rd Bob** 1859.8% **4th Clive** 1799.3%

in the Silver Plate competition (best 10) we have 1st **Clive** 2nd Gerald/Derek
and in the Bronze Medal competition (best 5) we have 1st **Gerald/Derek** 2nd Paul K

A few sequences (no interference): -

What does the last bid in these sequences show, and is it weak, invitational or strong?
These have all come up recently and people have got them wrong. Answers on the back page.

1. 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♥ ?
2. 1♦ - 1♥ - 2♥ - 3♣ ?
3. 1♥ - 2♣ - 2NT ?
4. 1♦ - 1♥ - 2♦ - 2NT ?
5. 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 3♠ ?
6. 1♣ - 1♠ - 4♠ ?
7. 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ ?

4-4 better than 5-4, even in slam?

Board 4 from Monday 19th

Dealer: ♠ 107

West ♥ J984

Both vul ♦ 85

♣ QJ1092

♠ KQ85

N

♠ A432

♥ A7

W E

♥ K63

♦ J9432

S

♦ AK106

♣ A7

♣ 54

♠ J96

♥ Q1052

♦ Q7

♣ K863

West	North	East	South
1♦	pass	1♠	pass
3♠ (1)	pass	4NT (2)	pass
5♥	pass	6♣	all pass

- (1) A bit pushy, but with decent shape, excellent ♠'s and aces in the two other suits it is understandable.
- (2) The ♠ suit is a bit short on intermediates but with good top cards and excellent support for partner's first bid suit East decided to go for slam. 4NT here was normal Blackwood.

And what happened? The ♠'s behaved and the ♦'s behaved and so 13 tricks rolled in. Note that the 4-4 ♠ fit is superior to the 5-4 ♦ fit as a losing ♣ from the East hand is pitched on the long ♦. On a ♣ lead 6♣ only makes if you guess the ♦'s correctly, on any other lead 6♣ is there even if you get the ♦'s wrong. Most pairs were in 4♠, making +1, +2 or +3 and just one pair played in 5♦ making 12 tricks for a bottom

The bottom lines: -

- A jump like this (1♦ - 1♠ - 3♠) is strong but not forcing, generally around 15-16 with 4 card support. With this nice West hand I think it's just about right, but not if the shape was say 4243. The 5th ♦ makes the hand much stronger.
- Don't play in 5♦ when you have a 4-4 ♠ fit. Not just because a good 4-4 fit may get an extra trick, but because ♠'s scores more than ♦'s!
- There's not much in it, but with 9 cards missing the queen it's usually best to go for the 2-2 split. 8 ever (finesse) 9 never. This is especially true if the suit is not trumps, when a defender may well have led a singleton.
- As East here I would much prefer to be playing RKC(1430) as you can back off and play in 5♠ if there is a key card and the ♠Q missing.

When a double of NT is take-out

Board 11 from Monday 19th

Dealer: ♠ 865
South ♥ Q9
Love all ♦ 985
♣ KQ1064

West(B)	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♦
pass	1NT	dbl (1)	pass
pass (2)	pass		

♠ J943	N	♠ KQ72
♥ 1063	W E	♥ 8754
♦ 42	S	♦ AK7
♣ AJ52		♣ 87
	♠ A10	
	♥ AKJ2	
	♦ QJ1063	
	♣ 93	

- (1) Not particularly elegant and perhaps dangerous in this position, but this bid is for take out (of ♦'s) with the emphasis on the majors (as North's 1NT usually hides a ♣ suit over a 1♦ opening).
- (2) What did you bid with this West hand B in this week's quiz? West thought that the double was for penalties and passed. With 4 ♠'s, West should bid 2♠.

And what happened? 1NT made exactly for 180 to N-S. This was an equal top for N-S, matching the pair who bid 1NT +3 also for 180. The top E-W score was +110 for 2♠ making (which is what this East was angling for).

The bottom lines: -

- A double of 1NT in this situation (1♣/♦/♥/♠ - pass - 1NT - dbl) is for take-out of the suit bid.
- If the opening bid was 1♦ then it's really just for the majors as the NT bidder usually has ♣'s.

How high is double for take-out?

Board 29 from Monday 19th

Dealer: ♠ KQJ9874
North ♥ AQ107
Both vul ♦ -
♣ QJ

West	North(A)	East	South
-	4♠ (1)	pass	pass
dbl (2)	pass	pass	pass

♠ A1063	N	♠ -
♥ 52	W E	♥ KJ63
♦ A87	S	♦ Q1095432
♣ K953		♣ 42
	♠ 52	
	♥ 984	
	♦ KJ6	
	♣ A10876	

- (1) What did you open with this North hand A in this week's quiz? It's not really good enough for 2♣ and 1♠ seems obvious. 4♠ is a pre-emptive bid and is a particularly poor bid with this hand containing 4 excellent ♥'s. There may be a ♥ fit and partner will not need too much for slam and both of these possibilities are ruled out with a 4♠ opener.
- (2) Penalties.

And what happened? 4♠ was bid at 7 out of the 9 tables and went down four times. Basically it depends upon the lead. A ♣ or ♦ lead sets it and a ♥ lead lets it through. Now I do not pretend to be an expert at leads, but I would lead a ♦ as with a 7 card suit it's less likely to give a trick away than leading from this ♥ holding.

The bottom lines: -

- It's up to you/your partnership as to how high double is for take-out. One popular treatment is that double is for take-out up to and including 4♥ but a double of 4♠ is penalties (with 4NT as take-out). Obviously the higher the bid the more likely the partner of the doubler is likely to pass and convert it into penalties.
- Do not pre-empt (4♠ is a pre-empt) with a decent 4 card major outside.

Bid again after responding 1NT?

Board 24 from Friday 21st

Dealer: ♠ 103
West ♥ QJ9872
Love all ♦ J73
♣ J4

♠ KJ8	N	♠ AQ6
♥ K6	W E	♥ A103
♦ Q862	S	♦ 10954
♣ Q876		♣ 952

♠ 97542
♥ 54
♦ AK
♣ AK103

West	North(G)	East	South
pass	pass (1)	pass	1♠
pass	1NT (2)	pass	2♣
pass	2♠ (3)	all pass	

- (1) Would you open this hand with 2♥? I guess that 2♥ is not really that good a bid in 2nd seat, but I would open 2♥ in 1st or 3rd seat, this ♥ suit has great body.
- (2) 1NT must be right here.
- (3) What did you bid with this North hand G in this week's quiz? Actually things have worked out quite well as you can now bid 2♥, weak, to play. In the post-mortem North was asked why he did not bid 2♥ and he said because his partner would not understand it and would bid on. So South was asked and he indeed said that he would have bid on!

And what happened? 2♠ was one down and scored about average. 2♥ would have made and scored a top.

The bottom lines: -

- If you respond 1NT and then bid a suit, it is weak and to play. This is true whether you play a forcing NT (i.e. the 2/1 system) or natural and is also applicable to a passed hand.

Worth a Reverse?

Dealer: ♠ A653
North ♥ AK976
Love all ♦ 6
♣ A32

♠ 8	N	♠ 109742
♥ Q105432	W E	♥ J8
♦ Q4	S	♦ A852
♣ 10754		♣ Q8
	♠ KQJ	
	♥ -	
	♦ KJ10973	
	♣ KJ96	

Board 1 from Friday 23rd

Table A

West	North(C)	East	South
-	1♥	pass	2♦
pass	2♠ (1)	pass	3♣ (2)
pass	3NT	pass	4NT (3)
pass	5♠	pass	6♠
all pass			

Table B

West	North(C)	East	South
-	1♥	pass	2♦
pass	2NT (1)	pass	3NT (4)
all pass			

Table A (1) What did you bid with this North hand C in this week's quiz? 15 points is about the minimum for a reverse and a singleton in partner's suit also downgrades the hand so I don't think it's worth a reverse and would bid 2NT (12-14).

(2) I don't know if this was meant as 4th suit or natural.

(3) I guess that this was meant as Blackwood? (It 'should' be quantitative).

Table B (1) This North correctly chose not to reverse.

(4) And South easily arrived at the best spot.

And what happened? There was silly bidding at a couple of other tables (ending in 5NT and 3♦) but most tables managed to stop nicely in 3NT.

The bottom lines: -

- 15 points is the absolute minimum for a reverse, one normally needs more.
- A singleton in partner's suit is not an asset.
- A 2NT rebid after a two level response from partner is 12-14. Some players will rebid a 5 card major rather than 2NT with a minimum (12-13) hand and play 2NT as 13-14 but that is by no means standard.
- 4NT after a natural 3NT is quantitative.

I was asked how to find 4♠ (rather than a 'poor' 3NT) on this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ 1043		<u>Table A</u>			
North	♥ KJ983		West(F)	North	East(D)	South
N-S vul	♦ J97		-	pass	1♣ (1)	pass
	♣ J3		1♠	pass	1NT (2)	pass
			3NT (3)	all pass		
♠ KQJ72	N	♠ A98	<u>The 'More Experienced' Table</u>			
♥ 62	W E	♥ 53	West	North	East	South
♦ A2	S	♦ KQ64	-	pass	1♣ (1)	pass
♣ KQ98		♣ A642	1♠	pass	1NT (2)	pass
	♠ 65		2♦ (3)	pass	2♠ (4)	pass
	♥ AQ107		4♠	all pass		
	♦ 10853					
	♣ 10754					

- Table A**
- (1) I prefer 1♣ to 1♦ when 4-4 in the minors.
 - (3) But what did you rebid here with this East hand D in this week's quiz?
With excellent 3 card support and a very weak doubleton (in a suit which partner has denied) I would most certainly bid 2♠. However, not everybody always agrees with me and a number of players chose 1NT.
 - (4) So what should West do now? What did you bid with this West hand F in this week's quiz? The problem is that neither 2♠ nor 3♠ are forcing in Standard American. The best solution is as our 'more experienced pair'.
- 'More Experienced' Table**
- (2) Now as I said, I would bid 2♠ here, so that's why our experts have been demoted to 'more experienced'.
 - (3) And the solution to a ♠ bid being non-forcing is to play either Ccheckback Stayman or New Minor Forcing. This pair prefer NMF and so 2♦ asks partner to clarify his major suit holdings. It is totally artificial and says nothing about ♦'s.
 - (5) Showing 3 ♠'s (and denying 4 ♥'s).

And what happened? 4 out of 7 tables found the 'miserable' 3NT, but only one went down as three South's decided not to lead '4th highest longest and strongest'.

The bottom lines: -

- Play either CBS or NMF to avoid silly NT contracts like this. I have written up CBS/NMF/Crowhurst on the web and I'll write something about CBS and NMF individually soon.
- It's perhaps a matter of style, but holding 4-4 in the minors I open 1♣, I am not keen of the philosophy of opening 1♦ with a 2♣ rebid in mind (that promises 5-4 in the minors).
- With hands like this East hand, 2♠ is a far better rebid than 1NT at (2).
- Now the sequence 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 3♠ is interesting. In Standard American is (highly) invitational but not forcing. In Acoll it is usually played as forcing as the 1NT rebid is strong (15-16).
- It is often best to lead an unbid major against 3NT.

Who (if anybody) should make the effort?Board 19 from Friday 23rd

There were two very close decisions on this deal from Friday:-

Dealer: ♠ 109742
 South ♥ 1094
 E-W vul ♦ A102
 ♣ K6

♠ 5	N	♠ KQ6
♥ Q875	W E	♥ AK62
♦ 9854	S	♦ J73
♣ 10754		♣ QJ2
	♠ AJ83	
	♥ J3	
	♦ KQ6	
	♣ A983	

Table A

West	North	East	South(J)
-	-	-	1NT
pass	2♥	pass	2♠ (1)
pass (2)	pass		

'Expert' Table

West	North	East	South(J)
-	-	-	1NT
pass	2♥	pass	3♥ (1)
pass	4♠ (2)	all pass	

- Table A** (1) The first decision; should South make a move? What did you bid with this South hand J in this week's quiz? Now I can be quoted as (often) saying to super-accept with 4 trumps and a non-minimum. But what constitutes a minimum? Actually, this deal is similar to Board 16 from Monday 5th which appeared in news-sheet 162. There I said to super-accept with ♠KQ105 ♥J64 ♦K92 ♣AQ10 because, although it's only 15 points, the trumps are good. It's similar here and I would super-accept because of the good ♠'s.
- (2) The second decision, and this one is probably even closer. Should North make a effort (with 2NT)? It's just '7' points but three tens and two nines are very big. I would not argue with pass or 2NT.
- 'Expert' Table** (1) Our experts play super-accepts of course. And what's more they don't simply bid 3 of the trumps suit, but have an agreement about other bids. 3♥ here shows 4 ♠'s, a non minimum and a small doubleton ♥.
- (2) With no wasted values in ♥'s north knows that it's a superb fit and easily bids game.

And what happened? Just three N-S's out of seven reached the good 4♠ game (and two were doubled). Now two N-S's finished in 3♠ and I don't really understand this; if one of them makes a try then surely the other should accept?

And to answer the question (who should make the effort?) – I think it's South.

The bottom lines: -

- Two touching 10-9's are easily worth a point (or more).
- Play super-accepts over a transfer.
- And if you're a bit more ambitious, define the 'spare' bids. There is a reasonable scheme written up in the NT bidding book on the web.

Double and bid again?

Board 6 from Friday 23rd

If you double and then bid again it shows a good hand. If you double and then cue bid it shows an absolute monster, 12 points hardly qualifies! Actually, this deal went down in my little black book because of the ‘interesting’ bidding at four tables! :-

Dealer: ♠ AQ9
 East ♥ QJ53
 E-W vul ♦ AJ9
 ♣ A32

Table A
 West(H) North(E) East South
 - - pass 2♦
 dbl 3NT (2) all pass

♠ KJ742 N ♠ 63
 ♥ AK86 W E ♥ 10972
 ♦ - S ♦ 8752
 ♣ J974 ♣ K108
 ♠ 1085
 ♥ 4
 ♦ KQ10643
 ♣ Q65

Table B
 West(H) North(E) East South
 - - pass 2♦
 dbl pass (2) 2♥ pass
 3♦ (3) dbl 3NT (4) pass
 4♥ dbl all pass

Table D
 West North East South
 - - pass pass (1)
 1♠ 1NT pass pass (5)
 pass

Table C
 West North East South
 - - pass pass (1)
 1♠ 1NT pass pass (5)
 2♥ (6) dbl (7) pass 3♦ (8)
 pass 3NT (9) pass pass
 dbl (10)

- Table A** (2) What did you bid with this North hand E in this week’s quiz? Now you hope to make game, but what’s the rush – especially at this vulnerability. I prefer the pass at Table B
- Table B** (2) Especially at this vulnerability it’s best to wait and see if something really nice happens.
 (3) What did you bid with this West hand H in this week’s quiz? Partner has promised absolutely nothing and you should pass. 3♦ is a gross overbid.
 (4) I can’t see the ♦ stop but it makes no difference as West is clearly determined to give them a top whatever. Well, it is Christmas.
- Table C** (1) I guess that this N-S pair were not playing a weak 2♦.
 (6) This South hand is worth an effort – see my comment on Table D.
 (7) With a 12 point opener and a 15-18 point hand sitting over you, bidding again here is ...?
 (8) Penalties.
 (9) Right bid at the wrong time.
 (10) Since partner has pulled the 200 that was due, North decided to go for 420.
 (11) But West was not through yet and decided to give N-S 750.
- Table D** (5) South should make a move here. Playing 4-way transfers he can bid 2NT (transfer to ♦’s) but playing traditional methods I would bid 3♦ - showing a good ♦ suit and invitational to 3NT.

And what happened? 4♥ doubled by West was not a great success (-800). Most tables ended up in 3NT by North making or making +1 or +2. 3NT doubled made +2 for 750.

Fiddling about?

Board 2 from Friday 23rd

Dealer: ♠ K54
East ♥ A107432
N-S vul ♦ 8
♣ 872

♠ QJ1096	N	♠ 73
♥ K5	W E	♥ 98
♦ 2	S	♦ A9753
♣ AQJ54		♣ K1096
	♠ A82	
	♥ QJ6	
	♦ KQJ1064	
	♣ 3	

West	North(K)	East	South
-	-	pass	1♦
1♠	dbl (1)	1NT	2♦
3♣	3♥ (2)	4♣	dbl (3)
all pass			

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand K in this week's quiz? The hand is not strong enough to bid 2♥ and a negative double is absolutely correct.
- (2) But what does 3♥ mean now? Actually, it's totally logical – North did not bid 2♥ at (1) but can come in now at the 3 level – that can only be because he has a decent 6 card ♥ suit but insufficient points for 2♥ at (1).
- (3) South had a long think, dithered around in the bidding box, pulled out the dbl card, attempted to put it back ... when his partner finally said '*enough is enough*' – play the card! Whether that comment is legal I won't go into but he has my total sympathy. Why on earth South would even think of doubling with a singleton ♣ is a complete mystery to me. He has said his strength and the QJx are superb support for partner's 6 carder. What's more, a side suit like KQJ10xx will likely make zero tricks in defence but 5 tricks in offence. With a great hand like this you don't even need to 'think' – bid 4♥ in tempo. Pass is the only remotely sensible alternative.

And what happened? 4♣ went one down but 4♥ is an easy make (+1) for N-S.

The bottom lines: -

- If partner negative doubles and later bids his suit, then that is because he has a long suit (6 cards) but insufficient points for an initial two level response.
- Can players with years of 'experience' please refrain from dithering around in the bidding box, it is against the rules.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1♠. It's not quite good enough for 2♣ and anything else is 'silly'. Playing strong two's or Benji you can open 2♠/2♣ resp.
- Hand B: 1♠. Partner's double is for take-out (with the emphasis on the majors).
- Hand C: 2NT. Partner's ♦ suit has not improved this hand and it is not worth a reverse into 2♠. Playing 2/1 I would bid 2♠ as that does not show extra values playing 2/1.
- Hand D: 2♠. With good 3 card support and a doubleton in a suit which partner has denied I definitely prefer this to 1NT.
- Hand E: Pass. You can probably make 3NT, but what's the hurry, especially at this vulnerability? So pass and wait for the Christmas present.
- Hand F: You cannot bid this one sensibly unless you play CBS (2♣) or NMF(2♦) to find out if partner had 3 ♠'s. The problem is that 2♠ or 3♠ now are not forcing and 4♠ is a bit unilateral opposite a possible doubleton (or even a singleton).
- Hand G: 2♥. This is a weak bid, showing a weak hand with 6 ♥'s and partner is expected to pass.
- Hand H: Pass. Partner's 2♥ bid has promised nothing, 0-8 points and (hopefully) 4 ♥'s. 3♥ now would be an overbid but perhaps not too bad. Anything else is a gross overbid.
- Hand J: 3♣ (or whatever your super-accept bid is with this hand). With 4 decent trumps and a poor doubleton (so a often a good holding in a suit contract) I think it's worth a super-accept. Of course if you play a bid of a new suit to show a worthless doubleton (yes, there is a pair who actually have agreed this in the club) then 3♥ defines this hand pretty exactly.
- Hand K: Dbl. A negative double showing ♥'s. In this case it has more than 4 ♥'s but as it is not strong enough for a two level bid then a negative double is correct. If you later bid ♥'s then that shows this hand type (long ♥'s but insufficient values for a two level response).

A few sequences: - Answers

1. 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♥? Weak, to play (a 6 card suit).
2. 1♦ - 1♥ - 2♥ - 3♣? Forcing. A new suit at the 3 level by an unlimited responder is forcing.
3. 1♥ - 2♣ - 2NT? 12-14. It is responder who has pushed the bidding up to the two level and opener's 2NT rebid is just the minimum NT response.
4. 1♦ - 1♥ - 2♦ - 2NT? 11-12. 2NT by responder at any stage is virtually always an invitational 11-12.
5. 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 3♣? Invitational. The best way to effectively make a forcing ♠ bid is to play NMF or CBS.
6. 1♣ - 1♠ - 4♣? Strong. It is not shut-out or fast arrival. It simply shows a hand with 4 ♠'s, about 18-20, points and no shortage to splinter. Partner is invited to bid on with a good hand.
7. 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠? Natural (and forcing). You can play this a 4th suit forcing if you wish and it's all written up in that leaflet.

		<u>Winner</u>		<u>Runner-up</u>		
Mon 26 th	N-S 1 st	Birger/Ole	58%	2 nd	Mike(Can)/Bill	57%
	E-W 1 st	Jan/Knud	62%	2 nd	Hans/Chuck	61%
Wed 28 th	N-S 1 st	Knud/Ursula	60%	2 nd	Bob P/Ken	59%
	E-W 1 st	Britta/Gun	60%	2 nd	Gerald/Derek	58%
Fri 30 th	N-S 1 st	Birger/Ole	65%	2 nd	Tom/Tomas	58%
	E-W 1 st	Arne/Lars	69%	2 nd	Peter(Lux)/Barry	53%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	(a) What do you open with Hand A? (b) Suppose you open 2♣ and get a 'waiting' 2♦. You then bid 3♣ and partner jumps to 4♠. What is 4♠ and what do you do?
♠ 102 ♥ A4 ♦ A3 ♣ AKQ10975	♠ AJ1076 ♥ J3 ♦ AJ94 ♣ A8	(a) What do you open with Hand B? (b) Suppose you open 1♠ and get a 1NT response, what now?
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C partner opens 2♥, what do you do? With Hand D partner opens 2♣ (or 2♦ playing Benji) and you give a waiting response. Partner then bids 3♣ (so a big ♣ hand), what do you bid?
♠ 103 ♥ 9864 ♦ A1053 ♣ A95	♠ 6 ♥ K652 ♦ KJ1064 ♣ J62	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner passes and RHO opens 1♥. what do you bid? With Hand F RHO opens 1♥. (a) what do you bid? (b) Suppose you choose 2♥ (Michaels) or whatever your two-suited bid is. Then what do you bid over partner's 2♠ (or 3♠ if you play Ghestem)?
♠ KQ10765 ♥ J72 ♦ J63 ♣ Q	♠ AQ1073 ♥ 7 ♦ AQJ953 ♣ K	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 2♥ (weak), what do you bid? With hand H LHO opens 1♥ and partner overcalls with a weak 2♠. RHO bids 3♥, what do you do?
♠ QJ1063 ♥ - ♦ AKQ94 ♣ AK6	♠ AJ83 ♥ 4 ♦ K10852 ♣ 862	

Bidding Sequences (no opposition bidding): -

Sequence J	2♥ - 2♠	2♥ is weak, what is 2♠? And is 2♠ forcing?
Sequence K	2♥ - 4♦	What is 4♦?
Sequence L	2♥ - 2NT	What is 2NT?
Sequence M	2♥ - 4NT	What is 4NT? Is it a sensible bid?
Sequence N	1♣ - 1♥ - 2NT - 3♥	2NT is 18-19, is 3♥ forcing?

The club championships for 2005 are over now, final results: -

A total of 11 members achieved 30 or more results over 53%, so the final placing in the **Gold Cup**: -

1	Chuck Papparigian	1923.2
2	Dave Cutler	1895.3
3	Bob Pelletier	1870.3
4	Clive Bell	1812.4
5	Ken Judson	1798.6
6	Jan v Koss	1766.9
7	Tomas Wikman	1742.4
8	Phil Lovell	1740.3
9	Bill Noe	1718.0
10	Michael Guin	1715.3
11	Tom Grovslie	1706.4

Silver Plate (best 10). The top 3 above were not eligible for the lesser competitions. The results were:

1	Clive Bell	649.9	
2	Gerard/Derek	643.0	
3	Ken Judson	641.7	for other placings, refer to web page or results book.

Bronze Medal (best 5). The 3 winners of the Gold Cup and the Silver plate winner are excluded:

1	Gerard/Derek	336.2	
2	Paul Kelly	334.2	
3	Ken Judson	326.7	for complete details refer to web page or results book.

Editorial

Membership fees are due now. It's 1000 bht a year or 150 bht a month. Members are entitled to play for just 50 bht a session on our club days of Mon, Wed and Fri. Non-members pay 100 bht a session.

The Club Library

We now have a collection of over 150 Bridge books. These are available for members to borrow free of charge. I have compiled a complete list and it's on the web site and also in the 'conventions' folder that I bring to the club. Let me know if you would like to borrow a particular book. We also have numerous magazines but I have not yet compiled a list of them, there are always a few around for members to borrow.

I will be keeping a list of who has borrowed what. I have failed to do this in the past and there are a number of items missing so I have now stamped all of the books with 'Pattaya Bridge Club'. If you have any of the following, would you please return them to me: -

The following are 'missing', please return them: -

Robin Hood's bridge memoirs
Bridge card play made easy
The complete book of Bols bridge tips
25 steps to learning 2/1
Getting Started
Competitive Bidding
It's Your Bid

David Bird
David Bird
Sally Brock
Paul Thurston
Freddie North
Brian Senior
Tony Sowter

World Championships DVD

If you own any bridge books or magazines that you no longer need, we will always gladly accept donations. Thank you Carol Combes, Peter(Lux), Jo, John Gavens, Bob P, Ole Dam, Cheryl/Don and a few others (my memory is fading) who have indeed donated books and magazines.

And now on to some bridge: -

Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit – immediately - 1

Board 10 from Friday 30th

Dealer:	♠ AQJ76				
East	♥ Q73	West(C)	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ J6	-	-	2♥ (1)	pass
	♣ QJ7	pass (2)	2♠ (3)	pass	3♠
		4♥ (4)	pass	pass	4♠
		all pass			
♠ 103	N	♠ 94			
♥ 9864	W E	♥ AKJ52			
♦ A1053	S	♦ Q842			
♣ A95		♣ 106			
	♠ K852				
	♥ 10				
	♦ K97				
	♣ K8432				

- (1) A rather off-beat 2♥, but perhaps not that bad a bid and it should have worked out well.
- (2) What did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? With 4♥'s opposite partner's presumed 6 card suit, 4♥ is clear. This west tried to 'get off cheaply'.
- (3) And North has a comfortable 2♠ bid; if West had bid 4♥ he would simply have had to pass.
- (4) Too late now.

And what happened? 4♠ made +1 for a joint top. 4♥ went two down at other tables and would have got a good score even if it was doubled (it would not have been).

The bottom line: -

- I guess it's been a few weeks since I said it, raise partner's pre-empt to the limit at once.

Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit – immediately - 2

Board 24 from Friday 30th

Dealer: ♠ AJ83
 West ♥ 4
 Love all ♦ K10852
 ♣ 862

♠ 942 N ♠ -
 ♥ K853 W E ♥ AQ1096
 ♦ AQ7 S ♦ 94
 ♣ J105 ♣ AK9743

♠ KQ10765
 ♥ J72
 ♦ J63
 ♣ Q

Table A

West	North	East	South(E)
-	-	1♥	1♠ (1)
2♥	2♠	3♥ (2)	3♠ (3)
pass (2)	pass	4♥	4♠ (4)
pass	pass	5♥	5♠ (5)
pass	pass	6♥	dbl (6)
all pass			

Table B

West	North(H)	East	South(E)
-	-	1♥	2♠ (1)
3♥	4♠ (2)	5♥ (3)	all pass

- Table A: (1) What did you bid with this South hand E in this week's quiz? Now 9 points qualifies for a 1♠ overcall, but look at those 'points' in ♥'s, ♦'s, and ♣'s – they are all probably worthless opposite a passed partner and after an opponent has opened the bidding. I'm sure that not everybody will agree with me, but I prefer the bid made at table B or even a pre-emptive 3♠.
- (2) A bit feeble
 (3) Don't bid your hand twice.
 (4) Don't bid your hand three times.
 (5) Don't bid your hand four times
 (6) Don't bid your hand five times. I can't see a single defensive trick here, can you?

- Table B: (1) This (or 3♠) is clearly best
 (2) What did you bid with this North hand H in this week's quiz? 4♠ is excellent.
 (3) It's difficult for East to find the slam now.

And what happened? 6♥ made just exactly as declarer could not be bothered to go for the cold 13 tricks (I guess it doesn't really mater when you are doubled). The good bidding at Table B was repeated at a few tables and no other E-W pair reached slam.

The bottom lines: -

- South bid his hand 4 times (I would have made just one bid) and then made a penalty double. His hand was worth (and made) zero tricks in defence!
- Obviously this South hand is a good offensive hand (played in ♠'s) but is worth zero in defence; with this sort of hand, pre-empt!
- Don't bid your hand twice. Three times, four times, .. five(!) times is extremely

A splinter agreeing a minor

Board 23 from Monday 26th

I have written a fair bit about splinters (there are a couple of articles in the conventions section on the web) and I have said that it is usually agreeing a major suit. However, it most certainly also applies over minors, especially when slam is in the air: -

Dealer:	♠ 6				
South	♥ K652	West	North(D)	East	South(A)
Both vul	♦ KJ1064	-	-	-	2♦ (1)
	♣ J62	pass	2♥ (2)	pass	3♣ (3)
		pass	4♠ (4)	pass	5♣ (5)
		all pass			
♠ QJ9843	N	♠ AK75			
♥ QJ103	W E	♥ 987			
♦ 92	S	♦ Q875			
♣ 4		♣ 83			
	♠ 102				
	♥ A4				
	♦ A3				
	♣ AKQ10975				

- (1) What did you open with this South hand A(a) in this week's quiz? It is only 9 playing tricks and theoretically not worth 2♣ (or 2♦ playing Benji). But with superb shape and 9 pretty much cast iron tricks I think that your strongest bid is OK. It's far too good for a gambling 3NT, if playing Benji then 2♣ is also reasonable. This South was playing Benji and chose the game forcing 2♦ opening, with which I do not disagree.
- (2) Automatic relay playing Benji.
- (3) Natural and game forcing.
- (4) A splinter – what a great bid! Did you find this excellent bid with this North hand D in this week's quiz? A natural 3♦ or 3♥ are reasonable alternatives but I prefer to agree ♣'s as it's unlikely that there is a red suit fit and you can riff a ♠ in the short ♣ hand.
- (5) Did you recognise partners 4♠ as a splinter in question A(b) of this weeks quiz and investigate slam? Unfortunately South was not quite sure what 4♠ was and so bid 5♣.

And what happened? 5♣+1 was the most popular spot. Nobody bid the excellent 6♣, 6NT was bid once and deservedly went down even though a ♠ was not led.

The bottom lines: -

- An unnecessary jump is a splinter agreeing partner's last bid suit. In this particular deal 3♠ at (4) would be natural and forcing so 4♠ is a splinter.

A big UNT/Michaels hand

Board 16 from Monday 26th

I have written a fair bit about the UNT/Michaels conventions, and I have said that they should be weak or very strong. A rare example of the very strong type came up on Monday: -

Dealer:	♠ K842				
West	♥ K106	West	North	East	South(F)
E-W vul	♦ 1086	pass	pass	1♥	3♣ (1)
	♣ J42	pass	3♠	pass	4NT (2)
		pass	pass (3)	pass	
♠ J65	N	♠ 9			
♥ J32	W E	♥ AQ9854			
♦ 74	S	♦ K2			
♣ AQ876		♣ 10953			
	♠ AQ1073				
	♥ 7				
	♦ AQJ953				
	♣ K				

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand F(a) in this week's quiz? Playing Michaels cue bids this hand just about qualifies for the strong type, so playing Michaels it's 2♥, showing ♠'s and a minor. This particular N-S pair play Ghestem, whereby 3♣ is a two-suited overcall (usually weak but could be very strong as UNT/Michaels) specifically showing ♠'s and ♦'s. Playing Questem it would be the same as Michaels, so 2♥ as showing the two highest (♠'s and ♦'s)
- (2) But the wheels came off here. What did you bid with this South hand F(b) in this weeks quiz? Partner has shown absolutely nothing and a simple 4♠ bid here shows the big hand type. If partner actually has the two key cards needed for slam he will bid on over the strong 4♠ bid.
- (3) Fearing that they may get too high, North passed as he has a ♥ stop.

And what happened? 4NT made but scored about average with a number of pairs playing in 4♠+1.

The bottom lines: -

- Playing UNT/Michaels (or whatever) then if you make the two-suited overcall and then bid again that shows a very big hand.
- 'Inexperienced players tend to overbid good hands and underbid poor ones'. I can't recall who actually said this, but it is very true.

Play in the 6-3 major suit fit!

Board 2 from Monday 26th

Dealer: ♠ Q10952
East ♥ 1087
N-S vul ♦ 954
♣ 98

♠ J8	N	♠ K4
♥ KQJ953	W E	♥ A62
♦ J732	S	♦ KQ8
♣ 5		♣ AK1072
	♠ A763	
	♥ 4	
	♦ A106	
	♣ QJ643	

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♣	pass
1♥	pass	2NT (1)	pass
3NT (2)	all pass		

'Expert Table'

West	North	East	South
-	-	1♣	pass
1♥	pass	2NT (1)	pass
3♥ (2)	pass	4♥	all pass

Table A: (1) 18-19

(4) Not a good decision.

'Expert' (2) I think that it's best to play any bid over this strong 2NT as forcing. With a 5
Table card major it's probably best to use CBS or NMF, with a 6 card major you simply bid it – forcing. With a suit this good I would not argue with a simple 4♥.

And what happened? Two tables ended up in 3NT and shared the bottom as there are only 9 tricks on a ♠ lead. 4♥ made either exactly or +1 at most tables.

The bottom line: -

- It's simplest (and I think best) to play any bid after a 18-19 2NT rebid as game forcing. You can bid naturally or else play CBS or NMF.

Bid what you can make?

Board 1 from Friday 23rd

♠ A653 Remember this Hand C from last week's (164) news-sheet? – it was under the
♥ AK976 the title **Worth a Reverse?** The question was what do you bid having opened
♦ 6 1♥ and got a 2♦ response from partner. I said that the hand was not worth a
♣ A32 reverse and that 2NT(12-14) is best as partner's ♦ response has devalued the hand. One
member asked me 'why not bid 3NT?' – you expect to make that opposite a two level
response.

Now I have actually been over this before. There are a couple of very interesting articles in news-sheet 93 about the similar sequence 1♠ - 2♦ - 3NT. The Devil's Advocate (by Chuck) and His Master's Voice (by me). In basic Standard American a NT rebid at the lowest level is 12-14 and a jump rebid in NT is 18-19. So a 3NT bid here shows 18-19 and if you bid it partner may go charging off into slam. As Chuck correctly pointed out in his article, *some* experts do indeed play it differently – but that would have to be agreed and I see nothing wrong with the standard approach.

With 5-4, don't play in 1NT

Board 22 from Wednesday 28th

Dealer: ♠ 85
East ♥ Q7542
E-W vul ♦ KQ1083
♣ 2

♠ K9432	N	♠ Q
♥ AK	W E	♥ 10986
♦ 62	S	♦ 75
♣ Q965		♣ KJ10743
	♠ AJ1076	
	♥ J3	
	♦ AJ94	
	♣ A8	

Table A

West	North	East	South(B)
-	-	pass	1♠ (1)
pass	1NT	pass	pass (2)
pass			

Table B

West	North	East	South(B)
-	-	pass	1♠ (1)
pass	1NT	2♣	2♦ (2)
3♣	3♦ (3)	all pass	

- Table A: (1) What did you open with this South hand B(a) in this week's quiz? Now I personally don't mind opening 1NT with a 5 card major. And I don't mind opening 1NT with two doubletons (provided that they are both Qx or better). But I will not open 1NT with a 5 card major and two doubletons. So for me it's a 1♠ opener. Now I don't know the bidding at other tables but I note that one South was playing in ♥'s (and went down) so it was presumably an off-beat 1NT opener and a transfer.
- (2) And what did you bid with this South hand B(b) in this week's quiz? With 5-4 distribution and the 4-carder lower ranking than the 5-carder it's best to remove 1NT and bid the 4 card suit. So I would bid 2♦ here. If you play 2/1 (so a forcing 1NT) then 2♦ is obligatory.

- Table B: (2) This N-S pair do play 2/1 so South bids 2♦ as that's what he would do without the intervention. But I think that playing 2/1 or not here is largely irrelevant as 2♦ seems clear to me playing any system.
- (3) And now that North knows that South has 4♦'s he sensibly did not mention his ♥'s. It's a partscore hand and the known 5-4♦ fit should play extremely well.

And what happened? The 5-4♦ fit played extremely well and scored a joint top. Other scores were all over the place.

The bottom line: -

- Generally speaking, with a 5 card major and a 4 card minor, open 1 of the major and then bid 2 of the minor if partner responds 1NT.

Too Strong for 2NT

Board 15 from Friday 30th

Dealer: ♠ J1094
South ♥ 1092
N-S vul ♦ 97632
♣ 5

Table A

West	North	East	South(J)
-	-	-	2NT (1)
pass	pass (2)	pass	

♠ K8	N	♠ Q65
♥ J84	W E	♥ KQ7653
♦ 5	S	♦ 8
♣ AJ98432		♣ Q76
	♠ A732	
	♥ A	
	♦ AKQJ104	
	♣ K10	

Table B

West	North	East	South(J)
-	-	-	2♣ (1)
pass	2♥ (2)	pass	3♦ (3)
pass	3♠ (4)	pass	4♠ (4)
all pass			

Table A: (1) What did you open with this South hand J in this week's quiz? 21 points with a stopper in every suit – so 2NT? I hope not!! Before I go any further, consider these two hands J & Z. They are both 21 'points' so open either with 2NT??

♠ A732	♠ A732	I hope that readers who are familiar with my preachings will realise that these two hands are not the same. Hand J is <i>much</i> better than hand Z. If you care to check with my writings you will see that Hand J is 9½ playing tricks and well worth your strongest bid. Hand Z is simply a classic 2NT opener.
♥ AQJ	♥ A	
♦ AK104	♦ AKQJ104	
♣ K10	♣ K10	

(2) With just one point North must clearly pass. Anything else is a total gamble.

Table B: (1) This East opened his strongest bid, so 2♣ unless you play Benji.
(2) 2♥ negative is the best scheme if you have only one strong bid.
(3) Natural and game forcing,
(4) Natural

And what happened? 4♠ was the top spot; just one pair bid it. Others were all over the place
The bottom lines: -

- If you think that 21 points is 21 points and that hands J and Z are both worth the same opening bid, then have a word with me and I'll put you straight. I have written a few pages on playing tricks and it's on the web.
- It was not relevant in this case, but 2♥ negative is the best scheme if you only have 2♣ as your strong bid.

A word about 2♥ negative

I was asked about this. If you play Benjamin twos then do not play 2♥ as a negative over a 2♣ opening. Playing Benjamin twos it is best for responder to always simply relay with the cheapest bid over a 2♣/♦ opening, so 2♦ over a 2♣ opening and 2♥ over a 2♦ opening.
2♥ negative only applies if 2♣ is your only strong bid.

Cue bid or Blackwood?

Board 1 from Friday 30th

Dealer: ♠ 93
North ♥ K962
Love all ♦ K43
♣ AQ65

♠ Q62 N ♠ KJ1054
♥ Q W E ♥ 3
♦ AQ10762 S ♦ J985
♣ K97 ♣ 1042

♠ A87
♥ AJ108754
♦ -
♣ J83

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	1♣	1♠ (1)	2♥
3♦	3♥ (2)	4♦	4NT (3)
pass	5♦	pass	5♥ (4)
all pass			

'Expert' Table

West	North	East	South
-	1♣	1♠ (1)	2♥
3♦	3♥ (2)	4♦	4♠ (3)
pass	4NT (5)	pass	5NT (6)
pass	6♥ (7)	all pass	

- Table A: (1) A bit light for an overcall, but with a 2nd suit and good intermediates I think it's just about reasonable.
- (2) West has pushed the level up but North really has to show is ♥ support although he has just a minimal opener.
- (5) Not a good bid. It is rarely sensible to bid Blackwood with a void as if it becomes apparent that there is just one ace missing then is it a useful one or the one in your void suit?
- (6) Having used Blackwood and found that there is just one ace missing one should bid slam. One should only use Blackwood if you are prepared to go to a small slam missing just one ace.
- 'Expert' Table (3) Our experts do not bid Blackwood with a void. South has options here; 5♦ would be Exclusion Blackwood but with the ♣'s wide open I think it's best to cue bid the ♠A.
- (7) And North also has options. South is looking for slam and North should co-operate. A 5♣ cue bid is a good bid, but so is RKCB provided that you have an understanding about showing voids. Anyway, this North chose RKCB, normally one should not use Blackwood with a weak doubleton but it's OK if partner has cue bid the suit.
- (8) Two key cards and a useful void.
- (9) There are no top losers, but with a minimal hand and a 'useless' ♦K North settles for the small slam.

And what happened? Every N-S made 12 tricks (presumably on the ♦A lead) but only one pair bid 6♥. Two E-W's sacrificed in 5♦ down 4 but 800 away was costly. Deep Finesse says that 6♥ by South makes on any lead, I know I would struggle on a passive lead.

The bottom lines: -

- It is mis-using Blackwood to make the ask and then back off if there is just one ace missing.
- Do not use Blackwood with a wide open suit unless you know that partner has a control in it.
- There are a few schemes to show a (useful) void in response to Blackwood, I give what is generally considered to be the best on the next page.

Roman Keycard Blackwood Void Responses

The responses with a void are somewhat more complicated than normal as they need to be at a higher level. We use the same sort of philosophy as normal in that the responder shows two possible numbers of key cards. Unfortunately, because of the lack of space, the numbers differ by only two (instead of three). So asker is expected to be able to distinguish between 0 or 2 and between 1 or 3 key cards. This is normally possible after considering the previous bidding.

The responses (with a void) to 4NT are as follows: -

- 5NT = 0 or 2 key cards + a useful void.
- 6* = 1 or 3 key cards + a void in * suit if * is lower ranking than trumps.
- 6 'trumps' = 1 or 3 key cards + a void in a higher ranking suit.

A new suit over partner's pre-empt is forcing

Board 4 from Friday 30th

Dealer: ♠ 854
 West ♥ J653
 Both vul ♦ 103
 ♣ J842

Table A

West	North	East(G)	South
2♥	pass	4♦ (1)	pass
pass (2)	pass	pass	

♠ 972 N ♠ QJ1063
 ♥ AQ9742 W E ♥ -
 ♦ 2 S ♦ AKQ94
 ♣ 975 ♣ AK6

Table B

2♥	pass	2♠ (1)	pass
3♠ (3)	pass	4♠	all pass

♠ AK
 ♥ K108
 ♦ J8765
 ♣ Q103

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this East hand G in this week's quiz? There are a few sensible options, and a few non-sensible ones. I would bid as Table B, but let's have a look at the options. First of all, what is 4♦ here? As 3♦ (or 2♠) is natural and forcing I would play it as a splinter. One player bid 4NT – again, I can't see the point, especially with a void. 2NT (Ogust, or asking partner for a feature, whatever you play) is a possibility but again I can't see the point. 3NT is reasonable I suppose but 2♠ is clearly the best bid.

(2) This West had no idea what 4♦ was (he knew from his hand that it was not a splinter) and so decided to pass. He has my sympathy.

Table B: (1) Clearly the best bid. Natural and forcing.

(4) 3♦, agreeing ♠'s and showing a ♦ feature is a good bid if partner will understand it. For an unfamiliar partnership then 3♠ is obviously correct.

And what happened? 4♠ was the top spot; just two pairs bid it.

The bottom lines: -

- A new suit over partner's pre-empt is forcing.
- Thus a jump in a new suit below game is a splinter!
- RONF, Raise Only Non-Forcing, is standard over two level pre-empts.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) It's theoretically a trick short but I would not argue with a 2♣ (or 2♦ playing Benjamin twos) opener. Playing Benjamin then 2♣ followed by 3♣ is a sound alternative.
(b) It's a splinter agreeing ♣'s (a non-jump 3♣ bid would be natural and forcing so this is a splinter). You should investigate slam or simply bid 6♣. There is no point in bidding Blackwood and I would bid 5♦, a cue bid and hope to hear a 5♠ cue bid from partner (showing a void). If partner has no ♠ void then settle for 6♣.
- Hand B: (a) 1♠. It's (semi) balanced but I don't like 1NT with a 5 card major and two doubletons (one of which is weak).
(b) 2♦. It's best to remove 1NT when you have this type of distribution.
- Hand C: 4♥. Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit at once. Partner has shown 6♥'s and so The Law says to bid 4♥ now.
- Hand D: 4♠. A splinter (showing a singleton or void) and agreeing ♣'s. A natural 3♦ or 3♥ are reasonable alternatives.
- Hand E: 2♠ or 3♠, weak. This hand is a 5-pointer (only the ♠ points are worth anything now), so a pre-emptive 2♠ bid (I would most certainly not argue with 3♠) is better than 1♠.
- Hand F: (a) 2♥ playing Michaels (or Questem), 3♣ if you play Ghestem. The two-suited overcalls are usually weak but can be very strong. This hand is just about good enough for the strong type. A simple double is an alternative.
(b) 3♦ or 3♠ if you play Michaels (or Questem) or 4♦ or 4♠ is you play Ghestem. Assuming Michaels/Questem then your initial 2♥ is presumed weak. If partner simply replies in your major then any bid by you is now strong and so 3♦/♠ is quite sufficient and forcing.
- Hand G: 2♠, natural and forcing. 2NT (Ogust or asking partner to show a feature) is a poor 2nd choice. 3NT is just about (possibly) reasonable as is 4♥ but the 2♠ bid really does stand out a mile. Any other bid (4NT, 4♦) is silly.
- Hand H: 4♠. The Law. Raise partner's pre-empt to the limit immediately.

Bidding Sequences (no opposition bidding): -

- | | | |
|------------|--------------------|--|
| Sequence J | 2♥ - 2♠ | 2♠ is natural and forcing. |
| Sequence K | 2♥ - 4♦ | 4♦ is a splinter agreeing ♥'s and looking for slam. If you do not play splinters then the bid is probably meaningless as 3♦ is strong and forcing. |
| Sequence L | 2♥ - 2NT | 2NT asks partner for a feature or is Ogust. |
| Sequence M | 2♥ - 4NT | 4NT is Blackwood and is unlikely to be a good bid as you could make another forcing bid (say 2NT) first. |
| Sequence N | 1♣ - 1♥ - 2NT - 3♥ | This one is up to partnership understanding. Some play that it is weak, but I prefer to play any bid over the strong 2NT (18-19) jump as forcing. It really does make life easy. |