



Last week's winners: Monday 31/3/03

Friday 4/4/03

winners	Ian/Jim	63%	winners	Malgosia/Philip	71%
2 nd	Gary/Chuck	56%	2 nd	Chuck/Terry	62%

Well done Malgosia/Philip on Friday. What a score! And though I say it myself, not against poor opposition! Hans/Paul and Ian/Jim were also contending. I noticed that Malgosia carries around her copy of all the news-sheets with her, Philip has commented on how he avidly reads them and accepts friendly advice. Guess this result just goes to show!

Sorry, Anne, forgot your news-sheet last week (Anne has a copy sent to her every week) – hope everything's fine in Germany, it's hot here. Guess more than a few people enjoy my incessant chatter and occasional digs; being appreciated really does make it worthwhile.

Numbers are coming down now, but 4 ½ tables on Monday and 4 on Friday are pretty good for this time of year, especially considering the 'flu epidemic (SARS) and the war.

We (UK) were sensible enough to stay out of Vietnam, how *did* we get involved in this one? Guess Tony relied on American 'intelligence'? – sorry for the contradictory terminology. Nobody doubts that the allies are doing the right thing - do they? So, when it's over, we'll be cleaning up Zimbabwe, Burma and Tibet etc next, right? Certainly ruled by equally oppressive regimes with a better guarantee that the people will be behind an uprising. Pity that they have no oil! Do I hear some cynics? Shame on you.

Do you really think that mr bush (and America) have ulterior motives? Well, I guess that if somebody made a fool of my dad then I might be a bit peeved.... so kick their butts! What the hell, george has the biggest and best toys in the world, so let's play.

p.s. If you have something to contribute to the news sheet, then give it to me and it will be included (within reason). I would just love some American culture, some Irish baloney, some double Dutch,

These guys (Chuck, Paul, Hans) are far better bridge players than myself, so spread the word

Having mentioned these guys and bridge, let's have a contribution from them: -

West	East	Remember this combination from news-sheet 21 where I said that West should open 2♣ as otherwise the excellent 6♣ will be missed? (Hans opened 2NT). Hans came back on this one and queried how 6♣ could possibly be bid? Chuck and Paul both suggested: -
♠ AJ	♠ K74	2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT - 4NT - 5♣ - 6♣ .
♥ A86	♥ J74	4NT is quantitative and since West is non-min (in my/Chuck/Paul's view), he accepts (bidding a 4 card suit on the way). If you are at all in doubt as to whether West should accept a slam invitation, then consider this: - The West hand is bristling with controls and a suit contract is probably best; after East's quantitative 4NT bid there <i>must</i> be a minor suit fit (he did not use Stayman or transfer). West should most certainly be looking for a minor suit slam. Even with a totally flat hand opposite, 6♣ is cold.
♦ AK94	♦ QJ7	
♣ AK83	♣ QJ54	

Incidentally, when this hand first came up, I assumed that 2NT was 20-22 and that 2♣ followed by 2NT was 23-24. Apparently Hans bids 2♣ on 22+ points (2NT is 20-21). In news sheet 21 I stated that there was a huge difference of opinion. Apparently (if this hand is not worth 22 points!) there is a Grand Canyon.

Hans says that if the majors and minors are interchanged then the hand *is* worth 2♣.

I agree. But the hand given is also most certainly worth 2♣.

Referring back to the last news-sheet about Benjamin Acoll etc.; Hans and Chuck both prefer: -

2NT opening	= 20-21	A bit pedantic, but I'm an easy goin' guy (ho, ho), so OK.
2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT	= 22-24	(it's just that I was brought up on 2NT = 20-22). Guess I'm getting old and stuck in my ways? That's what Chuck says.

Denying a Four Card Major

- ♠ K876 -1- South hand 25 from Monday. Partner opens 1♣, what is your reply?
♥ A75 A totally flat 10 count, so 1NT? no, No, NO. Never deny a 4 card major
♦ K52 under these circumstances. Especially if you play 5 card majors, how will
♣ 1043 you ever find your glorious 4-4 fits? Refer to news-sheet 17 to refresh your
memory as to why you cannot afford to miss 4-4 major suit fits. This hand was played in NT
twice on Monday and they got what they deserved – a joint bottom. 2NT is, of course,
atrocious.
- ♠ K876 -2- This hand is different. Partner has opened 1♦, what do you respond?
♥ A7 The correct bid is 2♣, with the intention of bidding ♠'s next turn. This is
♦ 52 not denying a major (at least, only temporarily) as the 2♣ bid is forcing
♣ AKJ94 and you intend to bid ♠'s at your next turn. This recommended sequence
helps show your shape. If you bid ♠'s first and then bid ♣'s, then partner will expect 5 ♠'s
and the bidding is up a level. Paul and Chuck totally agree; Hans would bid 1♠ first, he is
most definitely in the minority.
- ♠ K876 -3- Another twist – a slightly weaker hand. Partner has again opened 1♦,
♥ 97 what do you respond? It would be nice to be able to bid 2♣ (with the
♦ 52 intention of bidding ♠'s next turn). However, this hand is not strong
♣ AJ943 enough for a two level response, so you have to settle for 1♠.
- ♠ K876 -4- And how about this variation? Partner has again opened 1♦. You have
♥ Q7 the values for a two-level response. So 2♣? Unfortunately, no. Agreed,
♦ J2 you have the values for a two level bid, unlike -3-, but you are not strong
♣ AJ943 enough to subsequently reverse into ♠'s as that would be game forcing.
You have to settle for an initial 1♠ bid and see what happens. If partner rebids 1NT (12-14)
then raise to 2NT (invitational). Not really worth 3NT.

The bottom line: - You can only 'deny' a 4 card major and bid out your shape if you
have game forcing values. At least, that's the way Paul, Chuck and myself play.

Opening 1NT and responses Hand 22 from Monday: -

West	East	This hand was brought to my attention three times on Monday. The first time I saw it West opened 1♣ and rebid 2NT after his partner's 1♠ response. Unfortunately, this sequence shows 18-19 points and it was fortunate that East did not seriously look for slam as he made just 10 tricks in 4♥. If you have a balanced hand within your 1NT opening range, then open 1NT. If you do not, you will have rebid problems (as in this case) – do not worry about a weak doubleton. Would you believe that this hand was played 4 times and it was in 3NT twice! Do 50% of the club not know about the Holy Grail, the source of life, the fountain of youth,the 4-4 major suit fit!?
♠ 42	♠ K9853	
♥ KQ93	♥ J542	
♦ AK2	♦ 9	
♣ KJ102	♣ AQ5	

Stayman after Intervention The same hand 22 as above.

So, you open the West hand 1NT (15-17); but this time there is a 2♦ overcall. This is what happened when Paul/Hans were W-E. What do you bid as East? Unfortunately you cannot now bid either Stayman or transfers. Hans (East) bid 3♦ and Paul bid 3NT. 3NT made but 4♥ is a superior contract. So what did Hans' 3♦ bid mean? It could be interpreted as asking for a ♦ stop (as Paul took it). But I believe (a rare occasion where I actually agree with Hans!) that the best use of this cue bid is Staymatic - how else would you bid a hand with one or two major suits after intervention?

Fine, but what do you do with a game-going hand with no stopper in the overcalled suit? If the cue bid is Stayman, how do you show that you have the values for 3NT but no stopper in the overcalled suit? Basically, we need a conventional bid. I will explain **Lebensohl** in a later news-sheet (this one is full up).

Now I said three times. I was asked how to bid the East hand 22 when West opens 1NT and there was no intervention. The traditional method using transfers is to transfer and then bid your 4 card suit (game forcing). This is certainly the recommended method with a 5 card major and a 4 or 5 card minor; with 5-4 (or 4-5) in the majors, most serious players these days employ Stayman (they use the transfer and bid sequences in the majors only when 5-5). So, with a game forcing 5-4 (or 4-5) in the majors opposite a 1NT opening you bid Stayman. If partner replies in a major then raise to game. What if partner replies 2♦? Normally you bid 3 of your 5 card major (game forcing) and give partner the choice between 4 of the major or 3NT. A slight improvement on this is the **Smolen** convention, whereby you bid 3 of your 4 card major, thus giving opener the same options but ensuring that the 1NT opener is declarer.

Editor's Note. Smolen has now been superseded by Quest transfers.

An Opener?

♠ K9	A 12 count and nearly flat. Do you open or pass (in 1 st or 2 nd seat)? – 3 rd seat may open light. Some will open, some not. What do the 'experts' say? Is there a simple 'rule'? (there is!). You will get the answer next week. If you have a strong opinion, then let me know and it will be included next week. You get 10 Brownie points for the correct answer.
♥ J95	
♦ A863	
♣ A1064	

Sitting under a Strong NT

Board 8 from Friday: -

Dealer:	♠ J108532	West	North	East	South
West	♥ Q4	(me)	(Hans)	(Chuck)	
	♦ 98				
	♣ 652	1NT	pass	2♦ (1)	dbl (2)
♠ Q6	N	redbl (3)	pass	pass	3♣ (4)
♥ K82	W E	dbl (5)	all pass		
♦ KJ1064	S	(1) transfer			
♣ AKJ		(2) I have a good hand with ♦'s			
	♠ A9	(3) So do I			
	♥ AJ6	(4) I have a good hand with ♣'s			
	♦ AQ7	(5) So do I			
	♣ Q10974				

This is a part-score hand, but N-S went for 300. Why? South has a good hand, but he knows that West has too. It is dangerous to enter the auction at this stage (2) sitting under a strong NT, and you really should have better ♦'s. Should North have rescued the redouble with 2♠? It would have turned out better, but I sympathise with North's pass as he had two reasonable ♦'s (texture!) and obviously expected a better 'suit' from partner, 6 tricks in ♦'s may be easier than 8 tricks in ♠'s – I (sort of) agree with Hans here! Also, he did not know if Chuck could stand the redouble and Chuck may have rescued him. What about West's final double? Normally you should keep quiet after opening 1NT when partner has not promised any values, in this case I felt that the cards were lying badly for South (I expected 4 or 5 ♦'s) and I figured the 3 level too high as I had good trumps. I was right on the second count. Three points to consider: -

- 1- The double of a cipher bid (Stayman or transfer) is usually for a lead. But be cautious. I cannot see that the South really wanted a ♦ lead on this hand. If you enter the auction here, you must have a good suit (usually the cipher suit) to play in. Q10974 is not good enough, especially at the 3 level.
- 2- Note Chuck's pass of the redouble. He did not initially expect to possibly be declarer in a ♦ game contract with ♦ 532 and a 3 count, but he is slowly learning to trust me! Of course, with an unsuitable ♦ holding, he would pull it to 2♥. No problem.
- 3- If South had not doubled, West has just two options; complete the transfer or super-accept. South's interference makes life so much easier for West, he now has two additional options (pass and re-double). So what do you do with the extra bidding room? How about: -

Re-double = I think that we can probably make 8 tricks in ♦'s, let's teach them a lesson!
 Pass = I have only two ♥'s
 2♥ = I have three ♥'s (possibly min with 4, depending upon how you play super-accepts).
 other = super accept, 4 ♥'s

The Jump Rebid in NT

You open a suit and then rebid NT at the cheapest level. This is 12-14 (playing a strong NT) and 15-16 (playing a weak NT). No problem. The jump NT rebid is even easier. It is 18-19 or 17-19 (weak NT). Let's pretend that you play a strong NT, open 1♦, and partner responds 2♣. You rebid 3NT. This shows 18-19 points (or an excellent suit). Bog standard? To me, yes. To Hans, no!

♠ Axxx Hans believes that the jump NT rebid may be made on lesser values if your
♥ Axx partner bids your shortage. I.e. you did not open 1NT because of a
♦ KQ10xx singleton, when partner bids your singleton then you jump rebid NT –
♣ K shame that you don't have the values. He quoted this hand. Obviously
you open 1♦. Partner responds 2♣ (10 + points in his system). Clearly 3NT
is probably the best contract, so bid it?? No! This jump rebid shows 18-19 points. Hans disagrees and
asked how you bid this hand? I have no problem, I simply rebid 2♦ (too weak for a reverse), it would be
nice to have 6♦'s, but there is no other bid if you cannot reverse. Actually, you can reverse into 2♠ if you
have agreed that this does not show extra values after a two level response. I play this with Chuck, but this is
not standard. Incidentally, Hans is a great believer in rebidding NT with a singleton (or even void) in
partner's suit. I am not. Refer to news-sheet 18. This hand is an excellent example of why a two level
response should be up to strength. I believe that there is no other rebid but 2♦ (if the reverse shows extras),
but you do not expect partner to pass. I do not respond at the two level with crappy 10 counts because of
hands like this (and a multitude of other reasons). Hans and Paul do. Just a different style? I (and Chuck)
expect another bid after a two level response – even if not playing 2/1.

This hand is interesting. Obviously you would have liked to open a strong NT if you knew that partner
had ♣'s. With a singleton, you cannot. Unfortunately you cannot rebid either 2 or 3NT when partner bids
your problem suit as either will always show an incorrect point range. That is life. If you are unhappy with
it then check up on the Crowhurst convention (I don't like it – but it enables a variable range NT
response).

So, just to clarify everything. If you have a natural 1NT rebid but your partner responds at the two
level, then 2NT shows the same values (12-14 strong or 15-16 weak) – partner has forced you to the
two level and presumably has the values to anticipate a 2NT rebid. If your partner responds at the two
level and you jump rebid to 3NT then this shows 18-19 (strong NT) or 17-19 (weak NT). Paul agrees
with this, guess things are different in Holland? Certainly changed since I lived there.

♠ AK10 What prompted this debate between Hans and myself? This hand. What
♥ J74 do you open? It chose 1♦ and got a 2♣ response. The 2♣ reply has not
♦ KQ832 improved the hand, and clearly 3NT is probably the best contract. So
♣ A9 that's what this hand bid. Unfortunately, partner had a big hand and,
assuming 18-19 points, bid 6♦. Open this hand 1NT and you have no problem. If you
have a balanced hand within your 1NT range, then open 1NT! Think I've said that
before!