

Last week's winners: Monday 1/6/03

Friday 5/6/03

1 <sup>st</sup>	Ian/Bill	57 %
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Hans/Clive	55%

1 <sup>st</sup>	Hans/Jan	32 VP
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Ian/Bill	29 VP

**A one-level 'penalty' double?**A hand from Friday 30<sup>th</sup>

Hand A Two passes to you. You open 1♣, partner responds 1♦ and RHO overcalls 1♠, what do you do? I was playing with Bill and I doubled – passed out. ♠ AQJ9 LHO was amazed that this was a penalty double (the contract went ♥ AK74 two off). If you do not play support doubles here (I only play support ♦ 7 doubles of partner's major) then this is a penalty double. As Chuck is the ♣ Q732 only player who plays support doubles and he's gone, then this is most certainly penalties (saying I could have bid 1♠ myself if there was no overcall). After the dust had settled, RHO (Ian) expressed surprise that a one level contract can be doubled (and go two off). I simply replied that you got what you deserve for overcalling with Kxxx ! Bill (my partner) had just a 6 count and a small doubleton ♠; he saw no reason to let the opponents off the hook. Absolutely correct, I wish there were more penalty double sequences? Or perhaps more people who simply use their common sense (like Bill here) – what else can double possibly mean?

Incidentally, Hans would not double. I gave this hand to Hans and he said that he would rebid 1NT, but then Hans believes that it is inconceivable that anybody would overcall with Kxxx. Of course they should not, and the best way to teach them is to keep on doubling them. Hans does not see it this way, and believes that opponents always have their bids. I am not so trusting, people will do whatever they think they can get away with. Obviously more when you play against Hans than when you play against me. Incidentally, a 1NT rebid promises a balanced 12-14 points, perhaps I need to get my calculator out?

One more very significant point. Partner's 1♦ bid means that he has some (6-11) points but the hand is quite possibly a mis-fit. Do not bid too high with mis-fits and doubling opponents is usually a good idea.

Clive and Jan (Swe) were present when I gave this hand to Hans. Jan said he would rebid 1NT. Is he picking up bad habits (rebid 1NT with the incorrect point range) from Hans? Clive would rebid 2♥. Now normally a reverse would promise a good hand *with greater length in the first bid suit* (♣'s here) but I do have some sympathy with this bid because partner has not actually denied ♥'s – it is far better than the lying 1NT rebid.

Now Hans was quite adamant that a double here was not penalty orientated – he suggested that it was negative (showing 4 ♥'s). I disagree. One simple quote from a Crowhurst book (he is a *great* believer in negative doubles) should suffice :-

*'A double of an intervening overcall in this situation is for penalties. Furthermore, you will be relieved to hear that there are no exceptions to this general rule.'*

To be fair, this book did not include Support doubles; but if you do not play them (or play them only when partner bids a major suit – as I do) then Crowhurst's statement is still 100% valid.

The bottom line? If this hand does not qualify for a double (whatever you think double means), then what sort of hand does?

## Raising Partner's opening Major to Game

Hand B	Hand C	Your partner opens 1♠. Hand B is an excellent raise to 4♠, so bid 4♠? Perhaps, but then what about Hand C? Again you want to raise partner to 4♠, but this time more of a pre-emptive raise. You have 10 ♠'s between you and 'the Law' says to compete to the four level. You may or may not make 4♠, but if it fails then the opponents are sure to make game their way (probably 4♥). So, two totally different
♠ QJ863	♠ QJ852	
♥ A3	♥ 63	
♦ KJ42	♦ KJ42	
♣ K7	♣ 74	

hands wish to raise partner to 4♠. How does partner know if you have a solid raise (Hand B) or the pre-emptive raise (Hand C)? The answer is that you should only bid a direct 4♠ on the pre-emptive type hand. And how do you then bid Hand B? There are various different schemes to choose from (Jacoby 2NT, Swiss etc) and I will cover a few in later news sheets; for now an effective method is the delayed game raise. Simply (in this case) bid 2♦ with Hand B and bid 4♠ at the next turn. This shows a full-blooded raise to game.

Hand D	Hand E	So, now we've got the hang of it, let's see if you can do better than the holders of these two hands recently. Hand D is South board 4 from Friday. It responded 4♠ to partner's 1♠ opening at both tables. Opener had a good 15 count and could not bid on. An easy slam was missed. Why? Hand D is a very sound 4♠ raise, it should not bid 4♠ directly. Hand E was held by one of the same players on Monday (Board 19
♠ AJ1073	♠ Q9543	
♥ J104	♥ AQ10	
♦ A64	♦ 95	
♣ 107	♣ Q105	

North). What should you bid with Hand E after partner has opened 1♠? First, let's evaluate the hand. 10 points and flat except for the 5 card support for partner. Queens are not great cards but the hand does contain two tens and two nines. Now 10 points is normally a limit raise to 3♠ - that's what was bid at one table, but with 5 trumps it is too good. So a direct 4♠? The law of total tricks says to always bid 4♠ when you have 5 trumps, regardless of points (10 combined trumps, so bid to make 10 tricks). Perfectly sound and 4♠ is a far better bid than 3♠. The only problem with bidding 4♠ directly is that it is often (usually) a much weaker hand. The alternative? Hans would bid 2♣ and then jump to 4♠ next bid. This is the delayed game raise and one method of showing a sound raise to 4♠. This is definitely to be preferred if partner has a big hand (say 16+ points), with this big hand he would pass over a direct 4♠ but investigate slam with the slower sequence. In my opinion this Hand E is just on the borderline between these two approaches. I personally would bid the direct 4♠, but would adopt Hans' style if two of the queens were replaced by a king and a jack. If slam is a possibility, kings are way better than queens. I suspect that most expert players would not bid a direct 4♠, but then they have sophisticated methods to stay out of poor slams. What actually happened? Opener passed the 3♠ bid (he was minimum) and 4♠ made easily.

## 'Silly' Stayman?

Partner opens 1NT, you bid 2♣ Stayman and partner responds 2NT. What the hell is going on? You may recall back in new-sheet 4 there was a hand where Ian rebid this 2NT (to show a max) when playing with Chris. Now Chris is perhaps not quite so verbose as me, but his comments to Ian were sufficient to the extent that Ian has never made this silly bid again.

The reason that I am bringing this all up is that one of my former 'pupils' (Jan) used to play this 'silly' Stayman (in this case 2NT to show both majors). I taught him 'proper' Stayman but now one of our club's most experienced player (Hans) has agreed to play this silly scheme with him. I am appalled! Why undermine all my good (?) work?\_

Hand F	Hand G	Hand H	How do you bid these hands if partner opens a strong (15-17) 1NT? Easy. These are all classic Stayman hands. With Hand F you bid 2♣ and pass any response from partner. With Hand G you bid 2♣, if partner replies in a major then you pass; if partner replies 2♦ then you bid 2♠ (weak). So, Stayman
♠ J963	♠ J9852	♠ 975	
♥ J763	♥ J763	♥ K973	
♦ J9852	♦ J2	♦ J2	
♣ -	♣ 74	♣ A974	

works admirably with these weak hands containing two major suits (you need 4 or 5 ♦'s when only 4-4 in the majors). How about invitational hands? Playing a strong NT then an invitational hand would be 8 points. So you have Hand H and partner opens 1NT. You bid 2♣; if partner replies 2♦/♠ then you invite game by bidding 2NT, if partner replies 2♥ then you invite game by bidding 3♥. Nothing could be simpler; and this is how most people play Stayman. Chuck calls it 'garbage' Stayman – because the 2♣ bidder may have garbage.

Now Stayman has been around for eons and there are a few variations. One of which a few of our club members play is that if opener has two 4 card majors then he bids 2NT (instead of the usual 2♥). This way responder knows of any fit straight away. So what are the advantages/disadvantages of this approach? –

Let's start with the disadvantages: -

- 1) You have a problem with Hand F if partner replies 2NT (both majors) as you cannot then play in anything at the two level.
- 2) You have a problem with Hand G if partner replies 2NT (both majors) as you then have to play in 3♠ instead of 2♠.
- 3) You have a problem with invitational hands if partner replies 2NT (both majors) as you no longer have an invitational bid. 3♥/♠ would be weak, to play.
- 4) If opener responds 2NT (both majors) then the wrong hand will be playing an eventual major suit contract.
- 5) You cannot play 4-way transfers. With 4-way transfers *all* invitational bids (either containing a 4 card major or not) go via 2♣. If partner may respond 2NT then 4-way transfers is not a viable system for you. I will be covering 4-way transfers soon.

Just to be fair (ain't I always?), let's list the advantages of this scheme: -

.....

.....

Now this may appear to be an empty space, but that is an illusion. I'm sure that somebody out there (Hans?) can actually think of an advantage of this scheme? While we are waiting, I strongly advise everybody to play the normal ('Garbage') version of Stayman because:

- it works
- it's what most people play

p.s. I found a reference to 'silly Stayman' in a recent book. The author states that the 2NT response 'does not exist'; obviously he has not met some of the players at our club.

**Which Card – Solution.**

Dealer:	♠ A	West	North	East	South
South	♥ 954				
E-W vul	♦ J9754	-	-	-	4♠
	♣ AKJ3	pass	pass	pass	

♠ 75	N	♠ 43
♥ KQJ	W E	♥ A10732
♦ 108632	S	♦ A
♣ 1074		♣ 98652
	♠ KQJ109862	
	♥ 86	
	♦ KQ	
	♣ Q	

West leads the ♥K against South's 4♠ contract. What must East do?

East can see how the defence can succeed, West is not in a position to do so. Thus East must take charge; overtake the ♥K with the ♥A, play the ♦A and return a ♥ (the ♥10 if you feel that your partner needs a McKenny signal to know that you need a ♦ ruff). West cannot really go wrong now and gives East his ruff.