

Monday 21/6/04

Friday 25/6/04

1<sup>st</sup> Hans/Dave 61%  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Martin/Rosemary 57%

1<sup>st</sup> Kenneth 48 IMPs  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Dave 46 IMPs

There were just 9 players on Friday so we had an individual. Seems that a few stayed away because they were up until 4.00 a.m. the night before just to see England (football team) lose yet again. Mind you, one member did stay up but turned the TV off prematurely and missed twelve goals!

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

Hand A Hand B With Hand A partner opens 1♦ and you respond 1♥. Partner then bids 2NT (18-19), what do you bid?

♠ 107 ♠ 432  
 ♥ A1054 ♥ 10754  
 ♦ KQJ65 ♦ AK542  
 ♣ 65 ♣ K

With Hand B partner opens 2NT (20-21), what do you bid?

Sequence C W N E S

2NT shows 18-19 pts,  
is 3♦ weak or forcing? 1♦ pass 1♥ pass  
2NT pass 3♦?

Sequence D W N E S

2NT shows 18-19 pts,  
is 3♥ weak or forcing? 1♦ pass 1♥ pass  
2NT pass 3♥?

**Locating a specific king with RKCB**Board 21 from Friday 25<sup>th</sup>, E-W vul.

West	East	West	North	East	South
♠ K10	♠ AQJ7	-	pass	1♥	pass
♥ K104	♥ AJ8762	2♦	pass	2♠ (1)	pass
♦ AJ873	♦ Q9	3♥	pass	4NT (2)	pass
♣ 972	♣ A	5♥ (3)	pass	6♥ (4)	all pass

(1) a reverse, game forcing after 2♦

(2) Roman Key Card Blackwood

(3) 2 key cards, no ♥Q

-	-	5NT (4)	pass
6♠ (5)	pass	7♥ (6)	all pass

Both tables reached 6♥ on Friday and I was asked if the ♠K could be located when playing RKCB. The answer is yes – if you play one particular variation of the king ask. 5NT at (4) asks for kings (there are 3 left) and this scheme in responding is to bid the suit of your cheapest king. This works like a dream with this particular deal. And what if the West hand had, say, the ♣K in addition? Then it doesn't work with ♥'s as trumps, but with ♠'s as trumps a 6♥ bid would ask for the ♥K. There is a solution with all suits as trumps (Kickback) but then that really is getting complicated. I'm working on it. Incidentally, I don't think it's a good idea for East to look for a grand when he knows that the ♥Q is missing!

### Is it forcing? – part 1

Board 15 from Monday 21<sup>st</sup>, N-S vul.

North (A)	South	West	North	East	South
♠ 107	♠ K84	-	-	-	1♦ (1)
♥ A1054	♥ QJ	pass	1♥ (2)	pass	2NT (3)
♦ KQJ65	♦ A843	pass	3♦ (4)	pass	pass (5)
♣ 65	♣ AKJ10	pass			

An easy game missed, who's fault?

- (1) I always open hands 4-4 in the minors (outside my opening NT range) with 1♣, but some choose 1♦, OK.
- (2) 1♥ is correct, even with excellent ♦ support, never deny a 4 card major.
- (3) 2NT is fine, showing a balanced 18-19 points.
- (4) So what should North bid at (4)? Obviously 3♦ if, and only if, it is forcing. Is it?  
Yes. The only weak bids after partner's strength showing 2NT are pass and a return to responder's 1<sup>st</sup> suit (so 3♥ here) although many players (including me) prefer to also play this as forcing (so the only weak bid is pass!).
- (5) Clearly South should bid 3NT at (5).

And what happened? At other tables 3NT made exactly as did 6NT.

### Is it forcing? – part 2

Board 24 from Monday 21<sup>st</sup>, love all

West	East	West	North	East	South
♠ 102	♠ AKQ4	pass	pass	1♦ (1)	pass
♥ 9432	♥ Q8	1♥ (2)	pass	2NT (3)	pass
♦ Q10432	♦ AJ65	3♦ (4)	pass	3NT (5)	pass
♣ K7	♣ QJ5	pass	pass		

Now this time this West thought that 3♦ was weak but East thought otherwise, lets have a look: -

- (1) The 1♦ opening at is fine, the hand is not good enough for 2NT.
- (2) 1♥ is correct, even with excellent ♦ support, never deny a 4 card major.
- (3) Now should East bid 2NT, 1♠ or jump to 2♠ here? That depends upon your partnership style and I prefer 2NT as long as you have a mechanism (some sort of Checkback) to locate a possible 4-4 ♠ fit later. So 2NT at is fine, showing a balanced 18-19 points.
- (4) So what should West bid at (4)? Obviously 3♦ if, and only if, it is not forcing. Is it?  
We answered that above, it is forcing. West would like to play in 3♦ but you cannot unless you play the Wolf signoff convention – I am not going into that now. So West has to choose between passing or a rather optimistic 3♦ or 3NT.
- (5) South correctly assumes 3♦ was forcing and elected for 3NT.

And what happened? Obviously 3NT makes if the opposition don't take their ♥ tricks in time. 3NT made but 1NT was only +1 at another table (I guess somebody opened an over-weight 1NT?).

The bottom line. Check sequences C & D in this week's quiz.

### Is it forcing? – part 3

Board 11 from Friday 25<sup>th</sup>

Dealer: ♠ 862  
South ♥ KQJ1064  
Love all ♦ Q10  
♣ 63

♠ J7 N ♠ A4  
♥ A982 W E ♥ 7  
♦ 85 S ♦ AK972  
♣ AKJ54 ♣ Q10872  
♠ KQ10953  
♥ 53  
♦ J643  
♣ 9

#### Table A

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

#### Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	2♠ (1)
dbl	pass (5)	3♦ (6)	pass
pass (7)	3♠ (8)	pass (9)	pass
pass			

A new suit at the 3 level is generally forcing, but both tables got this disastrously wrong on Friday. In fact there were a number of poor bids and an easy slam missed at both tables: -

Table A: (1) I would open with a weak 2♠.

(2) A weak jump overcall, fine.

(3) East has values for game and must find a forcing bid, any ♣ bid is non forcing. You could bid 3♥ to ask for a ♥ stop, but with this excellent ♣ support and good shape there may be slam and I think that 3♦ is OK, but it may be simpler to just bid (RKC) Blackwood..

(4) Unfortunately West did not take this 3♦ bid as forcing.

Table B: (1) This South chose the sensible 2♠ opening.

(5) After West's double North chose to pass. With 3 card support I would bid 3♠.

(6) Now this is terrible. Normally a 3 level bid is forcing, but here partner's take-out double has forced a 3 level bid. A non-jump like this shows 0-9 points and East must make a positive move. A jump to 4♦ is possible but unfortunately is not absolutely forcing. Probably best is to cuebid 3♥ and then any subsequent bid below game is game forcing.

(7) West's pass is correct as East has shown no values.

(8) I have no idea what North was thinking here. Partner has opened with a weak bid (6-9 pts) and he has 8 points, it is quite likely that the opponents have game (even slam?). A pass here ends the auction – excellent.

(9) East now has a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance. 4♣ or 5♣ (or 6♣ or 7♣!) would have worked out very well.

And what happened? 3♦ was +1 and 3♠ was -2. 6♣ is absolutely cold as is 7♣ with careful play.

The bottom lines: -

- A new suit at the 3 level by an unlimited hand is forcing...
- .. except if it is a minimum bid after partner has forced you to bid with a take-out double.
- One good method to establish a game force is to cuebid the opponent's suit.
- If your partner has opened a weak two, then raise pre-emptively immediately with 3 card support.
- If you have a weak hand and partner has pre-empted then don't bid in the pass-out seat -you will feel sick if the opponents then go on to bid 5♣, 6♣ or even 7♣!

## When 1NT gets doubled

Board 2 from Friday 25<sup>th</sup>

Dealer: ♠ 10986  
East ♥ K82  
N-S vul ♦ 2  
♣ A10743

♠ 754 N ♠ AJ3  
♥ 10653 W E ♥ A97  
♦ Q643 S ♦ K1098  
♣ 52 ♣ KJ8  
♠ KQ2  
♥ QJ4  
♦ AJ75  
♣ Q96

### Table A

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

### Table B

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

Obviously I need to explain a few things about when a 1NT opening gets doubled: -

Table A: (1) When your RHO opens 1NT then a double shows 15+ points and is for penalties. Some players restrict the upper range to about 18 points as with more you know that partner will pull it. This hand is borderline, you all know me – subtract a point for 4333 type shape; I would pass but I suspect that most players would prefer to double. Another good reason for not doubling is that there is no good lead against 1NT doubled.

(2) West knows he's in for a hiding and this West simply chose to pass.

(3) With a good 7 points opposite partner's 15+ I would pass here.

Table B: (2) This West decided to run, quite reasonable.

(3) North could pass here, but he does not really want to defend 2♦, either doubled or not, so with 8 points 3♣ is very sensible.

(4) Unfortunately this East did not realise that his partner was very weak.

(5) Partner's 3♣ bid has shown values and so a penalty double here is clear.

What happened? 2♣ made exactly but 3♦\* went minus two.

The bottom lines: -

- A double of an opening 1NT is 15-18 points and is for penalties.
- The only strong bid that responder can make after partner's 1NT opening is doubled is redouble.
- When your partner has doubled 1NT it's usually best to pass and go for the penalty with 5+ points.
- When you open 1NT you have said it all; do not bid again unless partner invites.

## Obey the LAW

Board 5 from Friday 25<sup>th</sup>

Dealer: ♠ K5  
North ♥ KQJ32  
N-S vul ♦ Q842  
♣ 62

♠ 84 N ♠ AQJ976  
♥ 1094 W E ♥ 5  
♦ AK7 S ♦ 1095  
♣ Q10854 ♣ A73  
♠ 1032  
♥ A876  
♦ J63  
♣ KJ9

### Table A

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

### Table B

West	North	East	South
-	1♥ (1)	1♠	2♥ (6)
pass	pass	2♠	3♥ (7)
pass	pass	pass	

Let's see which table got this one right: -

- Table A: (1) 11 points, but I would open 1♥ - it's a nice ♥ suit, there's an easy (2♦) rebid and it conforms to the rule of 20.  
(2) A nice 9 count with excellent intermediates, but it's not quite worth a 2 level response so 1NT is fine.  
(3) Now this another reason why I would have opened. A 2♥ overcall here could be disastrous – East is unlimited and you may catch a penalty double.  
(4) Luckily for North East did not have a ♥ stack and quite reasonably bid 2♠.  
(5) But South got this one wrong. With 4 card support the 3 level is 'safe' and he should bid 3♥.

- Table B: (1) Open 1♥, I agree.  
(6) Values for 2♥, so bid it.  
(7) Here is where the LAW is applied. South has shown his 6-9 points and he now correctly bid 3♥ - not because he is maximum, but because he has 4 ♥'s!

And what happened? 2♠ made 10 tricks. 3♥ went just minus 1 for a good score.

The bottom lines: -

- With a marginal opening hand, remember the rule of 20. And sway towards opening if you have an easy rebid.
- Obey the LAW. In competitive situations compete to the total number of trumps. So 4 cards opposite an overcall (or major suit opening) is 9 in total – compete to the 3 level.

## Worth a go at slam?

Board 19 from Friday 25<sup>th</sup>, E-W vul.

West                      East (B)

♠ K8                      ♠ 432  
♥ AKQJ                  ♥ 10754  
♦ Q987                  ♦ AK542  
♣ AJ2                    ♣ K

## Table A

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

## Table B

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

Table A: West's opening is 20-21, so should East try for slam or not?

The answer is that it depends. 30-31 points is only good enough for slam if there is a fit or a long suit. This ♦ suit is very respectable but not enough on it's own, a ♥ fit is also needed. East should bid 3♣ (Stayman) even if slam was not in the air – a 4-4 fit will play better, especially with a singleton.

Table B: This East got it right. The East hand has 10 HCP's, the ♦ suit is a +, the shape is a +, but the ♣K is a bit of a minus. I say 'bit of' because it's not that bad as partner has opened 2NT and probably has either the ♣A or ♣Q. Anyway, it all adds up to the fact that this is a respectable 10 count and worth slam if, and probably only if, there is a 4-4 ♥ fit.

And what happened? 6♥ made and 3NT was +3. Note the power of the good 4-4 fit. The ♥'s were split 4-1 but 6♥ is still a far better contract than 6♦ or 6NT. This is because with the 4-4 fit you can choose which hand to take ruffs in, in a ♦ contract you gain nothing by ruffing with the long ♦ hand and so there are only 11 tricks in 6♦ or 6NT if the ♠A is offside.

The bottom lines: -

- Always look for the 4-4 fit.
- 30 or 31 points is usually only enough for slam if there is a fit.

## Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: 3♦. 3NT is reasonable but I prefer 3♦ (it is forcing) as there may be a ♦ slam.

Hand B: 3♣, Stayman. Look for the 4-4 ♥ fit.

Sequence C: 3♦ is forcing. If you have a weak hand and prefer ♦'s to ♥'s, then pass 2NT.

Sequence D: Up to you (and your partner).

3♥ is played as a weak bid by many players. If you have a good hand and 5 ♥'s then bid a forcing 3♣ or 3♦. Equally well, many other players say that any bid over 2NT is forcing. I prefer this latter approach but it's up to you.

Another option is the Wolf signoff (3♣ is a weak puppet to 3♦).