

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.