

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	♠ 4	
♥ 42	♥ AK987653	
♦ AQJ32	♦ Q10	What do you open with Hand B?
♣ 653	♣ Q9	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C RHO opens 1♣, what do you do?
♠ K52	♠ AK86	With Hand D you open 1♣ and LHO overcalls 1♥. This is passed round to you, what do you do?
♥ KQJ3	♥ 9642	
♦ K75	♦ K4	
♣ 972	♣ K85	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1♠, what do you bid?
♠ J9	♠ 95	
♥ AK87	♥ 10	With Hand F partner opens 1♥ and you bid 2♣. Partner then jumps to 3♥, what do you do?
♦ 10543	♦ AK82	
♣ KJ2	♣ AJ6543	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G you open 1♥ and partner responds 1♠, but RHO overcalls 2♣, what do you do?
♠ K6	♠ K6	Hand H is slightly different. You open 1♥ and partner responds 1♠, RHO again overcalls 2♣, what do you do?
♥ K10752	♥ K10752	
♦ K76	♦ K764	
♣ AJ4	♣ AJ	

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	N	♠ AJ52 ♥ - ♦ 98432 ♣ 87	E
♠ KQ10976 ♥ 10 ♦ KJ7 ♣ J	W	♠ 4 ♥ AK98765 ♦ Q10 ♣ 9	S

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
North ♥ AJ97
Both vul ♦ A2
♣ A76

Table A

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

♠ 983	N	♠ 104
♥ 854	W E	♥ 6
♦ KQJ7	S	♦ 108654
♣ Q84		♣ KJ1032
	♠ KQJ2	
	♥ KQ1032	
	♦ 93	
	♣ 95	

Table B

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

'Expert' Table

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' (1) As I said above, most experts bid 2♣ when 5-4.

Table (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.