

		Winners		Runners-up	
Mon 3 rd	N-S	1 st Kenneth & Peter	58%	2 nd Bob Short & Gerry	57%
	E-W	1 st Kees & Linda Lyen	56%	2 nd Marten & Phil	54%
Wed 5 th		1 st Chuck & Clive	60%	2 nd Dave & Phil	59%
Fri 7 th		1 st Bill & Mike	57%	2 nd Gerry & Tony	56%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A it's love all and 1 st seat. Do you open?
♠ QJ	♠ 1096532	With Hand B partner opens 1♦ and you bid 1♠. Partner then jumps to 3♣, game forcing. What do you bid?
♥ AQJ75	♥ -	
♦ 9842	♦ 5	
♣ 95	♣ KJ7632	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C partner opens 1♥, what do you bid?
♠ KQ10842	♠ 106	With Hand D partner opens 1NT (15-17) and RHO bids 2♦ - Multi Landy, Showing an (undisclosed) single suited hand. (a) What do you bid? (b) What do you bid if you play Lebensohl?
♥ J1064	♥ A10	
♦ 6	♦ K1098	
♣ AK	♣ Q7532	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E RHO opens 1♠, what do you bid?
♠ 76	♠ AKQ7	With Hand F you open 1♦ and Partner responds 1♥, what do you bid?
♥ 107	♥ KJ93	
♦ AK832	♦ K1096	
♣ AKJ9	♣ 9	

Bidding Sequences Quiz

G 1♦ 2♣ 2♠ pass What is the 3♣ bid of the opponent's suit?
3♣

There is no interference in the following sequence: -

H 1♦ - 1♠ - 3♣ - 4♥ What is 4♥? Does it show 1st round control?

J 1♦ - 1♥ - 2♠ - 3♥ What is 4♣? Is it forcing?
4♣

KJxxxx is not 4 points when partner bids the suit! Board 24 from Monday 3rd

Virtually everybody had problems with this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ A	<u>Table A</u>				
West	♥ 1083	West(A)	North	East	South(B)	
Love all	♦ AKQJ6	pass (1)	1♦	pass	1♠	
	♣ A1084	pass	3♣	pass	5♣ (2)	
		pass	pass (3)	pass		
♠ QJ	N	♠ K874				
♥ AQJ75	W E	♥ K9642	<u>'Expert' Table</u>			
♦ 9842	S	♦ 1073	West(A)	North	East	South(B)
♣ 95		♣ Q	pass (1)	1♦	pass	1♠
	♠ 1096532		pass	3♣	pass	4♥ (2)
	♥ -		pass	4♠ (4)	pass	5♥ (5)
	♦ 5		pass	7♣	all pass	
	♣ KJ7632					

- Table A: (1) Did you open this West hand A in this week's quiz? Non-vul and with an outside 4-carder I think that 2♥ is reasonable as it's a good ♥ suit. One player did actually open 2♥, but he was playing Muiderberg and it showed a weak five card ♥ suit with a 4 card minor.
- (2) What did you bid with this South hand B in this week's quiz? 5♣ was the popular choice and one bid only 4♣. 4♣ is reasonable if it is game forcing/slam seeking and that's the way I would play the bid. When partner has show a strong hand with ♣'s this hand is not 4 points, it's enormous! If you apply the well established points scheme for shortage after a fit is found (3 for a singleton and 5 for a void) that makes it a 12 count + a **very** bid plus for SIX card support! A small slam is certain after partner's jump and you should be looking for the grand!
- 'Expert' Table: (2) Our expert realises this of course. 5♥ (Exclusion Roman Keycard Blackwood) is a strong possibility but he chose the rather more cautious approach of a 4♥ splinter – agreeing ♣'s and showing shortage (singleton or void) in ♥'s.
- (3) A splinter is usually followed by a cue bidding sequence and North simply cue bids his ♠ A.
- (4) And South now cue bids his shortage – showing a void.
- (5) And that's all that North needs to know. The only possible loser can be in ♣'s and so 7♣ is on a finesse at worst and probably lay-down. Since North has only promised 4 ♣'s and South is looking for slam, it's fairly safe for North to assume that South has decent ♣'s.

And what happened? 5♣+2 was the most popular score. One pair did bid to 6♣ and were not unhappy to be doubled with an overtrick. The bottom lines: -

- Splinters can also be applicable at the 2nd round of bidding.
- KJxxxx is not 'just 4 points' when partner has bid the suit.
- If partner has bid two suits and you have a fit and a void in an unbid suit, that void is probably worth 5 'points'.
- Don't double a freely bid slam just because you have an ace and a couple of useless queens.
- A splinter is usually followed by a cue bid if there is slam interest.
- A cue bid of your splinter suit shows a void.

A Mini-Splinter

Board 6 from Monday 3rd

A jump shift is usually played as a good strong suit. Some play weak jump shifts (see next page for a perfect example). But some players play a jump shift after a major suit opening as a mini-splinter. There is a page on the web and I plan to expand it soon. Anyway, this E-W pair apparently play mini-splinters: -

Dealer:	♠ A976				
East	♥ AQ	West(C)	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ KJ1094	-	-	1♥	pass
	♣ J8	3♦ (1)	pass	3♠ (2)	pass
		4♣ (3)	pass	4♦ (4)	pass
♠ KQ10842	N	4♠ (5)	dbl (6)	4NT (7)	pass
♥ J1064	W E	5♣ (8)	dbl (9)	6♥ (10)	pass
♦ 6	S	pass	dbl (11)		
♣ AK					
	♠ J53				
	♥ 85				
	♦ 87532				
	♣ 653				
		♠ -			
		♥ K9732			
		♦ AQ			
		♣ Q109742			

- (1) What did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? With 4 card ♥ support there is little point in bidding ♠'s and I think that a 4♦ splinter is probably best (although some may like a better quality ♥ suit). This pair apparently play mini splinters and so 3♦ was a splinter in their system.
- (2) A cue bid, showing 1st round ♠ control.
- (3) A cue bid, showing 1st round ♣ control.
- (4) A cue bid, showing 1st round ♦ control.
- (5) A cue bid, showing 2nd round ♠ control.
- (6) I've no idea why North doubled.
- (7) RKCB (1430). I'm not so keen on bidding Blackwood with a void, but East knows that West has the ♣A.
- (8) 1 key card playing 1430
- (9) I've no idea why North doubled.
- (10) Redouble is possible, but 6♥ scores more than 5♣ redoubled+1 (I looked it up).
- (11) I've no idea why North doubled.

And what happened? 4♥ +2 was a common spot. With trumps 2-2 and absolutely every card right for declarer 12 tricks are trivial. Quite how the declarer in 6♥ managed to go down baffles me.

The bottom lines: -

- Splinters are great. They are usually followed by a cue bid.
- I was asked how to bid this hand. Playing normal splinters it could go: -
1♥ - 4♦ - 4♠ - 5♣ - 6♥. where 4♠ and 5♣ are cue bids and East hopes that there is just one ♥ loser. However, 6♥ is not that great a contract on the E-W cards and stopping in 4♥ is prudent. If West chose not to splinter then it could go 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♣ - 4♥ - pass, which is a very reasonable spot.

A Weak jump shift

Board 1 from Monday 3rd

Another fairly popular treatment for the jump shift is weak – a six card suit that is too weak to respond normally (so 0-5 points). Note that this is not standard and needs alerting: -

Dealer:	♠ Q2	West	North	East	South
North	♥ QJ109	-	1♦	pass	2♠ (1)
Love all	♦ Q95	pass (2)	pass	pass (3)	
	♣ AQ94				

♠ A75	N	♠ 109
♥ K8	W E	♥ A762
♦ AK10642	S	♦ J83
♣ 83		♣ K1076
	♠ KJ8643	
	♥ 543	
	♦ 7	
	♣ J52	

- (1) A weak jump shift, showing a hand with 6 ♠'s and 0-5 points. The purpose of this treatment is pre-emptive, to make it difficult for the next player.
- (2) And it worked. This West was reluctant to come in at the 3-level.
- (3) East should probably balance here with a double.

And what happened? The 2♠ pre-empt worked. I saw this at more than one table and it usually went just one down for minus 50 and a good score to N-S. If E-W get into the bidding then they make a ♦ partscore (the computer says 4♦ makes) or they push up N-S.

The bottom lines: -

- Weak jump shifts are interesting. But they are not standard and need alerting. Normal is to play strong jump shifts (good suit, good game forcing hand).
- The weak jump shift is less effective if RHO understands balancing.

Passed out

Board 15 from Monday 3rd

Dealer:	♠ K9743
South	♥ K
N-S vul	♦ 10642
	♣ A32

♠ 52	N	♠ J6
♥ A1084	W E	♥ J92
♦ A98	S	♦ KQ7
♣ K964		♣ J10875
	♠ AQ108	
	♥ Q7653	
	♦ J53	
	♣ Q	

This board was passed out at 4 of the 7 tables on Monday. Do you think that anyone should have opened?

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass (1)
pass	pass (2)	pass	

- (1) 11 points and 9 cards in the majors. This hand conforms with the rule of 20 and I would certainly open 1♥ as it contains both majors.
- (2) In 3rd seat it is acceptable to open light and I would open 1♠; especially if you play Drury.

And what happened? Those who bid played in 2♠ or 3♠, making 9 or 10 tricks.

The most abused convention out there

Board 22 from Monday 3rd

I've said it a number of times in the news-sheets – the Unusual NoTrump (UNT) and Michaels cue bids are the most abused conventions around. They are frequently mis-used with the wrong shape or with a totally incorrect point range. Here is an example from Monday with both (wrong shape and wrong points).

Dealer:	♠ Q2				
East	♥ AJ2	West	North	East	South(E)
E-W vul	♦ 1096	-	-	1♠	2NT (1)
	♣ 108543	pass	3♣	3♠	pass
		pass	4♣	4♠	pass (2)
♠ J10	N	♠ AK98543	pass	5♣ (3)	all pass
♥ K96543	W E	♥ Q8			
♦ Q4	S	♦ J75			
♣ 762		♣ Q			
	♠ 76				
	♥ 107				
	♦ AK832				
	♣ AKJ9				

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand E in this week's quiz? A 2♦ overcall is fine, with the intention of bidding 3♣ later is possible. 2NT (the UNT) is a very poor bid with this hand. It is far too good for a pre-emptive 2NT bid (which should be weak and 5-5 in the minors) and it is nowhere near good enough for the very strong type (which I play as game forcing)
- (2) Perhaps South should double here – to show more defence that his pre-empt suggested.
- (3) North believed South and so made the unnecessary sacrifice.

And what happened? 3♠ makes, 4♠ would have gone one down, 5♣ was minus two and scores about average when it was not doubled.

The bottom lines: -

- UNT is 5-5 or 6-5 in the minors, not 5-4 or 6-4.
- UNT is a pre-empt, so around 6-10 points.
- Some players play that UNT followed by a bid shows a very strong hand. I like this treatment but by very strong I mean just that – game forcing.
- The UNT is the most abused convention out there.

Intermediates Count

Board 22 from Friday 7th

West upgraded his hand because of decent intermediated on this deal. East had superb intermediates, and if he too had upgraded then an easy 3NT would have been reached that was missed by all of the field:

Dealer:	♠ KQ8	<u>Table A</u>			
East	♥ QJ8765	West	North	East(D)	South
E-W vul	♦ A74	-	-	pass	pass
	♣ A	1NT (1)	2♦ (2)	2NT (3)	all pass

♠ AJ9	N	♠ 106	<u>'Expert' Table</u>			
♥ K92	W E	♥ A10	West	North	East(D)	South
♦ QJ652	S	♦ K1098	-	-	pass	pass
♣ K10		♣ Q7532	1NT (1)	2♦ (2)	pass (3)	2♥ (4)
	♠ 75432		pass	pass (5)	2NT (6)	pass
	♥ 43		3♣	pass	3NT (7)	all pass
	♦ 3					
	♣ J986					

- Table A: (1) With a 5 card suit and decent intermediates, this west decided to upgrade his hand to a 1NT opener.
- (2) A single-suited hand - playing Multi Landy.
- (3) What did you bid with this East hand D(a) in this week's quiz? An invitational 2NT is 8-9 points, so OK? I don't think so. This hand is NOT 9 points, it's more like 11! Just look at those three 10's and the intermediates. Lacking more sophisticated methods, the value bid here is 3NT.
- 'Expert' Table: (3) Our experts, of course, have more sophisticated methods, and Lebensohl is one of them. So East simply passes for now so that he will find out which long suit North has. Double would be equally effective with the same result.
- (4) An automatic relay over the 2♦ bid.
- (5) I have a single suited ♥ hand.
- (6) Lebensohl, forcing opener to bid 3♣.
- (7) Showing values for 3NT and also a ♥ stop (slow shows).

And what happened? 3NT is solid on any lead, nobody bid it. Now I understand that it's difficult if West did not open 1NT (most would not) but after the 15-17 1NT opening it should easily have been reached.

The bottom lines: -

- Intermediates count.
- K432 is 3 points. K1098 is 4+ points, especially in No Trumps.

A Comedy of Errors

Board 11 from Friday 7th

N-S got in a mess here because of a ludicrous bid by East. But then they were let off the hook by an even more ludicrous bid by East later.

Dealer:	♠ 1096				
South	♥ AQ1087	West	North	East	South(F)
Love all	♦ 52	-	-	-	1♦
	♣ A76	pass	1♥	2♦ (1)	2♠ (2)
		pass	3♥	pass	4♣ (3)
♠ 542	N	pass	pass (4)	dbl (5)	4♥ (6)
♥ 54	W E	all pass			
♦ 84	S				
♣ Q108432					
	♠ AKQ7				
	♥ KJ93				
	♦ K1096				
	♣ 9				
		♠ J83			
		♥ 62			
		♦ AQJ73			
		♣ KJ5			

- (1) To be fair, East is a beginner. He knew that he needed 11 points and a 5 card suit to overcall at the two level, I guess I omitted to teach him that you do not overcall in the suit that LHO has opened (and promised at least 4 cards in – N-S play a short ♣).
- (2) South asked the meaning of 2♦, and was told ‘natural’. Obviously he should simply double and take the 800 on offer for an easy total top. However, he chose to bid on as if there had been no intervention.
So that brings me to question F. What would you bid with this South hand F if there had been no overcall? The correct bid is 4♣ - a splinter agreeing ♥’s and showing a ♣ singleton or void. This would then have led to the comfortable 6♥ contract. Showing the ♠ suit here, although it is game forcing, simply confuses the issue.
- (3) South meant this a splinter showing a ♣ singleton. That would have been the case last go but it is not now. I would take it as a cue bid showing 1st round ♣ control and agreeing ♥’s, probably with just 2 card ♥ support. Since the ♦A is presumably with RHO then 4NT, RKCB, would be the best bid here.
- (4) North was confused, He had the ♣A and he was also totally baffled by his partner’s failure to double 2♦. Since he had no idea what was going on he passed.
- (5) Obviously 4♣ would have been a totally ridiculous contract, and East presumably felt sorry for N-S and so doubled them.
- (6) Phew!

And what happened? N-S scored a joint top in 4♥ +3 when East decided not to take his ♦A when declarer led up towards the ♦K in dummy. Nobody bid 6♥.

The bottom lines: -

- Don’t overcall in a suit that LHO has promised 4 cards in.
- Don’t double the opponents in a ridiculous contract when they have a good spot (slam even!) in another suit.
- Don’t double the opponents when RHO has passed a clearly game forcing bid.
- A splinter is ALWAYS a jump and is usually a singleton. If it’s a void then the splinter bidder cue bids it later.
- A non-jump when a suit has been (sort of) agreed is a cue bid and shows 1st round control, either a void or more commonly the ace.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: Pass is obviously fine. But I won't argue if you chose 2♥, with a decent ♥ suit and an outside 4-carder the weak 2♥ is acceptable.
- Hand B: 4♥. A splinter agreeing ♣'s and showing ♥ shortage (singleton or void). 4♣ is reasonable if you both know that it is forcing and slam seeking (slow arrival). 5♥, Exclusion Roman Keycard Blackwood (thus showing the ♥ void at once) is also possible but with few high card points I prefer the slowly slowly approach of the 4♥ splinter (and cue bid ♥'s to show a void if partner cues in ♦'s or ♠' next). If you/partner are unsure about a 4♥ splinter here then you could simply bid 6♣; 5♣ is plain pathetic.
- Hand C: 4♦. A splinter agreeing ♥'s and showing ♦ shortage (singleton or void). This is probably better than 1♠ as you have a known 5-4 ♥ fit and that's the strain that you want to play in.
- Hand D: (a) 3NT. Lacking more sophisticated methods (Lebensohl) 3NT is the value bid. This hand, with these glorious intermediates, is far too good for a feeble 2NT.
(b) Pass (or double). Playing Lebensohl you can wait to find out which long suit RHO has; it's probably a major. If it's ♥'s then you bid 2NT next go followed by 3NT to show values for 3NT and a ♥ stop. If it's ♠'s then bid 3NT next go to show the values but denying a ♠ stop. Slow shows. In the unlikely event that it turns out to be a minor suit then you can happily double (penalties).
- Hand E: 2♦, and bid 3♣ later if the opportunity arises. The hand is totally unsuitable for a double with just 2 ♥'s. Do NOT attempt to show both suits with 2NT (The Unusual NoTrump, UNT) as this hand is far too strong. If you play that the UNT is weak or very strong if you bid again (a common practice that I approve of) then this hand is nowhere near good enough for the strong type.
- Hand F: 4♣. A splinter agreeing ♥'s and showing ♣ shortage (singleton or void). There is absolutely no reason to introduce this ♠ suit as you have a known 4-4 or better ♥ fit.

Bidding Sequences Quiz Answers

- G 1♦ 2♣ 2♠ pass What is the 3♣ bid of the opponent's suit? It is primarily asking partner to bid 3NT with a ♣ stop (A Western Cue bid). An alternative is to play DAB, which asks for a ½ stop.
3♣

There is no interference in the following sequence: -

- H 1♦ - 1♠ - 3♣ - 4♥ What is 4♥? Does it show 1st round control? I would play this as a splinter agreeing ♣'s and showing a singleton (possibly void) in ♥'s. 3♥ would be 4th suit but holding a genuine ♥ suit you bid 3♥ (4th suit) followed by 4♥ next go if you really want to show ♥'s when partner has shown an enormous minor-suited hand.
- J 1♦ - 1♥ - 2♠ - 3♥ What is 4♣? Is it forcing? 4♣ is obviously 100% forcing.
4♣ What it means is by no means certain, I would assume the ♣A or a ♣ void agreeing ♥'s.