

Mon 31 st	1 st	N-S Bob & Jo	56%	2 nd	Dave & Neil	53%
		1 st E-W John & Kenneth	56%	2 nd	Paul Wijnbergen & Harry	54%
Wed 2 nd	1 st	Bob & Eddie	55%	2 nd	Paul Scully & Dave	55%
Fri 4 th	1 st	Gerry & Tony	60%	2 nd	Jim & Phil	54%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B
♠ K765	♠ AJ9
♥ AK753	♥ 1086
♦ Q105	♦ KQ7
♣ 9	♣ A932

With Hand A LHO opens 1♦, partner bids 1♠ and RHO bids 2♦. What do you bid?

With Hand B LHO opens 1♥, partner bids 1♠ and RHO bids 2♥. What do you bid?

Hand C	Hand D
♠ J10872	♠ QJ8
♥ Q3	♥ KQ6
♦ 3	♦ Q104
♣ AK987	♣ K965

With Hand C partner opens 1♦, you bid 1♠ and partner reverses with 2♥. What do you bid?

With Hand D RHO opens 1♠. (a) what do you bid?
(b) Suppose you pass and this is passed round to partner who doubles. Then what do you bid?

Hand E	Hand F
♠ A106	♠ QJ109
♥ J9874	♥ KJ10
♦ A854	♦ 5
♣ 2	♣ J10942

With Hand E LHO opens 1♠ and this is passed round to you. What do you bid?

With Hand F LHO opens 1♦ and partner doubles.
(a) What do you bid?
(b) Suppose you bid 1♠ and partner bids 2♠, what now?

Hand G	Hand H
♠ K8	♠ A752
♥ 4	♥ AQ92
♦ A109864	♦ AQ84
♣ AKQ7	♣ 8

With Hand G you open 1♦ and LHO overcalls 3♥ which is passed round to you. (a) What do you bid?
(b) What if partner made a long pause?

With Hand H RHO opens 1♦. (a) What do you bid?
(b) Suppose you double and partner bids 1♠, what now?

Hand J	Hand K
♠ AK9732	♠ 3
♥ 4	♥ J862
♦ 97	♦ K862
♣ K965	♣ 10542

What, if anything, do you open (both vul in 1st seat) with Hand J?

With Hand K partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 1♠, what do you do?

Bidding Sequences Quiz

L	1♦	1♠	pass	2♠	What is 2♠?
M	1♦	1♠	pass	3♠	What is 3♠?
N	1♦	1♠	pass	4♠	What is 4♠?
P	1♦	1♠	pass	2♦	What is 2♦?

The Unassuming Cue Bid – part 1

Board 1 from Friday 28th

This deal is actually from two week's ago, but I was asked about it when a player was unjustly criticised by a club 'expert'.

Dealer: ♠ Q42
North ♥ Q9
Love all ♦ A743
♣ AJ87

Table A

West(A)	North	East	South(K)
-	1♦	1♠	2♦ (1)
3♠ (2)	pass	pass (3)	pass

♠ K765 N ♠ AJ1098
♥ AK753 W E ♥ 104
♦ Q105 S ♦ J9
♣ 9 ♣ KQ63

'Expert' Table

West(A)	North	East	South(K)
-	1♦	1♠	2♦ (1)
3♦ (2)	pass	4♠ (4)	all pass

♠ 3
♥ J862
♦ K862
♣ 10542

- Table A: (1) What did you bid with this South hand K in this week's quiz? I would negative double – I know it's 'only' 4 "points" but partner's opening and the overcall have improved the hand and it's worth looking for a 4-4 ♥ fit as you can always retreat into ♦'s if there is not one.
- (2) What did you bid with this West hand A in this week's quiz? If you don't play the Unassuming Cue Bid then I would bid 4♠. I understand that one player did indeed bid 4♠ and was criticised by an opponent. I see no need for this, not everybody plays all of the latest gadgets.
- (3) If 3♠ showed an invitational hand in their system then I would go to 4♠ with this hand – those ♠ intermediates are great and it's decent shape.
- 'Expert Table': (2) Our experts play that a cue bid of the opponent's suit after partner has overcalled in a major show a 'limit raise or better' – the Unassuming Cue Bid.
- (4) As I said above, this hand is worth 4♠ opposite an invitation.

And what happened? Two pairs bid 4♠, two stopped in 3♠. Just one player made 4♠, this is an example of when you should not play eight-ever nine never. After the defence cash two ♥ tricks then South has shown up with 3 points and so you should play North for the ♠Q which he probably needs to have an opening bid.

The bottom lines: -

- 'Eight ever-nine never' is in fact very close (2%). Take the bidding and cards already played into account before making the decision.
- When partner overcalls in a major, then cue bid the opponent's suit to show a sound raise to the three level or better (limit raise or better – the Unassuming Cur Bid).
- If you play the Unassuming Cue Bid then a direct raise of partner's suit to the three or four level is pre-emptive.

The Unassuming Cue Bid – part 2

Board 7 from Monday 31st

Here we see the advantage of playing the Unassuming Cue Bid – you can stay low if partner has a minimal overcall.

Dealer:	♠ 2	<u>Table A</u>			
South	♥ J74	West	North	East(B)	South
Both vul	♦ J1093	-	-	-	1♥
	♣ KQJ76	1♠	2♥	4♠ (1)	all pass

♠ 1086543	N	♠ AJ9	<u>'Expert' Table</u>			
♥ K2	W E	♥ 1086	West	North	East(B)	South
♦ A62	S	♦ KQ7	-	-	-	1♥
♣ 54		♣ A932	1♠	2♥	3♥ (1)	pass
	♠ KQ7		3♠ (2)	all pass		
	♥ AQ953					
	♦ 854					
	♣ 108					

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this East hand B in this week's quiz? If you do not play the Unassuming Cue Bid then I guess that you have to hope that partner has a decent overcall and bid 4♠.

'Expert Table: (1) Our experts play the Unassuming Cue Bid of course, so East simply shows a sound raise to 3♠ with a 3♥ cue bid.

(2) And with a minimal overcall our expert finds it easy to stop at the three level.

And what happened? 3♠ made, 4♠ was one down.

The bottom lines: -

- The Unassuming Cue Bid applies when LHO opens and partner overcalls (usually a major).
- You cue bid LHO's suit to show a sound raise to the 3 level (or better).
- And it also applies when RHO bids.
- I have written up an article on the Unassuming Cue Bid. It's in the conventions folder and on the web.

The Unassuming Cue Bid – part 3

Board 8 from Friday 4th

Dealer: ♠ 106
 West ♥ Q93
 Both vul ♦ AJ865
 ♣ 874

♠ AK9732	N	♠ Q854
♥ 4	W E	♥ AJ65
♦ 97	S	♦ 103
♣ K965		♣ QJ10
	♠ J	
	♥ K10872	
	♦ KQ42	
	♣ A32	

Table A

West(J)	North	East	South
pass (1)	pass	pass	1♥
1♠	2♥	3♠ (2)	pass
pass (3)	pass		

'Expert' Table

West(J)	North	East	South
pass (1)	pass	pass	1♥
1♠	2♥	3♥ (2)	pass
4♠ (4)	all pass		

- Table A: (1) Did you open this West hand J in this week's quiz? It conforms with the rule of 20 and with all of the points in the long suits I think it's a sound opener. I think that it's much too good for a weak 2♠ and in my style there is no 'gap' between a 1♠ and 2♠ opener and so I will never pass.
- (2) What would you bid with this East hand? Having read the last two pages you should know that 3♥ is the best bid – an Unassuming Cue Bid – showing a sound raise to 3♠. This direct 3♠ bid is just pre-emptive.
- (3) And West has no reason to know that East has a great hand.
- 'Expert Table: (2) Our experts play the Unassuming Cue Bid and 3♥ is clear here.
- Table: (4) With great shape and a singleton in opener's suit this hand is well worth 4♠.

And what happened? 10 tricks were always made in ♠'s. One player (Dave) did open the West hand with 1♠ and got an invitational 3♠ response from partner. Actually it's not so clear to accept the invitation now (rather than at (4) above) as he does not know that the singleton ♥ is great. But after a short pause he did indeed go to 4♠.

The bottom lines: -

- The Unassuming Cue Bid also applies when LHO opens and partner overcalls and RHO bids.

The Unassuming Cue Bid – part 4

Board 11 from Friday 4th

There was yet another example of the Unassuming Cue Bid on Friday: -

Dealer: ♠ 532
 South ♥ K
 Love all ♦ A9864
 ♣ A1032

♠ QJ7	N	♠ A106
♥ QJ84	W E	♥ A10975
♦ K2	S	♦ QJ53
♣ J864		♣ K
	♠ K984	
	♥ 632	
	♦ 107	
	♣ Q975	

Table A

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

'Expert' Table

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

- Table A: (1) We all know by now that this should be a pre-emptive bid.
 (2) And so East had no reason to bid on.
- 'Expert' (1) Our experts play the Unassuming Cue Bid and 2♦ is clear here.
- Table: (3) And opposite a sound limit raise East has an easy game bid.

And what happened? Two out of 3 pairs bid the game. Everybody made 10 or 11 tricks.

The bottom lines: -
 Play the Unassuming Cue Bid!

Hanging Partner

Board 8 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ QJ8
West ♥ KQ6
Love all ♦ Q104
♣ K965

West	North(D)	East	South(E)
2♠	pass (1)	pass	dbl (2)
pass	3NT (3)	pass	4♥ (4)
all pass			

♠ K97432	N	♠ 5
♥ A32	W E	♥ 105
♦ J7	S	♦ K532
♣ Q3		♣ AJ10874
	♠ A106	
	♥ J9874	
	♦ A854	
	♣ 2	

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand D(a) in this week's quiz? With a flat 13 count pass is certainly best. If your partner understands balancing then he will bid your hand for you.
- (2) What did you bid with this South hand E in this week's quiz? I don't see the point of doubling when holding a 5 card suit and, being a simple soul, I would simply bid 2♥.
- (3) What did you bid with this North hand D(b) in this week's quiz? 2NT is quite sufficient opposite a balancing double that may be as few as 7-8 points. Bidding game here is called "hanging partner" – partner has made a balancing bid simply to protect you/push the opponents up and you leap off to an unmakeable game. It looks like North 'understood' balancing with his initial pass but forgot about it here.
- (4) And it looks like South finally noticed that he had a 5 card ♥ suit and for some strange reason he decided to bid it at the 4-level.

And what happened? I guess that South's play is better than their bidding as they lucked out when 4♥ actually made.

The bottom lines: -

- A take out double is normally about 10+ points.
- But in the balancing seat things are about 3 points different, so 7+.
- So when partner balances with a double do not go leaping into game with 13 points.
- If you have a 5 card major then overcall with it, do not double.

The jump to 3NT when partner reverses

Board 19 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ J10872
South ♥ Q3
E-W vul ♦ 3
♣ AK987

♠ Q94	N	♠ 53
♥ 104	W E	♥ KJ975
♦ J107652	S	♦ Q
♣ 62		♣ J10543

♠ AK6
♥ A862
♦ AK984
♣ Q

Table A

West	North(C)	East	South
-	-	-	1♦
pass	1♠	pass	2♥ (1)
pass	3NT (2)	pass	4NT (3)
pass	5♦ (4)	pass	5NT (5)
pass	6♦ (6)	pass	6♠
pass	6NT (7)	pass	7NT (8)
all pass			

Table B

West	North(C)	East	South
pass	1♠	pass	2♥ (1)
pass	3NT (2)	pass	pass (3)

Table A: (1) A reverse.

(2) What did you bid with this North hand C in this week's quiz? 3NT is correct. Partner's reverse is forcing (16+ points) but he is not promising to bid again. Thus a jump to 3NT shows values to play there opposite 16, so about 9-12 pts.

(3) Asking for aces in their system I guess ?

(4) I would pass, even if partner's bid was ace-asking (I would take 4NT as quantitative). Partner did not open 2♣ and you have a total mis-fit and so no hope of slam.

(5) Asking for kings I guess. Obviously South simply went ballistic from (3) onwards.

Table B: (3) This South knew exactly what his partner's bid meant.

And what happened? 7NT went -4.

The bottom lines: -

- When partner reverses then a 2NT bid is not forcing (it's weakish, about 6-8 and promising a stop in the unbid suit).
- With game values, bid 3NT or a forcing bid.
- Beware of mis-fits.
- A bid of 4NT over partner's 3NT is a natural invitational raise (quantitative).
- For more advanced partnerships 2NT after partner's reverse is Lebensohl.

Double followed by a raise shows a strong hand

Board 2 from Monday 31st

West was incorrectly criticised on this deal; everybody (except West) seems to be talking garbage in my opinion. And nobody picked up on what I think was possibly an inferior bid by West, but it's marginal.

Dealer:	♠ 864					
East	♥ 743		West(H)	North	East(F)	South
N-S vul	♦ 962		-	-	pass	1♦
	♣ KQ75		dbl (1)	pass	1♠ (2)	pass
			2♠ (2)	pass	pass (3)	pass
♠ A752	N	♠ QJ109				
♥ AQ92	W E	♥ KJ10				
♦ AQ84	S	♦ 5				
♣ 8		♣ J10942				
	♠ K3					
	♥ 865					
	♦ KJ1073					
	♣ A63					

- (1) What did you bid with this West hand H (a) in this week's quiz? I know that double will be the almost unanimous choice but with these great ♦'s I think that 1NT may be better. Unlike a 1NT opening, a 1NT overcall may have a singleton – it's stop(s) in the suit bid that are all important. Double will normally work out fine, but not if partner responds 2♣. Anyway, nobody picked up on this so let's assume everybody was happy with the double.
- (2) What did you bid with this East hand F (a) in this week's quiz? A jump to 2♠ is about 9-10 points – and this hand is **easily** worth it. Solid ♠'s, good ♥'s great intermediates and a very useful singleton. I would not argue if you chose 3♠, but 1♠ is very poor.
- (3) What did you bid with this West hand H (b) in this week's quiz? 2♠ is **absolutely** correct. Partner has promised zero points and 2♠ here shows a good hand. 3♠ would be a gross overbid.
- (4) What did you bid with this East hand F (b)? Partner's 2♠ bid is strong and it's all textbook stuff (and up on the web in the beginner's section). Pass with 0-3, bid 3♠ with 4-6 and bid 4♠ with 7-8. This hand should have made a move last go, pass now is horrendous.

And what happened? The easy ♠ game (making 11 tricks) was missed, and apparently the other 3 (experienced?) players at the table all blamed West!! They said that he should have bid 3♠ at (2)! Total twaddle, and that's me being polite. My answer is to read up the section on the web and come along to lessons if you don't understand why 2♠ is absolutely correct. 3♠ is a gross overbid.

The bottom lines: -

- Upgrade (by a lot!) a hand with three tens, two nines and a useful singleton.
- If you give a minimal response of 1♥/♠ to a double by partner and he raises to 2♥/♠, then go to game with 7-8 points. This is all very clearly defined on the web (Basic Bidding – doc No. 134).
- Don't criticise an opponent if you don't know what you are talking about.

Forced to pass after partner's hesitation?Board 3 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ 7543
 South ♥ AJ
 E-W vul ♦ K32
 ♣ 10953

The same set of players got it all wrong on the very next board: -

♠ AQ6	N	♠ K8	West	North	East(G)	South
♥ Q73	W E	♥ 4	-	-	-	pass (1)
♦ Q75	S	♦ A109864	pass	pass	1♦	3♥ (2)
♣ 8642		♣ AKQ7	pass (3)	pass	pass (4)	
	♠ J1092					
	♥ K1098652					
	♦ J					
	♣ J					

- (1) South did not open 3♥ because had 4 ♠'s.
- (2) So now the pre-empt implies a 4 card ♠ suit.
- (3) After a very long pause.
- (4) What did you bid with this East hand G in this week's quiz? If you play negative doubles to this level then a re-opening double here is automatic. If you do not play negative doubles this high then I would still double (take-out). You most certainly do not want to sell out to 3♥ and I think that dbl is clear-cut. East passed because he thought that he was obliged to after partner's long pause. He is not.

And what happened? 3♥ went two down for about average. Had East doubled the he would have got a good score for 3♥ doubled going two down or else for 5♦ or 6♦ if E-W bid on.

The bottom lines: -

- Partner's hesitation does NOT bar you from bidding. In this example, if E-W play negative doubles then East is OBLIGED to make the 'automatic' re-opening double. Otherwise the director may well give an adjusted score if E-W got a good result because there was no re-opening double.
- If you play negative doubles through to say 2♠ and the above situation occurs, then East has to think "what would 80% of the people of my standard do in this situation" and make a bid if he believed that 80% would. In my opinion 80% of people of this East's standard would indeed have doubled.

A hat-trick - the same critical guys again.West hand 4 from Monday 31st

West	East	West	North	East	South
♠ Q7	♠ AK952	pass	pass	1♠	pass
♥ 108	♥ KQ2	1NT	pass	2♣ (1)	pass
♦ AQ1032	♦ 5	pass (2)	pass		
♣ J876	♣ AQ9				

- (1) Quite why East rebid 2♣ I have no idea, I would bid a game forcing 3♣. Anyway, people at the table said that West should have bid 2♠ at (2). I don't see why – it's a 'known' 4-4 ♣ fit. False preference to 2♠ may be better at pairs scoring but I would certainly not criticise the pass. East should not have made a non-forcing 'false' bid with game values.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 3♦. An Unassuming Cue Bid. You have a sound raise to 4♠ if partner has a decent overcall; but an overcall may be as few as 7 points. So a cue bid of the opponents suit means just that and enables partner to stop in 3♠ with a minimal overcall.
- Hand B: 3♥. Ditto
- Hand C: 3NT. This shows about 8-11 points and ♣ stop(s). 2NT is wrong because it is not forcing (it shows about 6-8) unless you play Lebensohl. With a slam seeking hand you could always kick off with 4th suit forcing (3♣ - which is not natural).
- Hand D: (a) Pass. Nowhere near good enough for 1NT and far too flat for double.
(b) 2NT. Partner's double is in the balancing seat and he is not promising the usual 11+ points (only about 8+). When partner balances you should deduct 3 points from your hand and reply accordingly.
- Hand E: 2♥. Totally unsuitable for a double (because of the singleton ♣ and values in ♠'s). It's very simple really – with a five card major, bid it. Note that 8 points is OK for a 2-level overcall in the balancing seat.
- Hand F: (a) 2♠. 9-11 points, which is what this hand is easily worth.
(b) 4♠ Partner is inviting game and you should go with 7-8 points.
- Hand G: (a) Dbl. “automatic” if you play negative doubles to this level. If you do not play negative doubles to this level than a (take-out) double is very clear.
(b) Dbl. As I said above, it's very clear and so not influenced by partner's pause.
- Hand H: (a) Dbl or 1NT? I prefer 1NT as it has two great ♦ stops and you are fixed if you double and partner bids 2♣. Also 1NT has the advantage that you will probably end up as declarer in an eventual ♥/♠/NoTrump contract and will likely get a favourable lead. If you double then partner is almost certain to become declarer. However, I suspect that 99% of readers will double and with both majors that will usually (but not always) work out fine.
(b) 2♠. Partner has shown 0-8 points. 2♠ by you now shows a strongish hand and invites partner to bid game if he has about 7-8 points. This hand is just about worth 2♠ and I would not argue if you chose to pass. 3♠, as suggest by a couple of players, would be a gross overbid. If you do not understand this it's all up on the web (→ Basic Bidding → doc No. 134).
- Hand J: 1♠. It conforms with the rule of 20 and with all of the points in the long suits I think it's easily worth an opener and is much too strong for a weak 2♠. I would never pass as I do not allow a gap between my 1♠ and 2♠ openers.
- Hand K: Dbl. Negative, showing 4 ♥'s. Partner's opening and the overcall have improved this hand and you can always rest in ♦'s if there is no 4-4 ♥ fit.

Bidding Sequences Quiz Answers

- L 1♦ 1♠ pass 2♠ What is 2♠? About 6-9 points and usually 3 ♠'s
- M 1♦ 1♠ pass 3♠ What is 3♠? Pre-emptive with usually 4 ♠'s
- N 1♦ 1♠ pass 4♠ What is 4♠? Pre-emptive with usually 5 ♠'s
- P 1♦ 1♠ pass 2♦ What is 2♦? A sound raise to 3♠ or more – an Unassuming Cue Bid