



Last week's winners: Monday 3/3/03

Friday 7/3/03

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----|-----------------|--------------|-----|
| winners | Mike/Ole | 58% | winners | Mike/Peter-M | 67% |
| 2 nd | Per/Tomas | 55% | 2 nd | Per/Tomas | 60% |

Same winners and runner-ups, except that Ole has gone home.

Your 2nd bid having transferred

Many people play transfers to majors over 1NT by partner, but what do you do after partner has completed the transfer? The following is a general guideline, where invitational is 11/12 points when playing a weak NT and 8/9 points when playing a strong NT. Game forcing is 13+ playing a weak NT and 10 + playing a strong NT.

Having transferred, your 2nd bid is: -

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Pass | 5 card suit or longer, insufficient values for an invitation. |
| 2NT | 5 card suit, invitational values; opener may pass, sign off in 3 of the major or bid game (3NT or 4 of the major). |
| 3 of the major | 6+ card suit, invitational values; opener normally passes or bids 4 of the major. |
| 3NT | 5 card suit, game forcing values; opener may pass or bid 4 of the major. |
| 4 of the major | 6+ card suit, game forcing values; opener should pass (unless also playing Texas transfers, in which case the bid is mildly slam interest). |
| a new suit | at least 5-4 shape, game forcing. |

On Monday I was asked to comment on the following auction. It was board 27.

| | | |
|----------|---------|---|
| West | East | West opened 1NT, East bid 2♦ (transfer to ♥), West completed the transfer and then East bid 4♥. Both players thought that their partner had misbid the hand and I was asked to comment. Of course they were both correct (their partner had mis-bid the hand). First of all, the opening bid. I am simply repeating myself when I say do not open 1NT with a singleton. It is a psyche and is not appreciated in this club where we have a number of beginners and people trying to improve their game. This hand should simply open with 1♦ and rebid 3♦. Apart from being totally the wrong shape, the hand is far too strong for a strong 1NT. Now what about East's bidding? You simply have to refer to the guidelines above about responding to transfers to see that this is totally incorrect. This pair are two of our leading players and really should know better than to bid like this. It sets a bad example. Quite how 2 other pairs finished in a lousy 6♥ baffles me, perhaps they have been taking lessons from our two stars here? The bidding should go 1♦ - 1♥ - 3♦ - 3NT - pass; or 1♦ - 1♥ - 3♦ - 3♥ - 3NT - pass. East has a very powerful hand but, in view of the mis-fit, should settle for 3NT. |
| ♠ AJ6 | ♠ Q73 | |
| ♥ A | ♥ KJ872 | |
| ♦ AQJ987 | ♦ 2 | |
| ♣ J92 | ♣ AK87 | |

The Power of the 4-4 fit

One of our members asked me to explain why the 4-4 fit is so desirable. He added that since 5 card majors systems are becoming ever more popular, surely that implies that the 5-3 fit is just as good? Not so. Standard American and similar systems are not designed specifically to locate 5-3 fits. If opener opens 1♥, responder will normally reply 1♠ with a 4 card suit, looking for a 4-4 ♠ fit. If opener opens a minor, then 4 card majors are subsequently bid up the line, looking for the 4-4 fit. Playing 5 card majors may take one bid longer than Acol to locate a 4-4 major fit, but it does get there. The thing about a

West

East

♠ KJ86

♥ AQ1084

♦ A9

♣ 72

♠ AQ105

♥ KJ97

♦ Q5

♣ AJ8

4-4 fit is that you can normally draw trumps in three rounds and get an extra trick with a ruff. Even on the occasions when trumps are 4-1 you can still normally get a ruff. The 4-4 fit has flexibility (you can often choose which hand to take a ruff in). With a 5-3 fit, a ruff with the 5 card suit does not give an extra trick. Look at this hand, 31 points. What contract would you prefer to be in? 3NT, 4♥, 6NT, or 6♥? Answer at the bottom of this page.

What's Your Bid?

East hand 1 from Friday

♠ J

♥ J42

♦ AK64

♣ AKJ97

Your RHO deals and opens 1♠, what is your bid? Hans held this hand and

doubled, with the intention of bidding 3♣ over West's probable 2♥ reply?

Not for the first time, I disagree with Hans on this one. As I stated last

week, I prefer a double of 1♠ to virtually guarantee 4♥'s. A 2♣ overcall is quite adequate on this hand. If you have a ♥ game, then partner will

reply 2♥ to a 2♣ overcall. I would hate to suggest ♥'s as trumps (by doubling 1♠) with such an anaemic ♥ suit. Finally, I would definitely prefer a six card ♣ suit for the double followed by a bid at the 3 level, I do not consider this hand good enough. Hans' opinion is that you may miss a ♥ game if you don't double. To each their own. I am not adverse to Moysian (4-3) fits but I do not go out of my way to reach them, and I would definitely prefer a suit better than J42.

The Power of the 4-4 fit – Answer

I guess you spotted the trap question? The answer is that 6♠ is the correct contract. A good 4-4 fit is often better than even a 5-4 fit. The reason is that you get an *extra* trick with a ruff (whichever hand you take it in). There is only a problem if you get an unlucky 4-1 or 5-0 ♠ split, but there are still good chances with the bad 4-1 split: - draw two rounds of trumps, discovering the bad break, and then play ♣A and another ♣. If the opponents do not ruff a ♥ then you are home. Ruff a ♣ and draw trumps. You make 4 trumps, one ruff, 5♥'s, one ♣ and one ♦. Total 12. Note that if you discover a 4-1 split after drawing two rounds of trumps, you cannot afford to draw another round – the ♣K may be with the outstanding trump and he will pull your remaining trumps, leaving you a trick short. With the expected 3-2 trump split there is no problem, simply draw all the trumps before going for your ruff. With a ♦ lead the play is slightly different. You then need the 3-2 trump split as you have to pitch the losing ♦ before the opponents get in with ♣K. So pull trumps and run the ♥'s, pitching the losing ♦ on the 5th ♥. Note that this is impossible if ♥'s are trumps (you have no trump left!).

Specific Types of Doubles

| | | | |
|----|-----|----|-----|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♦ | dbl | 2♦ | dbl |

This double by South is **RESPONSIVE**, and asks North to pick the suit.

| | | | |
|-----|------|----|----|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♦ | pass | 1♠ | 2♣ |
| dbl | | | |

This double by West is a **SUPPORT DOUBLE** and shows 3 card support for partner. Many people play a penalty double here – i.e. South stole your rebid. Up to you if you play support doubles.

| | | | |
|----|----|----|-----|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | 2♦ | dbl |

This double by South is a **COMPETITIVE DOUBLE** and asks partner to choose between the other two suits.

| | | | |
|------|------|-----|----|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | 2♦ | 2♠ |
| pass | pass | dbl | |

This double by East is a **COOPERATIVE DOUBLE** and gives partner the choice of passing for penalties or bidding on. Since East has limited values, it cannot be strictly penalties.

| | | | |
|-----|------|----|----|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♠ | pass | 2♠ | 3♥ |
| dbl | | | |

This double by West is a game try, a **MAXIMAL OVERCALL DOUBLE**. There is no room left for any other game try, 3♠ would just be competitive.

| | | | |
|----|----|-----|---|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | dbl | |

This double by East is **NEGATIVE**, in theory it shows the other 2 suits. In practice, it generally promises 4 cards in any unbid major(s) and may not have the other minor. See news-sheets 9 & 10.

| | | | |
|-----|------|------|------|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | pass | pass |
| dbl | pass | ? | |

If East fails to bid or double the overcall and South passes, then West should normally re-open with a double so that East can pass for penalties. Of course, if East cannot make a penalty pass, any other bid by him is weak.

The only exceptions when opener is allowed another bid but double are: -

- (1) when opener has a very shapely/weak opener and cannot stand to defend the doubled contract, in which case he either rebids his suit or bids another suit.
- (2) when opener has a very shapely very strong hand (a near 2♣ opener). A jump rebid.
- (3) a weak hand with 3 or 4 of the overcaller's suit. With length in overcaller's suit it is less likely that partner has a penalty pass and some partnerships allow opener to pass under these circumstances.

| | | | |
|------|------|------|----|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♦ | 1♥ | pass | 2♥ |
| pass | pass | dbl | |

This double by East is penalties. Presumably he was happy to have passed a re-opening double by West. This is just an extra 2 or 3 hundred. It is a notable exception to the rule about opponents bidding and

agreeing a suit. Negative doubles really are fun. Incidentally, I had this exact sequence a few years ago playing with an excellent Australian partner (remember Carol?). She bid 3♣ over my double, contending that my double was for take-out. Absolute nonsense, if I had a hand that could bid for take out over 2♥ I certainly would not have passed over 1♥ (a negative double?). Bridge is quite often simply a matter of logic.

A double of opponents after they have found a fit is usually for take out.

A double of any bid after anyone at the table has bid no trumps naturally is usually for penalties.

| | | | |
|----|------|-----|-----|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♥ | pass | 1NT | dbl |

This is a notable exception, the double is for take out of ♥'s. But be wary, you need a good hand as partner has passed, East has shown values and West is unlimited.

| | | | |
|-----|------|----|-----|
| W | N | E | S |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | 2♠ | 4♠ |
| 4NT | pass | 5♦ | dbl |

This double by South is for penalties. In reality it is unlikely that South can set 5♦. It is, in fact, a **STRIPED-TAIL APE DOUBLE**. The theory is that if you feel the opponents have a sure slam, they

may settle for a doubled game that scores less even with an overtrick. If you hear a re-double, you run like a striped-tail ape to 5♠ and opponents may double you there instead of bidding their certain slam (again good for you). Am I serious or not? Double Dutch?

4NT Quantitative

This is board 16 from Friday. Two pairs reached a very optimistic 6NT and I was asked how the hand should be bid: -

| North | South | North | South | |
|---------|--------|---------|---------|------------------|
| ♠ KQ32 | ♠ A75 | 1NT (1) | 2♣ (2) | (1) 15-17 |
| ♥ QJ7 | ♥ AK85 | 2♠ (3) | 4NT (4) | (2) Stayman |
| ♦ K1093 | ♦ QJ4 | pass | | (3) denies 4♥'s |
| ♣ A2 | ♣ Q93 | | | (4) invitational |

South knows that there are a combined 31-33 points but no fit. If North is max, then 6NT is a reasonable proposition. Even if you normally play 4NT as ace-asking it is invitational in this sequence where no trump suit has been bid (4♣ would be Gerber). With a minimum opening North should decline the invitation. I guess that Hans agrees with me on this one (we don't always disagree – it's just that when we do it is usually very interesting) as I note that they were the only pair to reach 4NT. In this example, if North had a couple more points, he would bid 5♦, just in case there is a 4-4 ♦ fit and 6♦ was a better contract than 6NT.

The 2NT Response to a suit bid.

- ♠ 52 South hand 17 from Friday. Partner opens 1♠, what do you bid? You
- ♥ A975 cannot bid 2♥ as that promises a 5 card suit, so 1NT (6-9) or 2NT(11-12)?
- ♦ AJ9 I sincerely hope that nobody out there would consider 2♣? It really is a
- ♣ J742 lousy bid but I'm sure that it would be the choice of a couple of people?
 With 10 points you have to evaluate to see if it is worth 2NT or just 1NT.

Two aces are a plus feature, but with poor support for partner's suit, poor intermediates and a very bad shape after partner's 1♠, the hand is only worth 1NT. You need a *really* good 10 points for 2NT. What happened? At our table, South bid 2NT, North bid Blackwood and ended in a hopeless 6♠.

If you think that 2♣ is a reasonable bid, have a word with me and I will type up a sheet or so as to why it is so bad – no room left in this news sheet.