

Last week's winners: Monday 14/4/03

Friday 18/4/03

winners	Paul/Chuck	69%	cancelled due to water (Soncran).
2 nd	Rolf/Knut	54%	

No Friday session, but there were a few fairly interesting hands on Monday. Not really that interesting, but they caused some loud discussions.

As many of you may know, I consider my bidding to be flexible (I can cope with most systems) and above average, but my declarer play has a lot to be desired. Not usually a problem as I am adequate and my bidding often ensures that I reach a sensible contract that I am capable of making. Quite often, a 'superior' player will confront me on a bidding sequence – if they are not too polite about it, they get back what they have asked for, often in writing. Sometimes someone will comment on my poor declarer play, I am always willing to learn and gladly accept helpful/friendly advice when I have made a mistake, as I am sure everybody at the club is. Occasionally someone will sometimes utter a load of nonsense. I do not usually analyse the play, but my answer to the garbage directed at me last week is returned in this issue. Let's get the ball rolling with my usual comments on bidding, the discussion of these two hands could have been heard in Bangkok: -

The Take-out double of RHO's 1NT response

♠ A1087 In new-sheet 19 I stated that a double in a sequence like 1♥ - pass - 1NT -
♥ 8 dbl is for take-out of the opening suit but that you need a good hand as
♦ AJ97 LHO is unlimited and RHO has advertised (balanced) values. You are
♣ AKJ6 sticking your neck out. This is South hand 16. This hand is good enough
to compete and is a perfect example of a double in this sequence. As I
said, you really do need a good hand to double in this position, an ideal hand occurs once in a blue moon. Unfortunately, this hand bid 2♥! I am speechless (actually, I was the opposite). My limited vocabulary could not find enough words to describe the bid. This must be an undefined bid in this sequence; whatever it is meant to mean, this hand cannot qualify. The only sensible meaning that I can think of for the bid is Michaels – a two suited hand with ♠'s and a minor; or perhaps the more sophisticated version (Ghestem) – here specifically showing 5-5 in ♠'s and ♣'s. Of course, there was nothing sophisticated about this particular bid and the pair eventually wound up in 3NT doubled, 3 off. Got what they deserved?

Incidentally, if you do play Michaels cue bids (or Ghestem) then it is worth checking with your partner that they are still on in this sequence – makes sense to me.

The Take-out double

♠ 1096 South hand 17. RHO opens 1♣, what is your bid? Please check back to
♥ AQ64 new-sheet 18 if you think that this hand warrants a take-out double. 50
♦ AQ10 years ago, some people played that you double with any opening hand.
♣ J92 Only rank beginners do that these days. The only sensible bid is pass,
especially if your partner is one of the best visitors to our club and certainly knows all about
balancing. The holder made an appalling take-out double.

Hand Evaluation / Phantom Squeeze / Talking Garbage Board 22 from Monday

Dealer:	♠ J8643		West	North	East	South
East	♥ 762					
Both vul	♦ 73		-	-	pass	pass
	♣ KJ6		1♦	pass	1♥	pass
			1NT (1)	pass	2NT (2)	pass
♠ 972	N	♠ KQ	3NT	all pass		
♥ AQ5	W	E ♥ K983				
♦ AJ86	S	♦ Q542	(1) 12-14			
♣ A82		♣ 1075	(2) I cannot find the correct adjective for this bid			

♠ A105
♥ J104
♦ K109
♣ Q943

What a terrible contract! At the other tables West opened a strong NT and the poor game was also reached. Here, West correctly downgraded the flat hand with no intermediates to a 14 point hand. Shame that East totally over-valued his hand. After the ♠ 4 lead the contract is hopeless.

♠ J86
♥ -
♦ -
♣ KJ

A kibitzer suggested that the contract can be made. After winning the 2nd ♠, run the ♥'s (luckily they are 3-3) and then lead ♦Q to the ♦K and ♦A. Finally the ♦J and then the 6♦ to the ♦10 leaves North to find a discard in this position, with West needing two tricks. North is pseudo squeezed.

♠ - N ♠ -
♥ - W E ♥ -
♦ 86 S ♦ 54
♣ A82 ♣ 1075
♠ 5
♥ -
♦ 10
♣ Q94

With the auction given, West cannot possibly have ♣Q and ♣A, so the ♣J discard is easy. Actually, even if West had opened a strong NT (thus having room for both ♣Q and ♣A), then North should still pitch the ♣, the ♣Q is irrelevant. West has ♣A and has set up a winning ♦ - North should simply hold onto his good ♠'s. He knows partner is winning this 3rd ♦ trick and will return a ♠. But how does North know that South and not West has the last ♠? Really! If West had it then the ♠ would have been led at this

trick to end play North and, with 4 ♠'s, West probably would have bid them? Just one more point, if West had ♣Q and ♣A then he may well have tried a finesse earlier. There is absolutely no % in hanging onto the ♣J. QED.

As I said, what a silly contract. The suggested play is to find the ♦K onside, the ♥'s 3-3 and hope that North makes a discard mistake with a non-existent squeeze. I believe that my line of playing North for ♦K doubleton or singleton and hoping that the ♠'s are 4-4 or blocked and the ♥'s 3-3 is just as good. Both are pretty hopeless in this miserable contract. I guess Chuck is right, you should not talk so much if you don't know what you're talking about. But really, I prefer to simply bid correctly and get into contracts that stand a chance of making. Mind you, if everybody was sensible then I could not be so sarcastic and the news-sheets would not be such fun to read.

So who was this kibitzer who criticised me just because 3NT made against him at his table? Why, the very same individual who made a take-out double with a totally flat 13 count (South 17), who bid 2♥ instead of doubling with South 16 and who invited game with a poor 10 count opposite a 12-14 NT bid. What would Chuck say about somebody who bids, plays and talks like this? I really need to start giving lessons again. Just joking really – the culprit was Chuck!

Incidentally, this hand is just another example of why 4333 hands should be downgraded. A total of 25 high card points but 3NT is hopeless. If you re-read my paper on hand evaluation then you will realize that this opening hand must devalue because of the totally flat shape and lack of intermediates. Also, responder's KQ doubleton in a suit that opener has denied is certainly not worth 5 points (look at the play!).

'One advantage of bad bidding is that you get practice at playing atrocious contracts'

- Alfred Sheinwold.

Stayman/Transfer Sequences

I had an interesting bidding dilemma when partnering Paul on Wednesday, I opened a strong NT and the uninterrupted sequence (actually the 2♣ bid was doubled, but that is largely irrelevant) was: -

So which of these hand types does partner (responder) have?

1NT - 2♣ - 2♠ - 3♦ - ? Weak (C), Invitational (D) or strong (E)? Is 3♦ forcing?

Hand C

Hand D

Hand E

♠ 63

♠ 63

♠ K7

♥ 10964

♥ K963

♥ A963

♦ AJ9763

♦ AJ9763

♦ AK9763

♣ 5

♣ 5

♣ 5

First of all, let's look at hand type E, game forcing with slam potential. The best way to bid this is to transfer to ♦'s (we play 4 way transfers – I think) and then bid 3♥, game forcing. So partner is weak (C) or invitational (D). Now either is possible, but with an invitational hand (like Hand D) it

may well be best to simply bid 3NT at the second turn as you will already be at the 3 level. Thus I deduced (it took me a while - we had no prior understanding) that partner had a weak hand, 4-6 in the red suits (as type C).

And so it was. I think that this is probably the best way to play this sequence, but if you play SID (Stayman in Doubt) then you simply have to transfer to ♦'s with the weak hand C and forget about a possible 4-4 ♥ fit (there is no game).

So, Paul intended this sequence as weak. Hans considered it forcing. Since these two guys are a fairly regular partnership this is something that needs to be discussed? You can play it however you like, as long as you are both on the same wavelength!

Which Suit to Develop?

North

South

North

South

♠ K92

♠ A75

-

1♣

(1) 12-14

♥ 863

♥ AKQ

1♦

1NT (1)

♦ AKJ84

♦ 63

3NT

pass

♣ Q9

♣ J10543

West leads the ♥J. How do you play the hand (which suit do you tackle)? Answer next week.