



Monday 27/9/2004

Friday 1/10/2004

1<sup>st</sup> Dave/Bob 63%  
2<sup>nd</sup> Tomas/Philip(Ire) 56%

1<sup>st</sup> Tomas/Philip(Ire) 65%  
2<sup>nd</sup> = Jan/Jimmy & Clive/Ken 56%

**Bidding Quiz**

**Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.**

Hand A

Hand B

♠ KQ654  
♥ K952  
♦ Q  
♣ 986

♠ KQ52  
♥ AK42  
♦ A7  
♣ K87

With Hand A partner passes as does RHO and so you elect to open this heap with a 3<sup>rd</sup> seat 1♠ opening. LHO bids 2♦ and partner bids 3♣, what do you do?

With Hand B you open 1♣, LHO overcalls 1♠ round to you.  
(a) What do you do?  
(b) What would you do if RHO had raised to 2♠?

Hand C

Hand D

♠ -  
♥ K632  
♦ KJ96  
♣ K10652

♠ J1064  
♥ Q98  
♦ Q  
♣ AQ543

With Hand C partner opens 1NT, what do you bid?

With Hand D RHO opens 1♣, what do you do?

Hand E

Hand F

♠ 1083  
♥ KQJ86  
♦ 1096  
♣ Q10

♠ AKQ975  
♥ -  
♦ AQ4  
♣ AJ93

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

(a) What do you open with Hand F?  
(b) What do you open if you play Benjamin twos?

Hand G

Hand H

♠ 75  
♥ A543  
♦ Q986  
♣ A104

♠ QJ54  
♥ K3  
♦ K943  
♣ Q53

With Hand G partner opens 1♠, what do you respond.

With Hand H LHO opens 1♣ and partner and RHO both pass. What do you do?

Hand J

Hand K

♠ AKQ95  
♥ J7  
♦ AK2  
♣ 983

♠ A10  
♥ KJ4  
♦ 109653  
♣ AQ10

With Hand J you open 1♠ :-

(a) What do you rebid if partner bids 1NT?  
(b) What do you rebid if partner bids 2♦?  
(a) What do you open with Hand K?  
(b) Suppose that you open 1♦, partner bids 1♥ and you rebid 1NT. Partner then bids 2♦, what do you do?

Hand L

Hand M

♠ J73  
♥ AKQ1054  
♦ 982  
♣ A

♠ AKQJ652  
♥ Q863  
♦ -  
♣ K6

With Hand L you open 1♥ :-

(a) What do you do if partner responds 1♠?  
(b) What do you do if LHO overcalls 2♦ and partner bids 2♠?

With Hand M you open 1♠, What do you rebid if partner: -  
(a) bids 1NT? (b) bids 2♣?

### 3♥ by whom?

Board 26 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>

Dealer: ♠ AJ98  
East ♥ Q43  
Both vul ♦ AK986  
♣ 7

♠ KQ654 N ♠ 73  
♥ K952 W E ♥ 87  
♦ Q S ♦ 752  
♣ 986 ♣ AKQJ104  
♠ 102  
♥ AJ106  
♦ J1043  
♣ 532

#### Table A

West (A)	North	East	South
-	-	pass (1)	pass
1♠ (2)	2♦	3♣ (3)	pass (4)
3♥ (5)	pass	pass	pass

#### Table B

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

Obviously something silly has happened when both N-S and E-W end up in 3♥ minus two, let's have a look.

These two East's both chose to pass at (1), 3♣ anyone? And both of these West's chose to open this miserable West hand, I suppose it's OK in 3<sup>rd</sup> seat. Both East's then decided that their ♣ suit was robust enough to bid at (3). I'm not arguing, as East is a passed hand he can safely bid 3♣ here, partner will hopefully not get carried away. But then the paths diverged: -

Table A: This South chose to pass at (4). The LAW says that 3♦ is fine and that's what I would bid. Anyway, back to West. What did you bid with Hand A at (5) in this week's quiz? Partner has bid 3♣ and so you have to bid either 3♥ or 3♠, right?

Wrong! Partner is a passed hand! This West hand is just an 8 count (♦Q is waste paper). With 3 card ♣ support pass is clear at (5). Also, I would consider 3♥ at (5) as forcing (a new suit at the 3 level by an unlimited hand - how else would West show a good hand?).

Table B: I guess that this South got confused about not denying a 4 card major? This South hand is not strong enough to introduce a new suit at the 3 level. As I said, I would bid 3♦ and pass is the only other alternative.

And what happened? 3♥ went down two for 200 away for a bottom no matter who played it. The other 3 tables all landed in sensible ♦ partscores by N-S making 10 tricks. Note that E-W can make 9 (maybe 10) tricks in ♣'s. Nobody can make anything in ♥'s.

The bottom lines: -

- You need a good hand to introduce a new suit at the 3 level.
- You do not need to rebid (especially at the 3 level) opposite a passed partner.
- Despite what Chuck says it is generally accepted that one can open 3♣ with a decent 6 card suit. This is obviously a good East hand and perhaps too strong for a pre-empt, but I think that 3♣ is OK vulnerable (it's too good if not vulnerable).

### 5-3 is better than 6-2?

Board 20 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>

Now I am continually saying that a 5-3 is good but a that the 4-4 fit is better. What about a 6-2 fit? Obviously good, but if a 5-3 fit also exists then the 5-3 fit may be preferable: -

Dealer:	♠ AK854	<u>Table A</u>				
West	♥ 76	West	North	East	South (L)	
Both vul	♦ Q5	pass	pass	pass	1♥	
	♣ 10872	pass	1♠	pass	4♣ (1)	
		pass	4♥ (2)	all pass		
♠ 1096	N	♠ Q2				
♥ J9	W E	♥ 832	<u>Table B</u>			
♦ AK763	S	♦ J104	West	North	East	South (L)
♣ K64		♣ QJ953	pass	pass	pass	1♥
	♠ J73		2♦	2♠ (3)	pass	3♥ (4)
	♥ AKQ1054		pass	4♥	all pass	
	♦ 982					
	♣ A		Nobody found the 5-3 ♠ fit, let's have a look at these two tables: -			

Table A: So what did you bid with Hand L(a) at (1) in this week's quiz? It's a nice hand but not worth a game force opposite a 1 level response. I would invite with 3♥. 4♣ was apparently asking for aces and 4♥ said one. Now this is terrible bidding. If you ask for aces and find just one missing then you should bid the small slam – do not use Blackwood to gauge partner's strength – it does not do that. This South hand is nowhere near good enough to leap into slam mode with no known fit, especially opposite a passed partner who may have just 6 points and has max 11.

Table B: This time there was an overcall and so North bid 2♠ at (3). Now this actually helps South as he knows that partner has 9-11 points or so and also that he has a 5 card ♠ suit (North would negative double with less points or with only 4 ♠'s). So what did you bid at (4) with hand L(b) in this week's quiz? Unlike Table A we now have game values after a two-level bid from partner; I would bid 4♠ but 4♥ is reasonable. I think that 4♠ is a far better bid with a known 5-3 fit. Anyway, North 'obviously' raises 3♥ to 4♥ here and that makes +1.

And what happened? 4♥ was bid 3 times, making +1 once and exactly the other two times. Two pairs somehow subsided in 3♥. Quite how many South could fail to make 11 tricks on this lay-out may seem baffling, but I saw how one South did it. He took the first ♠ trick with the ♠ A and then later he led the ♠ J from hand and (after some 'thought') let it run. Without the ♠ 10 (and 9) this is a no-win play, if West had the ♠ Q he will cover. The best way to play these ♠'s when missing the Q, 10 and 9 is to lay down the ♠ A and ♠ K and hope.

And what would have happened if I was South? We would have been in 4♠. East would have been on lead and would probably find a ♣ lead. Even on a bad day my partner (whoever) would then have made 13 tricks! The 5-3 fit is superior as you get 4 discards (if you need that many) from the North hand on the ♥'s and you get two ♣ ruffs from the short trump hand (if you need them). If they do find a ♦ lead then you still easily get 11 tricks. This is not that good an example but 5-3 is usually better than 6-2. The bottom lines: -

- A 5-3 fit is better than a 6-2 fit if the 6 card suit is solid.
- If you do not have the 10 of the suit then you cannot lead the J as a 'finesse'.

**Responding to 1NT with a shortage – part 1**Board 4 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>, both vul

North	South (C)	South2	West	North	East	South
♠ J875	♠ -	♠ -	pass	1NT	pass	2♣
♥ AQJ7	♥ K632	♥ K632	pass	2♥	pass	4♥
♦ A104	♦ KJ96	♦ KJ96	all pass			
♣ A7	♣ K10652	♣ KQ652				

Very sensible bidding. And what happened? 4♥ either made or made +1. Quite how two pairs managed to end up in 3NT (minus 1) is a total mystery to me.

Actually, 6♥ is a reasonable contract and only needs finding the ♦Q (it was with East which is the natural way to finesse the suit). Give South a couple more points (say the ♣Q) and he should go slamming, but how do you reach 6♥ with South2?

There are a couple of options. You can bid Stayman as here and when the ♥ fit is uncovered you can splinter with 3♠. But if opener denies 4♥'s there may well be a minor suit fit for slam. There is a means of discovering this (SARS) and I have a few pages on it if you are interested. An alternative approach is to splinter directly over the 1NT opening if you play 3♣/♦/♥/♠ as splinters (most people don't). A ♠ splinter would show shortage there and slam interest in any of the other 3 suits.

**Responding to 1NT with a shortage – part 2**Board 13 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>, both vul

West	East1	East2	West	North	East	South
♠ -	♠ AKJ4	♠ Q642	-	pass	1NT	pass
♥ A843	♥ Q92	♥ KQ9	2♣	pass	2♠	pass
♦ A765	♦ 98	♦ K9	3NT	all pass		
♣ AJ832	♣ KQ104	♣ KQ104				

East1 was the hand from Monday and everybody got this one right, landing in 3NT – but the bidding was not very scientific! Obviously if East had his some of his ♠ values elsewhere then 6♣ would be there and I was asked how 6♣ could have been bid opposite say East2.

Again there are the two options outlined above, and since West is definitely interested in slam in anything but ♠'s I prefer the direct splinter option here. So West bids 3♠ (showing ♠ shortage) and East1 then simply bids 3NT – no problem. But with East2 (little wastage in ♠'s) East is looking for slam and 6♣ is then easy to bid (East asks for aces).

The bottom lines (for both of the above deals): -

- A combined 28 points is often enough for slam *with a fit*.
- If you have shortage opposite partner's 1NT opening there are various options. You can splinter directly. You can bid Stayman and then splinter over a 2♥/♠ response. You can transfer into (any) 6 card suit and then splinter or you can ascertain partner's distribution via Stayman and then SARS.
- This use of direct splinters or the use of SARS (Shape Asking Relays after Stayman) to establish minor suit fits are by no means standard.
- I have a book on NT bidding that covers all of this (and a lot more). Let me know if you want to borrow it, but be aware that it is rather advanced.

## **Editorial      About our club and how I bend the rules?**

I was called over as director a couple of times on Friday and I was not too impressed. I was used to these sort of calls by Chuck – is it catching? One incident was because the opposition were talking in a foreign language. Now the Club language is English and it is courteous for all foreigners to speak English at the table when the other players do not speak their language. But we have to be tolerant and understand that there are a couple of players who's English is very poor – so please don't make an issue of this. I'm absolutely sure that the foreign pairs are not cheating and will translate if you ask; and I note that Alex does usually give a brief translation of what his partner has said.

The other incident was when dummy had ♦ AKxxx on table and declarer called for a ♦. Next player quickly played the ♦ Q and declarer then said that he meant the ace. The defender called for the director. Now I would most certainly expect this sort of behavior from Chuck, and the defender may have been right according to the rules. But do we need this? Defender surely knew that declarer wished to play the ace, so give him a little extra time to designate the card or for dummy to ask which one. This is a friendly club. Isn't it?

Yet another incident was when one player bid 1♥ and the next also bid 1♥. On being informed that this was inadequate he changed it to 1♠. Now if the guilty party had intended to bid ♥'s then a penalty is in order (partner barred). However, since this was a mechanical error there is no problem – mechanical errors (extracting the wrong card from the box) are only human and may be corrected with no penalty before the next player has bid.

It's up to you what you do when the opposition revoke. The rules say to call the director and this is what you should do if play has continued for a while. However, I don't bother if the revoke is easily rectified next trick. Up to you. Is winning that important?

The bottom line. Not everybody in this club is an expert, please be considerate towards less gifted players and towards players who do not speak English that well.

### **Strong Hand Bidding – part 1**

Board 22 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>

Dealer:      ♠ Q105  
East        ♥ 974  
E-W vul     ♦ QJ7  
             ♣ KJ87

♠ K4            N            ♠ A863  
♥ KQJ10862   W E        ♥ 53  
♦ K8            S            ♦ A9643  
♣ A6            ♣ 43  
             ♠ J972  
             ♥ A  
             ♦ 1052  
             ♣ Q10952

#### Table A

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

#### Table B

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

Table A: If you do not play strong twos or Benjamin then this is the correct bidding up to (1). This jump at (1) is strong but not forcing. East should bid 4♥ at (2) of course.

Table B: The bidding at most tables, fine.

And what happened? 4♥ was bid 3 times (+1 twice, +2 once), this one table bid 3♥ (+2) and one pair bid 6♥ making. The slam is not a good one but 12 tricks are there on a non-♠ lead as the ♦'s split 3-3 and you can set up the ♦ suit in dummy after a ruff.

## Strong Hand Bidding – part 2

Board 6 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>

Dealer: ♠ J42  
East ♥ 72  
E-W vul ♦ 752  
♣ 76542

♠ 1083	N	♠ AKQ975
♥ KQJ86	W E	♥ -
♦ 1096	S	♦ AQ4
♣ Q10		♣ AJ93
	♠ 6	
	♥ A109543	
	♦ KJ83	
	♣ K8	

Three totally different auctions, 2♦  
and I only really like one of them.  
Let's have a look: -

### Table A

West (E)	North	East (F)	South
-	-	1♠ (1)	2♥
pass (2)	pass	2♠ (3)	pass
4♠ (4)	all pass		

### Table B

West	North	East (F)	South
-	-	2♣ (1)	pass
2♦ (5)	pass	2♠ (6)	pass
pass (7)	pass		

### Table C

West	North	East	South
-	-	2♣ (1)	pass
(8) pass	2♠ (9)	pass	
3♥ (10)	pass	3♠ (11)	pass
4♠	all pass		

Table A: So what did you open with Hand F in this week's quiz? A game forcing 2♣ I hope.

This hand has 9½ playing tricks and is too strong for anything but your strongest bid. If you play Benjamin twos then it's too strong for 2♣ followed by either 2♠ or 3♠, open a game forcing 2♦ if playing Benjamin. Give partner the ♦K and nothing else and 4♠ is easy. Anyway, this East elected to open 1♠ and South overcalled 2♥. Now what should West do? What did you bid with Hand E in this week's quiz? This is a nice hand and playing negative doubles I would pass, awaiting partner's 'automatic' re-opening double. With shortage in the opponent's suit, East should re-open with an 'automatic' double – that would have led to +800 or +1100 even at this vulnerability. But East found a somewhat pathetic 2♠ and so the bonanza was gone and they ended up in the par contract when West bid 4♠.

Table B: This E-W play Benjamin twos and East elected to open 2♣ (8-9 playing tricks in an unspecified suit). As I said above I consider this hand too strong and I would open a game forcing 2♦ if playing Benjamin. Anyway, West bid 2♦, waiting, and East then bid 2♠ at (6), promising 8 playing tricks in ♠'s. Please re-read what I said on playing tricks in news-sheet 72. This East hand is about 9½ playing tricks. West then believed that he did not have enough to bid on opposite 8 playing tricks in ♠'s and passed at (7). I would bid 3♥ (forcing) or 4♠. I suggest that West re-read my page (news-sheet 72) on responding to Benjamin two's. I stated there that responder should bid on over partner's Benjamin two with: - *'as little as a king, the queen of trumps or even just 3 or 4 trumps'*. This West hand has a king (and queen and jack and three 10's!) and also 3 trumps to the 10. It is *far* too good to pass. So there you have it, since this pair regularly score in the 60%'s, who knows what they will achieve once they sort out their strong hand bidding?

Table C: This E-W pair play Standard American and they got it right. 2♠ at (9) is game forcing so the 3♥ at (10) and 3♠ at (11) also are. Good show, Alex/Jeff.

### Strong Hand Bidding – part 3

Board 27 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>

Dealer: ♠ J1064  
South ♥ Q98  
Love all ♦ Q  
♣ AQ543

♠ KQ52	N	♠ 98
♥ AK42	W E	♥ J763
♦ A7	S	♦ J10653
♣ K87		♣ J2

♠ A74  
♥ 105  
♦ K9842  
♣ 1096

#### Table A

West (B)	North(D)	East	South
-	-	-	pass
1♣	1♠ (1)	pass	pass
pass (2)			

#### Table B

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

Table A: So what did you bid with Hand D at (1) in this week's quiz. If West had opened any other suit then 2♣ would be OK, but over a 1♣ opening you are fixed. Now some experts say that it is acceptable to overcall with a good 4 card suit in these circumstances – but this is *not* a good 4 card suit! Pass is the correct bid.

Anyway, this comes round to West; what did you bid with Hand B(a) at (2) in this week's quiz? Playing negative doubles you usually double here in case partner has a penalty double, but that is unlikely here as you hold such great ♠'s and so this is an exception. With about 18-20 points and good cover in the overcalled suit, 1NT is best.

Table B: At Table 2 North also found this offbeat 1♠ overcall and this time South reasonably raised to 2♠. What should West do now? What did you do with Hand B(b) at (4) in the quiz? As I said above, 1NT is fine at (2) but 2NT is too high – partner is very likely to be bust. Now East said that West should double (2♠ will not make). That is nonsense of course as it would be for take-out. This time West should pass at (4).

And what happened? There was a real mixed bag of results on this board. At Table A 1♠ made exactly for the N-S top. At Table B 2NT was minus one for another good N-S score. Other E-W's managed to stop in 1♥, 1NT and 3♥; all of which made exactly.

The bottom lines: -

- Normally, when playing negative doubles, if you open and LHO overcalls and partner and RHO pass then you should re-open with a double as partner may have a penalty pass.
- But if you hold a very strong hand with good stoppers in the enemy suit then it's unlikely that partner has a penalty pass and so bid 1NT with about 18-19 points.
- Do not overcall with 4 card suits.
- Know which doubles are for take out before you incorrectly criticise partner.

## Strong Hand Bidding – part 4

Board 2 from Friday 1<sup>st</sup>

North (J)	South (G)
♠ AKQ95	♠ 75
♥ J7	♥ A543
♦ AK2	♦ Q986
♣ 983	♣ A104

### Table A

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

### Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	pass	pass
pass	1♠	pass	1NT (1)
pass	2NT (4)	pass	pass (5) we
pass			

Three tables out of 4 missed a simple 27 point game on Friday, need to investigate: -

Table A: So what did you respond at (1) with Hand G in this week's quiz? It's 10 points so borderline between a two-level 2♦ bid and 1NT. But this is a poor hand opposite a 1♠ opening and I would choose 1NT. But what about this 2♠ bid at (2)! What did you bid with Hand J(a) in this week's quiz? Your partner's 2♦ bid promises a good 10+ points, this North hand must either bid game or make a forcing bid. 2♠ is obviously woefully inadequate as is 3♦, 3♠ is not enough (not forcing). 4♠ or 3NT are too unilateral for me. I would 'dig up' a 3♣ bid and see what partner does. Here he would probably bid 3NT which I would pass.

Table B: This South chose 1NT at (1), with which I agree. But what did you bid with Hand J(b) at (4) in this week's quiz? After a 1NT response to you opening bid, a raise to 2NT is 17-18 points. This is a good 17 points and so 2NT is correct. Of course South should have raised to 3NT at (5).

And what happened? 9 tricks were easy in NT as the ♦J10 fell in two rounds. But the only table to bid game (3NT) somehow went down! Thus N-S got a top at Table B for being in a NT contract. The other two tables made 9 tricks in ♠'s and got an average.

The bottom lines: -

- If you know that your side has 27+ points, do not make a weak bid (2♠ here).
- If you know that your side has 27+ points, do not make an invitational bid (3♠ here).
- Do not be in a rush to rebid a 5 card suit if there is an alternative.
- If you know that your side has 27+ points, make a *forcing* bid or bid game.
- If you open with one of a suit and partner bids 1NT, then 2NT is 17-18 pts.

### A plug for 2/1.

What do you think about my suggested 3♣ bid at (2)? No one syllable answers allowed. I hope you all agree that it is the only sensible bit (have a word with me if you think that there is a reasonable alternative). So, it is 'standard practice' that a new minor at the 3 level may not be real after you have opened with one of a major. So therefore responder should not support this suit!

As I said, there really is no option but to invent a 3♣ bid here, not totally satisfactory! – it's just another reason why I like to play 2/1. Playing 2/1 2♦ at (1) would be game forcing and so 2♠ at (2) is the bid if you play 2/1. Easy, eh?

**Strong Hand Bidding – part 5**

Board 19 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>, E-W vul.

West (M)	East 1	East 2	<u>Table A</u>			
			West	North	East	South
♠ AKQJ652	♠ 109	♠ 109	-	-	-	pass
♥ Q863	♥ 92	♥ AKJ3	1♠	pass	2♣	pass
♦ -	♦ AKJ3	♦ 92	3♠ (1)	pass	4♠	pass
♣ K6	♣ A8752	♣ A8752	4NT (2)	pass	5♥	pass
			6♠	all pass		

‘Expert Table’

West	North	East	South	<u>Table B</u>			
-	-	-	pass	West	North	East	South
1♠	pass	2♣	pass	-	-	-	pass
4♠ (2)	pass	5♣ (3)	pass	1♠	dbl	2♣	pass
5♦ (4)	pass	? (5)		4♠ (1)	pass	pass (3)	pass

Table A: If you don’t play strong twos then 1♠ is the correct opening. But what did you bid at (1) with Hand M(b) in this week’s quiz? I don’t like 3♠, after East has responded at the two level then this hand has game values and I would bid either 3♥ or 4♠. This is a very rare occasion where I would deny the 4 card ♥ suit as it is so weak and the ♠’s are so good. This 4♠ bid, contrary to some people’s belief, is not shut-out. It shows a strong hand that expects to make 4♠ opposite minimal support from partner. Anyway, East 1 raised to 4♠ and here comes the inconsistency. 3♠ at (1) is non-forcing, partner raises to game and suddenly West is in slam mode? Anyway, you should not bid Blackwood at (2) with a wide open suit. You should also not bid Blackwood with a void – if there is one ace missing then how do you know if it’s the void suit or not?

Table B: Here there was interference but that does not really matter, 4♠ is still correct at (1). But I would bid on with the East hand at (3) ...

‘Expert Table’ So how do you reach slam if East has, say, the East 2 hand? As I said, you cannot use Blackwood and so you have to cue bid. I prefer 4♠ to 3♥ at (2). The bidding should start 1♠ - 2♣ - 4♠, West has shown a big hand with excellent ♠’s and East should look for slam at (3). East also cannot bid Blackwood (for the same reason – a weak suit) and so he should cue bid. 5♣ at (3) shows the ♣A and West then cues ♦’s (a void) at (4). With East 1 East bids 5♠ at (5) denying a ♥ control and we stop in 5♠. East 2 cues the ♥A with 5♥ at (5) and West bids 6♠.

And what happened? Everyone but Table A stopped in 4♠ and everyone made 11 tricks.

The bottom liners: -

- When opener jumps to 3 of his original suit it is invitational (about 16-17 points) but it is not forcing.
- When opener jumps to 4 of his original suit it shows a very strong hand (about 18-20 points). Responder is invited to investigate slam with a suitable hand.
- Do not bid Blackwood with a wide open suit.
- Do not bid Blackwood with a void.
- If you can’t bid Blackwood, then cue bid.

**Pass a take-out double?**

Board 16 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>

Dealer: ♠ J  
West ♥ 1065  
E-W vul ♦ KQ8752  
♣ J109

Table A

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	1♥ (1)
pass	pass	pass	

♠ Q843	N	♠ K1097
♥ Q82	W E	♥ 94
♦ 103	S	♦ AJ964
♣ 8543		♣ A2

♠ A652  
♥ AKJ73  
♦ -  
♣ KQ76

Table B

West	North	East	South
pass	pass	1♦	dbl (1)
pass	pass (2)	pass	

Table C

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

Table A: This South hand is far to good for a simple overcall. Double at (1) is correct, followed by some strong action next bid...

Table B: ... this South doubled but he got no next bid! So what do you think of North's pass of the double at (2)? It's not usually a good idea but this suit is probably just good enough and the vulnerability screams out for it. If N-S have game then E-W will surely go two down for 500?

Table C: This North made a quite reasonable 1NT bid at (2), showing 6-9 points and a ♦ stop. So what should South do now at (3)? 2♥ shows a hand that is too good for an overcall but it may be a bit feeble with this great hand. 3♥ is very reasonable and 3♦ is an alternative. Hopefully you then end up in 4♥.

And what happened? 4♥ is perhaps difficult to reach, but not with Jeff's style of bidding. Jeff/Alex made ♥ +1 for a near top of +450. This was only beaten by the 500 penalty for 1♦ minus two doubled. All other tables were in 1♥ or 2♥ making 10 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- Do not make a simple overcall with a rock-crusher.
- It is not normally correct to pass partner's take-out double; only consider it with a very good suit (this North is the minimum for the action) at favourable vulnerability.

## A weak sequence

Board 12 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>, N-S vul.

North	South
♠ Q42	♠ A10
♥ 9653	♥ KJ4
♦ KJ87	♦ 109653
♣ K5	♣ AQ10

### Table A

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

### Table B

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

Another mixed bag of results on this board, let's have a look at two tables: -

Table A: So what did you open with this South Hand K at (1) in this week's quiz? It's 14 points with decent shape, but the three 10's are worth at least one point. The 5 card suit is short on honours but I would still open a strong NT because of the ♥ and ♣ tenaces. Anyway, 1♦ was the choice of everybody on Monday. 1♥ is correct at (2) but what do you do as North at (3)? Easy, isn't it? You want to play in 2♦ so bid it! That's how it should be, but not with some partners. 2♦ is a weak bid stating the final contract and South's 3♥ bid is inexcusable.

Table B: At least this South did not go leaping about! South should pass at (4).

And what happened? Both ♥ contracts failed and scored miserably. Other tables were in sensible ♦ partscores, making. Nobody opened 1NT and so nobody was in 3NT; with the ♠ KJ and singleton ♦ Q with West it would have made comfortably (those 10's are good cards!).

The bottom lines: -

- Count an extra point for 3 tens.
- It's often good to open 1NT holding a hand with tenaces.
- If you open a minor, partner bids a major and you bid 1NT then you have limited your hand to 12-14 points. If partner puts you back in your minor then that is to play. If you feel that your hand is too good to pass then perhaps you should have opened 1NT?
- Do not convert a 5-4 fit into a 4-3 fit!

## Raising the pre-empt

Board 9 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>

Dealer: ♠ A8  
North ♥ 1098  
E-W vul ♦ 10  
♣ AJ107654

### Table A

West	North	East	South
-	3♣	pass	pass (1)
4♦	pass	5♦	all pass

♠ KQ7	N	♠ J10964
♥ Q6	W E	♥ KJ43
♦ AKJ96543	S	♦ Q72
♣ -		♣ 2
	♠ 532	
	♥ A872	
	♦ 8	
	♣ KQ983	

### Table B

West	North	East	South
-	3♣	pass	5♣ (1)
pass (2)	pass		

### Table C

West	North	East	South
-	3♣	pass	5♣
5♦	6♣	pass	pass
6♦	pass	pass	dbl
pass	pass	pass	

Table A: Obviously South must bid at (1). This is a classic psyche situation and many scoundrels would bid 3♦ at (1). But not at this club! So we obviously raise the pre-empt; 4♣ is not enough and 5♣ looks right to me. The only other bid I would consider is 6♣ (The LAW)!

Table B: This South bid 5♣ and it was enough to buy the contract.

Table C: But this West was made of sterner stuff and bid 5♦ (and 6♦ when pushed!)

And what happened? Five tables and 5 different contracts: 4♦ +2, 5♣ -2, 5♦ +1, 6♣ -3 and 6♦ making.

The bottom lines: -

- Raise partner's pre-empt with 3 (or more) card support.

**How many points to respond?**Board 18 from Monday 27<sup>th</sup>

Dealer: ♠ A109  
 East ♥ J85  
 N-S vul ♦ A62  
 ♣ J982

♠ K32 N ♠ 876  
 ♥ AQ62 W E ♥ 10974  
 ♦ Q S ♦ J10875  
 ♣ AK1074 ♣ 6  
 ♠ QJ54  
 ♥ K3  
 ♦ K943  
 ♣ Q53

Table A

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

Table B

West	North	East	South (H)
-	-	pass	pass
1♣	pass	pass	dbl (3)
2♣ (4)	all pass		

I am continually saying not to pass partner's 1♣ opening with a singleton ♣ if you can avoid it. One player took this advice to extremes on Monday, with excellent results: -

Table A: So what do you think of this 1♦ bid with just one point? I think it's a matter of percentages. 1♣, if passed out, is likely to be a lousy contract and any ♦, ♥ or ♠ contract will be far superior. Of course partner may leap off to 2NT or 3♣. Anyway, I'm not arguing with the bid although I expect most of you will. And it clearly worked out very well when the ♥ fit was uncovered. 2♥ at (2) is probably better than 1♥.

Table B: This East chose to pass. But what did you bid at (3) with Hand H in this week's quiz? You should pass, you have a flat hand and partner could not find a bid over 1♣ so West has a strong hand. This unwise double at (3) gave West the perfect opportunity at (4) to get to the top spot, quite why he chose to bid 2♣ rather than 1♥ is a mystery to me.

And what happened? 2♣ was minus two for the well deserved E-W bottom. 1♥ made +2 for the shared E-W top. One West somehow played in 2NT – I don't know the bidding but it must have been as bad as our West at Table B.

The bottom lines: -

- 4-4 fits play well.
- Do not pass partner's 1♣ opening if you have a reasonable bid (I will not argue if you say that 1♦ here is unreasonable).
- Do not bid in 4<sup>th</sup> seat over 1♣ with a mediocre balanced hand (LHO has a big hand).

## Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: Pass. Partner is a passed hand and you are under no obligation to rebid. Partner's surprising outing at the 3 level must surely be a six card suit and so you have excellent support. The only other vaguely sensible option is 4♣. 3♥ is terrible for a hand that does not even have opening values.
- Hand B: (a) 1NT. Normally you redouble in this situation, but with these ♠'s partner cannot have a penalty pass and so 1NT shows 18-19 points and good ♠'s.  
(b) Pass. 2NT is too high and double would be for take-out.
- Hand C: 2♣, Stayman. Look for the 4-4 ♥ fit. Two players failed to do this on Monday and went down in a subsequent 3NT when there was a 4-4 ♥ fit.
- Hand D: Pass. Double would show ♣ shortage and a 1♠ overcall with this suit is horrible.
- Hand E: Pass. You want to double 2♥ for penalties but you cannot if you play negative doubles. So pass and await partner's 'automatic' re-opening double. If you do not play negative doubles then double here for penalties.
- Hand F: (a) 2♣. This hand is far too good for anything other than your strongest bid.  
(b) If you play Benjamin twos then open with a game forcing 2♦.
- Hand G: 1NT. 1NT is 6-9 (poor 10) and a new suit, so 2♦ here, is 11 (good 10) +. With 10 points you have to evaluate. This hand is not so nice once partner has opened 1♠ (no support for partner) and I consider 2♦ to be an overbid.
- Hand H: Pass. It is rarely correct to balance over a 1♣ opening, partner has had loads of room to bid. With a flat hand it's best to pass. Opener may have a monster, partner does not.
- Hand J: (a) 2NT. This shows 18-19 points.  
(b) 3♣. This is a tricky one. You have game forcing values after partner's 2 level response, so 2♠, 3♠, 2NT and 3♦ are all automatically ruled out (not forcing). 3NT or 4♠ are possible but too unilateral for me, so you have to 'manufacture' a bid. It's too dangerous to lie in a major (2♥ or 3♥) so that just leaves 3♣ by a process of elimination. Elementary my Dear Watson?
- Hand K: (a) 1NT. It's 14 points but three 10's are easily worth an extra point.  
(b) Pass. You have said your hand and partner is setting the final contract.
- Hand L: (a) 3♥. The hand is not worth a game force (or slam investigation!) after a 1-level response from partner. 3♥ is strongly invitational and is fine.  
(b) 4♠. But the hand is worth a game force after partner's 2-level bid and I would support partner's 5 card ♠ suit. 4♥ is not totally unreasonable. 3♥ or 3♠ are not sufficient as they are not forcing. You could bid 3♣/♦ (an artificial bid looking for ♥ support opposite) but why make it complicated when you know there is a 5-3 ♠ fit?
- Hand M: (a) 3♠. The hand is not worth a game force after a 1-level response from partner. You cannot mention the ♥ suit (if you wanted to) as 2♥ really is too feeble and 3♥ would be game forcing.  
(b) 4♠. Similar to Hand L, it's now worth a game force after partner's 2-level bid and I would bid 4♠ rather than 3♥ because the ♠ suit is superb and the ♥'s are comparatively feeble. It's not often you see me denying a 4 card major, this is an exception.