

Monday 15/11/2004

Friday 19/11/2004

1st Bob/Dave 63 %
 2nd = Clive/Paul 62 %
 2nd = Tomas/Terry 62 %

1st Tomas/Philip(Ire) 74 %
 2nd Phil (UK)/Mike 56 %
 3rd Linda/Paul 56 %

The Friday Club is also moving!

Two weeks running standing outside in the sweltering heat is too much for me, and so the Friday club is also moving *from next Friday!* It will now be the same format as Mondays, 2.00 to about 5.30 and so more boards; and also the exorbitant playing fee of 50 bht.

So the Friday club moves next Friday and the Monday club will move on Dec 6th, both to the Diana Inn on 2nd road opposite the Mike shopping complex and next to Kiss Food. Both clubs will then be non-smoking.

Obviously not everybody is aware of the moves, so I will go to the Amari every Friday at 10.00 am to re-direct people and I will ask for a volunteer (with car) to be at Soi 4 a bit before 2 pm on Mondays in December/January to chauffeur/direct people to the Diana Inn.

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

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 2♣, what do you do?
♠ K7	♠ 1083	
♥ KQ95	♥ AJ54	With Hand B partner opens 1♠ and RHO doubles. What do you do?
♦ 10754	♦ 92	
♣ Q53	♣ KQ105	
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C you open 1♥ and partner bids 1♠. What do you bid now?
♠ Q6	♠ AK85	
♥ AK873	♥ A10	(a) What do you open with Hand D?
♦ 94	♦ AJ864	(b) Suppose you open 1♦ and partner bids 1♥, what is your rebid?
♣ AQ82	♣ 109	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1♥ and you bid 1♠. Partner then bids 2♣, what do you do?
♠ J9872	♠ J	
♥ 6	♥ K982	With hand F everybody is vulnerable and: -
♦ A10863	♦ KQ743	(a) RHO opens 1♥, what do you do?
♣ 75	♣ 987	(b) RHO opens 1♠, what do you do?
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G you open 1♠, LHO doubles and partner redoubles. This is passed round to LHO who rescues himself into 2♣. Partner doubles, what do you do?
♠ AQJ95	♠ Q1065	
♥ 972	♥ J	
♦ AKJ4	♦ 92	With Hand H it's favourable vulnerability and RHO opens 1♦, what do you do?
♣ 4	♣ KJ9872	

The re-double

Board 19 from Wednesday 10th

I ran out of room in last week's news-sheet for this one: -

Say you open 1♠, next hand doubles and partner re-doubles. What does partner's re-double mean? Does he have ♠'s? Or does it generally deny a fit? Let's see how it should work: -

Dealer:	♠ 1083				
South	♥ AJ54	West	North (B)	East	South (G)
E-W vul	♦ 92	-	-	-	1♠
	♣ KQ105	dbl (1)	redbl (2)	pass (3)	pass (4)
		2♣	dbl	pass	pass (5)
♠ 6	N	♠ K742	pass		
♥ KQ63	W E	♥ 108			
♦ Q1075	S	♦ 863			
♣ A762		♣ J983			
	♠ AQJ95				
	♥ 972				
	♦ AKJ4				
	♣ 4				

- (1) A classic take-out double. Unfortunately West was up against a N-S pair who knew what they were doing.
- (2) So what did you bid with Hand B at (2) in this week's quiz? Redouble is correct; this does not show ♠ support (indeed it often denies it) but is generally looking to double the opponents somewhere as you have the balance of the power.
- (3) 2♣ may be better here – but the result would be the same.
- (4) Obviously South passes to see what nice things can happen.
- (5) And what did you do with this South Hand G at (5) in this week's quiz? Partner wants to defend and you have good top cards that will take tricks in defence, so you trust partner and pass.

And what happened? 2♣ doubled went minus 2 for a top (500) to N-S. Now I would have thought that this would be a standard result if partnerships understand when to penalise the opposition. It appears not. One N-S pair played in 3NT +1 for 430 and the other pair went down in 4♠.

The bottom lines: -

- The re-double does not show strength in partner's suit.
- The re-double shows 9+ points and often a mis-fit for partner. It should have strength in at least two of the unbid suits so that you can subsequently double for penalties if the opponents retreat into one of them. Partner (opener) is expected to co-operate and double any suit bid where he has a decent holding.

Worth a Jump Shift rebid?

Board 8 from Friday 19th

West (D)	East
♠ AK85	♠ QJ92
♥ A10	♥ KJ83
♦ AJ864	♦ K
♣ 109	♣ KQ43

There was a fair bit of discussion about the bidding on this board from Friday: -

<u>Table A</u>			
West	North	East	South
1♦ (1)	pass	1♥	pass
1♠ (2)	pass	4♠ (3)	all pass

<u>Table B</u>			
West	North	East	South
1♦ (1)	pass	1♥	pass
2♠ (2)....		and onto 7♠	

- Table A: (1) I guess that most players would open 1♦.
(2) But what is your rebid? What did you rebid at (1) with Hand D(b) in this week's quiz? 2♠ is game forcing and this hand is obviously not good enough. So it really has to be 1♠.
(3) And 4♠ looks right here. The bid shows about 13-15 points and the singleton king in partner's suit is not good.
- Table B: (2) This West overbid with 2♠ at (2) and I believe that there was a subsequent Blackwood mis-understanding.

Anyway, 6♠ is where you want to be (or, at least, where I would want to be), so what went wrong and how should 6♠ be reached?

In my view (but not everybody shares my view) it's the same old problem that I bring up regularly – if you have a (reasonably) balanced hand within your 1NT opening range, then open 1NT. I would open the West hand 1NT and then Stayman followed by a keycard ask should reach 6♠ easily. And why would I open 1NT with two doubletons? Because you do not have a good rebid! The hand is not good enough for 2♠ and 1♠ is usually a much weaker hand.

And what happened? 4♠ was bid and made +2 at 3 tables. 7♠ was one down. 6NT was bid making an overtrick at the last table, I don't know how Jeff/Alex bid it. Clearly this scored a top but I think that 6♠ is a better contract.

The bottom lines: -

- A Jump Shift rebid – so 1♦ - 1♥ - 2♠ here – is game forcing in Standard American and typically about 18+ points.
- So if you have less than 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ is anything from 12 to 17. You see the problem? Partner may pass and you miss game (or as here you may miss slam) if you are in the 16-17 point range. That's why I think that
- if you have a balanced hand within your 1NT opening range, then open 1NT.
- If you open 1NT then you never have a rebid problem
- Not everybody shares my views, but with two doubletons I am happy to open 1NT if the 5 card suit is a minor.
- With the above hand I would open 1NT as it is top of the range (it's worth 17) and we may miss something if it goes 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠. But with just a 15 or poor 16 count I would be happy with this sequence and so would not open 1NT.

A 2-level major suit response is 5+ cards

Board 15 from Friday 19th

Dealer: ♠ A98
North ♥ 1043
N-S vul ♦ KQJ3
♣ A106

♠ J432 N ♠ Q1065
♥ A8762 W E ♥ J
♦ A86 S ♦ 92
♣ 4 ♣ KJ9872
♠ K7
♥ KQ95
♦ 10754
♣ Q53

Table A

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

Table B

West	North	East (H)	South (A)
-	1♦	2♣ (1)	2♥ (4)
2♠ (5)	3♥ (6)	3♠ (7)	4♥ (8)
4♠ (9)	dbl	all pass	

Excellent bidding at one table and
a comedy of errors at another: -

Table A: (1) A weak jump overcall. This would be a fine bid if it were not for the 4 ♠ 's.
(2) A negative double. Now bidding 3♥ or 3♠ here would promise a 5 card suit, so with one or two 4 card majors one should negative double. The hand is a trifle light for the bid (it's at the 3 level) but one often has to push slightly when pre-emption has taken up bidding space.

(3) Happy to bid 3NT.

Table B: (1) Here the overcall was at the two level and so does not deny a 4 card major. It's a bit weak for a 2 level overcall but with good shape and a decent 6 card suit it's acceptable for some partnerships at this vulnerability.

(4) What did you bid at (4) with this South Hand A in this week's quiz? Now this 2♥ bid is wrong. A 2-level response in a major suit promises 5 cards. The correct bid is double (negative). In this particular sequence (1♦ - 2♣ - dble) the double only promises one 4 card major.

(5) I guess that West was a bit peeved when South stole his bid? Anyway, the 4-4 ♠ fit is (luckily?) uncovered.

(6) And this is why South needs a 5 card suit – North may wish to support with just 3 cards.

(7) Now we are getting up into the danger zone in a competitive auction – and we all know what that means, don't we? – follow the Law! East has 4 card support and partner's 2♠ bid is usually 5 card but only promised 4 ♠ 's. So it's one above the Law but at this vulnerability and with this nice shape it's fine.

(8) But this is not fine. It's terrible! North has promised just 3 card support and rebidding this 4 carder is asking to be doubled for a number. It's 3(!) above the 'safe' Law level, and vulnerable at that.

(9) Obviously this West should partner South some day – it's exactly the same mistake, this time going two above the safe 'Law' level with just 8 trumps. I would simply double and take the money instead of handing it out.

And what happened? 3NT made +2 for the N-S top. 4♠ doubled went 3 down for an undeserved good score to N-S. Other N-S's played in NT partscores. The bottom lines: -

- Obey the Law. One above is OK on a shapely hand but not two (or three!) above.
- A two-level major suit response to partner's opening promises 5 cards.
- Understand negative doubles.

A new suit at the 3 level is a good hand.

Board 4 from Friday 19th

Dealer: ♠ J
West ♥ K982
Both vul ♦ KQ743
 ♣ 987

West	North (F)	East	South
1♥	2♦ (1)	3♣ (2)	3♠ (3)
3NT (4)	dbl (5)	all pass	

♠ Q432	N	♠ K6
♥ AQJ107	W E	♥ 65
♦ A5	S	♦ J98
♣ K3		♣ AQJ1065
	♠ A109875	
	♥ 43	
	♦ 1062	
	♣ 42	

- (1) So what did you do with this North Hand F at (1) in this week's quiz? I would pass as I prefer a stronger hand for a two-level vulnerable overcall. And remember what I said last week about a double not necessarily being stronger than an overcall? Suppose that West had opened 1♠, then I would not argue if you chose a rather light double with this North hand, a matter of style. Anyway, I don't like 2♦.
- (2) 3♣ here is (game) forcing. A good bid; 3♦ (stop ask) is a good alternative.
- (3) It's a nice ♠ suit but this hand is not strong enough to come in at the 3-level, especially when the opponents have advertised game-going values. Mind you, it's a sensible bid if you and your partner agree that it shows a hand like this after the opponents have shown the power – it can only be weak if RHO has his 3♣ bid.
- (4) West has a pleasant choice, double or 3NT. 3NT is probably best.
- (5) Now North may well have expected something more from partner but this double is silly. E-W were an experienced pair and they have happily bid to 3NT. What's more, North's original outing (2♦) was very dubious. Time to keep quiet.

And what happened? 3NT obviously made easily and so scored a top because of the double. 3NT was bid at 3 other tables; making, making +1 and going one down (impossible unless you are greedy?). At the 5th table South was doubled in 2♠ (-1).

The bottom lines: -

- A two-level overcall should be about opening strength, especially if only 5 card; and especially especially if vulnerable.
- If partner's opening is overcalled and you have to bid at the 3 level, then you need a good hand (about opening strength) as it's (game) forcing.
- If the opponent's bid happily to 3NT then don't double unless you have an unpleasant surprise for them.

Preference with a singleton

Board 11 from Friday 10th, N-S vul

North (E) South (C)

♠ J9872 ♠ Q6
♥ 6 ♥ AK873
♦ A10863 ♦ 94
♣ 75 ♣ AQ82

Table A

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

Table B

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

A tricky deal which failed to make it into last week's news-sheet as I ran out of space.

Lets look at two tables: -

Table A: (1) What did you rebid at (1) with Hand C in this week's quiz? You don't particularly like partner's ♠ suit and he has only promised about 6 points; 2♣ is quite sufficient.

(2) And what did you bid with Hand E at (2) in this week's quiz? Very difficult! You need a reasonable 6 card suit to rebid 2♠ and 2♦ would be forcing, whether you play it as natural or not. So that just leaves pass or 2♥. I prefer 2♥.

Table B: (1) 3♣ is a gross overbid.

(3) North has the same problem but one level higher.

(4) And a silly contract is reached. At the end of the hand South 'tried a Chuck' – saying that North should pass the opening 1♥ bid. This North hand must respond in my view and South has only himself to blame for the poor result.

The bottom lines: -

- Do not pass partner's opening with a singleton if you can dig up a bid.
- A jump shift rebid (so 3♣ here) is game forcing in Standard American and should be about 18+ pts.
- Simple preference may even be with just a singleton support.

Alerting Stayman?

West(me)	North	East	South
1NT	pass	2♣	pass
2♠	pass	pass	?? (1)

Now I have often said that the Alert rules are continually changing and vary from country to country. As far as I know the current rule for Stayman is that it only needs to be alerted if it does not guarantee a 4 card major (as when playing 4-way transfers). Now I was West and N-S were a French couple. At (1) South asked me what was going on and I explained that my partner's 2♣ bid promised zero points. South said that then it should have been alerted as such. That is apparently the situation in France (where Stayman usually promises at least 8 points) but not in the UK, USA or Pattaya (where Garbage Stayman is the most popular variation).

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: Double (negative). If you do not play negative doubles then you have to choose between 2NT (which denies a ♥ suit) and 2♦ or 3♦ (when a ♥ fit may again be lost). Playing negative doubles it's easy. After 1♦ - 2♣ a negative double promises a good 10 + points and at least one 4 card major.
- Hand B: Redouble. 9+ points and interest in penalising the opponents somewhere (you will double a run into ♣'s or ♥'s and hope that partner will be able to double ♦'s).
- Hand C: 2♣. It's not good enough for 3♣ which is game forcing in Standard American.
- Hand D: (a) 1♦ or 1NT. Now I suspect that most will choose 1♦ and that is not incorrect, but this is a very good 16 (it's worth 17 – especially if there is a ♠ fit) and the problem is that if you open 1♦ and partner responds 1♥, then what do you do
(b) 1♠. Ugh! There is no good bid now. 2♠ is a game forcing 18+. So you have to bid 1♠ which is thus 12-17 and it will sometimes be difficult to show your maximum.
Life would have been so much easier after a 1NT opening.
- Hand E: 2♥. It's horrible but this bid does not promise ♥ support. It is simple preference and simply means that you don't like ♣'s.
- Hand F: (a) Pass. The hand is not good enough for a two-level overcall and the fact that an opponent has ♥'s means that there's no fit with partner there.
(b) Pass or double. I suspect that most will pass. But this time the opponent's opening means that it's more likely that you have a decent fit somewhere with partner and I like the frisky double if that's your partnership style.
- Hand G: Pass. Partner wants to defend and there is no reason to believe that he has ♦'s or ♠'s. You have good top cards which will take tricks in defence and must trust partner.
- Hand H: Pass. An interesting one where 2♣ and 3♣ were both bid at the table. Now I would bid a weak 3♣ if it were not for the 4 card ♠ suit – you may have a ♠ fit with partner and a pre-empt will make it impossible to reach. I have much more sympathy with a bid of 2♣ – it's not really strong enough but it does have good shape and a reasonable suit and so is not too bad at favourable vulnerability.