

Monday 29/11/2004

Wednesday 1/12/2004

Friday 3/12/2004

1 <sup>st</sup> Gerard/Derek(AUS)	60%	1 <sup>st</sup> Mike/Phil	59%	1 <sup>st</sup> Tom/Derek(UK)	61%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Bob/Dave	59%	2 <sup>nd</sup> Gerard/Derek(AUS)	54%	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jim/Ian	58%

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

Hand A      Hand B

♠ J5	♠ 85
♥ K42	♥ 983
♦ Q7	♦ A943
♣ KQ9762	♣ A754

(a) What do you open with Hand A? Suppose that you pass, partner opens 1♦, you bid 2♣ and partner bids 2NT(12-14).  
 (b) What now?

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

Hand C      Hand D

♠ Q63	♠ AQ2
♥ AKQ7	♥ A983
♦ Q52	♦ J1095
♣ Q98	♣ J5

What do you open with Hand C?

With Hand D you open 1♦ and partner bids 2♣. What is your rebid?

Hand E      Hand F

♠ AK93	♠ K106
♥ AK7	♥ K108762
♦ K63	♦ QJ8
♣ J105	♣ 10

What do you open with Hand E?

With Hand F you open 2♥. LHO overcalls 3♣ and partner bids 3♥, what do you do?

Hand G

♠ Q3
♥ AQ10
♦ J3
♣ AKJ765

With Hand G you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♠. What is your rebid?

## Lonely Queens

Board 11 from Monday 29<sup>th</sup>, love all

West (C)	East (B)
♠ Q63	♠ 85
♥ AKQ7	♥ 983
♦ Q52	♦ A943
♣ Q98	♣ A754

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
1NT	pass	2NT	all pass

2NT is a miserable contract that went two or three down at most tables, who's fault? When dummy appeared at this table declarer quickly told his partner that he needed 9 points for the raise and that he should have passed. This is rubbish of course, what he meant to say was that he himself had a miserable hand for his 1NT opener – did you open 1NT with Hand C in this week's quiz? I believe that 7 players did on Monday; sometimes I wonder why I bother – surely everybody knows about 4333 type shape by now?

And what did you bid at (1) with Hand B in this week's quiz? Now the 'norm' for raising 1NT to 2NT is 8-9 points; this East hand is 8 points but aces are good cards and especially good in long suits. I think that the 2NT bid is fine. So why is it such a poor contract? Opener has a balanced 15 points doesn't he?

I've been over this a few times; hand evaluation is more than just counting points. Consider a hand ♠ AKQJ1098765432 ♥ - ♦ - ♣ - . It's 10 points, so pass? Of course not. You have to add up your points and then make adjustments. And one adjustment that I keep on harping on about is to deduct a point for 4333 shape. Seems the message has not got through as 6 pairs reached miserable 2NT (or 3NT!) contracts with these cards. I would open 1♣ and rebid 1♥ over 1♦ or 1NT(12-14) over 1♠.

And the other negative factor about this West hand is the unsupported queens: -

### About Qxx

If you have read anything on hand evaluation you will know that Qxx is a poor holding. I mentioned this in my leaflet about Hand Evaluation - it's an appendix in the 2003 yearbook. To demonstrate my point, look at these two holdings in the ♦ and ♣ suits: -

Deal 1		Deal 2	
West	East	West	East
♦ Qxx	♦ Kxx	♦ xxx	♦ KQx
♣ Kxx	♣ Qxx	♣ KQx	♣ xxx

Suppose that you are playing in a NT contract, which deal would you prefer to have?

The answer is deal 2. In both cases you have two certain tricks; with deal 1 that's it but with deal two you make two tricks in a suit by leading up to the honours if the ace is onside. So Kxx opposite Qxx makes just one trick, but KQx opposite xxx averages 1½ tricks. Think about it; with Deal 1 you make 2 tricks, with Deal 2 you make anything from 2-4 tricks with an expectation of 3 tricks – so 1 more trick from the same number of points.

Anyway, the point is that Qxx is a poor holding; unsupported honours are bad, touching honours are good.

The bottom lines: -

- Deduct a point for totally flat 4333 type hands.
- Devalue a Qxx holding.

## Points Smoints

Board 21 from Monday 29<sup>th</sup>, N-S vul.

With the last deal we saw that 2NT made just 5 or 6 tricks with a combined 23 points, but things are much different when there is a bit of shape, look at this 23 count: -

North (A)	South (D)	West	North(me)	East	South
♠ J5	♠ AQ2	-	pass (1)	pass	1♦ (2)
♥ K42	♥ A983	pass	2♣ (3)	pass	2NT (4)
♦ Q7	♦ J1095	pass	3NT (5)	all pass	
♣ KQ9762	♣ J5				

- (1) A borderline opener (it conforms to the rule of 20) but I chose to pass.
- (2) A minimal but fine opener.
- (3) Certainly good enough for a 2-level response.
- (4) And what did you bid at (4) with Hand D in this week's quiz? 2NT is correct, it shows 12-14 points. Note that this is not denying a 4 card major – to bid 2♥ here would be a reverse showing 16+ points and forcing.
- (5) Now when North bid 2♣ at (3) he had to know what to do if south bids 2NT. What did you bid at (5) in this week's quiz? I had already decided upon 3NT. Now the 'points pundits' will say that 11 opposite 12-14 is not a good bet, and they are right. But this hand is worth far more than 11 points now that partner has bid NT – that ♣ suit is glorious.

And what happened? 3NT made comfortably. It scored a complete top as none of the other 7 tables bid it. Seems too many people simply count points and don't adjust for shape?

I note that 3 pairs played in 3♣ (poor show – I hope that nobody opened 3♣, it's too good) and others were in ridiculous contracts like 3♦ and 4♥.

The bottom lines: -

- ♣ KQxxxx is worth far more than 5 points, especially if partner bids NT.

## Don't bid again after pre-empting

Board 16 from Friday 3<sup>rd</sup>, E-W vul.

North (F)	South	West	North	East	South
♠ K106	♠ Q732	pass	2♥	3♣	3♥
♥ K108762	♥ QJ5	pass	4♥ (1)	all pass	
♦ QJ8	♦ 97				
♣ 10	♣ A763				

- (1) So what did you do with this North Hand F at (1) in this week's quiz? I hope you passed. Partner's 3♥ bid is not an invitation for you to bid on. He is the captain and may have anything for his 3♥ bid.

And what happened? Nine tricks were made. 3♥ would have scored a near top, 4♥ minus one scored a near bottom.

The bottom line. Once you have pre-empted you have said your hand, partner is then the captain and makes any further decisions.

### 3NT is too high

Board 19 from Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup>, N-S vul.

North (E)	South
♠ AK93	♠ J64
♥ AK7	♥ 54
♦ K63	♦ 1075
♣ J105	♣ KQ974

#### Tables A & B

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

#### Table C

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	1♦ (1)	pass	1NT
pass	2NT (5)	pass	3NT
all pass			

#### Table D

West	North (me)	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	1NT (1)	all pass	

The ♣A was trippleton and 3NT went anything from one to three down. So just unlucky or is something wrong with the bidding at Tables A-C? Let's have a look: -

- Table A/B: (1) So what did you open with Hand E in this week's quiz? Three out of the four North's on Wednesday decided it was too good for 1NT and so opened either 1♣ or 1♦ with a view to jumping to 2NT over a one level response.  
(2) 2♣ is obvious here (3♣ if you play inverted minors).  
(3) This shows a good 17-19 points.  
(4) And with this great ♣ suit I too would bid 3NT.

- Table C: (1) ♦'s are the 'better' suit, but when equal length in the minors I always open 1♣ as at Tables A & B.  
(2) 2NT over partner's 1NT again shows a good 17-19 points.

- Table D: (1) But I was North at this table. There is a very simple 'rule' – deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape. This hand has nice top cards but is not quite worth 18 points in my view so I opened 1NT (15-17).

And what happened? 1NT just made and 3NT was hopeless except at one table where West failed to hold up the ♣A with ♣Axx when ♣KQ974 were in full view in dummy.

The bottom lines: -

- Deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape.
- If you want to open a minor and are equal length (3-3 or 4-4) then always open 1♣. It was not significant here but in other scenarios it makes partner's bidding much easier.
- If dummy has a long suit then it is usually best to hold up the ace when defending a NT contract, especially if there is no outside entry.

### Bid a Two card suit?

Board 12 from Friday 3<sup>rd</sup>, N-S vul.

West	East (G)	West	North	East	South
♠ AJ742	♠ Q3	pass	pass	1♣	pass
♥ 72	♥ AQ10	1♠	pass	2♦ (1)	pass
♦ 10752	♦ J3	pass (2)	pass		
♣ 82	♣ AKJ765				

What a silly contract, and East tried to blame West!

- (1) So what did you rebid with Hand G at (1) in this week's quiz? There are three sensible options – 3NT, 3♣ or 2NT. 2♦ is a reverse and shows a big hand with 4 ♦'s.
- (2) Pass is obviously very sensible if you have not agreed that a reverse is forcing.

And what happened? 2♦ made exactly with 3NT making at other tables.

Now this East is the same comedian who opened 1♣ (acceptable) and then rebid 2♣ (not acceptable) holding ♠AJ98 ♥QJ75 ♦A96 ♣104 (news sheet 81). You may recall that Hans tried to defend this individual (Jeff), saying that he does not try to mislead people – really! How would you describe this 2♦ bid? Misleading is an understatement – as this appears to be a recurrent event the culprit has been warned, repeated psyches are unacceptable at this club. It's not as though there was no other bid – I've mentioned three quite reasonable ones and reversing into a *good* 3 card suit (so 3♥ here) is also acceptable.

### Understanding Gerber

Board 8 from Friday 3<sup>rd</sup>, N-S vul.

North	South	West	North	East	South
♠ K1076	♠ Q	pass	1♣	pass	1♥ (1)
♥ K	♥ AQJ84	pass	2NT (2)	pass	4♣ (3)
♦ AK5	♦ QJ982	pass	4♦ (4)	pass	4NT (5)
♣ KQJ73	♣ 84	pass	5♣ (6)	all pass	

What a silly contract, what went wrong?

- (1) 1♥ is correct here, bid 5-5's from the top down.
- (2) 18-19 pts. Fine.
- (3) 4♣ is ace-asking here. 3♦ (forcing) is an alternative.
- (4) North mistakenly thought that this showed one ace.
- (5) As I mentioned last week, 4NT is a sign off once Gerber has been used.
- (6) After a long pause – he had no idea what to do.

And what happened? 5♣ scored a bottom as 3NT made 11 tricks comfortably at other tables.

The bottom lines: -

#### Responses to Gerber

4♦ =	0 or 4 aces
4♥ =	1 ace
4♠ =	2 aces
4NT =	3 aces

After one of these responses, 5♣ asks for kings (similar replies) and 4NT is to play.

## Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 1♣ or pass. It's borderline and either is acceptable. 3♣ is unacceptable as the hand is too good.  
(b) 3NT. This ♣ suit is great now that partner has bid NT, 3♣ is pathetic.
- Hand B: 2NT. Invitational, 8-9 points. Pass is acceptable if you're in a pessimistic mood.
- Hand C: 1♣. This hand is not worth a 1NT opener. You should deduct a point for the totally flat 4333 type shape. Also Quacks are bad and a Qxx holding is especially bad. Don't believe me? Then why did this Hand C make just six tricks opposite Hand B?
- Hand D: 2NT. This is 12-14 points. You should not bid 2♥ as that is a forcing reverse and promises 5+ ♦'s, 4 ♥'s and 16+ points.
- Hand E: 1NT. Deduct a point for the 4333 shape.
- Hand F: Pass. Partner's 3♥ bid is not an invitation for you to bid. You have said your hand and he's in charge.
- Hand G: Either 3♣ or 2NT (18-19 pts) or 3NT (good long suit). Any of these are fine, but the silly 2♦ bid chosen by one experienced player is not. If you really want to reverse with this hand then 2♥ is an acceptable bid – it is sometimes OK to reverse into a good 3 card suit but Jx is not acceptable. And which option do I prefer? I would bid 3NT or 2♥ (provided it is forcing).

## Count Your Cards – or get a zero

How many times do I cave to repeat this simple **rule**? You should count your cards, face down, before looking at them. We had yet another incident on Friday when a hand was bid and played out to the very end when it was discovered that one player had 14 cards and another 12. This really is a waste of everybody's time and they received a zero score, as did the pair before them who mis-boarded it.