

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----|------------------|-----|-----------------|----------------|-----|-----------------|--------------------------|-----|
| Mon | 31 st | N-S | 1 st | Bob Short/Phil | 63% | 2 nd | Alan Purdy/Clive | 59% |
| | | E-W | 1 st | Chuck/Terry | 61% | 2 nd | Gene/Richard = Bill/Dave | 53% |
| Wed | 2 nd | | 1 st | Bob P/Alan P | 64% | 2 nd | Gene/Richard | 56% |
| Fri | 4 th | N-S | 1 st | Jan/Jim(Sco) | 63% | 2 nd | Alan Purdy/John Gavens | 53% |
| | | E-W | 1 st | Chuck/Terry | 60% | 2 nd | Phil & Tomas | 58% |

NEW. When I expect a Mitchell movement all of the hands will be pre-dealt. You can pick up a leaflet with the hands or else they are on the web-site in with the results.

The standings in the Gold Cup competition are close; currently we have (best 30): -

1st **Chuck** 1876.6% 2nd **Dave** 1864.5% 3rd **Bob** 1849.4% 4th **Clive** 1799.3%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

| | | |
|-----------|-----------|---|
| Hand A | Hand B | What do you open with Hand A? |
| ♠ KQ83 | ♠ Q8 | (a) What do you open with Hand B? |
| ♥ AQ5 | ♥ KQ2 | (b) Suppose you choose 1♦, then what is your rebid after partner responds 1♠? |
| ♦ A764 | ♦ KQ10754 | |
| ♣ 94 | ♣ Q3 | |
| Hand C | Hand D | With Hand C partner opens 1♦, what do you bid? |
| ♠ AJ1076 | ♠ J | With Hand D you open 1♦ and LHO overcalls 2♦ (Michaels). Partner passes and RHO bids 2♥, what do you do? |
| ♥ K8643 | ♥ K7 | |
| ♦ - | ♦ AK10763 | |
| ♣ J73 | ♣ KJ32 | |
| Hand E | Hand F | With Hand E RHO opens 1♣. (a) what do you bid? (b) suppose you double, then what do you do if partner bids 2♣? |
| ♠ AQ63 | ♠ Q9654 | With Hand F partner opens 1NT. Just for a change I won't ask what you bid (if you try Stayman you get 2♦ and if you transfer into either suit partner simply accepts). The question is do you consider the hand (a) weak, (b) invitational or (c) game forcing. |
| ♥ 8 | ♥ Q10842 | |
| ♦ AK10632 | ♦ 5 | |
| ♣ KQ | ♣ A2 | |
| Hand G | Hand H | With Hand G LHO opens 1♣ which partner doubles, what do you bid? |
| ♠ J109542 | ♠ 54 | With Hand H you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♥, what do you bid? |
| ♥ Q10654 | ♥ A85 | |
| ♦ - | ♦ AK5 | |
| ♣ 65 | ♣ QJ753 | |
| Hand J | Hand K | What do you open with Hand J? |
| ♠ K10 | ♠ KQ1072 | Hand K, this is an interesting one, so have a good think before you come up with the "obvious" answer. You open 1♠, LHO overcalls 2♦ and partner doubles (negative), what do you bid? |
| ♥ K7 | ♥ A104 | |
| ♦ AK43 | ♦ A75 | |
| ♣ Q10753 | ♣ 65 | |

Index

Something new this week. I have compiled a comprehensive index to all of the news-sheets on the web. It is primarily for web use – searching for an item is so simple. But if you have no access to a computer and would like a print-out, let me know. Below is a sample of what you get – it's this week's index.

Page

- 2 So what do those bids mean? – splinter and cue bid? – Dunno.
- 3 1NT or support with 3 cards? 1♣ - 1♥ - ? , you have ♠ 54 ♥ A85 ♦AK5 ♣QJ753
- 4 A poor slam? for small slam you generally need about 33 points with no fit.
- 5 5-5 Come Alive – ♠AJ1076 ♥K8643 ♦ - ♣J73 is worth a move opposite a 1♦ opener.
- 5 Strong vs Weak NT-1 –you get the 15/16 point rebid problem less playing a strong NT.
- 6 Don't put Qx's on table! – try to be declarer.
- 6 The 2♣/♦ and the 2♥/♠ overcall of 1NT using Cappelletti/Multi Landy.
- 7 Don't bid 4♣/♦ if 3NT is a viable contract!
- 7 As an aside – when opponent bids Michaels over 1♣/♦, is a ♥ or ♠ bid asking or telling?
- 8 Michaels Again! – Michaels is (nearly always) a pre-empt.
- 8 A Word about Michaels and UNT – a few pointers on suit length.
- 9 Pick a major – bidding the opponent's ♣ suit is not natural, even if they play a short ♣.
- 10 Pick a major – 5-5 in the majors opposite 1NT.
- 9 Mobile phones – turn them off please!
- 10 Our 'Friendly' Club – everybody was asleep?
- 11 A negative double after partner pre-empts? – I don't think so.
- 11 A weak two opener? – ♠J109874 ♥86 ♦AQ7 ♣K2
- 12 Responding to partner's negative double – 1♠ 2♦ dbl pass 2NT is a good hand.
- 13 Strong vs Weak NT-2. – sometimes it works best to have a NT rebid as 15-16.
- 13 Contacting Others – there's a secure page on the web.

So what do those bids mean?

Board 28 from Friday 4th

| North | South | North | South |
|--------|----------|--------|--------|
| ♠ KQ9 | ♠ AJ1063 | 1♣ | 1♠ |
| ♥ K643 | ♥ A8 | 3♥ (1) | 4♦ (2) |
| ♦ AK2 | ♦ Q843 | 4♠ | pass |
| ♣ A84 | ♣ K6 | | |

N-S were asked what the bids meant; the explanations given were (1) dunno, and (2) dunno.

Playing sensibly, 3♥ would be a splinter agreeing ♠'s and showing ♥ shortage and 4♦ would be a cue bid showing the ♦A.

And what happened? N-S scored a zero as all the other tables were in slam or else in 3NT.

And how should the hand be bid?

| | | |
|------------------|---------|---|
| North | South | (3) 18-19 balanced |
| 1♣ | 1♠ | (4) NMF, some may prefer 3♣ CBS. Asks opener about his majors |
| 2NT (3) | 3♦ (4) | (5) 4♥'s, may or may not have 3♠'s. |
| 3♥ (5) | 3♠ (6) | (6) I have 5♠'s - forcing |
| 4♠ (7) | 4NT (8) | (7) I have 3♠'s. |
| etc to 6♠ or 6NT | | (8) Whatever form of Blackwood you play. |

Leading Quiz

| | | | |
|--------|------|------|--|
| Hand L | West | East | With this hand L you are South with this bidding. What do you lead? |
| ♠ 854 | - | 1NT | |
| ♥ K763 | 4♣ | 4♥ | Answer next page. |
| ♦ Q74 | 6NT | pass | |
| ♣ K53 | | | |

1NT or support with 3 cards?

Board 7 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ A876
 South ♥ 107
 Both vul ♦ J932
 ♣ 1084

| West(H) | North | East | South |
|---------|----------|------|-------|
| - | - | - | pass |
| 1♣ | pass | 1♥ | pass |
| 1NT (1) | all pass | | |

| | | |
|---------|--------|---------|
| ♠ 54 | N | ♠ 1093 |
| ♥ A85 | W E | ♥ QJ942 |
| ♦ AK5 | S | ♦ 1074 |
| ♣ QJ753 | | ♣ A4 |
| | ♠ KQJ2 | |
| | ♥ K86 | |
| | ♦ Q86 | |
| | ♣ 962 | |

(1) What did you bid with this West hand H in this week's quiz? With good 3-card support for partner and a weak doubleton I prefer 2♥ to 1NT. There are a few reasons why 2♥ is better than 1NT here: -

- You will probably get a ♠ lead.
- Partner may have 5 ♥'s
- Even if it's a Moysian fit it should play well as you get a ruff with the short trumps.

| | |
|---------|---|
| ♠ 1093 | (d) East may have a hand like this – it's only slightly different. Over a 1NT |
| ♥ QJ942 | response (12-14) from partner, this hand should pass. But over a 2♥ |
| ♦ Q74 | response it's worth an effort (say a 3♦ game try) and the excellent 4♥ is |
| ♣ A4 | then easily reached. |

And what happened? For some strange reason the defence did not lead a ♠ and so declarer made 13 tricks. This scored about average as 4♥ was bid at 3 tables.

The bottom lines:-

- Support with support. I will always support with 3 decent trumps opposite possibly only 4 if I have a weak doubleton. Not everybody agrees with me and some will only do it with a singleton – different styles?
- If you have 14 points it's even more important to do so as 2 of partner's major is more encouraging than 1NT.
- This West hand has no tenaces and so it's probably best for partner to be declarer (he may have something like ♠Kx or ♠KJx or similar).
- There was a very similar article in news-sheet 65.

A Poor Slam?

Dealer: ♠ 9763
East ♥ J852
Both vul ♦ 1086
♣ 76

| | | |
|--------|-----|---------|
| ♠ Q102 | N | ♠ AKJ |
| ♥ A9 | W E | ♥ Q104 |
| ♦ A952 | S | ♦ KJ3 |
| ♣ AQ82 | | ♣ J1094 |

♠ 854
♥ K763
♦ Q74
♣ K53

Board 10 from Monday 31st

Table A(Standard American)

| West | North | East | South(L) |
|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| - | - | 1NT (1) | pass |
| 4♣ (2) | pass | 4♥ (3) | pass |
| 6NT (4) | all pass | | |

Table B(Acol)

| West(C) | North | East(A) | South(L) |
|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| - | - | 1♣ (1) | pass |
| 1♦ | pass | 1NT (5) | pass |
| 4♣ (6) | pass | 4♥ | pass |
| 6NT | all pass | | |

Table A: (1) What would you open with this East hand? You know me, knock off a point for the totally flat shape. Also, all but one of the points in the 'short' suits is bad. But on the other hand the hand has two 10's and the J109x combination is good. All-in-all it's borderline so I won't argue with 1NT this time.

- (2) Gerber (3) 1 ace
(4) Optimistic?

Table B: (1) Playing a weak NT ...
(2) ... so this NT rebid shows 15-16 playing Acol
(3) Gerber etc.

And what happened? With no established fit I think that 6NT is a very poor contract with a combined 31 points and no long suit. The same poor slam was bid at 6 out of the 7 tables on Monday. Does nobody realise that 31 points is not usually enough with no fit or long suit? But perhaps I have to eat my words? Because 12 tricks were made at 6 of the 7 tables!

How is that possible? It does not look possible to me unless the defence find a poor lead. What did you lead in this week's bidding quiz? At our table I was South and led the ♠8.

Why? Because I listened to the bidding and knew that partner had absolutely nothing – if the contract is to be set then the two tricks must come from my hand. In this situation you cannot afford to give a trick away on the opening lead and so lead from nothing.

So if 6NT is a poor contract, how should the bidding go? There are two possibilities (playing a strong NT):

- (a) 1NT – 4NT – pass Where 4NT is quantitative,
or (b) 1NT – 3NT – pass Where 3NT is perhaps a bit feeble.

The bottom lines: -

- To make a small slam you generally need about 33 points unless you have a fit (and play in it as trumps) or have a long suit.
- And the lead. Leading away from an honour is often the only way to set a contract – you hope to find partner with an honour in the suit. But if you know that partner is bust then don't lead away from an honour!

5-5 Come Alive

This one's left over from last week: -

Board 18 from Friday 28th

Dealer: ♠ 92
East ♥ 972
N-S vul ♦ QJ105
♣ Q652

♠ AJ1076 N ♠ KQ83
♥ K8643 W E ♥ AQ5
♦ - S ♦ A764
♣ J73 ♣ 94
♠ 54
♥ J10
♦ K9832
♣ AK108

Table A

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

Table B

| West(C) | North | East(A) | South |
|----------|-------|---------|-------|
| - | - | 1♦ (1) | pass |
| 1♠ (2) | pass | 2♠ (5) | pass |
| pass (6) | pass | | |

Table A: (1) What did you open with this East hand A in this week's quiz? A decent 15 count so 1NT looks obvious to me.

(4) And what did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? I bid 1♠ here, see Table B.

(5) Having not opened 1NT East can only really bid 1♠ here.

(6) But luckily West has great ♠ support and an easy invite.

Table B: (1) It's catching! I don't understand what's wrong with 1NT.

(2) This West correctly bid 1♠, intending 2♥ over partner's response.

(5) With great support for ♠'s, it's in between 2♠ and 3♠. I would not be in this predicament as I would have opened 1NT.

(6) Pathetic. A 3♥ try is in order. I understand that West was 'put off' because he had a void in partner's 'suit'.

And what happened? Everyone was in game except Table B, mostly making 11 or 12 tricks. At Table B West made all 13 tricks for a cold zero. I guess his play is better than his bidding?

The bottom lines: -

- Open 1NT with a balanced hand within your opening 1NT range.
- Open 1NT and you never have a rebid problem – and you make it easier for partner if he's having an off day!
- If you can describe your hand in one go – do so.
- 5-5 in the majors is good (and really good opposite a 1NT opening!).

♠ 102 East hand 7 from Friday 28th

♥ AQJ43

♦ KQ85 Incidentally, I know it was not the small doubleton that deterred East from opening

♣ K8 1NT at Table B, for in the same session he opened 1NT with this East hand!

Strong vs Weak NT – part 1.

And another incidentally: This deal demonstrates one of the advantages of the Strong NT over the weak NT. When you hold say 15-16 points and open one of a suit you are never quite sure whether to jump or not when you have a fit for responder's suit. This problem occurs less frequently when you play a strong NT.

Don't put Qx's on table!

Board 2 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ KJ6
East ♥ 86
N-S vul ♦ A863
♣ KJ86

Table A

| West | North | East | South(B) |
|------|-------|----------|----------|
| - | - | pass | 1NT (1) |
| pass | 3NT | all pass | |

| | | |
|--------|-----------|----------|
| ♠ A975 | N | ♠ 1043 |
| ♥ A75 | W E | ♥ J10943 |
| ♦ J2 | S | ♦ 9 |
| ♣ 972 | | ♣ A1054 |
| | ♠ Q8 | |
| | ♥ KQ2 | |
| | ♦ KQ10754 | |
| | ♣ Q3 | |

- (1) What did you open with this South hand B in this week's quiz? This hand is easily worth a strong 1NT if you are happy with opening 1NT with two doubletons. I have no problem with it, provided that the doubletons are Qx or better. Actually, I have written about Qx a few times in the past – it is a holding that belongs in declarer's hand (rather than dummy) because if partner has Axx then the suit is immune from an opening lead. With two Qx's I most certainly want to be declarer.

And what happened? As I expected, NT played better from the South hand – but not because of either Qx but because of the ♥'s! If North is declarer then the obvious ♥ lead gives North problems.

3NT was bid three times and made +1 twice (going down once). Other contracts were 2♦, 3♦ and 4♦ (twice). Presumably the 4♦ bidders were not familiar with my frequently publicised doctrines about not bidding 4♣/♦ if 3NT is a viable contract?

The bottom lines: -

- Strive to be declarer with Qx in a suit
- If you have a 'balanced' hand within your opening 1NT range, then open 1NT.
- In my opinion a 6 card minor is OK for 1NT if both of the doubletons are Qx or better.
- If you open 1NT then you never have a rebid problem.
- Don't bid 4♣/♦ if 3NT is a viable contract.

The 2♣/♦ and the 2♥/♠ overall of 1NT using Cappelletti/Multi Landy

♠ 107 On Friday I witnessed a player overcall a weak NT with 2♦ playing Multi- Landy.

♥ Q10654 That shows a single suited hand. I said that I would bid 2♥ (♥'s and a minor),

♦ AQJ8 he countered that 2♥ promises 5-5. Who's right?

♣ A10 All of the books that I could find simply said that 2♥ was ♥'s and a minor.

However, **every** reference to Cappelletti or Multy Landy said that the single-suited bid (2♣/♦ resp) is a 6+ card suit. I found three fairly explicit references about 2♥ on the web.

Bridgeguys.com says it's 5 ♥'s and a 4 card minor. Slopín says it's 5 ♥'s and 5 (rarely 4) of the minor.

www.acbld22.com/unit537 says - '2♥ shows hearts and a minor; should be 5-5 but just could be 5-4 with 5 hearts'. With these great ♦'s and miserable ♥'s I believe that 2♥ is the bid if you don't like double. Nobody would seriously call this a single suited (♥) hand and later try to defend the bid, would they?

Don't bid 4♣/♦ if 3NT is a viable contract!

Board 8 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ 874
West ♥ A54
Love all ♦ QJ95
♣ Q109

| West | North | East(D) | South |
|----------|----------|---------|--------|
| pass | pass | 1♦ | 2♦ (1) |
| pass (2) | 2♥ | 4♦ (3) | pass |
| 5♦ | all pass | | |

| | | |
|---------|----------|-----------|
| ♠ AK94 | N | ♠ J |
| ♥ Q1083 | W E | ♥ K7 |
| ♦ 42 | S | ♦ AK10763 |
| ♣ 865 | | ♣ KJ32 |
| | ♠ Q10632 | |
| | ♥ J962 | |
| | ♦ 8 | |
| | ♣ A74 | |

- (1) A Michaels cue-bid. This is generally played as weak or very strong. And I happen to know that this South means *very* strong when he says that ('twas I) - not some crappy 14-15 count. I play Michaels as weak or game forcing if I bid again – so it's usually weak!
- (2) Now West really has to do something here. I would double and you can play that as you wish – I like to play it as having some values (say 6+) and being able to penalise at least one of RHO's suits.
- (3) I'm not exactly sure what this 4♦ bid meant. What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? E-W were a casual partnership so it's difficult, but assuming South has a weak hand then partner must have points. And what's more, he must have ♠'s (presumably at least four). I would chance 3NT here – if 3NT is the contract then East should be declarer to protect his ♥K. And in the (very unlikely) event that South actually has a rock crusher and doubles then East can happily retreat into the non-vul 4♦

And what happened? 5♦ was three down. 3NT made exactly at two other tables.

The bottom lines: -

- Don't bid 4♣/♦ if 3NT is a viable contract.

As an aside

What would bids of 2♠ or 3♥ by East at (3) mean? 3♥ would certainly be asking for a ♥ stop and since South is known to hold ♠'s and ♥'s then I suppose that 2♠ would be asking for a ♠ stop, or you could play it as showing a ♠ stop. But since East has to be declarer to protect his ♥K (he does not know that North has the ♥A) then I still think that East should gamble 3NT.

Michaels Again!

Board 12 from Monday 31st

Dealer: ♠ 2
West ♥ A1072
N-S vul ♦ Q1096
♣ K1073

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

| | | |
|---------|---------|---------|
| ♠ A9765 | N | ♠ K84 |
| ♥ 853 | W E | ♥ KQJ96 |
| ♦ K54 | S | ♦ A82 |
| ♣ Q6 | | ♣ 85 |
| | ♠ QJ103 | |
| | ♥ 4 | |
| | ♦ J73 | |
| | ♣ AJ942 | |

- (1) A Michaels cue-bid, showing ♠'s and a minor.
- (2) An overbid, but South's pre-empt has made it difficult for West.
- (3) Meant as asking partner to bid his minor. I am unsure about the wisdom of bidding here, partner's pre-empt may have caused West difficulties and E-W may well get too high in ♥'s and this ♥ holding may be awkward for East. Also, 4 of a minor is one above 'The Law' (it's only a 9 card minor suit fit) and unwise at this vulnerability.
- (4) But South also did not have his thinking cap on. Now if West had passed then 2NT from North would be asking for the minor. 3NT here must surely be to play – except that partner is a passed hand! He cannot have values for 3NT and so his 3NT bid must be asking for South's minor.

And what happened? 3NT went 3 down for a bottom to N-S. At other tables 4 E-W pairs played in ♥'s, making 7 tricks twice and 9 tricks twice. We'll never know if East would have pushed on to the miserable 4♥ if North had kept quiet – I bet he would have!

The bottom lines:-

- Obey The Law. Be very wary of oversteering the Law when vulnerable – especially if the opponents are not in game or may well be defeated.
- Now I can be quoted saying to raise partner's pre-empt with 3 card support (so a 2 opening to 3 or a 3 opening to 4) but that does not mean raise to 4 when partner has only 5 cards.
- Be aware that partner's pre-empt may have made it difficult for the opponents.

A Word about Michaels and UNT

5-5 or is a 4-card suit permissible? This is up to you, my personal opinion is as follows: -

- For 2♣/♦ over 1♣/♦ I only promise 5-4 or 4-5. Since partner only has to bid at the two level it is acceptable for one of the suits to be just 4-card.
- If partner has to go to the three level then I guarantee 5 cards there. Thus I am always 5-5 for the UNT and 1♠ - 2♠ promises 5 ♥'s and a 5 card minor.
- Thus 1♥ - 2♥ promises a 5 card minor but only 4 ♠'s (but if only 4 then they are good ones).
- Incidentally, I have written quite a bit about two-suited overcalls (it's on the web or ask me if you want a copy). Michaels/UNT are good but have problems; you cannot show all combinations (e.g. ♠'s and ♣'s over a 1♦ opening) and the minor suit is often ambiguous. These problems are solved with Questem or Ghestem whereby both suits are unambiguous but you have to utilise an artificial 3♣ bid. Look it up.

Pick a major – part 1

Board 22 from Wednesday 2nd (and Friday!)

Dealer: ♠ -
East ♥ J97
E-W vul ♦ QJ975
♣ J10987

| | | |
|-----------|--------|-----------|
| ♠ AQ63 | N | ♠ J109542 |
| ♥ 8 | W E | ♥ Q10654 |
| ♦ AK10632 | S | ♦ - |
| ♣ KQ | | ♣ 65 |
| | ♠ K87 | |
| | ♥ AK32 | |
| | ♦ 84 | |
| | ♣ A432 | |

Table A

| West(E) | North | East(G) | South |
|---------|-------|---------|----------|
| - | - | pass | 1♣ |
| 2♦ (1) | pass | pass | pass (2) |

Table B

| West(E) | North | East(G) | South |
|---------|----------|---------|-------|
| - | - | pass | 1♣ |
| dbl (1) | pass (3) | 2♣ (4) | pass |
| 4♣ (5) | all pass | | |

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this West hand E(a) in this week's quiz? Even if you play strong jump overcalls I don't like 2♦ here as it is passable and you may miss a ♠ fit. The hand is obviously too strong for a simple 1♦ overcall.

(2) I would 'automatically' double here playing negative doubles.

Table B: (1) This hand really is too strong for a 1♦ overcall. So double and then bid ♦'s over partner's expected ♥ response.

(3) I would make it difficult for the opponents and bid 3♣ here.

(4) What did you bid with this East hand G in this week's quiz? Now partner's double of 1♣ does not necessarily guarantee both majors; so bid 2♣, which basically says 'pick a major and I'm happy with at least the two level'.

(5) What did you bid with this West hand E(b) in this week's quiz? I simply bid 4♣ here – keep it simple.

And what happened? 2♦ went 3 down for a poor score. It looks like 4♣ has an obvious 11 tricks to me but one West managed to go two down in 5♠ doubled and another was doubled in 4♣ and made exactly. Why don't people double me in these contracts?

The bottom lines:-

- Bidding the opponent's suit is not natural, even ♣'s when they play a short ♣.
- Do not simply overcall with a huge 18 count.
- A double of 1♣ is playable in the other 3 suits unless the hand is strong enough to bid again.

Incidentally, the board was mistakenly not re-dealt on Friday and so played again. This was not noticed until the very last round when Chuck and I picked up the E-W cards and remembered it from Wednesday. As nobody else seemed to have recognised it we got an average and I let the other results stand. 2nd time round only one pair reached game (5♠ doubled making) and another two pairs managed to land in 2♦ going down.

Mobile phones

Is it asking too much for people to switch off their mobile phones during the session? I note that one player on Friday, notorious for being the slowest player in the club, had a conversation on the phone and subsequently did not play a board as a result. Next time I'll give him an adjusted (unfavourable) score? What do you think?

Pick a major – part 2

Board 30 from Friday 4th

Dealer: ♠ A83
East ♥ AJ96
Love all ♦ J1072
♣ K9

| West(F) | North | East(J) | South |
|---------|-------|---------|----------|
| - | - | 1NT (1) | pass |
| 3♠ (2) | pass | 4♠ (3) | all pass |

| | | |
|----------|--------|----------|
| ♠ Q9654 | N | ♠ K10 |
| ♥ Q10842 | W E | ♥ K7 |
| ♦ 5 | S | ♦ AK43 |
| ♣ A2 | | ♣ Q10753 |
| | ♠ J72 | |
| | ♥ 53 | |
| | ♦ Q986 | |
| | ♣ J864 | |

- (1) What did you open with this East hand J in this week's quiz? With two tenaces to protect I totally agree with this 1NT opening.
- (2) And what did you do with this West hand K in this week's quiz? I consider it to be worth game and we play 3♠ to show a game-forcing 5-5 major suit hand.
- (3) I would bid 4♥ here, not necessarily because East is a better declarer than West, but because it's usually better for the stronger hand to be declarer. Maybe East forgot the system?

And what happened? 4♠ squeaked home despite East's poor major suit holdings.

The bottom lines: -

- 8 points is enough to insist upon game if you are 5-5 in the majors opposite a 1NT opener.
- It's up to you how you bid 5-5's in the majors opposite a 1NT opener. I prefer transferring but I will usually go along with anything sensible that partner wants to play.

Our 'Friendly' Club

Board 10 from Wednesday 3rd

South

♠ QJ10xxx
♥ AQxxx
♦ xx
♣ -

There was an 'incident' on Wednesday, I did not get involved as I was playing and Dave was in charge. This was the dummy and declarer was playing in a ♥ contract. Declarer called for the ♥A and then called for 'queen'. Apparently dummy played the ♠Q, the next hand played a ♠ without comment, declarer played a small ♥ (not noticing that dummy had played the wrong card – declarer's ♥'s were solid) and the 4th hand quickly 'over-ruffed'. I did not hear about the details until later in the day.

This would be my ruling: -

- (a) When declarer asks for a card without specifying the suit, it is the last suit he asked for. Thus the ♥Q was played from dummy. I assume that dummy (South) was asleep?
- (b) I really don't care what the rules say here – West should have brought the irregularity to declarer's attention. The ♥Q was the card declarer asked for.
- (c) Obviously declarer was also asleep – but we all have our off days.
- (d) East contended that everything was in order and that he should get his trick.
- (e) The director (Dave) was summoned, there was general ill-feeling at the table and the board was averaged.

My ruling would have been as follows: -

- Both defenders behaved badly, especially West.
- The play should have been reset to declarer playing the ♥Q from dummy.
- If East did not like that ruling and feels he is entitled to the trick then he should play elsewhere, that kind of attitude is not tolerated at this club.

A negative double after partner pre-empts? Board 24 from Friday 4th

I'll usually go along with partner (so play jumps to 3♥/♠ showing 5-5 if he really wants to waste these otherwise useful bids when there are better methods) but I draw the line here: -

| | | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|----------|---------|-------|
| Dealer: | ♠ AQJ1032 | West | North | East | South |
| West | ♥ 1062 | (me) | (Ian) | (Chuck) | |
| Love all | ♦ 2 | 2♥ | 2♣ | dbl (1) | pass |
| | ♣ A64 | pass (2) | pass (3) | | |

| | | | |
|----------|----------|---------|--|
| ♠ 54 | N | ♠ K76 | (1) East intended this as a negative double (showing the minors). |
| ♥ KQ9854 | W E | ♥ J3 | |
| ♦ QJ4 | S | ♦ AK95 | (2) After some thought I passed – we certainly had not discussed this sequence and I think that it has to be penalties. |
| ♣ K7 | | ♣ J1098 | |
| | ♠ 98 | | (3) Ian was irate about my pause – he would have called the director if he was not present. But we all know when to totally ignore Ian (most of the time). |
| | ♥ A7 | | |
| | ♦ 108763 | | |
| | ♣ Q532 | | |

So then – is dbl at (1) negative or penalties?

- I say it's penalties. West has described his hand and East is the captain. It should not be a negative double because when playing negative doubles you expect partner to re-open with a double when you have the penalty pass; he most certainly never will in this situation.
- Chuck say it's negative and with no 4-card minor I should simply revert to 3♥.

This is the 3rd time that Chuck and I have disagreed when there is obviously no book readily available to cover the particular sequence. So I have again written off to a Bridge magazine, does anybody want to lay any bets before the answer is public knowledge? What are the realistic odds of me being wrong? Having been proved to be correct twice it's time I was wrong? Any bets on it snowing in Pattaya next week?

A weak two opener?

Board 8 from Friday 4th

| | | | | | |
|----------|--------|----------|-------|------|--------|
| Dealer: | ♠ Q653 | West | North | East | South |
| West | ♥ K754 | (me) | | | |
| Love all | ♦ J108 | 2♠ (1) | pass | pass | 3♣ (2) |
| | ♣ 65 | all pass | | | |

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|--------|---|
| ♠ J109874 | N | ♠ K | (1) I did not bother to put this one in the quiz as I'm pretty sure that there is only one person in the club who would not open this with 2♠. Fortunately he was sitting East. |
| ♥ 86 | W E | ♥ AJ32 | |
| ♦ AQ7 | S | ♦ K954 | |
| ♣ K2 | | ♣ Q943 | |
| | ♠ A2 | | (2) I cannot criticise this bid – it's difficult – that's what pre-empting is all about. |
| | ♥ Q109 | | |
| | ♦ 632 | | |
| | ♣ AJ1087 | | |

And what happened? Most E-W pairs played in 2♠ or 3♠ making 9 tricks. 3♣ went 4 down for a good score to E-W. The top E-W score was when South doubled at (2) and North bid 3♥, doubled for 500 away.

Responding to partner's negative double

Board 28 from Friday 4th

Dealer: ♠ KQ1072
West ♥ A104
Love all ♦ A75
♣ 65

| | | |
|---------|--------|---------|
| ♠ 864 | N | ♠ AJ9 |
| ♥ K976 | W E | ♥ 52 |
| ♦ 93 | S | ♦ KQ842 |
| ♣ Q1072 | | ♣ 943 |
| | ♠ 53 | |
| | ♥ QJ83 | |
| | ♦ J106 | |
| | ♣ AKJ8 | |

Table A

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

'Expert Table'

| West | North(K) | East | South |
|------|----------|----------|---------|
| pass | 1♠ | 2♦ (1) | dbl (2) |
| pass | 2♥ (4) | pass | 3♦ (5) |
| pass | 3NT (6) | all pass | |

- Table A: (1) A shade light for a two-level overcall, but with these ♠'s sitting over opener and at this vulnerability I think it's fine.
- (2) What would you bid with this South hand? It has the values for 2♥ but unfortunately that promises 5 ♥'s. See 'Expert Table'.
- (3) This is why the 2♥ bid has to guarantee 5 cards – because it uses up bidding space and partner has to know if it's safe to support with just 3 trumps.
- 'Expert' (2) A Negative Double, promising 4+ ♥'s and 6+ points (in my style).
- Table (4) Now this bid is interesting. What did you bid with this North hand K in this week's quiz? Partner has not responded at the two level and may possibly have as few as 6-7 points. 2NT would be incorrect here as it's too high if partner is weak. With this 13 count North has only two options - 2♥ or 2♠.
- (5) And our expert South knows that partner may have just 3 ♥'s, so he takes it slowly with a cue bid of the enemy suit.
- (6) And this expert North also knows what he's doing. Partner's cue bid is forcing to game, with 4 ♥'s he would bid 4♥ but with just 3 ♥'s and a ♦ stop he bids 3NT. With just 3 ♥'s and no ♦ stop he would bid 3♠ and leave it up to partner or else bid 4♥ if the Moysian fit looked the best bet.

And what happened? 4♥ was bid 3 times and went two or three down. 3NT was bid 3 times; -2, -1 or making. 3NT is not easy, but I suppose our experts would have made it?

The bottom lines: -

- A 2♥ bid over partner's 1♠ opening promises 5 ♥'s and 11+ points, whether or not there is an intervening overcall.
- With just 4 ♥'s it's different if there is an overcall or not: -
 - . If there is no overcall then bid 2♣/♦ (can be 4-card) – if partner has 4 ♥'s he will bid them and if he does not then there's no need to mention yours.
 - . If there is an overcall, then negative double to show 4 ♥'s.
- A negative double is unlimited in strength but only promises values to compete to cheapest level of the suit shown or to two of opener's suit (so 2♥/♠ here).
- If you have a 5 card ♥ suit but less than 11 points then it's not enough to bid a forcing 2♥ and so you have to negative double.

Strong vs Weak NT – part 2.

The sequence 1♠ 2♦ dbl pass 2NT is interesting. As I said above it's a problem playing a strong NT. But playing Acol there's no problem as a NT rebid would be 15-16 and so 2NT to deny 4♥'s and show a ♦ stop would usually be OK.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1NT. A balanced 15-17. Quite why at least two people chose 1♦ is beyond me.
- Hand B: (a) 1NT. This hand is well worth a strong 1NT and these Qx's belong in declarer's hand (not dummy).
(b) 2♦, I suppose, but it's a bit feeble. It's too good for 1NT (12-14). That's why I open 1NT – you don't have to worry about your rebid!
- Hand C: 1♠. Bid 5-5's from the top down. If partner responds 1NT or 2♦ then bid 2♥, (or maybe 3♥ over 1NT).
- Hand D: 3NT. Now partner has not made it easy for you (it would have been nice to hear a reassuring double from him to say that he has something) but you have to assume that LHO's Michaels is weak. 3NT is a possible final contract and with the ♥Kx that presumably needs protecting you simply have to gamble that partner has something in ♠'s (he surely has – as otherwise where are they all?).
- Hand E: (a) dbl. It's far too strong for a 1♦ overcall.
(b) 4♠. Anything else is not forcing.
- Hand F: (c), game forcing, is correct in my opinion. 8 points is usually just invitational, but with two 5-card major suits I consider it worth a game force.
- Hand G: 2♣. This is not natural. It asks partner to pick a (major) suit and promises values to compete to at least the two level.
- Hand H: 2♥. With a weak doubleton ♠ I prefer the possible 4-3 fit to 1NT, and partner may well have 5♥'s. Also, 2♥ is preferable as it's more encouraging than 1NT and if partner has say 9-10 points you want him to make a move – he will not over 1NT.
- Hand J: 1NT. With two tenaces to protect 1NT is best. 1♣ is also fine as you have a good rebid of 2♦ (a reverse) but with these major suit tenaces I prefer 1NT. With less points in the majors or one of them worse than Qx then I would go the reverse route.
- Hand K: 2♥. Yes, 2♥ and not the "obvious" 2NT. Why is that?
I suppose that it depends upon how you play your negative doubles, but I do not promise 11 points with the double of 2♦, only enough to compete to 2♥ or 2♠, and so 2NT may be too high. Partner must also realise that this may easily be a weakish hand with just 3♥'s and should not leap off to 4♥ on the assumption that you also have 4♥'s.

Leading A ♠. Partner is totally bust and so to set the contract you must get two tricks with no help from partner. Leading away from an honour will probably cost a trick

Quiz

Answer (as partner is bust) so lead from nothing – it cannot give anything away.

Contacting Others

We now have a list of some member's/guest's telephone/e-mail details on the web-site. When you open the main page, click on 'contact us' and then at the very bottom of that page you'll see a 'contact members' link. When you click that you'll be asked for a password. At the moment it contains 20 or so entries, if you would like your details included then give them or e-mail them to me (if I don't already have them) and I'll include them and tell/e-mail you the password.