

Mon	10 th	N-S	1 st	Alex/Jeff	57%	2 nd	David/Kenneth	50%
		E-W	1 st	Clive/Tom	66%	2 nd	Bob Short/Phil	58%
Wed	12 th		1 st	Peter (Lux)/Kari	60%	2 nd	Dave/Gene	55%
Fri	14 th		1 st	Bob/Monte	61%	2 nd	Kari/Ian	60%

Now you may ask how you can come 2nd in a Mitchell with 50%? – The answer is that the scores for ‘Terry all alone’ are not included! And tough luck for John Gavens/Phil on Friday – they scored 60% but only came 3rd!

There were loads of interesting boards this week – too many for the news-sheet and so some have been left over for next week.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A LHO opens 1♣ and this is passed round to you, what do you do?
♠ K9	♠ 864	
♥ QJ6	♥ AJ108763	With Hand B, what do you do if:
♦ Q1076	♦ 8	(a) RHO opens 1♦?
♣ QJ43	♣ Q7	(b) RHO opens 2♦ (weak)?
Hand C	Hand D	With Hand C there are 3 passes and you open 1♠ in 4 th seat. LHO overcalls 2♣ and this is passed to you. What do you do?
♠ AQ1085	♠ K1074	
♥ K94	♥ Q10	With Hand D partner opens 1♥ and you respond 1♠. Partner then bids 1NT, what do you do?
♦ Q106	♦ K85	
♣ K8	♣ K1062	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1♠ in 4 th seat and RHO overcalls 2♣, what do you do?
♠ 9	♠ AQ1085	
♥ AQJ	♥ K94	With Hand F RHO opens 1♠, what do you do?
♦ J543	♦ Q106	
♣ Q10762	♣ K8	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G RHO and you both pass and LHO opens 1♠ in 3 rd seat. Partner passes and RHO bids 1NT, what do you do?
♠ 9	♠ 87	
♥ AQJ	♥ Q76	(a) what do you open with Hand H?
♦ J543	♦ K87	(b) suppose you open 1♣, then what do you bid when partner responds 1♥?
♣ Q10762	♣ AKQ85	
Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J partner opens 2♠ and RHO passes, what do you do?
♠ 642	♠ AJ75	
♥ AJ	♥ KJ872	With Hand K partner opens 1♦ and you respond 1♥. Partner then bids 1NT, what do you do?
♦ K864	♦ 3	
♣ A852	♣ 965	

1NT overcall in the balancing seat

Board 6 from Monday 10th

Two out of 5 pairs got too high (3NT) on this deal from Monday: -

Dealer:	♠ K9				
East	♥ QJ6	West	North(A)	East	South
E-W vul	♦ Q1076	-	-	1♣ (1)	pass
	♣ QJ43	pass	1NT (2)	pass	2♣ (3)
		pass	2♦	pass	3NT (4)
		all pass			
♠ J10642	N	♠ Q85			
♥ 10752	W E	♥ A3			
♦ J94	S	♦ AK2			
♣ 7		♣ K8652			
	♠ A73				
	♥ K984				
	♦ 853				
	♣ A109				

- (1) I would open 1NT, I suppose they played a weak NT?
- (2) What did you do with this North hand A in this week's quiz? There are two sensible options. You can pass, or you can bid 1NT. Now this is the pass-out (or balancing seat) and is totally different from bidding in the direct seat (I cover it in detail below). Anyway, 1NT in the balancing seat is around 10-13 points.
- (3) Stayman
- (4) South was expecting 15-18 opposite.

And what happened? 3NT went two down for a poor score. If South had passed 1NT then the +90 for N-S would have score around average.

The bottom lines: -

- Be aware of balancing bidding. In the above example North would get a poor score for passing 1♣ and so needs to be able to bid 1NT. One effective way of thinking about it is that you 'borrow' 4 points from partner. And partner needs to know this of course and not leap about – so pass with the 11 count above.

Bidding in the Pass-out seat is totally different: here is a general type of schedule, different partnerships may vary upon this a little: -:-

1NT	=	10-13
Double followed by NT	=	14-16
2NT	=	17+
A take-out double	=	7+
An overcall	=	7+
Double followed by a suit	=	strong, but not as strong as in the direct seat because we also have the jump overcall to show a strong hand.
A jump overcall	=	strong, range/strength up to you, say 17+ or equiv.
Double followed by a new suit	=	about 14-17 as a direct jump shows a stronger hand.
Cue bid	=	a 2♣ opener!

Note that jump overcalls are always strong. The cue bid and 2NT are not Michaels/UNT – they do not exist in the balancing seat. There is no such thing as a pre-empt in the pass-out seat, only bid if you expect to get a +ve score!

Giving Count

Sometimes it is very important for partner to know how many cards you have in a suit (and thus how many declarer has).

Suppose you are defending a 3NT contract and see ♦KQJ1098 on the table but no outside entry. Declarer plays a low card from hand (so partner has the ace) and you hold ♦72, which card do you play?

The answer is that it is really important to give count in this kind of situation so that he knows how long to hold up his ace. You should play the ♦7 – highest from an even number of cards. If you held ♦742 you must play the ♦2 to show an odd number.

It is good practice to always give count when declarer is playing a suit. This helps partner to get a picture of who has what. Of course this may help declarer, and more advanced players know when to lie about their suit lengths - when the information is more important to declarer than to partner.

There's no such thing as a pre-empt over a pre-empt! Board 10 from Wednesday 12th

Dealer:	♠ 3				
East	♥ Q942	West	North	East	South(B)
Both vul	♦ K42	-	-	2♦	3♥ (1)
	♣ 98652	4♠	5♥ (2)	5♠	pass
		pass	6♥	pass	pass
		dbl	all pass		
♠ AKJ1075	N	♠ Q92			
♥ 5	W E	♥ K			
♦ AQ5	S	♦ J109763			
♣ A104		♣ KJ3			
	♠ 864				
	♥ AJ108763				
	♦ 8				
	♣ Q7				

- (1) What did you bid with this South hand B(b) in this week's quiz? 'Unfortunately' any jump here shows a strong hand. With this hand B you should simply overcall 2♥; 3♥ shows a very good hand.
- (2) An easy 5♥ bid, maybe there's slam?

And what happened? 6♥ doubled went 3 down for a bottom to N-S at this vulnerability.

The bottom lines: -

- You cannot pre-empt over a pre-empt; jumps show a very good hand.

Invite with a good 11 or 12.Board 21 from Wednesday 12th

Dealer: ♠ Q94
 North ♥ KJ953
 N-S vul ♦ AJ3
 ♣ 95

♠ A86 N ♠ K1074
 ♥ A8642 W E ♥ Q10
 ♦ Q62 S ♦ K85
 ♣ A8 ♣ K1062

♠ J54
 ♥ 7
 ♦ 10975
 ♣ QJ743

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

- (1) What did you bid with this East hand D in this week's quiz? It's a decent 11 points with three 10's, and the Q10 in partner's suit make it well worth a try for game (2NT).
 (2) West has shown 12-14, and with this max he should certainly accept.

And what happened? 3NT made exactly. It's a pretty straightforward bidding sequence to a decent contract – so the same at every table? Apparently not, At the other three tables one was in 1NT and the other two in 2NT (making +1).

The bottom lines: -

- With 12 or a decent 11, invite game opposite partner's opening.
- With 14 points, accept partner's game invitation.
- Three 10's are worth a point, especially in NT.

Intermediates countBoard 17 from Friday 14th

I've said it a few time, 10's and 9's are sometimes important: -

Dealer: ♠ A106
 North ♥ QJ
 Love all ♦ AJ104
 ♣ AJ106

♠ KJ875 N ♠ 32
 ♥ A75 W E ♥ K843
 ♦ K63 S ♦ Q92
 ♣ 84 ♣ KQ52

♠ Q94
 ♥ 10962
 ♦ 875
 ♣ 973

West	North	East	South
-	1NT	all pass	

I don't know the auction at other tables, but three N-S's arrived in 1NT. I was North here and with his totally flat 2 count my partner said '*good luck partner – you'll need it*' as he put down dummy. In fact he was incorrect, even a declarer of my limited ability had no problem making +1 on this combined 19 count. Why's that? Just look at those 10's and 9's! 2♥ tricks with just 3 points in the suit! Whichever suit E-W attack helps declarer!

The bottom lines: Add on for 10' and 9's. But note that the North hand is not too strong for 1NT because the ♥QJ doubleton are poor cards - but turned out great opposite 109xx! And I've mentioned touching honours before – those two J10 combinations in the North hand.

Penalising the opponents when there's no penalty double available

Dealer: ♠ K6542
 South ♥ 875
 E-W vul ♦ AK97
 ♣ 3

Board 19 from Friday 14th

♠ 9 N ♠ AQ1083
 ♥ AQJ W E ♥ K94
 ♦ J543 S ♦ Q106
 ♣ Q10762 ♣ K8
 ♠ J7
 ♥ 10632
 ♦ 82
 ♣ AJ954

Table A

West(G)	North	East(F)	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	1♠ (1)	pass (2)	1NT
dbl (3)	pass	pass (4)	2♠ (5)
pass	pass	dbl (6)	all pass

Table B

West(E)	North	East(C)	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	pass (1)	1♠	2♣ (7)
pass (8)	pass	pass (9)	

- Table A:
- (1) A light opener, but fine in 3rd seat.
 - (2) What did you bid with this East hand F in this week's quiz? It's a decent 14 count which has improved with RHO opening 1♠, and so 1NT is reasonable but would not be my choice. I like my partner's pass (I was West) – wait and see what happens – maybe things will turn out very well? Double is out of course, as that is take-out.
 - (3) What did you bid with this West hand G in this week's quiz? A double here is take-out of ♠'s, and as you have already passed partner will only expect 10-11 points. Pass is reasonable, but I chose to double.
 - (4) We've got them here, what a great partner I have.
 - (5) We're toast whatever I do.
 - (6) When I say double – I mean it.

- Table B:
- (1) This North chose to pass. OK.
 - (7) Way short of the mark for a 2-level overcall.
 - (8) What did you bid with this West hand E in this week's quiz? Playing negative doubles you pass of course – awaiting partner's 'automatic' re-opening double which you will then pass for penalties.
 - (9) Unfortunately West is still waiting. What did you do with this East hand C in this week's quiz? Playing negative doubles then a re-opening double is absolutely mandatory with anything but a very strange hand.

And what happened? 2♠ doubled went two down for the top to E-W. 2♣ went four down; it was a decent score for E-W, but a double would have got the top spot.

The bottom lines

- If LHO opens and RHO bids 1NT, then dbl is for take-out of the suit opened.
- With length and strength in RHO's suit, it's usually best to pass.
- When playing negative double, opener should re-open with a double with most hand types.

3rd hand high

Board 21 from Friday 14th

There are a number of saying in bridge. Two which are true most of the time are:

- (a) 3rd hand plays high and (b) return partner's suit.

Let's see what happened when both of these were ignored: -

Dealer:	♠ J10753	West	North	East	South
West	♥ 7653	1NT	pass	pass (1)	pass
Love all	♦ 52				
	♣ 103				

♠ K64	N	♠ 9
♥ Q2	W E	♥ A108
♦ AKJ106	S	♦ Q94
♣ Q42		♣ KJ9865
	♠ AQ82	
	♥ KJ94	↑
	♦ 873	DUMMY
	♣ A7	

E-W play 4-way transfers, so East could have shown his ♣ suit at (1). But what's the point? 3NT must surely be the best bet for game.

Anyway, it's about the play now. North led the ♠J, some would prefer a 4th highest but that's not the issue here. What should South play? What he did was play low! Now the contract still looks pretty hopeless for West and perhaps he should take his ♠K and run for two down?

But he did not want to give up so easily and so he also played low. Now North had no idea what was going on and understandably switched to a ♥. Low from dummy and South produced the ♥9 which declarer won with the ♥Q. Declarer then ran the ♦'s and then a ♣ ensured +1 when South turned up with the ♠A. N-S eventually winning just the ♥K, ♠A and ♣A.

Clearly South should have won trick 1 with the ♠A and returned the ♠Q; that ensures the defeat of the contract. Apparently South did not want to 'waste' his partner's ♠J!

And what happened at other tables? 3NT was bid at 3 other tables; it went one down twice and somehow made +2(!) at the fourth. I'm afraid I don't know the (lack of) defence at that table.

The bottom lines: -

- An honour lead (especially against NT) usually promises the next lowest card (unless you play some sort of 'sophisticated' scheme such as 'Jack denies').
- Do not be afraid to overtake partner's honour lead if you can afford it.
- Return partner's suit.
- 3rd hand plays high. When there is no honour in dummy it is usually best for the 3rd player (i.e. sitting over dummy here) to play his highest card.
- I prefer to keep my leads simple, especially with unfamiliar partners, and find that it's simplest to always lead top of an honour sequence.

How do you reach 6NT

Board 23 from Friday 14th

Most pairs reached slam (6♥) and I was asked how 6NT could be reached. This was a typical auction: -

Dealer:	♠ AQJ				
South	♥ AK8543	West	North	East	South(H)
Both vul	♦ AJ4	-	-	-	1♣
	♣ 3	pass	1♥ (1)	pass	1NT (2)
		pass	4♣ (3)	pass	4♥
♠ 9653	N	pass	5♣ (4)	pass	5♠
♥ J	W E	pass	6♥ (5)	all pass	
♦ 1053	S				
♣ J9765					
	♠ K1042				
	♥ 1092				
	♦ Q962				
	♣ 104				
	♠ 87				
	♥ Q76				
	♦ K87				
	♣ AKQ85				

- (1) What did you open with this South hand H(a) in this week's quiz? I would open 1NT (15-17). In my opinion it's much too good for 1♣ followed by 1NT (12-14) or 2♣.
- (2) And what did you rebid with the South hand H(b)? 1NT is 12-14 and if you don't agree with me that it's worth a 1NT opener then that's the rebid. Note that this does not guarantee a stop. I witnessed one South having a problem with this rebid here, he eventually chose 2♦ which is incorrect because it shows a much stronger hand (it's a reverse) and also promises 4♦'s.
- (3) Gerber.
- (4) Kings?
- (5) Chicken?

First of all, to answer the question (how to bid 6NT). It's easy of course, (1NT – 6NT). 7♥ or 7NT are also fine contracts that could/should also be reached after a 1NT opening, but fail because of the 5-1 ♣ break and either finesse (♠ or ♦) failing.

And what happened? 3 pairs bid 6♥ (one made +1, presumably West discarded a ♣?). One pair bid 6NT and one somehow stopped in 3NT.

The bottom lines: -

- AKQxx is more than 9 points! Upgrade a hand with a holding like this.
- If you open 1NT you never have a rebid problem!
- A reverse is 16+ and shows at least 5-4 (always with more cards in the first bid suit).
- 4♣ is Gerber after partner's last bid was 1NT or 2NT.
- 4NT is quantitative (invitational) after partner's last bid was 1NT or 2NT.

Combining Chances

Board 27 from Friday 14th

One pair overbid to 6♠ on this deal, and nearly every North mis-played it :-

Dealer: ♠ KQ97642
South ♥ 94
Love all ♦ 84
♣ 107

♠ 5	N	♠ 1083
♥ AK105	W E	♥ QJ63
♦ Q65	S	♦ 1072
♣ K9854		♣ J63
	♠ AJ	
	♥ 872	
	♦ AKJ93	
	♣ AQ2	

Table A

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

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♦ (1)
2♣ (2)	4♠ (4)	pass	6♠ (5)
all pass			

Table A: (1) 1♦ is correct, it's too strong for 1NT and not good enough for a strong bid.

(2) I would double! – looks ideal.

(3) No ♥ stop

Table B: (2) I still prefer double

(4) I guess that this is fine if you agree it's weak!

(5) And with 19 points South quite reasonably bid slam.

And what happened? 6♠ went two down. 4♠ made exactly at every table except Table A. Now I don't know how it was played at other tables - presumably every E-W cashed two ♥'s and then declarer drew trumps and then took a losing finesse. At Table A declarer was a bit more careful. He drew trumps and cashed ♦AK and ruffed the 3rd round. That set up the ♦'s and it was not necessary to take a (losing) finesse. Mind you, if East led the ♥QJ and then a ♣ then it's not so easy – but did he? I bet most North's mis-played it?

The bottom lines: -

- If West had doubled, then a jump to 4♠ by North is to play.
- But after a simple overcall it's not so clear and has to be agreed. It seems sensible to me to play it as weak but I can't fault South's bidding with no such agreement.
- Combine your chances when declarer. If you have various options in the play – then try to set up a suit rather than a finesse – you can always finesse later if the suit can't be set up.

Who should bid Blackwood?

Board 10 from Friday 14th

I was asked how to reach 6♠ or 6NT on this board. My inquisitor correctly saying that after West bids Blackwood and finds an ace missing then it's dodgy to look for kings.

Answer below.

Dealer: ♠ 103
East ♥ QJ98
Both vul ♦ 953
♣ Q965

Table A

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

♠ AQJ6	N	♠ K982
♥ A5	W E	♥ K74
♦ KQJ86	S	♦ 1072
♣ A10		♣ KJ3
	♠ 754	
	♥ 10632	
	♦ A4	
	♣ 8742	

Table B

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

Table A: (1) 20-21

- (2) With a flat hand opposite 20-21 slam may be doubtful and so this East eschewed the possible ♠ fit and bid 3NT. Now you all know me (never deny a 4 card major, even with 4333 shape) but there is one important exception – that's when you have so many points that you expect to make 11 tricks in either contract. So given that East does not want to look for slam, 3NT is better than Stayman. Mind you, a quantitative 4NT looks like a reasonable shot and West would accept with his clear maximum.

Table B: (1) I'm not sure if they play a different system or if this West upgraded this hand to 22-24 points. With this great ♦ suit upgrading is certainly reasonable.

- (3) 22-24 in Standard American these days

(4) Stayman

- (5) Having found the 4-4 fit I think that East should go for slam here. I would bid 4NT (Blackwood) and then 6♠. Now I have mentioned in earlier news-sheets that bidding Blackwood is dodgy with a wide open suit that partner has not bid but since he's got 22-24 points it's worth the risk.

And what happened? One pair bid 6♠. 3NT got the 2nd top and the rest shared the wooden spoon for 4♠+2.

The bottom line: -

- One rare exception to denying a 4 card major is when you have a flat hand and so many points that you expect to make the same number of tricks (i.e.11) in 3NT or a major suit.
- After a 2NT opening (or 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT) then 4NT is quantitative, 4♣ is Gerber.
- After a 2NT opening (or 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT) then 3♣ is Stayman and 3♦/♥ are transfers.
- When you have shown your hand then it's up to partner to look for slam; so in this example West can never go slamming – it's up to East if he wants to have a shot.
- Having used Blackwood or RKCB, 5NT asks for kings and it's generally accepted that all aces (or key cards) must be present for a king ask.

Raise partner's pre-empt with 3 card support

Board 6 from Friday 14th

Dealer: ♠ K108
East ♥ KQ8753
E-W vul ♦ 5
♣ K96

♠ 642 N ♠ AJ9753
♥ AJ W E ♥ 9
♦ K864 S ♦ J102
♣ A852 ♣ J103
♠ Q
♥ 10642
♦ AQ973
♣ Q74

Table A

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

Table B

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

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this West hand J in this week's quiz? See table B.

(2) With West showing little values, North has a comfortable 3♥ bid.

Table B: (1) With 3 card support for partner's pre-empt, always raise. This is 'The Law' and you should raise pretty much regardless of your points; I would bid 3♠ here with a lot less points and even with more (if not quite enough to try for game).

(3) And now it's not so easy for North. 4♥ is probably worth a try but you could easily run into trouble if East has a little more and South did not have ♥'s.

And what happened? 3♠ made +1 for the E-W top. 4♥ was bid and made twice.

The bottom line. With 3 trumps, always raise partner's pre-empt (either a 2 or 3 opening).

(Usually) don't rebid a 5-card suit

Board 5 from Friday 14th

Dealer: ♠ AJ75
North ♥ KJ872
N-S vul ♦ 3
♣ 965

♠ K1086	N	♠ 42
♥ 95	W E	♥ A63
♦ K842	S	♦ Q1075
♣ Q108		♣ KJ72
	♠ Q93	
	♥ Q104	
	♦ AJ96	
	♣ A43	

Table A

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

Table B

West	North (K)	East	South
-	pass	pass	1♦
pass	1♥	pass	1NT
pass	pass (1)	pass	

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this North hand K in this week's quiz? See table B.

Table B: (1) Now I guess that bidding 2♥ is not totally unreasonable here, but I usually prefer to have a 6 card suit. In this particular case South has denied 4 ♠'s and so presumably has something in ♣'s. Also, you'll probably get a ♠ lead on the bidding and that may work out very nicely if partner has a ♠ honour.

And what happened? 3NT got a ♠ lead and so scored +2 for a complete top – outscoring everybody else who all played in ♥'s.

The bottom lines: -

- It's usually best not to rebid a 5 card suit. Even if there is a 5-3 fit it may play better in NT.

Force partner to do the right thing

Board 22 from Friday 14th

There's interesting bidding and play on this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ AQ	West	North	East	South
East	♥ 10742	-	-	pass	pass
E-W vul	♦ AK6	pass	1♣ (1)	pass	1♥ (2)
	♣ AJ85	pass	4♥ (3)	all pass	

♠ 2	N	♠ K10853	(1) I would downgrade because of no
♥ KQ	W E	♥ 86	honours in the ♥ suit and open 1NT,
♦ J873	S	♦ 109542	but I won't argue with the 1♣ opening.
♣ K97632		♣ Q	(2) I would bid 1♠ - followed by 2♥.
	♠ J9764		Bid 5-5's from the top down.
	♥ AJ953		(3) But the final contract is always 4♥ anyway.
	♦ Q		
	♣ 104		

Now onto the play. West decided to lead his singleton ♠. Now some may say that it's a bad lead with this trump holding, but as I was West I'll say nothing more.

South then asked East what the lead of a two meant. East replied 'standard bridge'. Upon further interrogation he was informed that the lead of a two promises an honour unless it's a singleton. That's standard.

DUMMY	♠ A	Declarer reasonably played the ♠Q and East won.
→	♥ 742	On the bidding, East placed West with ♠Jxx(x)
	♦ AK	and so reasonably returned a ♦.
	♣ J85	South won, led a ♣ to the ♣A and finessed a ♥
		which West won.
♠ -	N	That leaves this position, with West on lead.
♥ K	W E	What card should West play now?
♦ J87	S	Now West knows that East is now void in ♣'s
♣ K9762		(he noticed partner's ♣Q fall). And he also knows
	♠ 10853	that his ♣K is a boss and will stand up if led.
	♥ 8	So he led the ♣9!!
	♦ 10942	Now West knows exactly what's going on and he
	♣ -	also knows that his partner does not!
	♠ J976	East assumed that South had the ♣K and obviously
	♥ AJ95	ruffed. But what should he return?
	♦ -	
	♣ 10	

The answer is, as it often is, trust partner (rather than an opponent). E-W play Lavinthal (McKenny) and a high ♣ asks for a ♠. East knew that this would mean that South had started with 5 ♠'s but after some thought he decided to trust partner. The ♠ return set the contract.

And what happened? 4♥ made exactly at every other table.

The bottom lines: -

- Eight ever, nine never: South should play the ♥A at trick one.
- Bid touching 5-5's from the top down (4-4's bid the lower ranking).
- Play a signalling system. I recommend Lavinthal (McKenny) for all non-regular partnerships as the 'standard' for our club. I have a sheet on it for those interested.
- Trust partner!

Overtake if you need to lead to the next trick

Board 6 from Wednesday 12th

And let's have another board on defensive play: -

Dealer:	♠ AJ103				
East	♥ 62	West	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ 6	-	-	pass	1♣
	♣ Q109875	dbl	3♣ (1)	pass (2)	pass
		3♦ (3)	pass	pass	4♣
♠ KQ82	N	♠ 75	pass	4♦	pass
♥ K109	W E	♥ 8754	pass	5♣	pass
♦ KQJ52	S	♦ A109743	dbl	all pass	
♣ 3		♣ K			
	♠ 964				
	♥ AQJ3				
	♦ 8				
	♣ AJ642				

- (1) Perhaps OK, but this denies a 4 card ♠ suit.
- (2) With a 6 card suit opposite partner's double, 3♦ would be reasonable here. 3♦ is probably better than mentioning this motley ♥ suit.
- (3) This shows the hand pretty well.

West led the ♦K, which card should East play?

Answer: He should overtake with the ♦A and return a ♥. Why? Because West will almost certainly be in a spot if he is left on lead at trick two – the ♥ switch needs to come from East. East also knows the ♦ situation (declarer must be void now) and he also knows that West will probably continue with a fateful ♦ if left on lead.

And what happened? East played an encouraging ♦3 at trick one (they pay low to encourage). Obviously West had no idea that East had 6 ♦'s and so he 'safely' continued with a ♦. The resultant ruff and discard gifted the contract to South.

And at other tables? 5♣ was doubled and went one down at two other tables.

The bottom lines: -

- Make life easy for partner if you can.
- A king lead promises the queen if you've bid the suit.

Editorial

I have been going through old news-sheets as I put them on the web and found this amusing article (137): -

What a Friendly Club!

Our Irish visitors (Kevin and Noreen) remarked to Richard what a nice, quiet, friendly club this is! Richard told them that that's the way the director tries to keep it (and has to put in a lot of effort just to do that). I could give a list of ½ a dozen or so players who are noticeably absent at the moment – but no names!

One of these un-named noticeably absent individuals returned, caused considerable disruption, and has now been banned. Dave remarked how nice and peaceful the club had been for 6 months or so before his return and suggested he be thrown out for good. Most agree.

Bidding Quiz Answers

Hand A: 1NT. About 10-13 in the balancing seat. Pass is also reasonable I suppose.

Hand B: (a) 3♥, pre-emptive.

(b) 2♥. A simple overcall. You cannot pre-empt as a jump over a pre-emptive opening shows a very strong hand – there is no such thing as a pre-empt over a pre-empt.

Hand C: Dbl. 'Semi-automatic' when playing negative doubles and this hand certainly is no exception. Double so that partner can pass if he has a ♣ penalty hand.

Hand D: 2NT. This is an excellent 11 points and well worth a raise.

Hand E: Pass. Sit back and wait for partner's 'automatic' re-opening double (you are playing negative doubles of course).

Hand F: Pass. It's usually best to pass with length and strength in RHO's suit. You cannot double for penalties and on a good day partner will get a double (take-out) in and you can pass for penalties. 1NT (15-18) is just about acceptable (this hand is good enough as it has improved with RHO bidding ♠'s) but I don't really like it with this many ♠'s.

Hand G: Dbl. This is for take-out (of ♠'s). It would be nice to have 4 ♥'s but these are 3 decent ones; and partner will not expect more in values as you are a passed hand.

Hand H: (a) 1NT. The ♣AKQxx are huge and this hand is easily good enough for a 15-17 1NT.

(b) 1NT. If you did not open 1NT (15-17) then you have to bid 1NT now (12-14). Note that this does not guarantee a ♠ stop – it simply shows a balanced 12-14.

Hand J: 3♠. With 3 card support always raise partner's pre-empt and make it difficult for the next player.

Hand K: Pass. It's usually best to bebid your major here only if you have a 6 card suit. In this particular case it's very likely that 1NT will play nicely even if partner has 3 ♥'s as he has bid your singleton and the expected ♠ lead will turn out nicely if partner has an honour in the suit (especially the queen).