

		<u>Winner</u>		<u>Runner-up</u>	
Mon 2 nd	N-S 1 st	Bob P/Ken	58%	2 nd	John B/Kenneth 56%
	E-W 1 st	Dave/Ruth	65%	2 nd	Jim(Sco)/Terry 58%
Wed 4 th	N-S 1 st	Chuck/Terry	62%	2 nd	Bob P/Tomas 55%
	E-W 1 st	Hans/Henrik	67%	2 nd	Dave/Jan & Knud/Ole 56%
Fri 6 th	N-S 1 st	Bob P/Joe	59%	2 nd	Bill/Mike(Can) 55%
	E-W 1 st	Dave/Ruth	72%	2 nd	Britta/Jan 52%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	(a) What do you open with Hand A? (b) Suppose you open 1NT, partner bids 2♣ and you bid 2♦. Partner then bids 2♠, what do you do?
♠ AQ7 ♥ K9 ♦ J10965 ♣ A103	♠ 6 ♥ 65 ♦ K10943 ♣ K10874	With Hand B it's love all and you are dealer and pass. LHO opens 1♥ and RHO bids 1♠, what do you do?
Hand C	Hand D	(a) With Hand C RHO opens 1♦, what do you bid? (b) With Hand C RHO opens 1♣, what do you bid?
♠ A84 ♥ KJ97 ♦ K7 ♣ K764	♠ AJ10 ♥ 3 ♦ 96 ♣ QJ106542	With Hand D it is love all and RHO opens 1♥, what do you bid?
Hand E	Hand F	What do you open in 1 st seat with Hand E?
♠ 75 ♥ AJ86 ♦ Q105 ♣ AQ97	♠ 93 ♥ AQ7 ♦ AKQ76 ♣ AK9	With Hand F it's favourable vulnerability (a) what do you open? (b) Suppose you open 2♣, partner gives a 2♦ waiting response and RHO bids 2♠, what do you bid?
Hand G	Hand H	(a) What do you open with Hand G? (b) Suppose you open 2♣, then what is your rebid when partner gives a 2♠ positive response?
♠ K ♥ AJ7653 ♦ AK10 ♣ AQ7	♠ A ♥ J85432 ♦ 987 ♣ 653	With Hand H partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls a weak 2♠, what do you do?

Bidding Sequences (no opposition bidding). Quite a few more interesting ones this week: -

Sequence J	1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♠	Is 2♠ weak, invitational or forcing?
Sequence K	1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♦	Is 2♦ weak, invitational or forcing?
Sequence L	2NT - 3♥ - 3NT	What is 2NT (not accepting the transfer)?
Sequence M	2♣ - 2♦ - 2♠	Assuming 2♦ is negative, is 2♠ forcing?
Sequence N	2♣ - 2♦ - 3♠	Assuming 2♦ is negative, what is a jump to 3♠?

A final Sequence P. You open 1♣, LHO overcalls 1♠ and partner bids 2♠, what does 2♠ mean?

Don't draw trumps if you need ruffs

Board 5 from Monday 2nd

It's usually best for declarer to draw trumps, but not if you need two ruffs and need three rounds to pull trumps.

Dealer:	♠ J7				
North	♥ A62	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ Q1062	-	pass	1♣	pass
	♣ A1072	1♠	pass	2♠	pass
		4♠	all pass		
♠ AQ105	N	♠ K862			
♥ K43	W E	♥ Q97			
♦ A754	S	♦ K8			
♣ 85		♣ KJ63			
	♠ 963				
	♥ J1085				
	♦ J93				
	♣ Q94				

The bidding was straightforward, but I do note that one pair preferred to ignore the 4-4 ♠ fit and play in 3NT. Anyway, 4♠ is the best contract, so how should West play the hand on a ♦ lead? The point is that you should not immediately draw all of the trumps but ruff two losing ♦'s in the East hand. If you start with ♦A, ♦K, ♠A, ♦ ruff, ♠Q you see the ♠J fall and you can ruff the last ♦ high with the ♠K and draw the last trump later. If the defence give you no help (by leading a ♥ for you) then you need to guess the ♣ position.

But now let's look at this deal; how do you make 4♠ this time with a ♠ lead from South?

Dealer:	♠ 3				
North	♥ QJ10852	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ 3	-	2♥	pass	pass
	♣ QJ964	dbl	3♣	3♠	pass
		4♠	all pass		
♠ AQ102	N	♠ KJ986			
♥ A4	W E	♥ 973			
♦ A7542	S	♦ J8			
♣ A8		♣ 753			
	♠ 754				
↑ DUMMY	♥ K6				
	♦ KQ1096				
	♣ K102				

Don't worry about the bidding, it's the play that is the point here.

If you draw the trumps in 3 rounds the you make only 9 tricks (5 trumps, 1 ♥, 1 ♦, 1 ♣ and 1 ruff), thus losing 1 ♥, 1 ♦, 1 ♣ and one other ♣ or ♥) loser. If you attempt to ruff a ♥ and a ♣ in the West hand you will be foiled by South returning a trump at every occasion with the same result (South's initial ♠ lead foils this otherwise excellent line when he has 3 or more trumps). Can you see the solution? Answer next page.

The dummy reversal

Deal repeated for convenience

Dealer: ♠ 3
 North ♥ QJ10852
 N-S vul ♦ 3
 ♣ QJ964

West	North	East	South
-	2♥	pass	pass
dbl	3♣	3♠	pass
4♠	all pass		

♠ AQ102	N	♠ KJ986
♥ A4	W E	♥ 973
♦ A7542	S	♦ J8
♣ A8		♣ 753
	♠ 754	
↑ DUMMY	♥ K6	
	♦ KQ1096	
	♣ K102	

Don't worry about the bidding, it's the play that is the point here.

South leads the ♠7.

Dealer: ♠ -
 North ♥ QJ
 N-S vul ♦ -
 ♣ QJ

So how do you play the hand after winning the first trick? You should cash the ♦A and lead another ♦. It does not matter what the defence do now as you are assured of 10 tricks. Say South wins and leads a trump (best). Then you win with the ♠10 and ruff a ♦. Then back to dummy with the ♥A and ruff another ♦.

♠ AQ	N	♠ -
♥ 4	W E	♥ 97
♦ -	S	♦ -
♣ 8		♣ 75
	♠ 54	
↑ DUMMY	♥ K	
	♦ -	
	♣ K	

Finally back to the dummy with the ♣A and ruff the last ♦ and you have 8 tricks, so this position with the ♠AQ to come.

So you scored 4 ♠'s, 1♥, 1♦, 1♣ and 3 ♦ ruffs, a total of 10 tricks. This technique is called a Dummy Reversal, where you delay drawing trumps so that you can score ruffs in the long trump hand. In this particular example you drew just two rounds of trumps (you needed them as entries to the west hand) and never actually drew all of the trumps.

Talking Garbage

Board 10 from Wednesday 4th

Dealer: ♠ J8654
East ♥ Q742
Both vul ♦ K4
♣ J6

♠ 10	N	♠ K932
♥ A105	W E	♥ J863
♦ AQ72	S	♦ 83
♣ Q9754		♣ K82

♠ AQ7
♥ K9
♦ J10965
♣ A103

West	North	East	South(A)
(Henrik)	(Chuck)	(Hans)	(me)
-	-	pass	1NT (1)
pass	2♣	pass	2♦
pass	2♠ (2)	pass	pass (3)
pass (4)			

- (1) What did you open with this South hand A in this week's quiz? All of those intermediates make it well worth a strong 1NT in my opinion.
- (2) Weak playing normal 'Garbage' Stayman.
- (3) Mandatory playing normal 'Garbage' Stayman.

The bidding is 'absolutely standard', with the 2♠ bid at (2) being a weak bid. At (4) Henrik asked me what the 2♠ bid was, and I said 'weak with 5 ♠'s and 4 ♥'s'. Henrik then said that it should be alerted, I (and Chuck) said not so. Now you can be 100% sure that if anybody criticises me in Hans' presence then Hans will immediately side with them, no matter how trivial or how much 'garbage' they are saying (he has been trying – and failing at every attempt – to prove me wrong for about 5 years now). This 2♠ bid is not alertable anywhere in the Northern or Southern hemispheres – except, presumably, at Henrik/Hans' club?

The bottom lines. If Henrik (or Hans) try to dictate the laws to you at this club then ignore them (call the director if necessary) – they have demonstrated that they have no idea. You may recall that Henrik was banned (and still is) from the Mon/Fri clubs partially for the rude/arrogant way that he incorrectly told somebody that they were not allowed to bid after their partner had made a long pause. He apparently still does not know the ruling there either, I suggest he reads the rules before arguing the toss with me/Chuck.

'Garbage' Stayman is the most popular form of Stayman played. Playing Garbage Stayman the sequences 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥/♠ are weak. This has appeared in the news-sheets about 50 times but I fully understand why Henrik/Hans do not read the news-sheets. Perhaps they might learn something?

Hans/Henrik continued in the same vein in a very unpleasant atmosphere by asking unnecessary questions on the very next board (I believe that Chuck may have called it 'cheating'). I have told Dave that it's up to him if he allows Henrik back in the Wednesday club but Chuck and I certainly do not wish to play against this pair again. Chuck and I play together on Wednesdays for an enjoyable afternoon of bridge – it is evident that Hans/Henrik have the exact opposite in mind. You can rest assured that Henrik will never be seen here on Mondays or Fridays.

If you have any problems with a player's behaviour on Mondays or Fridays have a word with me. If there's a problem on Wednesdays then have a word with Dave and/or me. The main goal of our club is that it is friendly, unpleasant behavior will not be tolerated.

Sandwich NT?

Board 24 from Wednesday 4th

I was asked about this one. Apparently one E-W pair (guess who) criticised North's bid (I assume they were asked? – that's the club rules). Anyway, South later asked me and I told him that the suggestion given was not the best bid.

Dealer:	♠ 6				
West	♥ 65	West	North(B)	East	South
Love all	♦ K10943	pass	pass	1♥	pass
	♣ K10874	1♠	2NT (1)	dbl (2)	3♦ (3)
		dbl	all pass		
♠ J9873	N	♠ KQ10			
♥ Q83	W E	♥ A9742			
♦ AJ65	S	♦ 7			
♣ 5		♣ AQJ3			
	♠ A542				
	♥ KJ10				
	♦ Q82				
	♣ 962				

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand B in this week's quiz? This North bid the UNT – showing the minors. E-W told North that he should have doubled instead. I'll tell you my choice later.
- (2) I play this as being able to penalise one of the bidder's suits.
- (3) I would pass here (with no particular preference for either minor) as partner may be 6-5 or whatever, so let him pick the suit.

And what happened? 3♦ doubled cost 500 and scored a bottom against the 450 for 4♠ +1 at most tables. Apparently E-W later told North should have doubled as then they would be at the safe two level. Were E-W correct?

I don't think so. Obviously North could pass but he understandably wants to show his two minor suits and he has options. 2NT is the UNT but may be unwise between two bidding opponents, I would bid 2NT at favourable vulnerability only. Double would also show the minors, but I would most certainly require a lot more points for the bid (say about a 9-10 count). But there is a solution – the Sandwich NT. 1NT in this position is exactly the same as the UNT – there is no need to jump (especially as you are a passed hand). The sandwich 1NT is the ideal bid with this hand as you don't get too high and you don't imply lots of points to partner.

The bottom lines: -

- It seems sensible to me to only ask advice from people about bidding if they are known to know what they are talking about. You can always ask me or Chuck. Ask others if you wish, but they may be simply 'talking garbage'.
- If LHO opens, partner passes and RHO bids then 1NT by you is the same as the UNT, showing a weak hand with the other two suits; not wishing to raise the level (2NT) and not wishing to imply strength (dbl).

What's Alertable?

There have been a few mis-understanding at the club recently and so I'll take this opportunity to clear up a few things. Now I do not agree with everything that the ACBL says, but the following extract from their paper on alerts certainly makes a lot of sense.

'Natural bids that convey an unexpected meaning must be Alerted. This includes strong bids that sound weak, weak bids that sound strong, and all other bids that, by agreement, convey meanings different from, or in addition to, the expected meaning ascribed to them'.

So then, natural bids that have an unexpected meaning should be alerted/announced, and I totally agree. It's a shame that the WBF do not always implement the above paragraph. Let's have a few important examples of my interpretation of this and how it applies at our club: -

- 1- **Transfers.** If you play 2♦/♥ as *natural* over partner's 1NT then this is a natural bid with an unexpected meaning (most would expect a transfer these days) and I believe it fits in with their paragraph above and needs alerting. It is not in accordance with other ACBL rules (so they have got themselves in a muddle here) but at this club a natural 2♦/♥ response to 1NT should be alerted as it is unexpected. I think it's best if you also alert or announce transfers (I always announce).
- 2- **Strong opening twos.** The ACBL are not specific here and so I believe that their paragraph above should apply. Most players play weak opening twos and so a strong opening two needs to be alerted at this club in accordance with the above paragraph.
- 3- **Weak jump shifts.** The ACBL are actually very specific here – weak jump shifts are not standard and I totally agree that they need to be alerted.
- 4- **Weak jump overcalls.** These are standard and not alertable. Only strong/intermediate jump overcalls need alerting in accordance with the ACBL's paragraph.
- 5- **The opening 1NT range.** Responder should announce partner's 1NT range. However, many players forget to do this and they will not be penalised. I know that if you are a Brit it is not automatic to announce or alert a 12-14 1NT, so if in doubt about the opponent's range, then ask (or look at their convention card! Ho, ho). I generally announce my partner's 1NT range unless I know for certain that the opponents know what it is.

Incidentally, if your partner fails to announce or alert a bid (or gives an incorrect explanation) then: -

- If you are declarer or dummy then you should inform the opponents before the opening lead and call the director if somebody feels it is really necessary.
- If you are defending you should say nothing (you may be helping partner). You can call the director at the end of play if declarer feels that he was harmed.

And a word about **hesitation**. We all sometimes need to think, and if you think for a long time and then bid then that's fine. But if you think for a long time and pass then you are passing unauthorised information to partner (that you were thinking of bidding). Partner is **NOT** banned from the auction but if he bids it must be a **VERY CLEAR** bid. If he make a 'dodgy' bid then the director will adjust the score accordingly.

I have run off a few copies of the club rules and it's on the web. As far as alerts is concerned it really is very simple – alert anything that is not standard. Who knows, maybe somebody at the ACBL/WBF may also come up with this novel solution sometime?

Let's have a few natural bids that have come up recently and were queried as to whether they were alertable or not (no interference): -

- 1NT- 2♣ - 2♠ is weak playing Garbage Stayman. This is not unexpected and thus not alertable.
2♦ - 2♠
- 1♣ - 1♠ - This pair play NMF and so 3♦ is weak. Nobody was sure at the time, but I now believe that this fits in with the ACBL's paragraph and should have been alerted as one would normally expect 3♦ to be a forcing bid here.
1NT- 3♦
- 1NT- 2♣ - If the 2♣/2NT bidder is not guaranteeing a 4-card major then the ACBL say that the 2NT bid need alerting. I (reluctantly) go along with this, my personal opinion is that 2♣ should have been alerted. Most people expect a Stayman bidder to have a 4 card major and I think that 2♣ should be alerted if this is not so (say playing SARS and/or 4-way transfers). Anyway, one of the bids needs alerting.
2♦ - 2NT
- 1NT- 2♣ - If the 2♣/2NT bidder is denying 4 ♠'s (as when you play 4-way transfers) then the 2NT bid needs alerting (if you have not already alerted the 2♣ bid).
2♥ - 2NT

And a few ones that I mentioned on the previous page: -

- 2♦/♥/♠ If it's a strong two then it should be alerted at this club.
- 1NT- 2♦/♥ If 2♦/♥ is natural then it needs alerting at this club. If it's a transfer then it's best for opener to simply announce 'transfer'.
- 1♣ - 2♥ If you play jump shifts as weak then that is alertable.
- 2♣/♦ If 2♣ is your only strong bid then it does not need an alert. If you play Benjamin twos then both 2♣ and 2♦ openings (and responses) need alerting.
- 2♣ - 2♦ If 2♦ is negative it needs no alert. If it is waiting then it needs alerting.
- 1NT The rules keep changing here. I think it's unfair to have different rules for strong or weak NT and I think that both should be announced, but I will impose no penalty if anybody forgets.
- 1♣ - 1♥ If the 1NT rebid may be stronger than 15 points the ACBL say that it needs alerting. Playing Acol 1NT here is 15-16. This is not America and it is not the UK and, as I said above, I see no reason why Acol players should be treated differently from Standard American players; I do not believe that the bid needs alerting. If you are playing against a pair of Brits then it's quite likely that they are playing a weak NT and so a 15-16 point range here is not unexpected.
1NT

Of course, the simplest solution to most situations is to fill out a convention card!!

I think that established pairs should have a card. I always have one when I play with Chuck and I'll help you to fill out one for your partnership if you wish.

These last two pages have been added to the club rules which are already on the web.

A large number of players at our club are inexperienced and the club rules, which may differ from WBF/ACBL at times, are designed with that in mind – to make it easier for them.

A nice pre-empt

Board 8 from Wednesday 4th

Dealer: ♠ A107
West ♥ 3
Love all ♦ 96
♣ QJ106542

Table A
West North(D) East South
1♥ 3♣ (1) dbl (2) pass
4♠ (3) all pass

♠ QJ32 N ♠ K9864
♥ AKQJ2 W E ♥ 97
♦ J107 S ♦ Q853
♣ K ♣ A3
♠ 5
♥ 108654
♦ AK42
♣ 987

Table B
West North(D) East South
1♥ 4♣ (1) dbl (4) pass
pass (5) pass

- Table A: (1) What did you bid with this North hand D in this week's quiz? 3♣ is a weak jump overall but I prefer North's bid at table B.
(2) 3♣ here is generally played as natural and forcing. With insufficient values for that bid a negative double is correct.
(3) Partner has shown 4(+) ♠'s and West has an easy game bid.
- Table B: (1) Now this is more like it – it's only a 7 card suit but with good 'body' and non-vul I think the 4-level pre-empt is a good bet.
(4) This E-W play negative doubles, but only up to 3♠, and so East is a bit fixed here. He does not have the values for 4♠ nor for 4♥. Pass is a bit feeble and I guess that the penalty double chosen is the only realistic bid.

And what happened? With the bad lie of the cards, 4♠ went down at most tables, so 50 to N-S. But 4♣ doubled made and the 510 to N-S was a top. Note that 4♣ is always a good bid, move the ♦A from South to East and 4♠ makes and 4♣ is just one down.

The bottom lines: -

- Pre-empt to the limit at the first opportunity, take 'body' and vulnerability into account..

An Inverted minor

Board 1 from Wednesday 4th

I have not covered Inverted Minors in the news-sheets or on the web yet; but they really are good for more experienced pairs and I'll get round to it soon.

Dealer: ♠ KQ76
North ♥ A5
Love all ♦ 432
♣ A532

Table A

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

♠ J102	N	♠ A84
♥ Q8632	W E	♥ KJ97
♦ QJ1065	S	♦ K7
♣ -		♣ K764

Table B

West	North	East(C)	South
-	1♣	pass (1)	3♣ (2)
pass (4)	pass	pass (5)	

♠ 953
♥ 104
♦ A98
♣ QJ1098

- Table A: (1) What did you bid with this East hand C in this week's quiz? It's often difficult when RHO bids a suit that you have. Had he opened 1♦ then dbl would be fine, but over 1♣ double is a poor bid with these short ♠'s and ♦'s. I do not recommend 4 card overcalls to any but the most experienced of pairs and the hand is not good enough for 1NT. I too would pass.
- (2) A pretty standard bid if you do not know better methods.
- (3) The UNT, showing 5-5 in the lowest two suits (so ♦'s and ♥'s).
- Table B: (2) This pair play inverted minors, so the meanings of 2♣ and 3♣ here are 'inverted'. Thus 3♣ here is a weak hand with 5+ ♣'s and about 6-9 points.
- (4) The extra level makes it impossible for West to come in.
- (5) And East has the same problem, it's difficult to come in safely here.

And what happened? 3♣ made +1 for an excellent score to N-S. 4♥ at another table made +1 for E-W and other scores were all over the place.

The bottom lines: -

- Pre-empt to the limit at the first opportunity. That's just one thing that's nice about playing inverted minors: you can do just that.
- If you/partner are fairly experienced, then play inverted minors.

Real Garbage (Stayman)

Board 21 from Friday 6th

We had one earlier, here's another case of Garbage Stayman successfully in action: -

Dealer:	♠ A982			<u>Table A</u>				
North	♥ Q109			West	North	East	South	
N-S vul	♦ 76432			-	pass	pass	1NT (1)	
	♣ 7			pass	pass (2)	pass		
♠ K105	N	♠ Q74		<u>Table B</u>				
♥ AK	W E	♥ 86542		West	North	East	South	
♦ J1098	S	♦ -		-	pass	pass	1NT (1)	
♣ Q654		♣ KJ1093		pass	2♦ (2)	pass	pass (3)	
				pass				
	♠ J63							
	♥ J73							
	♦ AKQ5							
	♣ A82							

Table A: (1) A marginal 1NT opener (totally flat), 1♦ is an alternative.

(2) This North thought about 'Garbage stayman' but decided against it.

Table B: (2) This North decided to try the garbage route and I agree, even if partner does bid the unfortunate 2♥ then it's a decent Moysian fit as you get ♣ ruffs in the short trump hands.

(3) As it turns out South bids 2♦ and the best spot is reached.

And what happened? Results were all over the place. 1NT went down, 2♦ was a good contract, E-W can make 11 tricks in ♣'s but game is not really biddable.

The bottom lines: -

- The 'ideal' shape for garbage Stayman is 4441 or 4450. But 3451 or 4351 etc are also acceptable. Any other shape is just gambling.
- Garbage Stayman (and subsequent bids) do not need alerting.
- The sequences 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥/♠ are generally played as weak.

A nice negative double sequence

Board 24 from Friday 6th

E-W bid this one nicely to the top spot: -

Dealer: ♠ 7432
 West ♥ 96
 Love all ♦ AK2
 ♣ 10942

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

♠ A	N	♠ KQ
♥ J85432	W E	♥ AK107
♦ 987	S	♦ J6543
♣ 653		♣ AQ
	♠ J109865	
	♥ Q	
	♦ Q10	
	♣ KJ87	

- (1) The best opening. With just 19 points and points in the short suits it's way short of a 2NT or equivalent opener.
- (2) Weak.
- (3) What did you bid with this West hand H in this week's quiz? It's nowhere near good enough for a 3♥ bid but a negative double is just about right. A negative double here is showing ♥'s and values to compete to the three level. Now the values may be a bit lacking in the HCP's but with this shape I think it's a good bid.
- (4) A bit feeble, 3♠ or even 4♠ (the Law) is called for.
- (5) If partner can compete then this hand is well worth game.

And what happened? 4♥ was bid and made at 4 tables. 4♠ is a good save (in fact one South made 4♠)

The bottom lines: -

- It's best to play negative doubles as just promising an unbid major.
- Support partner's pre-empt to the limit immediately (North should bid 4♠ at (4)).

Passed out (twice) or bid game (three times)!

Board 18 from Friday 6th

Only two pairs found the sensible (and obvious?) contract of 1NT with these E-W cards:

Dealer: ♠ 643
 East ♥ KQ10
 N-S vul ♦ 842
 ♣ KJ106

♠ AJ92 N ♠ 75
 ♥ 432 W E ♥ AJ86
 ♦ AJ93 S ♦ Q105
 ♣ 53 ♣ AQ97
 ♠ KQ108
 ♥ 975
 ♦ K76
 ♣ 842

Table A

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

Table B

West	North	East(E)	South
-	-	1♣ (1)	pass
1♦	pass	1♥	pass
1♠ (5)	pass	1NT (6)	pass
pass (7)	pass		

- Table A: (1) What did you open with this East hand E in this week’s quiz? Now 1♣ is so obvious that you may ask why I ask. It is because the deal was passed out twice on Friday, I cannot imagine why anybody would pass with this East hand.
 (2) It is a matter of style if you respond 1♦ or 1♠ with this type of hand. It’s probably best to respond 1♠ if you have not agreed about the sequence 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ being natural or 4th suit or whatever.
 (3) I have no idea what West was thinking here, I would pass 1NT although an invitational 2NT (which East should decline) is not too bad. If you do not play NMF then this 2♦ bid is weak, with usually 6 ♦’s and 4 ♠’s and partner is expected to pass (sequence K in this week’s quiz).
 (4) Again, I have no idea – pass seems ‘automatic’ to me.
- Table B (5) This pair have agreed that 1♠ is natural in this sequence (with 2♠ being the 4th suit bid).
 (6) This is still 12-14.
 (7) I agree with pass as I would like just a little more for an invitational 2NT.

And what happened? The overbidders won the day, with our double-dummy computer saying that 11 tricks are there. On a combined 23 count 3NT is an easy make as every single card is right. Swap the N-S hands and E-W would do well to make 1NT. Quite how 4 out of 8 pairs can reach this 23 point game is a mystery to me.

A forcing pass

Board 6 from Friday 6th

I was asked how N-S could have penalised a rather brash East on this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ AKJ				
East	♥ 96543	West	North	East	South(F)
E-W vul	♦ J2	-	-	pass	2♣ (1)
	♣ 1054	pass	2♦ (2)	2♠ (3)	3♦ (4)
		pass	3NT	all pass	
♠ 84	N	♠ Q107652			
♥ K1082	W E	♥ J			
♦ 983	S	♦ 1054			
♣ Q763		♣ J82			
	♠ 93				
	♥ AQ7				
	♦ AKQ76				
	♣ AK9				

- (1) What did you open with this South hand F(a) in this week's quiz? This is a great 22 count and too good for 2NT even if you play 2NT as 20-22. So open 2♣ with a view to bidding 2NT next go, mostly played as 22-24 these days. Don't worry about small doubletons for NT bids; the hand is balanced and should not bid ♦'s having opened 2♣.
- (2) This pair play 2♦ waiting.
- (3) Bold is an understatement here. Vul against not with a big hand on your left this is asking for a huge penalty.
- (4) But fortunately for East this South carried on regardless. What did you bid with this South hand F(b) in this week's quiz? 2NT still shows 22-24 but you cannot sensibly bid that with no ♠ stop. Double is for penalties and cannot be right with two small ♠'s. 3♠ (asking partner for a ♠ stop) is a possibility but by far the best bid is pass – this is forcing and you would be quite happy whatever partner bids (a double by him would be penalties).

And what happened? 3NT was pretty average on the board. 2♠ doubled would have gone for at least 500 and given N-S a near top.

The bottom lines: -

- If you have opened 2♣, then a subsequent double by either you or your partner is for penalties.
- If you have opened 2♣ and RHO comes in, then pass is forcing (and offers partner the choice of bidding or doubling for penalties).

Not a 2♣ opener?

Board 3 from Friday 6th

Dealer: ♠ AJ10432
South ♥ Q9
E-W vul ♦ QJ32
♣ 8

♠ 975	N	♠ Q86
♥ K1082	W E	♥ 4
♦ 54	S	♦ 9876
♣ K932		♣ J10654

♠ K
♥ AJ7653
♦ AK10
♣ AQ7

Table A

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

Table B

West	North	East	South(G)
-	-	-	2♣ (5)
pass	2♠ (6)	pass	3♥ (7)

.... and onwards to 7NT

- Table A: (1) What did you open with this South hand G in this week's quiz? This is an interesting one and I'm sure that there will be a variety of answers. Anyway, here's my opinion. It's a shapely 21 count but nowhere near good enough for 2♣ followed by a game forcing ♥ bid – that promises at least 9 tricks and this hand is woefully short. So what about the 2NT chosen by this South? Actually I think it's not that bad – you are allowed to open 2NT with a singleton. If you think that it's a bit too good then I would not argue with 2♣ followed by 2NT. But I personally would open 1♥ and make game forcing noises later – it's taking a risk of being passed out but that is unlikely when you have a singleton ♠ and if partner cannot respond to 1♥ then 1♥ is probably where you want to play.
- (2) Transfer.
- (3) Undisciplined. You should complete the transfer. With a partner I understand I would take 3NT here as a super-accept looking for a ♠ slam.
- (4) Fed up with partner not obeying the rules.
- Table B: (5) As I said, I don't mind a 2♣ opener if it's followed by 2NT.
- (6) positive.
- (7) Showing a big hand with ♥'s (this hand is not good enough in my opinion) and if I had opened 2♣ I would bid 2NT here and we would presumably reach 4♠.

And what happened? The usual mixed bag; 7NT went just one down (clearly someone's play is better than their bidding). 6NT went 4 down at another table etc. etc.

The bottom lines; -

- 2♣ followed by a suit bid is generally played as game forcing and should be 9 playing tricks+.
- 2♣ followed by 2NT shows a (semi) balanced 22-24.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 1NT. With good shape and a hand bristling with intermediates it's well worth a strong 1NT.
(b) Pass. Unless you play some special type of Stayman then the 2♠ bid is weak and you are expected to pass.
- Hand B: 1NT. Pass is also reasonable but most players would like to show their hand. 1NT here is unusual (sometimes called the Sandwich NT) and it is not necessary to jump to 2NT as 1NT cannot possibly be strong and natural. Double is a poor alternative as it implies more points.
- Hand C: (a) dbl. It would be nice to be 4-4 in the majors but you cannot always guarantee that.
(b) Pass. You should not double this time as a ♦ response will be awkward. 4 card overcalls are not generally recommended to any but the most experienced of players and the hand is not good enough for 1NT.
- Hand D: 4♣. 3♣ would be weak and is the value bid but with this suit/vulnerability I like 4♣.
- Hand E: 1♣. Quite why two players passed on Friday baffles me.
- Hand F: (a) 2♣ (with a view to rebidding 2NT). The hand is too good for a 2NT (20-21, or even 20-22, whatever you play) opener.
(b) Pass, forcing. Give partner a chance to double if he can or else bid his suit.
- Hand G: (a) 1♥. That would be my choice (followed by a game forcing bid) but I would not argue if you chose a rather offbeat 2NT or 2♣ with the intention of rebidding 2NT.
(b) 2NT. If you rebid 3♥ (or 2♥ over a 2♦ response) that shows a much stronger hand.
- Hand H: Double. Negative, showing ♥'s and values to compete (it's just about good enough). 3♥ is a poor alternative as it shows a stronger hand.

Bidding Sequences (no opposition bidding in J – N): -

- Sequence J 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♠ 2♠ is weak. Absolutely standard playing the most popular form of Stayman (Garbage Stayman).
- Sequence K 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♦ 2♦ is weak. Usually 4 ♠'s and 6 ♦'s.
- Sequence L 2NT - 3♥ - 3NT 3NT should be a super-accept of some type, agreeing ♠'s and looking for a ♠ slam.
- Sequence M 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♠ 2♠ is forcing. Most play it as game forcing.
- Sequence N 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♠ 3♠ is absolutely game forcing, and a jump like this in a game forcing auction is played as a completely solid suit (AKQJxx or better) and invites partner to cue bid.
- Sequence P 1♣ 1♠(overcall) 2♠(from partner).

Ruth came up with this 2♠ bid playing with Dave. Dave took it as asking for a ♠ stop (as would I). So I asked Chuck - apparently it's common practice in Canada and USA for this to show one of two things:

- (a) A limit raise or better (so a sound 3♣ or more) or
(b) Asking for a stop.

The actual meaning is clarified next go. Opener should bid NT if he has a stop and if responder then retreats into opener's suit then it simply shows the sound raise. I looked up the sequence in an Acol book and that was very different and all very convoluted, so this North American treatment seems fine by me. It is probably even more useful over a major opening.