

Mon 19 th	1 st	Jan & Phil	63%	2 nd	Bob P & Dave	61%
Wed 21 st	1 st	Ian & Peter L	63%	2 nd	Bill & Mike	57%
Fri 23 rd	1 st	Bob & Dave	63%	2 nd	= Ivy & Jan	60%
				2 nd	= Bill & Mike	60%

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A partner opens 1♠, what do you bid?
♠ 943	♠ K4	
♥ A1064	♥ AQJ73	With Hand B you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♥. What do you bid?
♦ AQ106	♦ -	
♣ Q6	♣ AKQ1075	
Hand C	Hand D	What do you open with Hand C?
♠ KQJ10973	♠ AQ53	
♥ -	♥ KQJ95	With Hand D everybody is vulnerable. LHO opens 1♠ and RHO responds 2♦, what do you do?
♦ Q109	♦ 5	
♣ AK8	♣ 763	
Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1♣, what do you bid?
♠ AQ2	♠ 964	
♥ Q94	♥ Q9854	With Hand F everybody is vulnerable. Partner opens 1♥, what do you bid?
♦ 92	♦ KQ3	
♣ AKQ94	♣ 43	
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1♥, what do you bid?
♠ 6	♠ AKQ3	(a) What do you open with Hand H?
♥ Q1062	♥ A8	(b) Suppose you choose 1♦ and partner responds 1♥, what do you bid now?
♦ K96	♦ KQ9873	
♣ AK1074	♣ Q	
Hand J	Hand K	What do you open with Hand J?
♠ A	♠ A	
♥ K863	♥ Q64	What do you open with Hand K?
♦ A653	♦ AJ976	
♣ KJ84	♣ A943	

Bidding Sequences Quiz

There is no interference in the following sequences: -

L	1♠ - 3♠	3♠ is invitational. But (a) How many ♠'s? (b) How many ♥'s?
M	1♠ - 4♠	(a) What is 4♠? (b) How many ♠'s?
N	1♥ - 2♦ - 2♥ - 3♥	(a) What is 3♥? (b) What is 3♥ if you play 2/1?
P	1♥ - 2♦ - 2♥ - 4♥	(a) What is 4♥? (b) What is 4♥ if you play 2/1?
Q	1NT - 2♥ - 2♠ - 4♣	What is 4♣?
R	1NT - 2♥ - 3♠ - 4♣	What is 4♣?

Don't bid Blackwood with a void

Board 6 from Wednesday 21st

If you bid Blackwood with a void, then you have no idea if partner's ace is useful or useless (in your void suit): -

Dealer:	♠ AQ8	<u>Table A</u>				
East	♥ 8654	West	North	East	South(B)	
E-W vul	♦ KQ103	-	-	pass	1♣	
	♣ 63	pass	1♥ (1)	pass	4NT (2)	
		pass	5♦ (3)	pass	5♥ (4)	
		all pass				
♠ 109753	N	♠ 962	<u>Expert Table</u>			
♥ 102	W E	♥ K9	West	North	East	South(B)
♦ 7642	S	♦ AJ985	-	-	pass	1♣
♣ 82		♣ J94	pass	1♥ (1)	pass	5♦ (2)
	♠ K4		pass	5♥ (5)	pass	6♥ (6)
	♥ AQJ73		all pass			
	♦ -					
	♣ AKQ1075					

- Table A: (1) It's a matter of style if you bid 'up the line' – so 1♦ or bid 1♥ here.
(2) What did you bid with this South hand B in this week's quiz? This 4NT was RKCB but is a poor bid with a void – if partner shows one or two key cards you do not know if that includes the useless ♠A or not. 4♦ (a splinter) is a very reasonable bid and is what I would bid if partner had never heard of Exclusion Roman Keycard Blackwood (ERKCB - see expert table). No, I did not just make that up – it is a convention advocated by Eddie Kantar (the world's acknowledged expert on RKCB) and many other experts. Nobody in this club plays it. I did bid it once with an ex-partner but we got a zero as he knew it was exclusion but did not realise it was Roman Keycard.
(3) 1 key card.
(4) With no idea what North has, South signed off.
- 'Expert'
Table: (1) Let's suppose that our expert also chooses 1♥ (I would bid 1♦ with a big hand).
(2) Exclusion RKCB. Asking for key cards outside ♦'s.
(5) One (so either the ♠A or the ♥K).
(6) 6♥ is now very clear.

And what happened? Three tables out of 4 stopped in 5♥, presumably with a similar Blackwood sequence. Just one pair bid 6♥. Everybody made 13 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- Do not bid Blackwood with a void, it is pointless.
- If you/partner do not play ERKCB, then splinter with a void and then cue bid the suit later.
- In a situation where 4NT would be RKCB, then a **jump** to the 5 level of a suit shows a void and asks for key cards: ERKCB. If ♥'s was the last suit bid (at the one level) then a jump to 3♠ is a splinter and so 4♠ would be ERKCB.

2/1 makes slam bidding a cinch

Board 28 from Wednesday 21st

3 out of 4 tables again missed an easy 6♥ making 13 tricks on this deal: -

Dealer: ♠ QJ32
West ♥ 932
N-S vul ♦ J43
♣ KJ10

♠ AK10	N	♠ 95
♥ AQ10874	W E	♥ J65
♦ Q10	S	♦ AK982
♣ 98		♣ A43
	♠ 8764	
	♥ K	
	♦ 765	
	♣ Q7652	

Table A

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

Expert Table

West	North	East	South
1♥	pass	2♦ (1)	pass
2♥	pass	3♥ (4)	pass
3♠ (5)	pass	4♣ (5)	pass
4NT (6)	pass	5♥ (7)	pass
6♥ (8)	all pass		

- Table A: (1) This is best – and support ♥’s next go.
(2) This now shows a sound raise to 4♥.
(3) But should West go slamming? Bidding Blackwood with a weak doubleton is poor bidding, with two weak doubletons it’s a very poor bid. A 4♠ cue bid is perhaps safe, but then you will reach slam if East holds something like ♠QJ8 ♥KJ5 ♦AK982 ♣43. The problem is that East needed to jump to 4♥ to show a good hand (3♥ is not forcing in standard) and there is no room for West to safely investigate slam.
- ‘Expert’ Table: (1) Our experts have no problem with this deal as they play 2/1 and this 2♦ bid is game forcing.
(4) And now 3♥ is the exact opposite of the above – it is looking for slam (4♥ would be fast arrival).
(5) Cue bids.
(6) East has shown the ♣A and so RKCB is relatively safe (a 5♠ cue bid is an alternative).
(7) Two key cards.
(8) West knows that just the ♥K or the ♦A are missing and so bids the small slam.

And what happened? Three tables out of 4 stopped in 5♥, presumably with a similar sequence. Just one pair bid 6♥. Everybody made 13 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- Playing standard, the sequence 1♥ - 2♦ - 2♥ - 3♥ is invitational, showing 3 card support.
- Playing standard, the sequence 1♥ - 2♦ - 2♥ - 4♥ is a sound raise. It may or may not be interested in slam.
- 2/1 makes slam bidding a walk in the park: -
- Playing 2/1, the sequence 1♥ - 2♦ - 2♥ - 3♥ is game forcing and slam seeking.
- Playing 2/1, the sequence 1♥ - 2♦ - 2♥ - 4♥ shows a sound raise without slam interest.

A jump raise promises 4 card support

Board 5 from Wednesday 21st

This time it's only a 4♥ game, but **nobody** found it!

Dealer: ♠ AKQ105
North ♥ Q932
N-S vul ♦ J97
♣ J

Table A

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

♠ 862	N	♠ J7
♥ KJ75	W E	♥ 8
♦ 53	S	♦ K842
♣ AK75		♣ 1098432
	♠ 943	
	♥ A1064	
	♦ AQ106	
	♣ Q6	

Expert Table

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

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this South hand A in this week's quiz? 3♠ is incorrect because (i) it promises 4 ♠'s, and (ii) it generally denies 4 ♥'s.

(2) North had a look at his opponents and said 'I'm not bidding game against you two'. Very wise as it turns out.

'Expert' Table: (1) Our experts know how to bid invitational hands with 3 card support. Bid a minor first and then raise a minimal rebid like 2NT(12-14) or 2♠ to 3♠.

(3) North bids his 2nd suit of course.

(4) And now that there's a 4-4 ♥ fit in addition to the 5-3 ♠ fit South has an easy raise to the 4♥ game (4-4 usually plays better than 5-3). If you are a bit pessimistic you can bid 3♥ but partner should raise this to 4♥ anyway.

And what happened? North at table A was right! East led his stiff♥, dummy played low, West won and carefully returned the ♥5 (Lavinthal, asking for a ♣), East ruffed, led a ♣, got a 2nd ruff and N-S were held to 9 tricks. Now out of 4 tables **nobody** found the 4-4 ♥ fit. So did North's caution pay dividends? No. At all of the other 3 tables North declared in 4♠ and it seems that their poor bidding was matched by their opponent's poor defence as everybody made 4♠ (even +1 and +2!).

The bottom lines: -

- The sequence 1♠ - 3♠ is invitational, promising 4 ♠'s.
- The sequence 1♠ - 3♠ is invitational, often denying 4 ♥'s.
- The 4-4 fit usually plays better than 5-3. Even with the bad ♥ break 4♥ makes.
- Return partner's suit.

At the other tables, did West not return a ♥? I guess North played it safe and went up with the ♥A? Presumably North's play was better than South's bidding?

Namyats does not leave partner guessing

Board 27 from Wednesday 21st

Two pairs found the nice slam on this deal. And we don't need an expert table this time as I like the bidding of Mike/Bill. Unfortunately it was against me!:-

Dealer:	♠ 42				
South	♥ A1095	West	North	East	South(C)
Love all	♦ A43	-	-	-	4♦ (1)
	♣ QJ102	pass	4♥ (2)	pass	4♠ (3)
		pass	4NT	pass	5♠ (4)
		pass	6♠	all pass	
♠ 6	N	♠ A85			
♥ QJ6432	W E	♥ K87			
♦ J762	S	♦ K85			
♣ 54		♣ 9763			
	♠ KQJ10973				
	♥ -				
	♦ Q109				
	♣ AK8				

- (1) What did you open with this South hand C in this week's quiz? It's about 8½ playing tricks but I suppose that many will open 2♣. I don't like that because (i) I like to have more points for a 2♣ opener, and (ii) the opponents may get in with ♥'s. And this latter point is true if you open 1♠ or some sort of strong two (say a strong 2♠ or Benjamin). So I want to open at the four level – but 4♠ could well be a **much** weaker hand. Is there a sensible solution? Yes, and Mike found it (guess he had a good teacher?). This hand is ideal for 4♦, Namyats, showing a good (as opposed to totally pre-emptive) 4♠ opener.
- (2) Simply asking South to bid 4♠. This is a good bid with no tenace in the North hand as he wants partner be declarer.
- (3) RKCB
- (4) Two key cards + ♠Q.

Simple, eh?

And what happened? Two out of 4 pairs bid the good slam. A ♦ lead would beat it but West has no reason that I can see to lead a ♦ (I led the ♥Q).

The bottom lines: -

- If you do not pay Namyats then you may miss slam if partner has a decent hand.
- Namyats 4♣/♦ shows a good 4♥/♠ opening – about 8½ playing tricks according to my Max Hardy book. South was spot on here.
- I hope this write-up silences my critic(s) (well, there is only one really – he says that I only write negative things – but then he does not even play Namyats himself).

Double = playable in the unbid suits

Board 23 from Wednesday 21st

If you double an opening bid, then the hand is playable in the other three suits (or very strong). If both opponents bid then the hand is playable in the other 2 suits (or very very strong). See what happens when you double with a mediocre one-suited hand: -

Dealer:	♠ 4					
South	♥ -		West	North	East(D)	South
Both vul	♦ KJ10962		-	-	-	1♠ (1)
	♣ AQ9854		pass	2♦ (2)	dbl (3)	2♥ (4)
			3♣ (5)	dbl (6)	3♥ (7)	dbl (8)
			all pass			
♠ J102	N	♠ AQ53				
♥ 1052	W E	♥ KQJ95				
♦ A87	S	♦ 5				
♣ KJ102		♣ 763				
	♠ K9876					
	♥ A8764					
	♦ Q43					
	♣ -					

- (1) Only 9 ‘points’ but I have no problem with (my partner) opening this hand. With 5-5 in the majors and a void this is a sound opener.
- (2) I chose to bid the ♦’s first as I can then bid the ♣’s later if necessary.
- (3) What did you bid with this East hand D in this week’s quiz? Since the opponents’ bidding so far has indicated 23+ points I think that pass is prudent. If you really want to bid (I would not) then bid 2♥. Double (showing ♥’s and ♣’s) is a terrible bid.
- (4) South obviously assumed that East had a big ♣ hand and so bid his hand out. I concur.
- (5) And I also agree with this bid. West has an excellent 9+ points with a fit for partner’s ♣’s. This 3♣ bid is totally correct, assuming partner has his bid.
- (6) Penalties.
- (7) As Hardy (or was it Laurel) once said, what a fine pickle I’ve gotten us into, Stanley.
- (8) Penalties.

And what happened? 3♥ doubled went -2 for a joint bottom. Amazingly, at another table, E-W got to 4♥ doubled and also went -2.

The bottom lines: -

- A take-out double is just that, take-out – so playable in the unbid suits.
- Do not make a take-out double with a single suited hand (unless extremely strong).

When the opponents are up at the 4-level, cue bidding, Blackwood whatever, do not ask about a bid unless it is going to affect your bid. If you are going to pass anyway, then don't ask until the end of the auction.

Dealer:	♠ J6				
West	♥ 932	West	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ 98	1♥	pass	1♠	pass
	♣ AQ8753	4♣ (1)	pass	4NT (2)	pass
		5♣ (3)	pass	5♥ (4)	pass (5)
		pass (6)	pass		
♠ AQ942	N	♠ K873			
♥ KQJ765	W E	♥ A8			
♦ 5	S	♦ AKJ			
♣ J		♣ K942			
	♠ 105				
	♥ 104				
	♦ Q1076432				
	♣ 106				

- (1) A splinter, showing ♣ shortage, agreeing ♠'s and showing about 18-19 points (this hand is worth that after partner has bid ♠'s). I have noticed a marked improvement in this player's bidding over the past few months. Not long ago he would always use 4♣ to ask for aces and now he's playing splinters and RKCB (1430 even?). Good show.
- (2) RKCB.
- (3) 1(or 4) keycards playing 1430.
- (4) But East did not understand this bid! Apparently he thought that they played standard RKCB and that partner has no ace, and so he signed off.
- (5) At this juncture one of the opponents asked East what the 4♣ bid was and East replied no keycards.
- (6) Now, having heard the explanation, West can be pretty sure that 6♥ is making. But it is totally unethical and against the laws to bid on in a situation like this. Fortunately West was totally ethical and passed.

And what happened? Everybody made 12 or 13 tricks in ♥'s, but only one pair bid the slam.
The bottom lines: -

- It is best to keep questions until the end of the auction as asking during the auction may tell the opponents that they have a mix-up.
- This is especially true up at the 4-level when you probably don't want to bid whatever.
- This is one advantage of having bidding cards. At the end of the auction an opponent can ask for the bidding cards to remain on the table and ask about all of the bids. Easy.
- If you play RKCB then standard is 3014 and 1430 would have to be agreed. Playing 1430 may *sometimes* be better, it is marginal, and the only real solution is to play Kickback. It's on the web but perhaps a bit advanced.

An 'Impossible' response?

Board 25 from Monday 19th

Here we have a very difficult hand using standard methods: -

Dealer: ♠ KJ63
North ♥ 85
E-W vul ♦ AK3
 ♣ J642

♠ 98	N	♠ 10754
♥ K762	W E	♥ AJ103
♦ 107654	S	♦ QJ8
♣ 83		♣ 107
	♠ AQ2	
	♥ Q94	
	♦ 92	
	♣ AKQ94	

Table A

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

Table B

West	North	East	South(E)
-	1♣	pass	4NT (1)
etc to 6NT			

Expert Table

West	North	East	South(E)
-	1♣	pass	2♣ (1)
pass	2♦ (4)	pass	2♠ (5)
pass	3♣ (6)	pass	5♣ (7)
all pass			

Table A: (1) What did you bid with this South hand E in this week's quiz? This is impossible without a decent system. In standard, neither 2♣ nor 3♣ are forcing and so this South invented a ♠ suit.

(2) And now he simply bid 3NT, hoping that partner would not convert to 4♠.

(3) I would bid 4♠ because in my style North may have just 3 ♠'s for his initial support and the 4-4 ♠ fit should play better.

Table B: (1) This South did not know what to do either, so he simply charged into slam.

'Expert' Table: (1) Our experts play Inverted Minors, So 2♣ is forcing, showing 11+ points and no 4 card major.

(4) Playing Inverted minors one is often looking for 3NT and stoppers are bid up the line. So 2♦ here shows a ♦ stop.

(5) And 2♠ shows a ♠ stop and denies a ♥ stop.

(6) North knows that the ♥'s are wide open and so signs off in 3♣.

(7) But South has a big hand. He knows that there are 2 ♥'s losers off the top but that should be all and so he bids the minor suit game.

And what happened? The fortunate 4-4 ♥ split means that 3NT makes, but 6NT made +1 and 3NT made +2. Seems that the defence did not know how to play this ♥ suit:

West should lead the ♥2 to East's ♥A and then the ♥J by East collects 4 ♥ tricks whatever South does.

The bottom lines: -

- Playing Inverted Minors is the only way to sensibly bid these hands when you have game going values and support for partner's minor (but no major to bid).
- The 'standard' approach when not playing Inverted Minors is to 'dig up' the other minor as that's forcing and is not lying about a major suit holding. So a somewhat uncouth 1♦ at (1)!
- If you do not play inverted minors then it could go: -
1♣ - 1♦ - 1♠ - 2♥ (4th suit, game forcing) - 3♦ (no ♥ stop) - 5♣.

Splinter!

Board 24 from Friday 23rd

Everybody stopped short in 5♥ with this board from Friday: -

Dealer:	♠ 104	<u>Table A</u>				
West	♥ AKJ73	West	North	East	South(G)	
Love all	♦ A1072	pass (1)	1♥	pass	2♣ (2)	
	♣ Q2	pass	2♦	pass	4♥ (3)	
		pass	4NT (4)	pass	5♦	
		pass	5♥ (5)	all pass		
♠ A98753	N	♠ KQJ2				
♥ 95	W E	♥ 84				
♦ QJ	S	♦ 8543	<u>Expert Table</u>			
♣ J63		♣ 985	West	North	East	South(G)
	♠ 6		pass	1♥	pass	3♠ (2)
	♥ Q1062		pass	4♦ (6)	pass	5♣ (7)
	♦ K96		pass	6♥ (8)	all pass	
	♣ AK1074					

- Table A: (1) Looks like a sound 2♣ opener to me.
(2) What did you bid with this South hand G in this week's quiz? If you do not play splinters then 2♣ is best – with the intention of jumping to 4♥ next go to show a sound raise to 4♥.
(3) A sound raise to 4♥. This is not shut-out and invites slam if opener has a good hand.
(4) It is not a good idea to bid Blackwood with a weak doubleton (two even)! Cue bidding really is a better approach (see expert table).
(5) North knows that South has just one black ace and so there could be two top losers in the other black suit and so he signed off.
- 'Expert' Table: (2) This is the correct bid for hand G – a splinter showing ♠ shortage, slam interest and agreeing ♥'s
(6) A cue bid, showing the ♦A
(7) A cue bid showing the ♣A. (RKC) Blackwood now is an alternative.
(8) North knows that South has the ♣A and a singleton ♠ and so only one top loser. With nothing else to cue he simply bids the small slam.

And what happened? Everybody stopped in 5♥, making 12 or 13 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- Playing splinters really is important.
- A splinter is usually followed by a cue bidding sequence (and then often by Blackwood). Often this is a far better approach than using Blackwood directly
- Bidding Blackwood with a weak suit is poor technique. With two weak suits it's ...?

Who underbid?

Board 22 from Friday 23rd

Nobody bid to the nice 4♠ with these E-W cards, so whose fault?: -

Dealer:	♠ J52				
East	♥ KJ	West(H)	North	East	South
E-W vul	♦ A52	-	-	pass	pass
	♣ K9763	1♦	pass	1♥	pass
		1♠ (1)	pass	pass (2)	pass
♠ AKQ4	N	♠ 9873			
♥ A8	W E	♥ Q10972			
♦ KQ9873	S	♦ 4			
♣ Q		♣ A42			
	♠ 106				
	♥ 6543				
	♦ J106				
	♣ J1085				

- (1) What did you bid with this West hand H(b) in this week's quiz? 1♠ is nowhere near good enough (it's not forcing). With a shapely 20 count a jump to 2♠ is called for. If partner has something like ♠ J73 ♥109732 ♦A4 ♣642 then he will clearly pass and 5♦ is cold.
- (2) What would you do with this East hand? 2♠ is best as partner may well have a decent 16 count or so and make game. And even if he does not have a big hand then 2♠ should be safe and it will prevent the opponents from coming in with their ♣'s.

And what happened? 1♠ made +5 and scored an average! One pair managed to stop in 2♦ and another pair overbid to a dodgy 6♠ but made it on the ♦A lead.

The bottom lines: -

- A jump, like 1♦ - 1♥ - 2♠ shows a big hand (18+) with 4 ♠'s and 5+ ♦'s.
- 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ is not forcing.

Spacefiller

A guy walks into the local welfare office, marches straight up to the counter and says, "Hi... You know, I just HATE drawing welfare. I'd really rather have a job."

The social worker behind the counter says, "Your timing is excellent. We just got a job opening from a very wealthy old man who wants a chauffeur and bodyguard for his beautiful nymphomania daughter. You'll have to drive around in his Mercedes, but he'll supply all of your clothes.

Because of the long hours, meals will be provided. You'll be expected to escort her on her overseas holiday trips. You will have to satisfy her sexual urges. You'll be provided a two-bedroom apartment above the garage.

The starting salary is \$200,000 a year."

The guy, wide-eyed, says, "You're bullshittin' me!"

The social worker says, "Yeah, well... You started it."

Worth a raise to 3♥?

Board 5 from Friday 23rd

South at table A was unjustly criticised by her partner on this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ Q87	West	North	East	South(F)
North	♥ AJ1062	-	1♥	pass	2♥ (1)
N-S vul	♦ A5	all pass			
	♣ A98				
♠ KJ3	N	♠ A1052			
♥ -	W E	♥ K73	(1) What did you bid with this South hand F in this week's quiz? Now this is where some people get confused about the Law.		
♦ J984	S	♦ 1076	If necessary you may consider competing to 4♥ (10 combined trumps) but with no singleton at this vulnerability I would simply raise to 2♥ and compete no higher than 3♥ later.		
♣ KQJ652		♣ 107			
	♠ 964				
	♥ Q9854				
	♦ KQ3				
	♣ 43				

And what happened? N-S scored a top as everybody else bid 4♥ or even 5♥. At the end of the Hand North commented that South should raise to 3♥ (and then he would bid 4♥ and go down like the rest of the field). I disagree. A 3♥ bid (unlike 4♥) is constructive, showing 11-12 points and inviting game. This South hand is nowhere near; bid 2♥ and go to 3♥ later if pushed, and at this vulnerability go no further unless partner invites (and then bid game).

The bottom lines: -

- Don't incorrectly criticise partner; this South bid perfectly.
- The difference (between bidding 3♥ directly and bidding 2♥ followed by 3♥ if pushed) is that 3♥ promises 11-12 points and 2♥ followed by 3♥ shows 6-9 points but 4♥'s (or maybe 5♥'s if vul).
- A jump raise (1♥ - 3♥) is constructive (11-12) unless you play something like Bergen raises.

Do not open 1NT with a singleton

North hands 4 & 25 from Friday

I witnessed the same North as the above deal open 1NT with both of these hands. He then explained that opening 1NT with a singleton ace is OK. **It is not.** Apart from the fact that it is very silly, you are **not allowed** to open 1NT with a singleton. So how should you bid these hands? :-

Hand J	Hand K	With Hand J some would open 1♦. However, I always open 1♣ when 4-4 in the minors. So I open 1♣ and have no rebid problem.
♠ A	♠ A	Over 1♦ I bid 1♥, I raise 1♥ to 3♥ and over 1♠ I bid 1NT. Note that a 1NT (12-14) rebid is fine as a singleton ace in partner's suit should be downgraded. Over 1NT I pass or bid 2♣.
♥ K863	♥ Q64	Hand K is even easier. Open 1♦. Raise 1♥ to 2♥. Over 1♠ then either 1NT or 2♣ are fine (purists will say 2♣). Over 1NT bid 2♣.
♦ A653	♦ AJ976	
♣ KJ84	♣ A943	
♠ A	But note that it is allowed to open 2NT with a singleton. I would not argue if you chose to open this hand with 2NT.	
♥ KJ63		
♦ AQ53		
♣ AQJ4		

What is 4♣ after a transfer?

Board 2 from Friday 23rd

E-W got too high on this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ 4				
East	♥ 9742	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ QJ985	-	-	1NT	pass
	♣ A83	2♥	pass	3♠ (1)	pass
♠ KJ8732	N	4♣ (2)	pass	4♦ (3)	pass
♥ Q86	W E	4♣	pass	4NT	pass
♦ K4	S	5♦ (4)	pass	6♠ (5)	all pass
♣ J6					
	♠ AQ96				
	♥ A103				
	♦ A1032				
	♣ K9				
	♠ 105				
	♥ KJ5				
	♦ 76				
	♣ Q107542				

- (1) A super-accept. With a max and 4 ♠'s this is fine.
- (2) I really don't know what West was doing here. I believe that he thought that it was Gerber, but simply bidding 4♣ is the obvious bid. The 4♣ bid in this sequence is a cue bid.
- (3) A cue bid, showing the ♦A.
- (4) One key card (playing standard RKCB)

And what happened? 6♠ was one down for a bottom.

The bottom lines: -

- I have written a leaflet on when 4♣ is ace-asking or a cue bid, it's on the web and also in the conventions folder.
- Basically, 4♣ is Gerber only if partner's last **natural** bid was 1NT or 2NT and no trump suit has been agreed. So: -

After 1NT - 2♥ - 2♠ -	4♣ is Gerber (2♠ was not a natural bid)	- sequence Q
	4NT is quantitative	
After 1NT - 2♥ - 3♠ -	4♣ is a cue bid (♠'s are agreed as trumps)	- sequence R
	4NT is RKCB.	

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 2♦. You plan to raise a minimal rebid by partner (2NT or 2♠) to 3♠, showing an invitational hand with 3 ♠'s. A direct 3♠ bid now is a poor bid because it denies 4 ♥'s and promises 4 ♠'s.
- Hand B: 4♦. A splinter agreeing ♥'s and showing ♦ shortage, with the intention of cue bidding ♦'s again (to show a void). 4NT is a very poor bid with a void as you do not know if partner's response includes the useless ♦A or not. But actually the very best bid, instead of a 4♦ splinter, is 5♦ - Exclusion Roman Keycard Blackwood, agreeing ♥'s and asking for keycards outside ♦'s.
- Hand C: It depends upon your system. It's too good for 4♠, I don't like 2♣ with just 15 HCPs, I don't like 1♠ as it let's the opponents in cheaply with their ♥'s. I don't like a strong two (or a Benji two) for the same reason. So there is no sensible opening? Of course there is, provided that you know about Namyats. Undoubtedly the best (only sensible) bid is a 4♦ Namyats – showing a good 4♠ opener (about 8½ playing tricks).
- Hand D: Pass. The opponents have advertised 23+ points and you are vulnerable. The only vaguely sensible bid is 2♥. Double is atrocious as partner will undoubtedly bid ♣'s and then you are up at the 3 level and going for a number.
- Hand E: 1♦. You cannot bid 2♣ or 3♣ as that is not forcing. 3NT is an underbid as there may be slam and a red suit may be wide open in any case, You cannot bid a major because you may end up in a 4-3 fit with 3NT a far better contract. So the only thing to do is lie in the other minor and wait to see what happens. If you play inverted minors then it's simple, a forcing 2♣.
- Hand F: 2♥. The hand is not worth 3♥. Now some people seem to be confused here, at favourable vulnerability some may consider 4♥ and I would not argue too much, but a 3♥ bid is not pre-emptive. It shows 11-12 points and this hand, although nice, is way short. So bid 2♥ to show your values and then compete to 3♥ later if necessary to show the extra length. I would compete to just 3♥ when vulnerable.
- Hand G: 3♠. A splinter agreeing ♥'s, showing ♠ shortage and slam interest.
- Hand H: (a) 1♦. It's not good enough for 2♣ and the totally unsuitable shape for 2NT.
(b) 2♠. But now you have to show your strength. After partner has responded there is game, so force with a jump to 2♠. 1♠ here is not forcing.
- Hand J: 1♣. Do not open 1NT with a singleton, even an ace.
- Hand K: 1♦. Do not open 1NT with a singleton, even an ace.

Bidding Sequences Quiz Answers

- L 1♠ - 3♠ 3♠ is invitational. (a) promising 4 ♠'s (b) usually denying 4 ♥'s
You may occasionally make this bid with 3 **good** ♠'s – but then you would never have 4 ♥'s.
- M 1♠ - 4♠ (a) what is 4♠? – weak. (b) How many ♠'s? – usually 5.
- N 1♥ - 2♦ - 2♥ - 3♥ (a) what is 3♥? – 11-12 pts, invitational.
(b) what is 3♥ if you play 2/1? – game forcing, slam interest
- P 1♥ - 2♦ - 2♥ - 4♥ (a) what is 4♥? – 13+, maybe slam interest.
(b) what is 4♥ if you play 2/1? 13ish, with no slam interest.
- Q 1NT - 2♥ - 2♠ - 4♣ what is 4♣? – Gerber, the NT bidder has not shown a suit.
- R 1NT - 2♥ - 3♠ - 4♣ what is 4♣? – A cue bid (♣A), ♠'s are agreed and 4NT would be Roman Keycard Blackwood.