



Last week's winners: (Monday's results were mislaid)

Friday 13/6/03      1<sup>st</sup> Hans/Jan 52 VPs      2<sup>nd</sup> Garry/John 48 VP's

**Count Your Tricks**

North	South	West	North	East	South
♠ 8753	♠ AKQ102	-	-	1♦	dbl
♥ Q52	♥ A874	3♦ (1)	pass	4♦	4♠
♦ 4	♦ 63	pass	pass	5♦	dbl
♣ QJ1062	♣ AK	pass	5♠	all pass	(1) weak

West leads the ♦10 to East's ♦K, East continues with ♦A. How do you play?  
Answer at the end of this news-sheet.

## Bidding Stayman When 5-4 (or 4-5) in the Majors

Hand A Hand A is Hand (d) from the page I photocopied from a book and added to last week's news sheet. I was asked why this hand did not transfer after partner opened 1NT. Obviously my writings are clearer and easier to understand than the professionals? With this 'garbage' hand you just want to play in a better spot than 1NT. So transfer and get partner playing in 2♠? That would often be fine, but it may just be that partner has 4♥'s and you miss a 4-4♥ fit. So best to bid 2♣ then pass a 2♥ or 2♠ bid but convert 2♦ to 2♠. Thus the Stayman sequences: -

1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♠ shows a weak hand with 5♠'s & 4♥'s and is drop dead.

1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥ shows a weak hand with 5♥'s & 4♠'s and is drop dead.

Hand B OK, but what about stronger 5-4 (or 4-5)'s? You can transfer into the 5 card major and then bid the 4 carder (so 1NT - 2♥ - 2♠ - 3♥ here). This sequence is game forcing. However, the recommended modern practice is to reserve the transfer sequences for 5-5 hands and to bid Stayman on *all* major suit 5-4's (no matter what strength). With this example bid Stayman and raise any major suit response to game. If opener responds 2♦ then jump to 3♠, game forcing, offering partner the choice of 4♠ or 3NT. If you play the SMOLEN convention, then jump in the 4 card major so that opener is always declarer. Thus (if not playing Smolen): -

1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♥ shows 5♥'s, 4♠'s game forcing. Opener should bid 3NT or 4♥.

1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♠ shows 5♠'s, 4♥'s game forcing. Opener should bid 3NT or 4♠.

Hand C

Holding a 5 card major and a 4 (or 5) card minor, then transfer to the major and then bid the minor. Game forcing.

♠ QJ852

♥ K4

♦ AQ87

♣ 74

So, 1NT - 2♥ - 2♠ - 3♦ shows 5♠'s, 4+♦'s and is game forcing.

Just for completeness, I mentioned that 5-5 hands in the majors after a 1NT opening from partner are shown by transferring by the more experienced players these days. But which suit do you transfer into? The answer is: -

1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ shows 5-5 in the majors and is invitational

1NT - 2♥ - 2♠ - 3♥ shows 5-5 in the majors and is game forcing

Makes sense to me. Keep the bidding lower on the invitational hand. Both sequences are 5-5 as all 5-4 major hands use Stayman as mentioned above.

Editor's note: Smolen has been superseded by Quest transfers

## The forced reply after a Transfer

West	North	East	South
1NT	pass	2♦	3♣
3♥	pass	?	

This sequence occurred on Monday, when an eventual 4♥ contract was reached. At the end of play I asked West why he bid 3♥ when he had only a doubleton. He replied that he had been told that he should always complete the transfer. Yes, but not if there is intervention! Partner has another bid. In this particular sequence 3♥ is a super accept, normally promising a max and 4♥'s. If the intervention is a double, then only complete the transfer with 4 trumps.

## Top or Bottom from sequences?

You hold ♦ 10987, what do you lead? Obviously the ♦10, top of a sequence. Dummy plays low and partner produces the ♦K which declarer wins with the ♦A. Where is the ♦Q? You have no idea if your partner will choose randomly when holding ♦KQx. That is why one should always play lowest from a sequence when you are not leading it. Consider this example:

	♦ 864	
	N	
♦ K1052	W E	♦ QJ9
	S	
	♦ A63	

E-W are defending. West leads ♦2, dummy played low and East thoughtlessly plays the ♦Q. Often this may make no difference; but not if West is one of those annoying players like Hans, Chuck, Clive (or even myself on a good day) who will note which card was played. When declarer (south) wins this with ♦A then West will place South with ♦J and will not continue the suit when he regains the lead. If East had played the ♦J and declarer the ♦A then West *knows* that East has ♦Q (South would have played ♦Q if he held both ♦A and ♦Q).

So, when leading always lead top of a sequence. When following suit (whoever leads it), always play the bottom of a sequence. If you are declarer, of course, you play whichever card is more likely to deceive opponents.

## **2♠ Redoubled, making!**

Now Ian came under a bit of stick (for unsound overcalls) in the last news-sheet. He agreed it was warranted but wanted me to print something about his 2♠ redoubled contract that made (didn't he do well). Ian overcalled a 1NT opener with 2♠ holding ♠10xxxx last week. He was doubled and his partner redoubled (having full faith in Ian's overcalls). The contract should have gone down but made because one defender played ♦Q from ♦QJx when the suit was led. The previous paragraph was not written for nothing.

## **Too Tough?**

More than one member has told me that they enjoy the news sheets, especially when they can relate to the people mentioned. Sometimes I may seem a bit tough, but I only really go up against the 'big guys'. Hans, Chuck etc are far better players than myself and they can take a bit of stick. With less experienced players I tend not to mention names. Anyway, with Chuck gone for a while I have to find material elsewhere. I did mention Ian and Bill by name last week, but only because they are steadily improving (Ian's overcalls have progressed from Kxxx to now 10xxxx). Who knows, a few more weeks and he may actually be relied upon to have a decent (by my standards) 5 card suit. It will take a long time before he has the requirements for a Hans overcall.

And hasn't the Ian/Bill partnership taken off! Neither of them has had consistent results like this before. Bill seems to have taken on a new lease of life and will soon be the expert on Stayman/transfers etc? What a difference a new motivated partner (for Bill) makes. When these two had a sit-out on Monday they discussed the news sheet and Stayman /transfers for 20 minutes. This would have seemed inconceivable a few months back. Good stuff. I'm glad that the effort I put into the new sheets is appreciated, even to the extent of Ian ringing me up to ensure that his 2♠ redoubled contract was included!

## **The take-out double and response**

Board 15 from Friday

East	Your LHO opens 2♥ (weak) and partner doubles for take-out. What do you do? I covered this situation fairly comprehensively in news-sheet 17.
♠ J3	The one thing that you do not do is pass. This hand has no defence and
♥ 8653	partner is short in ♥'s. 2♥ doubled and making cost 670 points,
♦ J76	team-mates were not impressed. So what should you bid? 3♣ is clear-
♣ Q1082	cut, your cheapest suit. The bid promises 0-9 points.
West	While we are discussing the board, let's just look at partner's hand. Your
♠ KQ872	RHO opens 2♥. What is your bid? Now this is so easy that I would not be
♥ A10	reproducing the hand if it was not for a poor (in my opinion) bid by an
♦ Q32	experienced player on Friday. Obviously a 2♠ overcall, nothing else can
♣ A65	even be remotely considered. Hans chose a double! I can see no reasoning
	behind this at all. An appalling double. The hand is not strong enough to
	bid 3♠ after partner's 3♣/♦ response. The only sensible contract with these E-W hands is
	2♠. It will not be reached if you double. A Double Dutch double? enough said.

## Not Using Stayman

East hand 4 from Friday

♠ J963 Partner opens a strong 1NT, what is your response? A combined 29-31  
♥ AQ3 points, so Stayman and look for a slam? That's what happened at one table  
♦ KJ7 and 6NT went two down (even though partner had a 17 count). This hand  
♣ K102 is totally flat with the only 4 card suit headed by the Jack. Slam is out of  
the question. Even 31 combined points is nowhere near good enough  
without a fit or a long suit. Hans held this hand at our table and bid 3NT, ignoring the 4 card ♠ suit.  
Correct? Now you will undoubtedly have read throughout the news-sheets that you should never deny a 4  
card major. However, I did state in news-sheet 28: 'Playing in 3NT rather than 4 of a major *only applies*  
*when the other three suits are well covered (with at least 27 combined pts) and usually only when*  
*the 'trump' suit is very poor.'* This hand fits that description perfectly and is one of the *very few*  
examples when Stayman should not be used.

## Count Your Tricks - Solution

Dealer:	♠ 8753	West	North	East	South
East	♥ Q52				
N-S vul	♦ 4	-	-	1♦	dbl
	♣ QJ1062	3♦ (1)	pass	4♦ (2)	4♠ (3)
		pass	pass	5♦ (4)	dbl
♠ 6	N	♠ J94	pass	5♠	all pass
♥ 1063	W E	♥ KJ9			
♦ Q1092	S	♦ AKJ875			
♣ 98543		♣ 7			
	♠ AKQ102				
	♥ A874				
	♦ 63				
	♣ AK				

First of all, what can we say about the bidding? 3♦ at (1) is a good bid. A jump in partner's suit after a double is best played as pre-emptive, it certainly prevented North from entering the auction. And what about East's further pre-empt with 4♦ at (2)? At favourable vulnerability I prefer 5♦. I do not like the 5♦ bid at (4), if East is prepared to go to the five level, then he should do so at (2) – that would really make it difficult for South. South's 4♠ at (3) was good judgement, as was North's 5♠ at (5) – it would have been tricky if East had bid 5♦ at (2).

Anyway, onto the play. The ♦A takes the first trick, what do you do when ♦K is led?

Many players would go wrong here because of failing to count. Assuming that ♠'s do not split 4-0 there are 5 ♠ tricks, 5 ♣ tricks and the ♥A; eleven in total. The ♦ ruff in dummy can be a twelfth, but if declarer thoughtlessly ruffs in dummy then the ♣ tricks in dummy are unreachable.

If the trumps are split 3-1 (the most likely split) then there is no entry to North's ♣'s after trumps have been drawn. Thus declarer must not ruff the 2<sup>nd</sup> ♦, but throw a ♥ from dummy. South then wins the next trick, draws trumps, ♣AK and has the ♠8 as an entry to the three top ♣'s.

If South was in the poor 6♠, then he would have to ruff the 2<sup>nd</sup> ♦ and hope that the trumps are 2-2.