

Mon 25 th	N-S	1 st	Sid/John Gavens	56%	2 nd	Bob/Dave	53%
Mon 25 th	E-W	1 st	Eddie/Phil	61%	2 nd	Bjorn/Kees	60%
Wed 27 th		1 st	Chuck/Terry	69%	2 nd	Richard/Ken	66%
Fri 29 th		1 st	Terry/John Gavens	60%	2 nd	Chuck/Louis	56%

Bidding Quiz**Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated**

Hand A Hand B

♠ Q3 ♠ Q86
♥ A5 ♥ AJ3
♦ Q1094 ♦ 875
♣ 97632 ♣ A876

With Hand A LHO opens 1♥ and RHO bids 1♠, what do you do?

With Hand B partner opens 1♦, what do you bid?

Hand C Hand D

♠ A3 ♠ KJ104
♥ AK75 ♥ 1074
♦ 82 ♦ AK106
♣ AQ1065 ♣ K10

With Hand C LHO opens a weak 2♥ and this is passed round to you. What do you do?

What do you open with Hand D?

Hand E Hand F

♠ J984 ♠ J72
♥ 4 ♥ AQ1073
♦ A763 ♦ 1087
♣ KJ73 ♣ Q8

With Hand E RHO opens 2♥ and you have to pass - it's nice shape. but really is not strong enough to make a take-out double.

It goes round to partner who bids 3♣; what do you do?

With Hand F partner opens 1♦ and RHO overcalls 1♥, what do you do (everybody is vulnerable).

That infamous Unusual 2NT again

Board 1 from Monday 25th

I've said it before the UNT is the most abused convention out there.....

Dealer:	♠ Q3				
North	♥ A5	West	North(A)	East	South
Love all	♦ Q1094	-	pass	1♥	pass
	♣ 97632	1♠	2NT (1)	3♠	5♣ (2)
		dbl	all pass		
♠ A10762	N	♠ K954			
♥ 73	W E	♥ QJ1064			
♦ J863	S	♦ A2			
♣ K8		♣ QJ			
	♠ J8				
	♥ K982				
	♦ K75				
	♣ A1054				

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand A in this week's quiz? Pass is obvious to me, but this North chose the UNT. Usually weak and definitely promising 5-5 in the minors.
- (2) Expecting more cards and points in the minors opposite, South quite correctly (in my humble opinion) bid 5♣.

And what happened? 5♣ doubled went two down for 300 to E-W for a poor score. Even if E-W bid to 4♠ it is doubtful that they can make it.

The bottom lines: -

- The UNT guarantees at least 5 cards in each minor.
- It is unwise to bid the UNT when all of your points are in the majors.
- I will not comment further on a hand that satisfies neither of the above criteria.
- There are more pass cards in the bidding box than any other – why is it sometimes so difficult for people to find them?

Who should bid 1NT?

Board 10 from Monday 25th

An easy 3NT game was missed on this deal. Who would you blame – or would you blame both?

Dealer:	♠ KJ104	West	North(D)	East	South(B)
North	♥ 1074	-	-	pass	pass
E-W vul	♦ AK106	pass	1♦ (1)	pass	1NT (2)
	♣ K10	all pass			

♠ 752	N	♠ A93
♥ K652	W E	♥ Q98
♦ Q4	S	♦ J932
♣ Q942		♣ J53
	♠ Q86	
	♥ AJ3	
	♦ 875	
	♣ A876	

- (1) What did you open with this North hand D in this week's quiz? It is decent shape – 4432 type shape is 'average' – you deduct only for 4333 type shape and add on for better shapes. So it's an average 14 count – but then look at those 10's. It's generally accepted that three 10's are worth a point, so with four of them this is a clear 1NT opener.
- (2) And what did you bid with this South hand B in this week's quiz? 2♣ really is a poor bid – it is passing the buck and you will be fixed next go if/when partner bids 2NT. No, it's best to make the decision now: 1NT (6-9/10) or 2NT (11-12)? I deduct a point for the 4333 type shape, so it's a 10 count and with no 10's or 9's for me it's a clear 1NT bid.

And what happened? 9 tricks were made at 5 out of the 6 tables, so 1NT scored badly as 3 N-S pairs bid the game.

The bottom lines: -

- Add on a point for three 10's, more for four 10's.
- Deduct a point for the 4333 type shape.

Another easy 3NT missed

Board 25 from Monday 25th

Another easy 3NT game was missed on this deal and I was asked what went wrong: -

Dealer:	♠ Q5				
North	♥ QJ9862	West (C)	North	East(E)	South
E-W vul	♦ K4	-	2♥	pass	pass
	♣ 942	3♣ (1)	pass	3♠ (2)	pass
		4♠ (3)	all pass		
♠ A3	N	♠ J984			
♥ AK75	W E	♥ 4			
♦ 82	S	♦ A763			
♣ AQ1065		♣ KJ73			
	♠ K10762				
	♥ 103				
	♦ QJ1095				
	♣ 8				

- (1) So what did you bid with this West hand C in this week's quiz? This sort of thing comes up a lot – when not sure, double? But double is most certainly a very poor bid here with only a doubleton ♠. So bid 3♣ then? That's possible but then how are you going to get to the likely best spot of 3NT? – partner most certainly has nothing in ♥'s. No, the best bid with this West hand C is 2NT.
- (2) And what did you bid with this East hand E in this week's quiz? You have a good fit for partner's ♣'s but raising ♣'s is not the answer – how many times have I said that 3NT is usually easier than 5 of a minor. Now you could mention the ♠ suit but then you're may be going past 3NT and partner will probably expect 5+ ♠'s. Even though partner failed to find his best bid of 2NT it's still not too late, the best bid with this East hand E is 3♥ - ask partner if he has a ♥ stop (which he may have overlooked last time?).
- (3) Last chance. West can still bid 3NT here – but he chose not to.

And what happened? 4♠ went 5 down (so -500) which was not good as every other E-W made a +ve score, with 3NT making exactly being the most popular.

I would imagine that most players bid ♥'s at some level with this East hand and so I was surprised that only one N-S pair doubled them: -

Dealer:	♠ AQ103				
South	♥ J	West	North	East	South(F)
Both vul	♦ AQJ43	-	-	-	pass
	♣ KJ2	pass	1♦	1♥ (1)	pass (2)
		1NT (3)	dbl (4)	2♥ (5)	dbl (6)
		all pass			
♠ K86	N	♠ 954			
♥ 2	W E	♥ K98654			
♦ K965	S	♦ 2			
♣ 109754		♣ A63			
	♠ J72				
	♥ AQ1073				
	♦ 1087				
	♣ Q8				

- (1) A weak jump overcall is pushing it with this hand when vulnerable. But with decent shape and a 6 card suit I think that 1♥ is fine.
- (2) What did you bid with this South hand (F) in this week's quiz? Against vulnerable opponents I think it's best to go for the penalty. This N-S pair play negative doubles and so South passed, awaiting North's 'automatic' re-opening double.
- (3) But playing negative doubles you sometimes get the opponents for more than if you simply play penalty doubles. West should pass with this hand but thought that 1NT might be a decent spot.
- (4) North's bid says 'no it ain't'. He knows now that partner probably has the ♥'s sitting over the overcaller.
- (5) Whether East corrects into his 6-carder or passes really does not matter now.
- (6) And now South (me) gets in his penalty double – but one level higher!

And what happened? 2♥ doubled made 3 tricks and went for 1100. I note that at every other table South was declarer in 3NT making exactly and so scoring 600. Clearly it must have been South who bid NT every time as he was declarer. Is it only me who likes to double opponents at the one or two level with hands like this? I would not even dream of bidding NT.

The bottom lines: -

- With a holding like AQ10 xx sitting over overcaller, think penalty double (i.e. pass if playing negative doubles) – especially if they are vulnerable.
- With a poor hand and no fit for partner, pass his overcall.
- If you play negative doubles and want to penalise RHO then you have to pass. Partner (at least any regular partner of mine) will normally re-open with a double that you can then pass for penalties.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: Pass. The hand is not good enough for a take-out double. And, what's more, it is totally unsuitable for an unusual 2NT (weak, promising 5-5 in the minors). With virtually all of the points in the opponent's suits it's usually best to defend.
- Hand B: 1NT. 2♣ really is pointless – it simply delays any decision and may make life difficult for partner. So grab the bull by the horns and make the decision now (1NT or 2NT). With this 4333 type shape and no intermediates I bid 1NT.
- Hand C: 2NT. With excellent ♥'s this is clear. Double would be a very poor bid with just two ♠'s and there really is little point in mentioning the ♣ suit when NT looks like the best spot. And when you know that partner cannot possibly have anything in ♥'s you have to bid NT yourself.
- Hand D: 1NT. It's average shape (so neither add on nor deduct) but the four tens are easily worth an extra point or more.
- Hand E: 3♥. You have a decent hand with excellent ♣ support. You want to be in 3NT if partner has a ♥ stop – so ask him. 4♠ is not a good bid as partner will probably expect a 5+ card (and stronger) suit. 4♣ is not a good bid as it goes past a possible 3NT contract.
- Hand F: Pass. Awaiting partner's 'automatic' re-opening double when playing negative doubles. If you do not play negative doubles then double (penalties). Any sort of NT bid here is a poor choice – go for the penalty.