

Mon	5 th	1 st	Bob/Monte	60%	2 nd	Ken/Clive	58%
Wed	7 th	1 st	Terry	56%	2 nd	Clive/Tomas/Kenneth	54%
Fri	9 th	1 st	Clive/Ken	62%	2 nd	Ian/Tomas	61%

The standings in the Gold Cup competition are getting closer; currently we have: -

1st **Chuck** 1855.7 2nd **Dave** 1835.3 3rd **Bob** 1832.0 4th Ken 1740

So Bob is nearly up with Dave; and with the way it works, if Bob gets a score above 56.5% his total goes up, so a 60% session would add on 3.5 which would be enough to overtake Dave (provided Dave does not get a score above 56.5%). The 56.5% figure happens to be the 30th best result for both of them. It's a real cliff hanger, and bear in mind that Dave has the handicap of often not playing or sometimes playing with a beginner on Wednesdays.

Chuck needs a score above 56.7% to improve and Ken needs above 55.3% to improve.

I have been asked if I could hold an 'advanced' bidding class. If you are interested, then ask me. I will do it before the Wed and Fri sessions if there is enough demand. But I'll probably go back to one of these days for beginners when Don/Cheryl return.

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A partner opens 1♣ and RHO overcalls 1♠. It's favourable vulnerability; what do you bid?
♠ K72	♠ A74	
♥ AJ	♥ -	(a) What do you open with Hand B?
♦ 87542	♦ AK1053	(b) What do you rebid if partner responds 1♥?
♣ K92	♣ KQ963	(b) What do you rebid if partner responds 1♠?

Hand C	Hand D	Do you open Hand C in 2 nd seat?
♠ KJ64	♠ KJ64	
♥ KQ8	♥ KQ8	
♦ 9762	♦ 976	Do you open Hand D in 2 nd seat?
♣ K5	♣ K52	

Hand E	Hand F	With Hand E partner opens 1NT, what do you do?
♠ A964	♠ J87	
♥ K874	♥ AQ3	What do you open with Hand F?
♦ 52	♦ AQ96	
♣ 854	♣ AJ2	

What does the last bid in these sequences show? :-

Sequence W	1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣?
Sequence X	1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♥?
Sequence Z	1♦ - 1♥ - 1NT - 2♠?

Don't Abuse the Reverse

Board 22 from Friday 2nd

I kept this hand over from last week (last week's news-sheet quiz was full). There is a saying in bridge: 'A reverse shows strength – but don't (ab)use the reverse to show strength'.

Dealer: ♠ Q10982
 West ♥ AQ65
 E-W vul ♦ 82
 ♣ J2

Table A

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

♠ K6	N	♠ A74
♥ KJ1098	W E	♥ -
♦ QJ96	S	♦ AK1053
♣ 85		♣ KQ963
	♠ J53	
	♥ 7432	
	♦ 74	
	♣ A1074	

'Expert' Table

West	North	East(B)	South
pass	pass	1♦ (1)	pass
1♥	pass	2♣ (5)	pass
3♥ (6)	pass	4♣ (7)	pass
? (8)			

- Table A (1) What did you open with this East hand B(a) in this week's quiz? See experts.
 (2) A reverse, showing 16 + points. But unfortunately promising more ♣'s than ♦'s.
 (3) 2♥ may be better here, but this was an unfamiliar partnership and West did not know if East would take 2♥ as forcing.
 (4) And East can now never show his shape whatever West had bid.
- 'Expert' Table (1) 1♦ is correct when 5-5 in the minors, however many points.
 (5) What did you rebid (assuming you opened 1♦) with this East hand K(b) in this week's quiz? Partner's 1♥ bid has not improved this hand and a simple 2♣ is quite sufficient now. This is rarely passed (and if it is then it is surely the best spot) and partner will usually give preference with a weak hand.
 (6) West has options here. 3♦ may be preferable.
 (7) East now shows his shape.
 (8) And West either bids 5♦ or 4♦ (forcing, to look for slam).

And what happened? 3NT went down. Other tables were in 2♦, 3♦ or 5♦ all making 12 tricks.

The bottom lines: -

- When 3-3 in the minors, open 1♣.
- When 4-4 in the minors, it's up to you/your partnership understanding. Some advocate always opening 1♦; others (including me) always open 1♣ and yet others will simply open the strongest.
- When 5-5 in the minors, open 1♦. This is a must.
- A reverse shows a good hand, but promises greater length in the first bid suit.

Be wary if LHO bids NT

Board 19 from Monday 5th

If RHO opens, you overcall, and LHO bids 1NT, then he is around 7-10 with a stop in your suit. So if you bid again, be wary – LHO has advertised a decent holding in your suit: -

Dealer:	♠ K72				
South	♥ AJ	West	North(A)	East	South
E-W vul	♦ 87542	-	-	-	1♣
	♣ K92	1♠	1NT (1)	pass	pass
		2♠	(2) dbl	(3) all pass	
♠ A109864	N	♠ Q53			
♥ K32	W E	♥ 10975			
♦ QJ6	S	♦ 1093			
♣ A		♣ 876			
	♠ J				
	♥ Q864				
	♦ AK				
	♣ QJ10543				

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand A in this week's quiz? As I mentioned last week (and above), a 1NT bid after an overcall should be a decent hand (with a stop); there is no need for a 'courtesy' 1NT in case partner has a good hand as he gets another go anyway. This actual hand is at the top end but with no points in the long suit and a fragile ♠ stop I think that 1NT is better than 2NT, especially as RHO has overcalled at red, so presumably has a decent hand.
- (2) And this is a decent hand. I cannot really criticise the 2♠ bid. Although passing would probably work out very well as you will get a ♠ lead and may set 1NT.
- (3) But it's favourable vulnerability, and with 11 points opposite an opener North decided to go for the 'magic' 200. Good bidding.

And what happened? Just one down, but that 'magic' 200 was a top for N-S.

The bottom lines: -

- When LHO bids 1NT over your overcall, be very wary of bidding again; especially if vulnerable.

Points in the suit

Board 4 from Monday 5th

Now we all know about my 'things' (always re-open with a double when playing negative doubles; never deny a 4 card major; knock off a point for 4333 type shape etc.) but now it's time for one of Chuck's. Chuck is always quite insistent about having points in your suit (especially for pre-empts) and his advice should have been heeded on this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ AKQ93				
West	♥ K76	West	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ A	2♠ (1)	pass (2)	pass	pass (3)
	♣ K1087				
♠ 108652	N	♠ J			
♥ Q84	W E	♥ AJ95			
♦ K8	S	♦ Q109732			
♣ AQ9		♣ J4			
	♠ 74				
	♥ 1032				
	♦ J654				
	♣ 6532				

- (1) Certainly a very wild pre-empt. What would Chuck say? Well actually I know what Chuck said (he was North).
- (2) So what do you do with an enormous hand when RHO bids your suit? You could double followed by NT but with vulnerable opponents it is often best to pass.
- (3) I was South and will normally balance with a double here, but with just 1 point that is pushing it a bit?

And what happened? Two down, that 'magic' 200 was again a top for N-S. At most other tables it was North playing in ♠'s and not doing too well.

The bottom lines: -

- A 5 card suit to the 10 really is pushing it, especially vulnerable.

Knock off a point?

Board 4 from Monday 5th

Hand C	Hand D	What did you open with Hands C & D in the quiz? I was asked if I would open this hand C from Monday in 2 nd seat. Apparently one South passed and got a good score as a result.
♠ KJ64	♠ KJ64	Maybe, but maybe he would have got a good score anyway?
♥ KQ8	♥ KQ8	The asker suggested that one should knock off a point for an ace-less hand. Now aces are great cards, but kings are also good.
♦ 9762	♦ 976	I would always open this hand (1♦), especially as it has the ♠ suit.
♣ K5	♣ K52	

One should adjust for aces when very strong (say 20+); I don't deduct, but add on for a hand with 3 or 4 aces. Move the ♦2 to the ♣ suit so that we have Hand D so it's 4333 shape then 'obviously' I would pass. You should **always** knock off a point for **any** 4333 type shape. And, what's more, you will find that this complies with the rule of 20 – hand C is an opener and Hand D is not (only 19). The rule of 20 automatically compensates for the bad 4333 type shape.

That 4333 type shape again

Board 4 from Friday 9th

All N-S pairs overbid this hand from Friday (but it was not always South): -

Dealer: ♠ A964
 West ♥ K874
 Both vul ♦ 52
 ♣ 854

Table A

West	North(E)	East	South(F)
pass	pass	pass	1♦ (1)
pass	1♥	pass	2NT (2)
pass	3NT (3)	all pass	

♠ KQ3	N	♠ 1052
♥ J10962	W E	♥ 5
♦ K74	S	♦ J873
♣ Q3		♣ K10976
	♠ J87	
	♥ AQ3	
	♦ AQ96	
	♣ AJ2	

Table B

West	North(E)	East	South(F)
pass	pass	pass	1NT (1)
pass	2♣ (4)	pass	2♦
pass	2NT (5)	pass	3NT (6)
pass			

- Table A (1) What did you open with this South hand F in this week's quiz? See table B for the correct answer. At two tables South thought it too strong for 1NT and so opened 1♦ ...
- (2) ... and rebid 2NT to show 18-19.
- (3) And North then clearly has enough to bid the game.
- Table B (1) This South got it right, he knows all about how bad the 4333 type shape is, so correctly opened just 1NT.
- (4) But unfortunately it was his partner this time who overbid. What did you bid with this North hand E in this week's quiz? 2♣ here is simply an undisciplined gamble. It may 'work' if there is a 4-4 major suit fit (but you are one level higher) but it is almost certain to lead to disaster if partner has no major. This North hand is a poor 7 count and should pass 1NT...
- (5) ... and here we see the problem, North has to overbid over a 2♦ response.
- (6) And now South is maximum for his bidding and correctly accepts.

And what happened. Even with a combined 25 count, 3NT is hopeless and went down (by one, two or even 3) tricks at every table. Why? Because the 4333 type shape is terrible, it has no trick making potential. This deal is a classic example and those who do not believe me (and think that 18 points is 18 points regardless) should study this deal.

The bottom lines: -

- Knock of a point for the 4333 type shape

Do not bid Stayman without invitational values unless you can cope with **any** response.

Bidding After Partner's 1NT rebid.**Checkback Stayman (CBS) and
New Minor Forcing (NMF)**

How did you get on with sequences W, X & Z in this week's quiz?

Hand W	Sequence W	1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣
♠ KJ76 ♥ 4 ♦ 65 ♣ Q107642		In this sequence, if you do not play Checkback Stayman (CBS) or New Minor Forcing (NMF) then 2♣ is a weak bid, showing 4 of the major bid and usually 6 of the minor. This hand is typical and partner is expected to pass. If you play CBS or NMF then you would have to bid 3♣ with this hand. I understand that one player bid 2♣ in a sequence like this one Monday with a 13 count and a ♣ suit. It's weak unless you play CBS/NMF.
Hand X	Sequence X	1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♥
♠ KJ765 ♥ Q942 ♦ 65 ♣ 62		In this sequence, the 2♥ bid is again weak. But this time it promises 5 ♠'s and 4 (or 5) ♥'s. Opener should pass or correct. This is the same whether or not you play CBS/NMF.
Hand Y	Sequence W	1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣
♠ KJ965 ♥ KJ94 ♦ 65 ♣ 62		So how do you bid a hand like this? Responding 1♠ must be correct; but after partner's 1NT rebid a 2♥ bid would be weak and this hand has invitational values. The only real solution is to play CBS (or NMF). The 2♣ asks opener to clarify his major suit holdings. CBS (or NMF) guarantees invitational or better values. In this situation the responses would be: -
	2♦ =	Not 4 ♥'s or 3 ♠'s, minimum points
	2♥ =	4 ♥'s (possibly also 3 ♠'s)
	2♠ =	3 ♠'s but not 4 ♥'s
	2NT =	Not 4 ♥'s or 3 ♠'s, maximum points
	other =	Opener can bid above 2NT to describe his hand further provided that he is non-min. There are various schemes here.
Hand Z	Sequence Z	1♦ - 1♥ - 1NT - 2♠
♠ KJ76 ♥ AK942 ♦ A5 ♣ 62		This sequence is totally different. Responder has reversed and the bid is forcing. This hand has game going values and the reverse informs partner of his shape (5 ♥'s) so that opener can pick the best denomination. I witnessed one player trying to pass this 2♠ bid one Monday - I advised him to look closely at partner's bidding before playing the pass card that he was pulling out of the box.

Which is best - Checkback Stayman or New Minor Forcing?

Hand Y	Sequence: -	1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2?
♠ KJ765		So what's the difference between CBS and NMF?
♥ KJ94		They are the same if the opening bid was 1♦ (2♣ asks) but if the opening
♦ 65		was 1♣ then it's different. Playing CBS 2♣ asks; playing NMF 2♦ asks
♣ 62		and 2♣ is simply putting partner back in his first bid suit.

Which is best? I prefer CBS as opener has more room to show his strength. Also, the 2♦ bid can be used as another artificial bid (Inverted Checkback), but that's another story. If you use 2♦ (NMF) then opener has to get to the 3 level to show a max hand when he has no major suit holding. Playing CBS, if you happen to have a weakish hand with ♣ support after a 1♣ opening then you have to jump to 3♣. I see no problem there as it keeps the opposition out.

So in response to a 2♦ NMF bid we have: -

2♥	=	4♥'s (possibly also 3♠'s)
2♠	=	3♠'s but not 4♥'s
2NT	=	Not 4♥'s or 3♠'s, minimum.

Here we see the problem, with 2♦ as the asking bid there is no room for opener to show min/max when he has no major. Thus this 2NT has to show a minimum and if opener is maximum then he has to bid something above 2NT. Not quite as good as CBS, but workable.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: 1NT. This shows a good hand (around 8-10) with a ♠ stop. Since RHO has made a vulnerable overcall and this is a very fragile single ♠ stop it's only worth 1NT. And it's not that good a hand with the points in the wrong places (a 5 card suit headed by the 8 is not good) and so I think that 2NT would be pushing it too much.
- Hand B: (a) 1♦. Always open the higher ranking when 5-5.
(b) 2♣. Quite sufficient, the 1♥ bid has not improved your hand.
(c) 3♣ (but I won't argue if you say 2♣). The ♠ response from partner has improved this hand and I would make a game-forcing 3♣ bid.
- Hand C: 1♦. The shape is OK and it's worth an opener in any seat.
- Hand D: Pass. Knock off a point for that totally flat 4333 type shape.
- Hand E: Pass. If you bid Stayman you are fixed over a 2♦ response. A subsequent 2NT bid is then invitational and you will probably get/be too high, whether or not partner presses on.
- Hand F: 1NT. Knock off a point for the 4333 type shape. Simple.