

		<u>Winner</u>		<u>Runner-up</u>	
Mon 14 th	N-S	1 st Paul(Ire)/Henrik	63%	2 nd Keith/Mike	56%
	E-W	1 st Alan/Gerry	64%	2 nd Knud/Lars	59%
Wed 16 th	N-S	1 st JohnGavens/Terry	55%	2 nd Ursula/Bessy	54%
	E-W	1 st Chuck/Dave	63%	2 nd Paul(Ire)/Henrik	62%
Fri 18 th	N-S	1 st Alan/Bob	64%	2 nd Jean-C/Thorlef	58%
	E-W	1 st Paul Kelly/Dave	62%	2 nd Ian/Terry/Ron	56%

The strange entry of Ian/Terry/Ron is because Ian rudely walked out on his partner after just 4 boards. Seems he got one his better results when he did not actually play?

Bidding Quiz

Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated

Hand A	Hand B	With Hand A it is unfavourable vulnerability: - (a) What do you open in 1 st seat? (b) What do you open if you play strong twos?
♠ A74 ♥ KQ10984 ♦ - ♣ 9842	♠ 7 ♥ KJ83 ♦ A6542 ♣ A93	With Hand B partner opens 1♥, what do you bid?
Hand C	Hand D	What do you open with Hand C?
♠ 96 ♥ AKQ8 ♦ 764 ♣ AK75	♠ 873 ♥ A874 ♦ 8653 ♣ 92	With Hand D LHO opens 1♣, partner overcalls 1♥ and RHO bids 2♦, what do you do?
Hand E	Hand F	What do you open with Hand E?
♠ J10 ♥ KJ92 ♦ AKQ10 ♣ J42	♠ J ♥ 7 ♦ 973 ♣ AKQJ10532	What do you open with Hand F?
Hand G	Hand H	With Hand G partner opens 1NT, what do you bid?
♠ K983 ♥ A53 ♦ J75 ♣ 975	♠ AK96 ♥ AKQ102 ♦ 86 ♣ 87	With Hand H partner opens a gambling 3NT – showing a long solid minor suit with no outside ace or king. What do you bid?

Pre-empt in 5th seat?

Board 12 from Monday 14th

Dealer:	♠ A74	West	North(A)	East	South
West	♥ KQ10984	-	pass (1)	1♦ (2)	pass
N-S vul	♦ -	1♠	3♥ (3)	pass	pass
	♣ 9842	dbl	all pass		
♠ QJ32	N	♠ 85			
♥ 72	W E	♥ AJ653			
♦ Q86	S	♦ KJ943			
♣ AQJ6		♣ K			
	♠ K1096				
	♥ -				
	♦ A10752				
	♣ 10753				

- (1) What did you open with this North hand A in this week's quiz? Playing weak twos then I guess that 2♥ would be the favourite. With this good suit and a void I would not argue with 3♥; and if playing strong twos then pass, 3♥ and 1♥ are all worth considering. Anyway, this North plays strong twos and passed, no problem.
- (2) Quite why East opened 1♦ instead of 1♥ is a mystery.
- (3) This is incredibly silly. Now I said that I would not argue with it as an opening bid, but to come in the 'sandwich seat' at the three level at unfavourable vulnerability is sheer lunacy. Both opponents have bid and exchanged information – it's too late for a pre-empt now. His 'excuse' that the hand was too good for an initial 3♥!! Quite how good a vulnerable opening 3♥ is meant to be was not stated. I asked why not 2♥ now if you really have to bid? There were some muttering about 'strong', but by a passed hand I did not bother to enquire further. The only logical reason that I can see for passing and then coming in with 3♥ is that it's a decent hand with 4 ♠'s – not the case here. And what happened? 800 away and a well deserved total zero.

The bottom lines: -

- Pre-empt to the limit first go and do not bid again later.
- Whatever system you play, a jump overcall by a passed hand cannot be strong.
- It's too late later.
- Passing and subsequently 'pre-empting' is something totally new to me. 5th seat bidding?
- Actually, there is a situation where pre-empting later is sensible – that's when you have an outside 4 card major and so should not normally open with a pre-empt.

No super-accept available?

Board 23 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer:	♠ Q				
South	♥ QJ7632	West	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ 109	-	-	-	1NT (1)
	♣ AJ54	pass	2♦	pass	2♥ (2)
		pass	pass (3)	pass	
♠ J853	N	♠ K762			
♥ A8	W E	♥ 9			
♦ AQ65	S	♦ J873			
♣ 1097		♣ K863			
		♠ A1094			
		♥ K1054			
		♦ K42			
		♣ Q2			

- (1) Weak, so 12-14.
- (2) If this South hand was about 4 points stronger and I was playing a strong NT, then I would super accept (I super-accept with a non-min and 4 trumps). But playing a weak NT super-accepting is unsound as partner has promised no points.
- (3) Playing a weak NT you need about 11 points to invite. This hand is borderline – 6 ♥'s is great but the singleton Q is not. However, singleton honours are no so bad when partner has opened NT and 3 ♥ would be a reasonable gamble. But with just 12 points South would probably decline the invitation anyway.

And what happened? South made 11 tricks (the defence was not perfect) and scored a joint top. And at other tables? Two did bid 4♥ but they both went one down; two tables stopped in 3♥ but they both made +1 and there were the usual spurious results.

The bottom lines: -

- When you open 1NT and partner transfers, then you can super-accept with 4 trumps. I prefer to be non-min (so 16-17) and I do not consider super-accepting to be sound when playing a weak NT.

A cold slam – but difficult to bid?Board 10 from Wednesday 16th

Dealer: ♠ 7
 East: ♥ KJ83
 Both vul: ♦ A6542
 ♣ A93

♠ KQ863 N ♠ AJ104
 ♥ 106 W E ♥ 5
 ♦ 973 S ♦ QJ10
 ♣ 864 ♣ J10752
 ♠ 952
 ♥ AQ9742
 ♦ K8
 ♣ KQ

Table A

West	North(B)	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
pass	4♥ (1)	pass	pass (2)
pass			

'Table Expert'

West	North(B)	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
pass	3♠ (1)	pass	4NT (3)
pass	5♣ (4)	pass	6♥ (5)
all pass			

- Table A:
- (1) What did you bid with this North hand B in this week's quiz? 4♥ is a very poor bid. The best bid is that made at our 'Experts' table; but playing simple methods you should bid 2♦ and then bid 4♥ next go – this is a 'delayed game raise' and shows a sound raise to 4♥ as opposed to a direct raise which is pre-emptive.
 - (2) Obviously South passes opposes the advertised weak response.
- 'Expert' Table:
- (1) This is the correct bid – a splinter. It sets ♥'s as trumps and shows ♠ shortage; it is a hand with values for a sound raise to 4♥ and slam aspirations.
 - (3) And now it's as easy as pie. South only needs to know about aces and the king of trumps – so RKCB.
 - (4) Playing standard 0314 responses this shows 3 key cards.
 - (5) That's all South needs to know.

And what happened? Only one table out of 7 found the slam.

The bottom lines: -

- Considering how many times I have written about splinters it is disappointing that only one pair found this 'trivial' slam – It really is trivial playing splinters.
- And playing RKCB also helps.
- I keep on about how 31 points is not enough for slam without a fit or a long suit, and this deal shows just how important a fit and shape are. It's a lay-down slam with just 26 combined points.
- Shortage with a fit for partner is excellent if partner has no wasted values in the suit, and the way to tell him is to splinter.

Obey the Law

Board 8 from Friday 18th

Dealer: ♠ AKQ9
 West ♥ Q3
 Love all ♦ 10
 ♣ KJ10543

♠ 873 N ♠ 1054
 ♥ A874 W E ♥ KJ652
 ♦ 8653 S ♦ A7
 ♣ 92 ♣ AQ8
 ♠ J62
 ♥ 109
 ♦ KQJ942
 ♣ 76

Table A

West(D)	North	East	South
pass	1♣	1♥	2♦
pass (1)	3♣	all pass	

Table B

West(D)	North	East	South
pass	1♣	1♥	2♦
2♥ (1)	3♣	3♥ (2)	all pass

Table A (1) What did you bid with this West hand D in this week's quiz? It's only 4 points but that's not what matters, with 4 ♥'s you have to support partner. The best bid here is actually 3♥ - go to the limit of the Law (9 trumps). This is a weak bid, as with a sound raise to 3♥ or better you would cue bid the opponent's suit.

Table B (1) Now actually I was West here but I did not bid 3♥ as my partner was not experienced and I assumed he would take it as a good hand. But I still had to bid, and so I chose 2♥ with the intention of bidding 3♥ later if necessary.
 (2) This bid is probably unsound (one above the Law) but it's reasonable; I would pass (you all know about me and the Law) but then West (the real me) would have bid 3♥ anyway.

And what happened? Only two E-W pairs competed to 3♥, making exactly for a shared top. At other tables N-S were usually down in ♣ or ♦ contracts but 50 or 100 to E-W did not beat 140 for 3♥ making.

The bottom lines: -

- Obey the Law – compete to the total number of trumps. In the above example it is West who knows that there are 9 trumps and it should be him (not East) who goes to the 3 level. Points are largely irrelevant in these competitive situations.
- A jump raise to 3 of partner's 1♥/♠ overcall is best played as pre-emptive.
- With a sound limit raise or better, cue bid the opponent's suit.

The Gambling 3NT

Board 18 from Friday 18th

Dealer: ♠ 10854
 East ♥ J6
 N-S vul ♦ KQ10542
 ♣ 9

Table A
 West North East(E) South
 - - 3NT(1) pass
 6NT (2) all pass

♠ AK96 N ♠ J
 ♥ AKQ102 W E ♥ 7
 ♦ 86 S ♦ 973
 ♣ 87 ♣ AKQJ10532
 ♠ Q732
 ♥ 98543
 ♦ AJ
 ♣ 64

Expert Table
 West(H) North East(E) South
 - - 3NT(1) pass
 5♣ (2) all pass

- Table A (1) What did you open with this East hand E in this week's quiz? It's far too good for a 3♣ pre-empt and actually there is a bid for specifically this hand type – 3NT. An opening 3NT bid is best played as the gambling 3NT – showing a solid 7, 8 or 9 card minor suit. There are variations as to how much is allowed outside and the best treatment is to play absolutely nothing outside. Thus the bid is not actually gambling at all – you've told partner exactly what you have.
- (2) But this is gambling of course. But this E-W pair were an unfamiliar partnership and West did not know if East promised something outside for the bid.
- 'Expert' Table (1) Our experts have discussed it and play the best variation if the gambling 3NT – absolutely guaranteeing no outside ace or king.
- (2) And now it's as easy as pie (for our experts). West knows that there are just two losers – in the minor that East does not have, so he bids 5♣ which is pass or correct. Actually, there is a slight improvement on this bidding. 4♣ would be pass or correct and 4♦ is conventional – asking partner to bid a singleton/void if he has one as there would be slam opposite ♦ shortage but I won't go into that here and it's slightly complex when opener's shortage is in the other minor and you need a conventional bid (4NT) with no shortage.

And what happened? A ♦ lead would be obvious from the North hand; and with this South hand I would lead the ♦A against this bidding. South at Table A chose something else and E-W scored a lucky 13 tricks. Other results were all over the place, with just 3NT going two down at one table.

The bottom lines: -

- Play the gambling 3NT
- And it's best to play it with nothing outside.
- Lead an ace against 6NT when an opponent is known to have a long solid suit – if you don't lead it you may not get it later; and who knows – maybe partner has the king.

With a balanced hand, open 1NT – part 1

Board 3 from Monday 3rd May, 2004

We've seen this hand before (news-sheet 79) but it reappears for a couple of reasons. It recently appeared in my column in the Pattaya Mail and Henrik (a top-flight visitor from Norway) came up to me on Wednesday and asked if I wrote the articles. I admitted my guilt and he then said that he totally agreed with me. He added that if anybody did not open 1NT and then produced the absurd sequence of East below he would be laughed out of their club. The second reason for repeating it was that there was a similar hand on Friday (next page).

In the article I said that I would open 1NT but that not a single person in the club agreed with me. Henrik is the first. Perhaps others will realize the wisdom of our ways when they review the bidding below and that of the next deal. I won't mention any names, but the 'laughable' East (Henrik's words, not mine) was somebody who is always criticizing others and lately continually trying to find fault with my bidding!

West	East	West	North	East(C)	South
♠ QJ85	♠ 96	-	-	-	pass
♥ -	♥ AKQ8	pass	pass	1♣ (1)	pass
♦ AJ832	♦ 764	1♦ (2)	pass	1♥ (3)	pass
♣ 10943	♣ AK75	1♣ (4)	pass	1NT (5)	pass
		2♣ (6)	pass	3NT (7)	all pass

I won't bother to go into all of the bids again, the pertinent points are: -

- (5) 12-14
- (6) I don't like NT
- (7) 18-19

And how should the bidding go? Easy: 1NT - 2♣ - 2♥ - 2NT - 3NT.

The bottom lines: -

- With a balanced hand within your opening 1NT range.
- Do not lie about your strength with your NT rebid.
- You do not guarantee honours in all suits when you open 1NT and, indeed, you may sometimes have two weak suits.
- Think about your rebid(s) before you open.
- Open 1NT and you never have a rebid problem.

With a balanced hand, open 1NT – part 2

Dealer: ♠ A752
 North ♥ 1084
 N-S vul ♦ 83
 ♣ KQ108
 ♠ J10 N ♠ K983
 ♥ KJ92 W ♥ A53
 ♦ AKQ10 S ♦ J75
 ♣ J42 ♣ 976
 ♠ Q64
 ♥ Q76
 ♦ 9742
 ♣ A53

Board 21 from Friday 18th

Table A

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

Table B

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

- Table A (1) What did you open with this West hand E in this week's quiz? It's much the same as Hand C – you should open 1NT as otherwise you have rebid problems.
 (2) And, lo and behold, West has no rebid! 2NT here is 18-19 and is a gross overbid. 1NT would be 12-14 and is an underbid. The only remotely sensible bid is a reverse into 2♥ but I would like a stronger/more shapely hand and the reverse promises 5+ ♦'s in any case. No, there is no sensible rebid having failed to open 1NT. It's a shame that this West had not noted my article in the Pattaya Mail – or maybe he simply disagrees with me?
 (3) East obviously has game opposite 18-19 and 3NT is correct.
- Table B (1) This West reads the news-sheets (well actually he writes them, 'twas I). Seems I do practice what I preach.
 (4) What did you bid with this East hand G in this week's quiz? 2♣ followed by 2NT is fine with 8 points, but this flat (4333) hand is not worth 8 points and I would pass.

And what happened? 3NT deservedly went two down. One pair stopped in 1NT and 2NT was usually made on the nail.

The bottom lines: -

- With a balanced hand within your opening 1NT range, open 1NT.
- Do not lie about your strength with your NT rebids.
- Downgrade a hand with 4333 type shape

Incidentally, what would you lead with this North hand? The ♣K looks right to me – top of a (near) sequence. This lead promises the queen and the jack or ten. South should overtake and push another ♣ through declarer. Note that South really should do this as if South plays the ♣5 or ♣3 on the first trick North will probably take it as discouraging, placing declarer with ♣AJ and will not continue the suit.

Contacting Others

We now have a list of some member's/guest's telephone/e-mail details on the web-site. When you open the main page there is a 'contact members' link in the left column. When you click that you'll be asked for a password. At the moment it contains 20+ entries, if you would like your details included then give them or e-mail them to me and I'll include them and tell/e-mail you the password.

Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A: (a) 2♥. With this nice shape 3♥ is possible, but at this vulnerability 2♥ must be best.
(b) pass or 3♥ or even 1♥ are possible. With no weak 2♥ available I guess that some may choose 3♥. And an aggressive player may choose 1♥ - it's only 19 for the rule of 20 but 1098 in your long suit are worth a point. I would not argue with any of these options – but I would argue if you decided to pass and then 'pre-empt' later!
- Hand B: 3♠. A splinter agreeing ♥'s and showing a sound raise to 4♥ with ♠ shortage.
If you do not play splinters, then bid 2♦ followed by 4♥ - this is a 'delayed game raise' and shows a sound raise to 4♥. A direct 4♥ bid here is pre-emptive.
- Hand C: 1NT. Don't worry about the weak suits. If you don't open 1NT with a balanced hand smack in the middle of your 1NT opening range it will be impossible to find sensible bids later.
- Hand D: 3♥. This is best played as pre-emptive. With a sound raise to 3♥ it's best to cue bid with 3♦.
If you/your partner do not play this scheme then you cannot pass with 4 card support – so bid 2♥ with the intention of bidding 3♥ later if necessary.
- Hand E: 1NT. Same comments as Hand C.
- Hand F: 3NT. The gambling 3NT. If you play this convention this hand is perfect – promising a long solid minor with absolutely nothing outside.
- Hand G: Pass. With 8 points 2♣ followed by 2NT if partner does not bid ♠'s is fine. But this hand, with it's totally flat 4333 shape, is not worth 8 points.
- Hand H: 5♣, pass or correct. You know that there are just two losers in a minor and this bid asks partner to pass if his suit is ♣'s or else to correct to 5♦. There is actually a more precise bid here (4♦ to ask about partner's shape in case there is a slam) but I won't go into that now.