

Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> N-S	Hugh & Sally	62%	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Bob P & Mike	57%
	1 <sup>st</sup> E-W	John & Kenneth	57%	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Ivy & Wolfgang	52%
Wed 25 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	Pal & Valm (Iceland)	68%	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Tomas & Phil	62%
Fri 27 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	Albert & Knud	61%	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Lewis & Terry	59%

**Bidding Quiz**

**Standard American is assumed unless otherwise stated.**

**Hand A**

**Hand B**

With Hand A it's both vulnerable. Partner opens 1♣ and RHO doubles, what do you bid?

♠ A1096  
♥ A98  
♦ K7543  
♣ 10

♠ J73  
♥ Q107  
♦ 103  
♣ AKQ65

With Hand B RHO opens 1♥. What do you bid?

**Hand C**

**Hand D**

With Hand C RHO opens 1♥. What do you bid?

♠ KQ  
♥ 108  
♦ AKJ1042  
♣ QJ5

♠ K10643  
♥ 986542  
♦ 4  
♣ 7

With Hand D it's favourable vulnerability. LHO opens 1♦ and RHO bids 2NT (11-12). What do you do?

**Hand E**

**Hand F**

With Hand E everybody is vulnerable and you are dealer. What do you open?

♠ A  
♥ K6  
♦ A76  
♣ J1087543

♠ AJ72  
♥ 932  
♦ KQ6  
♣ AQ6

What do you open with Hand F?

**Bidding Sequences Quiz**

- G** 1NT pass 4♣ pass 4♣ is Gerber and 4♠ is two aces. What is 4NT?  
4♠ pass 4NT
- H** 1♣ dbl redbl What is redouble?
- J** 1♦ pass 2NT 3♦ 2NT is 11-12 with no 4-card major, what is 3♦?

## The Championship Races

The current standings for all competitions are in the results folder and on the web. Please inform me if you notice any errors.

There are currently 6 members qualified for the gold cup (30 results above 53%): -

1	Dave Cutler	1859.4
2	Bob Pelletier	1795.8
3	Michael Guin	1759.1
4	Bill Noe	1747.5
5	Phil Lovell	1742.8
6	Kenneth Johansson	1734.8

### Don't double when you can overcall – part 1

Board 11 from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>

If RHO opens and you have a 5 or 6 card suit, then overcall. A simple overcall at the two-level shows about 11-17 points.

Dealer:	♠ KQ				
South	♥ 108	West	North(C)	East	South
Love all	♦ AKJ1042	-	-	-	pass
	♣ QJ5	1♥	dbl (1)	2♥	2♠ (2)
		pass	3♦ (3)	pass	3♠ (4)
		pass	4♠ (5)	all pass	
♠ J76	N	♠ 105			
♥ AQJ93	W E	♥ K76			
♦ 63	S	♦ Q875			
♣ A96		♣ K1072			
	♠ A98432				
	♥ 542				
	♦ 9				
	♣ K108				

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand C in this week's quiz? A two-level overcall describes the hand perfectly and double will only get you into trouble when partner bids ♠'s.
- (2) This is easily enough for a free bid of 2♠.
- (3) North now mentions his ♦ suit one level higher than necessary if he had bid it before.
- (4) North has shown a very good hand and so South rebids his 6-card major.
- (5) And North overbids for the third time.

And what happened? 4♠ went two down for a bottom.

The bottom lines: -

- With a single suited hand do not double but overcall.
- Double followed by a new suit bid shows a hand too strong to overcall, so about 18+ points.
- A 2-level overcall is about 11-17 points.
- It is dangerous to double 1♥ without 4 ♠'s – you need a very good hand (much more than a relatively balanced 16).

## Don't double when you can overcall – part 2

Board 4 from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>

It's the same dynamic North in action again – seems he does not mind continually going down?

Dealer:	♠ J73				
West	♥ Q107	West	North(B)	East	South
Both vul	♦ 103	1♥	dbl (1)	pass	2♠ (2)
	♣ AKQ65	pass	4♠ (3)	all pass	

♠ AK2	N	♠ 10
♥ AK9543	W E	♥ 82
♦ 98	S	♦ KQJ54
♣ J10		♣ 98432
	♠ Q98654	
	♥ J6	
	♦ A762	
	♣ 7	

- (1) What did you bid with this North hand B in this week's quiz? A two-level overcall describes the hand perfectly and double will only get you into trouble when partner bids ♠'s. I think I've said that before.
- (2) A jump opposite a double shows about 8-10 points, With 6 ♠'s and a 4 card ♦ suit this hand is worth it.
- (3) But this is just suicidal. It's one trump and about 5 points light for the bid.

And what happened? This time 4♠ went three down for a bottom.

The bottom lines: -

- With a single suited hand do not double but overcall.
- A 2-level overcall is about 11-17 points.
- It is dangerous to double 1♥ without 4 ♠'s – you need a very good hand (much more than a relatively balanced 13).
- I'm glad that my word processor has a copy/paste capability – I would get fed up typing the same thing over and over again.

## A simple play problem

Board 23 from Friday 27<sup>th</sup>

♠ K8	N	♠ 764	West	North	East	South
♥ A73	W E	♥ KQ52	-	-	-	2♠
♦ A1075	S	♦ K9632	2NT	pass	3♠ (1)	pass
♣ AQJ6		♣ 10	3NT	all pass		

(1) Stayman

You are West, declarer in 3NT.

North leads the ♠Q which South ducks (playing an encouraging card). Obviously you have no problem had South risen with the ace but now you have to win with the ♠K and North still has a ♠. How do you continue?

## An amusing duck

Board 23 from Friday 27<sup>th</sup>

It is often correct to hold up; but not if you can win and then let partner take the next five tricks against a 3NT contract...

Dealer:	♠ Q5	West	North	East	South
South	♥ J1086	-	-	pass	2♠
Both vul	♦ 84	2NT	pass	3♠ (1)	pass
	♣ K8543	3NT	all pass		

♠ K8	N	♠ 764
♥ A73	W E	♥ KQ52
♦ A1075	S	♦ K9632
♣ AQJ6		♣ 10
	♠ AJ10932	
	♥ 94	
	♦ QJ	
	♣ 972	

(1) Stayman. Denying a ♠ stop playing Lebensohl.

There's nothing much to the bidding, with four out of 5 tables reaching the decent 3NT contract. But what was your answer to the play problem on the previous page? Declarer knows the ♠ position exactly and cannot afford to take the ♣ finesse unless it is absolutely necessary.

So declarer should first try the ♦'s. As it happens they split 2-2 and so there are 10 tricks (1 ♠, 3 ♥'s, 5 ♦'s and 1 ♣). If the ♦'s fail to split then the only hope is that the ♥'s split and the ♣ finesse works (then 1 ♠, 4 ♥'s, 2 ♦'s and 2 ♣'s).

One declarer went two down and so obviously took the unnecessary ♣ finesse. And Dave told me the amazing tale of another declarer who also foolishly took the ♣ finesse but North ducked!! Presumably North was waiting for declarer to finesse again (difficult)? Declarer was then forced to play sensibly and so undeservedly scored an outright top for 3NT+3.

## Open 1NT with a balanced 15-17

Board 11 from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>

I've said it on numerous occasions; you most certainly do not need a stop in every suit to open 1NT.

Dealer:	♠ AJ72	West	North(F)	East	South
East	♥ 932	-	-	pass	pass
Both vul	♦ KQ6	pass	1♣ (1)	pass	1♥
	♣ AQ6	pass	3NT (2)	all pass	

♠ Q95	N	♠ K108
♥ K8	W E	♥ QJ104
♦ J9853	S	♦ A104
♣ 732		♣ J109
	♠ 643	
	♥ A765	
	♦ 72	
	♣ K854	

(1) What did you open with this North hand F in this week's quiz? It's a clear 1NT opener. If you do not open 1NT with a balanced 15-17 you will have a rebid problem.

(2) But this North thought that he had no problem. 2NT would be an overbid and he found 3NT! And this 3NT bid is doubly bad as it inhibits finding a possible 4-4 ♠ fit.

And what happened? 3NT was bid at two tables, going two down.

The bottom lines: -

- Always open 1NT with a balanced hand within your 1NT opening range, do not worry about a weak suit (or two). If you do not open 1NT you will have a rebid problem.

## Giving Count – part 1

Board 14 from Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>

There are various signalling systems in common use and many of them are mentioned on the web-site in ‘general bridge topics’ → ‘signals in defence’. As people are continually changing partners in this club I try to encourage a uniform scheme. We generally give attitude on partner’s lead and play Lavinthal discards. But one other often very important convention that I have not yet emphasised in the news sheets is the need to give count.

Dealer:	♠ QJ53				
East	♥ 873	West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ A84	-	-	2NT	pass
	♣ A97	3NT	all pass		

♠ J64	N	♠ AK87
♥ 64	W E	♥ AKQ2
♦ KQ1097	S	♦ J5
♣ K54		♣ QJ3
	♠ 92	
	♥ J1095	
	♦ 632	
	♣ 10862	

The bidding is trivial with all but one reaching 3NT (one E-W pair were in a silly 4♥ going two down).

Everybody made 3NT but it should go one down! South leads the obvious ♥J and declarer wins. Declarer then leads the ♦J and this is allowed to hold. The ♦5 followed and every North ducked in order to ensure that dummy’s ♦’s do not score; but should he?

The answer is “which ♦’s did South play?” South played the ♦2 followed by the ♦3 and this (a non-peter) indicates an odd number of ♦’s. So North should know that declarer has just two ♦’s and should win the 2<sup>nd</sup> ♦ trick.

The bottom lines.

- Most experienced players always give count (high-low shows an even number) when declarer leads a suit. It is especially important when declarer is playing in No Trump and has a long suit with no outside entry.

## Giving Count – part 2

Board 15 from Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>

And this deal is virtually the same.

Dealer:	♠ 876				
South	♥ 32	West	North	East	South
N-S vul	♦ 642	-	-	-	2♣
	♣ KQJ43	pass	2♦	pass	2NT (1)
		pass	3NT	all pass	
♠ 10943	N	♠ J5			
♥ 765	W E	♥ QJ104	(1) 22-24		
♦ QJ10	S	♦ 9875			
♣ A97		♣ 862			
	♠ AKQ2				
	♥ AK98				
	♦ AK3				
	♣ 105				

The bidding is again trivial with all but one reaching 3NT (one N-S pair were in a silly 2♦).

This time everybody made 3NT except the pair up against Wolfgang/Malcolm. Wolfgang (West) led the ♦Q which declarer won with the ♦A. South played the ♣10 and West correctly ducked. South then tried the ♣5 but West rose with the ♣A to restrict declarer to 8 tricks. Why did West rise with the ♣A on the 2<sup>nd</sup> round? Because partners first ♣ was the ♣2, promising an odd number, so one or three. If it's a singleton then declarer has 4 ♣'s and there is nothing to be done; but if it's the (more likely) three card holding then West has to take the ♣A on the 2<sup>nd</sup> round.

Suppose that declarer had ♣1065 and East held ♣82. Then East would have played the ♣8 on the first round (intending to peter to show an even number) and West would have realised that this was high from a doubleton and would have held up until the 3<sup>rd</sup> round.

The bottom lines.

- These two examples show the need for giving count; more experienced pairs virtually always give count as this enables them to 'get a count' of declarer's hand and establish his distribution.

**Redouble! Gets you into the thousands.**

Board 13 from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>

If partner opens and RHO doubles, then if you are short in opener's suit with 9+ points then redouble – go for the throat.

Dealer: ♠ 54  
 North ♥ J4  
 both vul ♦ 1098  
 ♣ QJ7654

♠ A1096	N	♠ Q73
♥ A98	W E	♥ K1073
♦ K7543	S	♦ J2
♣ 10		♣ AK98
	♠ KJ82	
	♥ Q652	
	♦ AQ6	
	♣ 32	

Table A

West(A)	North	East	South
-	pass	1♣	dbl (1)
1♠ (2)	pass	1NT	pass
3NT (3)	all pass		

Table B

West (A)	North	East	South
-	pass	1♣	dbl (1)
redbl(2)	pass (4)	pass (5)	1♦ (6)
dbl (7)	pass	pass	1♥
pass (8)	pass	dbl (7)	1♠
dbl (7)	2♦	pass (8)	pass
dbl (7)	all pass		

- Table A: (1) A near classic take-out double; playable in all three unbid suits.  
 (2) What did you bid with this West hand A in this week's quiz? Now I am always saying "do not deny a 4 card major" but this is an exception. With 9+ points and shortage in partner's suit you should double and try to get a substantial penalty. Both 1♦ and 1♠ are far inferior alternatives to redouble.  
 (3) This hand, with good shape and intermediates, is worth 3NT.
- Table B: (2) This is the answer to question A. It is a really classic re-double. You can subsequently double either ♠'s or ♦'s for penalties and if partner cannot double ♥'s then you can try 3NT (or a more pessimistic 2NT).  
 (4) With no 5 card suit (other than ♣'s!) North correctly passes.  
 (5) And East just has to sit back and wait.  
 (6) South decided to take the round-about route, but he's a gonner whatever he does.  
 (7) Penalties.  
 (8) Forcing.

And what happened? 3NT at Table A went two down, but made +1 at two other tables. But the +630 palls into insignificance compared to the +1100 that E-W got at Table B. And 1♠ by South would be no better.

The bottom lines: -

- Redouble with 9+ points opposite an opening when you are short in the partner's suit.
- When the opponents are vulnerable you only need to set them three (or two if you are non-vul) to get a top.
- Take the money with 11 points opposite an opener. In this situation with 11 points and no fit for partner game is by no means certain – go for the penalty, even if it is only at the one level.
- Even 1-level penalties can be lucrative when you have the balance of power.

**4NT having bid 4♣ Gerber is to play**Board 27 from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>

If partner bids 1 or 2 NoTrump (either opening or in the middle of an auction) then 4♣ asks for aces. Having got a response then 4NT is to play and 5♣ asks for kings.

Dealer: ♠ 4  
 South ♥ J  
 Love all ♦ J75  
 ♣ AJ976543

♠ 762 N ♠ K9853  
 ♥ A9832 W E ♥ K1075  
 ♦ K84 S ♦ Q1063  
 ♣ Q2 ♣ -  
 ♠ AQJ10  
 ♥ Q64  
 ♦ A92  
 ♣ K108

Table A

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

Table B

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1NT
pass	5♣ (1)	all pass	

Table A: (1) This North is the club's eternal optimist, 4♣ here was Gerber.

(2) Two aces

(3) Apparently meant as asking for kings; it is not. It is to play and 5♣ asks for kings when using Gerber. Quite why North wants to ask for kings when there is an ace missing is a complete mystery to me. Having decided upon slam he should simply bid 6♣.

(4) South was unsure about the 4NT bid and 'answered' showing one king.

Table B: (1) Most North's took the simple route to the best spot. If you play 4-way transfers then 2♠ (transfer to ♣'s) followed by 5♣ is possible but this may allow the opponents to find a cheap save in a major. If you play 2♠ as a weak hand with an unspecified minor you can still use it to get to 5♣ but it's probably best to bid 5♣ immediately.

And what happened? 5♣ made exactly at most tables. At Table A East led the ♠5 and after some thought declarer put up the ace from dummy. He then played ♣A,K and led the ♠Q upon which he ditched his ♥ loser. Declarer's two ♦ losers then went away on the good ♠'s. Well played.

The bottom lines: -

- After 4♣ Gerber, 5♣ asks for kings and 4NT is to play.
- Only ask for kings if all the aces are present.

**Don't pass when 5-6 in the majors**

Board 3 from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>

Even if you are a bit short of points, a hand with 11 cards in the majors is worth a squeak.

Dealer:	♠ QJ72				
South	♥ K10	West	North	East	South(D)
E-W vul	♦ J853	-	-	-	pass
	♣ A103	1♦	pass	2NT	pass (1)
		3NT	all pass		
♠ 5	N	♠ A98			
♥ A3	W E	♥ QJ7			
♦ KQ976	S	♦ A102			
♣ KQ952		♣ J864			
	♠ K10643				
	♥ 986542				
	♦ 4				
	♣ 7				

(1) What did you bid with this South hand D in this week's quiz? It looks (from the results) like nearly everybody passed. With 11 cards in the majors I would not keep quiet and would bid 3♦. This is still a Michaels cue bid and, as it's in the sandwich seat and at the 3-level, it shows a very shapely hand.

And what happened? 3NT was reached at 5 out of 6 tables with varying results (from -2 to +1). Just one N-S pair bid to 4♠ but they somehow managed to go down.

The bottom lines: -

- You can compete with 11 cards in the majors.
- You can compete with minimal hands at favourable vulnerability.
- Michaels cue bids still apply if RHO bids 2NT (or 1NT).

## Minor suit slams – part 1

Board 24 from Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>

Bidding minor suit slams is difficult after a 1NT opening. Most people look for a major suit fit (via Stayman) and if none exists they go for NoTrump. However, 6♣ or 6♦ making scores a lot more than 6NT going one down!

Dealer: ♠ 862  
West ♥ QJ9  
Love all ♦ 953  
♣ A754

♠ KQ3	N	♠ AJ109
♥ A32	W E	♥ K84
♦ A874	S	♦ KQJ2
♣ K63		♣ Q2
	♠ 754	
	♥ 10765	
	♦ 106	
	♣ J1098	

### Table A

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

### 'Expert' Table

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

- Table A: (1) Pretty obvious, although I did note one player not bothering to look for any sort of fit and bid an invitational 4NT straight away. I suppose that you can call that bidding.  
(2) Quantitative.  
(3) West was unsure (4♣ as Gerber is standard here) and so stated his number of aces. I would pass as the hand is minimum for the 1NT opener.
- Table B: (1) The obvious Stayman.  
(4) Our experts use 3♣ after Stayman to enquire about the minor suits; SARS – Shape Asking Relays after Stayman.  
(5) Using SARS this shows 4♦'s and not 4♣'s. So 3343 shape exactly.  
(6) Without the values to safely bid 6NT East wisely goes for the slam in the known 4-4 fit.

And what happened? Just one pair bid the excellent 6♦ after West opened a Precision 1♣. Every Standard American pair overbid to 6NT; two made and two went one down. 6NT is hopeless of course but I did notice one West claim the contract pretty quickly after North found the opening lead of the ♣A. I guess that it's a 1 in 13 chance, but any lead other than the ♣A (even the poor lead of a low ♣) and declarer goes down

The bottom lines: -

- Do not lead an ace against 6NT unless the bidding has indicated that the opponents have a long solid suit and can run 12 or 13 tricks off the top.
- More experienced/established pairs may like to read up on SARS, it's on the web and in the No Trump bidding book.
- If 6NT is borderline, look for the 4-4 minor suit fit for slam.
- 6NT only scores more than 6♦ if it makes.

## Minor suit slams – part 2

Board 27 from Friday 27<sup>th</sup>

And only one pair found the 4-4 fit for slam on this deal: -

Dealer:	♠ Q43					
West	♥ Q9752		West	North	East	South
Love all	♦ J92		1♥	pass	2♦ (1)	pass
	♣ K64		3♦ (2)	pass	3♥ (3)	pass
			3♠ (4)	pass	4♦	pass
♠ A102	N	♠ K76	4NT (5)	pass	5♦ (6)	pass
♥ AQ864	W E	♥ KJ3	6♦ (7)	pass	pass (8)	pass
♦ K843	S	♦ AQ75				
♣ Q		♣ 873				
	♠ J985					
	♥ 10					
	♦ 106					
	♣ AJ10952					

- (1) This pair play 2/1 and so this bid is forcing to game.
- (2) And this is just one of the beauties of playing 2/1. West can simply support ♦'s without needing to leap about.
- (3) Three card ♥ support.
- (4) A cue bid (the ♠A). East's initial 2♦ response and his 3♥ bid have improved West's hand immensely. With a double fit he is seriously looking for slam.
- (5) Roman Keycard Blackwood for ♦'s.
- (6) One key card.
- (7) This West knows all about 4-4 fits making an extra trick. There are insufficient values for 6♥ but the 4-4 fit indeed scores the vital extra trick.
- (8) After a little thought East also realised that 6♦ with the 4-4 ♦ fit was better than the "higher scoring" 5-3 ♥ fit in 6♥.

And what happened? Just one pair bid the excellent 6♦. Three pairs were in 4♥ +1 and one pair managed to land in a silly 3NT going three down.

The bottom lines: -

- A 4-4 fit is almost always better than a 5-3 fit. So if you are in the slam zone, think about 6♣/♦ with a 4-4 fit.
- 6♥ only scores more than 6♦ if it makes.
- 5♣/♦ are very often poor contracts (if 3NT makes) but a minor suit slam is usually better than a thin 6NT or 5-3 major suit slam if there is a 4-4 minor suit fit.
- It's 'only' a combined 26 count but 6♦ is cold, that simply shows the power of the good 4-4 fit and having a double fit.

## Too strong for a pre-empt

Board 20 from Friday 27<sup>th</sup>

Don't pre-empt at the three level with an opening hand.

Dealer:	♠ KJ106				
West	♥ Q10532	West	North	East	South
Both vul	♦ K32	3♣ (1)	dbl	5♣ (2)	pass
	♣ K	pass	dbl	all pass	

♠ A	N	♠ 8543
♥ K6	W E	♥ A9
♦ A76	S	♦ J1084
♣ J1087543		♣ A96
	♠ Q972	
	♥ J874	
	♦ Q95	
	♣ Q2	

- (1) What did you open with this West hand E in this week's quiz? 3♣ is horrendous; apart from the fact that all of the points are outside the long suit, it's far too strong for a pre-empt. 1♣ is the obvious opening.
- (2) East obviously thinks that N-S have an easy game in ♥'s and so quite reasonably makes it difficult for them.

And what happened? 5♣ went one down for the only minus score for E-W. One E-W pair bid 3NT making +1 and others were in ♣ partscores making. The bottom lines: -

- It's usually best to have points in a suit which you pre-empt.
- 12 points is far too good for a three-level pre-empt.

## Bidding Quiz Answers

- Hand A:** Redouble. Look for the penalty. It is by no means certain that you can make game so take the vulnerable penalty. You can subsequently double either ♠'s or ♦'s for penalties and if partner cannot double ♥'s then you can try for the No Trump game.
- Hand B:** 2♣, showing 11-17 points and a ♣ suit. You will have problems if you double.
- Hand C:** 2♦, showing 11-17 points and a ♦ suit. You will have problems if you double.
- Hand D:** 3♦, Michaels. With this shape and especially at this vulnerability pass is a bit feeble.
- Hand E:** 1♣, far too strong for a 3♣ pre-empt. And a pre-empt is particularly bad with most of the points outside of the long suit.
- Hand F:** 1NT, no catch. But somebody did get in a pickle when they did not open 1NT "because they had no ♥ stop". You do not promise an honour in every suit when you open 1NT – just a balanced hand shape wise.

## Bidding Sequence Answers

- G** 1NT pass 4♣ pass 4♣ is Gerber and 4♠ is two aces. 4NT is to play.  
4♣ pass 4NT
- H** 1♣ dbl redbl Redouble is 9+ points. Often with a misfit and looking for a lucrative penalty.
- J** 1♦ pass 2NT 3♦ 3♦ is Michaels; and in this position at least 5-5 in the majors.