

What would you bid? Answers to September 2006 Competition

The Panel

Back down to four panellists. New member Victor Silverstone making a major contribution based on his vast knowledge of top play and the styles of top players.

Thanks to those who have taken part, including the competitors, four this month, Dominic, David, Kathleen and Niall. Come on Bedfordshire lets have more contributions, or the bailiffs may have to come in.

Hand 1

Hand 1: Dealer West EW Vul Teams

East: ♠A6♥QJ32-♦Q643♣A85

W	N	E	S
1D	P	1H	P
1NT ¹	P	2C ²	P
2NT ³	P	3D ⁴	P
3H ⁵	P	?	What do you do now?

The auction is now game forcing.

¹ 15-18 ² Checkback ³ 2NT 17-18

⁴ Natural ⁵ 3 card support.

Keith Bennett: 3NT

3NT: Although we could have slam on, I don't have a clear bid that sets diamonds and shows my fairly limited interest. 4D seems too forward going, and if partner cooperates (eg 4S) I play subsequent 4NT bids as RKCB - which would be an overbid.

Alan Kay: 3NT

3NT. If I cue bid now I think it will accept that hearts are agreed but after bidding 3NT my 3D should be a mild slam try in D which is what I am, worth and if partner goes on I will certainly cooperate further.

Peter Lee: 3NT

3NT. This auction clearly implies that I still have

reasonable slam interest in diamonds - else I would have bid 3NT last time - so I prefer to let partner use his intelligence. With a perfect Kxx K10x AKJxx Kx where 6D is cold he will obviously bid on, and with a dismal KJx Axx AJxx KJx where 3NT is best he clearly won't. With something like Kxx K10x AKJx Kxx he might not, but we need a 3-2 diamond break and no heart ruff then anyway. Though I might do more with a partner who would think 3NT was terminal.

Victor Silverstone: 3S

3 spades – we know partner's numbers- By cueing 3 spades and following with 4 clubs over the probable 3NT we will prompt partner into indicating something about his quality and particularly the quality of his diamond suit which could range from Jxxx to AKxxx. As an aside in most of my partnerships over 2C I play that 3NT shows a maximum with 5 good diamonds and 3 hearts. This was gleefully known as Rose in the circles in which the late Great Irving Rose (of TGR fame) moved. I always assumed that this was a rare contribution to bidding theory from Rose who really had little time for systems but was always being bullied into playing a variety of artificial methods. An alternative suggestion is that it is called Rose because once he actually remembered it.

Moderator: 3NT gets the votes and top marks, but note the 3S cue from Victor, a classy way of making a starting a serious slam try for diamonds.

Hand 2

Keith Bennett: 3D

Hand 2: Dealer North LA Teams

West: ♠J2♥QJ643-♦AJT653♣

W	N	E	S
	P	1C	?

Do you bid? What do you bid?

Note 2NT (red suits) is systemically not available.

3D, opposite a passed hand I'll pre-empt. Second choice would be to hope to bid 2NT on the next round. I don't mind 1D, 2D or even 1H as alternatives.

Alan Kay: 1D

1D. I would certainly bid 2NT here if it was available so I am bidding 1D and if the auction returns to me with the opponents bidding the black suits I will show my Hearts by bidding the appropriate level of NTs even 4NT as this hand could be a good save if partner has a fit for my suits.

Peter Lee: 1H

1H. Would have preferred to bid an unusual 2NT of course. If I bid 1D and it goes 1S No 4S back to me 4NT might imply a 5-6 shape but is far too unilateral at love all. A heart fit is the best chance of doing well so I go for that .

Victor Silverstone: 1H

1 heart- you pays your money and.....

Moderator: Everyone wants to bid. What they bid is a matter of style (or maybe religion). A 1H bid just edges out 1D, but next Sunday it might be the other way round.

Hand 3

Hand 3 Dealer North NS Vul Teams

West: ♠Q42♥J5♦92♣KJT543

W N E S

1NT X

? Do you bid? What do you bid?

Use your favourite method.

Keith Bennett: 3C

3C - my favourite method is pre-empting, too much defence for a psyche.

Alan Kay: 3C

3C. I normally play that redouble shows a single suit for rescue and other bids show various 2-suiters .I think that my Club suit is sufficiently good enough to

bid at the 3 level to make it as awkward as possible for the opponents.

Peter Lee: XX

XX. On my methods this is how one removes with a single suiter, partner having to bid 2C. I will compete to 3C. If 2C is a natural weak take out I would bid that. I could pass hoping for +180 or more but I might lose 500 for nothing. (Note I have assumed a 12-14 NT).

Victor Silverstone: Pass

Pass – prepared to look stupid or not. I am assuming a level match against equally matched teams or early in a match against a weaker team. If our team were in a decent lead I would run all the way to 2 clubs.

Moderator: Keith & Alan go for the aggressive 3C pre-empt, trying to hurt the opponents a little. Peter goes for the systemic removal to 2 clubs via a redouble and Victor plays a tactical game, looking for an early swing in the match. For my money, within my favourite partnership, we would bid 2NT (Rubensohl) – transfer to 3C, getting some pre-emption and the hand played by the 1NT opener, so that the doubler is on lead.

Hand 4

Hand 4: Dealer West EW Vul Teams

West: ♠K98743♥J93♦7♣QJ9

W N E S

1NT P P

? Do you bid? What do you bid?

Keith Bennett: 2S

2S - I didn't hear South announce their NT, even so I'm not selling out to 1NT. A sound weak two fine for an overcall of 1NT, and since I am protecting I can have slightly less. We play 2NT as invitational in response which will help to ensure

we don't get too high.

Alan Kay: Pass

Pass. I try to bid over the opponents 1NT if at all possible and partner is marked with some values but I do not think that my hand is good enough at this vulnerability and form of scoring - even so I would bid 2S with these values if my spade suit was better eg KQJxxx with little else.

Peter Lee: Pass

Pass. I have often thought that there ought to be a convention here equivalent to a Multi so that I could make it clear I had 6 spades and was weak. In the absence of that, partner is too likely to raise or bid 2NT on the occasions we are making 2S. We are virtually never making game here, and if I bid on hands like these partner will never go for game when I have a real hand.

Victor Silverstone: Pass

Pass – prepared to look stupid or not.

There are 2 dangers in bidding (1) you may be about to concede a number to contest a part score and (2) often when you can make 2 spades you will be declaring 3 or 4 spades. That's the half empty cup. The half full cup is that we are lay-down for game or can make a spade partial when they are making 1NT.

I always think of Barnet Shenkin when 1NT is followed by 2 passes. Consequently on marginal positions like this, I would, in practice, sometimes bid attempting to judge (at which Barnet was invariably right) that RHO had shown no interest in the proceedings. On paper I have to reveal my true colours and take the cowardly option.

Moderator: The field divides into two, the aggressive and the cautious, or maybe the young versus the old. On this occasion, the on paper passers win the day. At the table, the aggressive 2S bid lead to 4S, giving Bedfordshire the winning imps in an ECL match.

Panel	Hand 1	Marks	Hand 2	Marks	Hand 3	Marks	Hand 4	Marks	Score
Alan Kay	3NT	10	1D	9	3C	10	Pass	10	39
Peter Lee	3NT	10	1H	10	XX	8	Pass	10	38
Keith Bennett	3NT	10	3D	8	3C	10	2S	8	36
Victor Silverstone	3S	8	1H	10	Pass	8	Pass	10	36

Competitors Comments

Hand 1

Dominic Connolly: 3NT, You need 11 tricks for 5D, 3NT only 9. The spades may be right-sided for NT, clubs may be 4-4. I don't believe the chances for slam justify trying.

David Woulds: 3S, may as well get in an advanced cue bid and save some bidding space. If partner now bids 3NT I will follow with 4D and partner should now recognise 3S as a cue.

Kathleen Gilbert: 3NT, Partner knows that I have 5 black cards at most. He can remove to 5D if advisable.

Niall Perry: 3NT – poor intermediates make slam a dubious proposition.

Hand 2

Dominic Connolly: 1D, I like to bid my longest suit generally. If you overcall 1H partner will never believe you have longer diamonds. I expect to bid again. I bid a lot with 6-5s. Even more than usual.

David Woulds: 1D, and hope to be able to bid hearts twice later. If I bid hearts first, partner will never believe I have 6 diamonds

Kathleen Gilbert: Pass, bidding diamonds may prevent finding a heart fit. Partner or opponents may bid and I can always show diamonds later if there is no better action available.

Niall Perry: 1H, and will contemplate bidding diamonds later if opps get together in spades

Hand 3

Dominic Connolly: Pass, I could retreat to the safety of the eight card club suit by transferring to clubs via whatever method, but at the moment I have the advantage after my partner opened 1NT, I know our combined values, the guy on my left has no idea what is going on. If they cash 7 heart tricks they may have missed a heart game. It's a risk I'm prepared to take.

Moderator: 8 card club suit? Perhaps one of us should visit an optician?

David Woulds: XX, systemic promising a 5+ card suit forcing a 2C relay from partner. Passing the X shows a willingness to play 1NT X'd. Whenever I Pass with this type of hand, the X'er has a running suit and we're writing down -200/500 instead of +90/110.

Kathleen Gilbert: Pass, (and hold my breath).

Niall Perry: XX. Redouble is a transfer to 2C in our methods...can't afford to go -500 at teams. I would pass at pairs.

Hand 4

Dominic Connolly: Pass, We could quite easily be missing something but my spade suit is not good enough and if I bid partner will expect more. I pay out to the weak NT if we are missing out on an easy game but that is why we like the weak NT I guess.

David Woulds: 2S, Yes I bid, either 2S direct or whatever relay bid that allows me to play in 2 spades. Partner is marked with at least 10hcp and if he makes any kind of invitational bid in a rounded suit, I will bid game as I have good shape and intermediates.

Kathleen Gilbert: 2S, Partner should have 9 HCPs minimum, hopefully a few more. A bit risky at this vulnerability, but I don't fancy defending on the inevitable D lead.

Niall Perry: Pass, I pass at teams (not pairs) – the suit quality is too poor...give partner a share of the remaining points and a not-unsuitable hand such as Qx, Axx, KJxxx, xxx and -200 is still likely.

Competitors	Hand 1	Marks	Hand 2	Marks	Hand 3	Marks	Hand 4	Marks	Total
Dominic Connolly	3NTn	10	1D	9	P	8	P	10	37
Niall Perry	3NT	10	1H	10	XX	8	P	8	36
David Woulds	3NT	10	1D	9	XX	8	P	8	35
Kathleen Gilbert	3NT	10	Pass	5	P	8	2S	8	31