

County Club Simultaneous Pairs 2018

Hi everyone,

A number of years ago I started playing a system involving a strong No Trump, 5 card majors and 2 level responses over one level openers as forcing to game. I scoured the internet for a system which I could base these methods upon and came across one played by Swedish internationals Fredrik Nystrom and Johan Upmark. They have become one of the top pairs in the world and are the main reason why Sweden is seriously competing each time for the Bermuda Bowl, the world championships. My regular partner and I therefore adopted their methods.

They appeared frequently on Bridge Base Online and I watched to gain tips about our common system. It was with great disappointment therefore when I discovered last year that they had changed to a strong club system. My first thoughts were that they had realised that their old methods were no good. That may be true but I have continued to play their old system.

What has this got to do with this year's hands? Well, every board is taken from a competition involving Nystrom and Upmark. The competition was the HCL International played in New Delhi in September last year. Playing with a Dutch pair, they won the tournament, defeating a team consisting of most of the Italian first team squad in the final.

All the hands are taken from the semi-final and final of this competition. I hope you find them entertaining and instructive.

Simon Stokes

1

♠ 96
♥ J954
♦ J875
♣ 982

♠ K
♥ AKQ1062
♦ 102
♣ AQJ10

♠ AJ10542
♥ 7
♦ AQ93
♣ K5

♠ Q873
♥ 83
♦ K64
♣ 7643

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	?		

Opening Lead:

We start with a slam hand for E/W. With a misfit however it is often difficult to choose the correct strain. The best contract is 6♥ or 6♠ which makes on any lead but I suspect a number will go for 6NT. You better make sure that W is not playing this as a ♦ lead will defeat it. With Nystrom/Upmark sitting N/S, the opposition lost their way and ended in 4♥. 6NT by W was the contract in the other room but N failed to lead a ♦.

2

♠ AQJ76532
♥ 976
♦ 2
♣ 10

♠ 1098
♥ KJ1042
♦ A63
♣ J2

♠ K4
♥ Q
♦ KQJ1087
♣ K753

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		?	

Opening Lead:

Nystrom/Upmark sitting E/W created a big swing on this board. Nystrom overcalled 2♣ and over N's 4♠, Upmark doubled. Nystrom bid 4NT asking partner to choose and he bid 5♥. This looks like a make but N bid 5♠. After J♣ lead declarer ruffed the second round and played a ♦. Upmark rose with the A and led a ♥ to partner's A. With a third ♣ and the trumps splitting 3-0 declarer cannot discard all his hearts and the contract goes 2 off. At the other table teammates played in only 4♠ and the defence to defeat this was not found.

3

♠ 872
♥ A932
♦ 10
♣ J7654

♠ AJ104
♥ J1075
♦ QJ83
♣ 2

♠ KQ3
♥ 86
♦ K76
♣ AK1098

♠ 965
♥ KQ4
♦ A9542
♣ Q3

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

Those who like 11 count 1NT openings might come unstuck on this hand if E makes a penalty double as no 2 level contract will fare any better than 2 off. With Nystrom/Upmark sitting N/S the bidding went 1♦-P-1♥, E doubled and Nystrom redoubled showing 3♥. W bid 1♠ and that was it, making 8. At the other table S passed and after a 1NT opener by E they reached 3NT without interference. S found the understandable but unfortunate lead of a ♦ and that was enough for E to make 9 tricks.

4

♠ KJ976
♥ Q
♦ A
♣ 986542

♠ A1054
♥ A82
♦ KJ642
♣ J

♠ 2
♥ KJ109643
♦ Q9
♣ KQ7

♠ Q83
♥ 75
♦ 108753
♣ A103

Dealer: West
Both Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

A swingy hand from the semi-final. Sitting N/S, Upmark was able to overcall W's 1♦ with 3♣ showing ♠ and ♣. When E bid 3♥, Nystrom bid 4♠ and E took out W's double into 5♥. Nystrom was unable to find the near impossible lead of a ♦ which would defeat the contract so 11 tricks were made. At the other table teammates played in 4♥ which was fortunate as this was played by W and N was on lead with the A♦ leading to 3 tricks for the defence.

5

♠ Q3
♥ AJ962
♦ 104
♣ 10763

♠ 10974
♥ 84
♦ 832
♣ AQJ5

♠ AK2
♥ K1073
♦ A965
♣ K9

♠ J865
♥ Q5
♦ KQJ7
♣ 842

Dealer: North
N-S Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	?		

Opening Lead:

Unless anyone is playing Lucas, E/W ought to get an uninterrupted run in the bidding and aggressive pairs will get to 3NT by E. The fate of the contract hinges on the opening couple of tricks. On S's lead of the K♦ declarer should duck. If S continues with another high ♦ honour that presents declarer with his ninth trick. This exact defence helped the Swedes' teammates to make 3NT. Upmark played a low ♦ at trick 2 so declarer only made 8 tricks but they were only defending 1NT.

6

♠ QJ9864
♥ AJ2
♦ J3
♣ A2

♠ AK
♥ 8
♦ Q97654
♣ Q987

♠ 53
♥ Q9654
♦ A102
♣ KJ5

♠ 1072
♥ K1073
♦ K8
♣ 10643

Dealer: East
E-W Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		?	

Opening Lead:

A competitive part score battle here with N/S making nine tricks in ♠'s and E/W ten in ♦'s. With the Swedes E/W, after two passes Nystrom opened an intermediate 2♦, N overcalled 2♠, Upmark doubled and bid 3♦ when partner showed ♣'s. S did not compete. At the other table the bidding went P-P-1♦-1♠-x-1NT-2♠-2♠-3♦ but after two passes N bid 3♠. After a ♥ lead from E, 9 tricks were trivial.

7

♠ 732
♥ Q10865
♦ 654
♣ A10

♠ Q64
♥
♦ 87
♣ KQ987643

♠ J8
♥ AK932
♦ KQJ2
♣ 52

♠ AK1095
♥ J74
♦ A1093
♣ J

Dealer: South
Both Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

With Nystrom/Upmark sitting N/S, Upmark opened 1♠, W overcalled 3♣ and after two passes Upmark made a re-opening double. Thus the Swedes found the unfortunate 3♥ contract. After the K♦ lead Nystrom did well to only go 1 off. At the other table, W bid 4♣ over 1♠ and that had to go off as well.

8

♠ Q1032
♥ A9
♦ 108
♣ AQ1065

♠ A765
♥ 75
♦ KQ76
♣ K42

♠ 9
♥ KJ102
♦ J95432
♣ 83

♠ KJ84
♥ Q8643
♦ A
♣ J97

Dealer: West
Neither Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

A slip up for the Swedes. W opened 1♦, E raised to 3 and neither N nor S found a way to enter the bidding. At the other table the ♦ opener by W only showed 2, N overcalled 2♠ and with E silent, N/S eventually found their ♠ fit and bid to game making 10 tricks. N/S may find similar difficulties in finding game after a 1NT opener and a transfer to ♦'s by E.

9

♠ Q53
♥ A1072
♦ Q104
♣ K32

♠ 1086
♥ 8543
♦ 72
♣ 10864

♠ K97
♥ KQJ9
♦ AK63
♣ J9

♠ AJ42
♥ 6
♦ J985
♣ AQ75

Dealer: North
E-W Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	?		

Opening Lead:

If N fancies a 1NT opener on this 11 count with two 10's at favourable vulnerability he will probably get a very good score as E will double and now the trouble begins. N/S can make 3NT but only played by N as a ♥ lead from W will defeat the game played by S. Nystrom opened 1♦ as N, E overcalled 1NT and S doubled. This went 2 off. At the other table N passed and after a strong 1NT opener by E, neither N or S could compete.

10

♠ 4
♥ AJ96
♦ 754
♣ A10875

♠ K10852
♥ 854
♦ 96
♣ Q93

♠ J3
♥ K1073
♦ AK1082
♣ 62

♠ AQ976
♥ Q2
♦ QJ3
♣ KJ4

Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		?	

Opening Lead:

A poor board for the Swedes. After 1♦ by E (2+), Nystrom overcalled 1♠ and Upmark bid 1NT raised to 2 by his partner. The defence was ruthless. A small ♦ lead by E, Upmark got the ♠'s wrong and with both major K's offside he went 2 off. At the other table N/S played in 3NT by S and, as E had not shown a natural ♦, W led a heart to S's Q and when declarer got the ♠'s right, nine tricks were made.

11

♠ KQJ1065
♥ AQ
♦ 1086
♣ AK

♠ A87
♥ K10643
♦ 92
♣ 1083

♠ 9
♥ 975
♦ KJ4
♣ QJ7642

♠ 432
♥ J82
♦ AQ753
♣ 95

Dealer: South
Neither Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

Not much to say other than a fairly routine 4♠ for N/S making 11 tricks. I predict a flat board. The Swedes play strong club so after a 1♣ opener by Nystrom, E overcalled 3♠, Upmark bid a confusing 3♣ which partner raised to 4. The auction at the other table was uncontested to the same contract.

12

♠ J10
♥ AKQ63
♦ 76
♣ A943

♠ 8
♥ 109842
♦ QJ10852
♣ 8

♠ 72
♥ 75
♦ AK943
♣ K752

♠ AKQ96543
♥ J
♦
♣ QJ106

Dealer: West
N-S Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

I would expect most pairs to bid 6♣ on this deal but can a pair find out enough information to bid 7 with confidence. Problem is that E/W might locate their big ♦ fit and indeed there are only 4 losers in 7♦ but that might encourage N/S to bid the grand slam. With Nystrom/Upmark sitting N/S, the bidding went 1♥-P-1♠-3♦-P-5♦. With nothing to go on Nystrom just bid 6♣ and even with good controls Upmark didn't fancy bidding one more.

13

♠ AQ10962
♥ 75
♦ 7
♣ J985

♠ 4
♥ 10642
♦ AKJ1098
♣ Q2

♠ KJ8
♥ KQJ98
♦ 54
♣ A106

♠ 753
♥ A3
♦ Q632
♣ K743

Dealer: North
Both Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	?		

Opening Lead:

Another reverse for the Swedes. Upmark opened 2♠ with the N cards and E found an aggressive 2NT raised to 3. Nystrom led a ♠ and on winning the A♥, led another, giving declarer 9 tricks. The other table played in 4H after 3♥ overall of 2♠. After a ♠ lead to the A and a ♣ switch, declarer let S's K win. Now a ♦ switch led to a ruff. So, 3♥ or 2NT? Close decision.

14

♠ AJ3
♥ K932
♦ Q109
♣ 532

♠ 984
♥ 105
♦ K8432
♣ KQ4

♠ 765
♥ A874
♦ J765
♣ 76

♠ KQ102
♥ QJ6
♦ A
♣ AJ1098

Dealer: East
Neither Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		?	

Opening Lead:

A fascinating hand. Despite 27 points there is no certain game for N/S. In 3NT, after a ♦ lead do you knock out A♥ and play for 3-3 break or 10♥ doubleton or take double ♣ finesse and hope for four tricks. Hope you went for the ♥'s. The Swedes got to 4♥ by N and after a ♣ lead and ♦ switch, Upmark played on trumps, E taking the 3rd round. a club would beat the contract but E played a ♦ and declarer lost just a ♦, ♣ and ♥. The contract at the other table was 5♣, going off when both ♣'s were wrong.

15

♠ KQ63
♥ 103
♦ J
♣ A75432

♠ J9
♥ J9874
♦ AQ7532
♣

♠ A1054
♥ KQ62
♦ 986
♣ Q10

♠ 872
♥ A5
♦ K104
♣ KJ986

Dealer: South
N-S Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

An awful board for the Swedes. Sitting N/S, Upmark's opening bid was 1♦ and the bidding continued P-1S-P-1NT. W now bid 2♦ and was raised to 3 by E, making 10 tricks. E/W had missed game in H but at the other table S opened 1♣, W bid 1NT, presumably a 2 suiter, N bid 3♦, splinter, and S bid 3NT. This goes 2 off on a ♥ lead but W led a small ♦ and then, on the run of the ♣'s, held on to two ♥'s and discarded two ♦'s. Declarer was able to establish a ♠ trick to make the contract. Will you find the 4♥ game?

16

♠ QJ95
♥ J104
♦ 932
♣ A62

♠ AK102
♥ AQ875
♦ 6
♣ KQ5

♠ 8743
♥ 2
♦ 1084
♣ J10984

♠ 6
♥ K963
♦ AKQJ75
♣ 73

Dealer: West
E-W Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

A part score battle. The bidding is likely to go 1♥-P-P-2♦-X. If N bids 3♦, it comes round to W who might double again in which case E is likely to declare in 3♠ making 9. This is what happened at the Swedes' table, sitting N/S. At the other table, N/S bid to 4♦ going 1 off after the defence failed to find the two ruffs in ♥'s.

17

♠ QJ43
♥ A54
♦ A109
♣ QJ2

♠ 952
♥ Q86
♦ J76
♣ A1075

♠ A7
♥ KJ103
♦ KQ52
♣ K83

♠ K1086
♥ 972
♦ 843
♣ 964

Dealer: North
Neither Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	?		

Opening Lead:

Those playing a weak NT will come a bit of a cropper here as E yet again is lurking with a penalty double - and there is nowhere to go. An easy defence for E/W for 2 off. Nystrom/Upmark play 14-16 but still got caught for -300. Those playing strong NT and 5 card majors will no doubt open a minor and here E is likely to play in 1NT making 8 tricks.

18

♠ 65
♥ A1098653
♦ 109
♣ 107

♠ K97
♥ K2
♦ J7
♣ AQ8652

♠ J1083
♥ J
♦ AK542
♣ K93

♠ AQ42
♥ Q74
♦ Q863
♣ J4

Dealer: East
N-S Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		?	

Opening Lead:

A fairly routine 3NT by E/W though in fact N/S have a save in 4♥ which only goes two down assuming the hearts are played for no losers. Nystrom and Upmark had an uninterrupted auction to 3NT but in the other room N was able to mention his hearts at the 3 level. However partner was no interested in raising and in teams this is understandable though at pairs a 4♥ sacrifice may be found (but you need to lead that Q♥!)

19

♠ K4
♥ AK75
♦ A1084
♣ K84

♠ 98763
♥ J2
♦ QJ73
♣ A5

♠ 105
♥ 109863
♦ K952
♣ 32

♠ AQJ2
♥ Q4
♦ 6
♣ QJ10976

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

A lot of luck for the Swedes on this board. 6C is an excellent contract and was reached at the other table. Upmark, as S, was forced by his system to open 1♦(!) and rebid 1♠(!!) thus making it difficult to find the top spot. They failed to find a fit and ended up in 6NT which is obviously off on a ♦ lead. E however found a passive ♥ lead and a small swing to the Swedes.

20

♠ 5
♥ K5
♦ AJ8653
♣ KQ65

♠ K10973
♥ Q97
♦ KQ
♣ AJ2

♠ Q8642
♥ 1064
♦ 1074
♣ 98

♠ AJ
♥ AJ832
♦ 92
♣ 10743

Dealer: West
Both Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

5C is a fairly good contract here and on the lie of the cards a making one. Nystrom as N overcalled 2♦ and after a raise to 3 by E, Upmark made an aggressive t/o dbl. Nystrom then bid 4NT to give partner a choice of minor suit contract. 5♣ is a bit hairy but with the trumps and ♦'s favourably placed it comes home. At the other table, E/W had an uncontested auction to 3♠ going two down.

21

♠ K975
♥ KQ872
♦ J854
♣

♠ AQ4
♥ A104
♦ A72
♣ A1063

♠ J1082
♥ J53
♦ 3
♣ Q8742

♠ 63
♥ 96
♦ KQ1096
♣ KJ95

Dealer: North
N-S Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	?		

Opening Lead:

A part score battle in the minors. With Nystrom and Upmark sitting E/W, Nystrom opened a strong ♣, N overcalled 1♥ and S bid 2♦. N then bid 4♣, a splinter which gave Upmark the chance to double and Nystrom bid 5♣ over S's 4♦. Surprisingly there was no double and declarer got out for 1 off after N failed to lead a ♥. At the other table, E/W played in 4♣ but without knowing of N's trump shortage, declarer led the A♣ and ended 2 off.

22

♠ J75
♥ A2
♦ A106
♣ KJ854

♠ AQ1083
♥ 654
♦ J92
♣ Q3

♠ 42
♥ J10983
♦ 8753
♣ A10

♠ K96
♥ KQ7
♦ KQ4
♣ 9762

Dealer: South
E-W Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

Why do we overcall? Taking up bidding space, boss suit, lead directing? Well, that's three good reasons why W's 1♠ overcall is automatic. On this hand however it does not matter. At both tables N/S bid to 3NT played by S and it's just a matter whether W has the confidence to lead his suit. Nystrom did lead a small ♠ and declarer, an Italian international played W for Ax in ♣'s so played a ♣ to the K to go two off. At the other table, W, another Italian international led a ♥ and declarer got the ♣'s right for 10 tricks.

23

♠ Q4
♥ KJ109
♦ J8
♣ A8542

♠ 9872
♥ 42
♦ 10964
♣ KQ7

♠ A1063
♥ A765
♦ AKQ52
♣

♠ KJ5
♥ Q83
♦ 73
♣ J10963

Dealer: South
Both Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

Strangely enough, after two passes, both N's found an opening bid of 1♥. E doubled and S found a ♥ raise. At the Swedes' table, W bid 2S and that was sufficient to tempt partner into bidding 6 which of course was not a success. At the other table, W passed and after that E/W were only ever going to get to game. There is no leeway for E to bid more than 4.

24

♠ A63
♥ AQ952
♦ J109
♣ 95

♠ K842
♥ J1043
♦ 6
♣ AQ73

♠ QJ9
♥
♦ AKQ752
♣ J1064

♠ 1075
♥ K876
♦ 843
♣ K82

Dealer: West
Neither Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

Nystrom opened 1♥ with the N cards, E bid 2♦ and Upmark raised to 3♥, E re-opened with a double and W came to life by bidding 4♥. E bid 4NT (choose a minor) and W bid 5♣ - an excellent contract making 12 as the cards lie. At the other table this was a 2♦ opener for W and E bid 2NT enquiry. E/W ended in 3NT but of course now played from the wrong side and on a ♥ lead from S defenders took 5♥'s and a ♠.

25

♠ QJ107642
♥ 1032
♦ 97
♣ K

♠ 53
♥ J985
♦ K8432
♣ J5

♠ A8
♥ Q7
♦ AQJ
♣ 1098763

♠ K9
♥ AK64
♦ 1065
♣ AQ42

Dealer: North
E-W Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
	?		

Opening Lead:

Do you raise partner's non-vulnerable first in hand pre-empt with the S hand? That's the simple question on this hand. Against Nystrom and Upmark, S had obviously seen his partner's pre-empts before and decided to pass 3♠. At the other table N did not give partner a guess as he found a 4 level pre-empt. Obviously N's K♠ is golden and 10 tricks are a spread. I expect a few of you to be in game.

26

♠ 8
♥ 95432
♦ 543
♣ A843

♠ 75
♥ QJ7
♦ AKQJ10
♣ Q107

♠ AQ1042
♥ AK8
♦ 82
♣ K92

♠ KJ963
♥ 106
♦ 976
♣ J65

Dealer: East
Both Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		?	

Opening Lead:

A borderline slam for E/W. Against the Swedes, the opposition had a complex uncontested auction to 6NT. On a passive 10♥ lead from Upmark there was no line to make 12 tricks. The auction at the other was slightly simpler. 1NT - 3NT.

27

♠ 9873
♥ KJ742
♦ 8
♣ K62

♠ 10
♥ A63
♦ KQ1042
♣ Q853

♠ AKJ64
♥ 10
♦ 763
♣ AJ107

♠ Q52
♥ Q985
♦ AJ95
♣ 94

Dealer: South
Neither Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

A good minor suit game for E/W here. In the Swedes' room, the bidding started P-1D-1H-1S and Upmark bid 3♦ showing a good 4 card raise. However E was not stopping short of game and W ended playing 5♠ making 12 when the Swedes failed to find their ♦ ruff. In the other room E/W played in 5♦ doubled and, with the cards so favourable, that was an easy make as well. I'm afraid that the 3NT brigade will be disappointed here.

28

♠ AQ1032
♥ 42
♦ AQ7
♣ Q82

♠ 6
♥ A98765
♦ 942
♣ K75

♠ 985
♥ K3
♦ K63
♣ J10963

♠ KJ74
♥ QJ10
♦ J1085
♣ A4

Dealer: West
N-S Vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

Opening Lead:

I expect N/S to reach 4S on this deal and it will fail on most occasions. There was no weak 2 opener by W so the Swedes had a clear run to game. E led J♣ to the K and a ♦ came back to the K. Now with no indication about partner's ♥'s, E led a 2nd ♦ and the game was let through. This didn't happen in the other room where W opened 3H. N/S got to game but 3 rounds of ♥'s left declarer with no chance.