

2008 NABC Bridge Quiz with Answers

By Michael Rosenberg

Question 1:

Imps: N-S vul. You, South, hold:

♠ 75 ♥ AK1052 ♦ AKJ732 ♣ ---

S	W	N	E
---	---	1♥	4♠
?			

A) Which of the following choices do you prefer?

- i) 6♥
- ii) 5♥
- iii) Other _____

Analysis:

i) 6♥. This may feel strange, with no control in the opponents' suit, but there are several ways this can "win". Partner may have a control in spades; or they may save at favorable vulnerability; or they may not lead spades; or (the most fun) LHO may have a singleton ♠A!

There could also possibly be a ♦ loser (or even a trump loser). But these are not things to worry too much about. 6♥ "puts it to them" – and you don't even care too much what they do.

The main point here is you are compelled to make a decision which may turn out very badly – there is no escape.

ii) 5♥. Obviously, a better chance of going plus than bidding 6♥. And you could also bid 5♥ with the plan of bidding 6♥ if they bid 5♠ (since now partner is more likely to be short). But they may not oblige – and even if they do, you can't be sure of success. And you may also be cold for a grand slam.

iii) Other 7♥ is also a possible gamble. This might talk RHO out of a spade lead. It would look foolish when cold for only 6♥, though it might stampede LHO into a 7♠ sacrifice. It would be more attractive if one or both red suits had no loser possibility.

The only other sensible choice would be 4N – defending 4♠ should not be a choice here. 4N may not have a clear meaning. But even if you always intend to bid 6♥, 4N gives the opponents more options than a direct 6♥ bid.

Scores

6♥	100
4N	80
5♥	70
7♥	60
Double	10

Question 2

Matchpoints; N-South vul. You, South, hold:

♠ Q62 ♥ 4 ♦ 92 ♣ A1087432

S	W	N	E
?			

Which of the following choices do you prefer?

- i) 3♣
- ii) Pass

Analysis:

- i) 3♣. For the “preempts always work” crowd, this would be automatic. But this hand does not really have enough playing strength for an unfavorable 3-level preempt.
- ii) Pass. It may not feel “tough” to not make life difficult for the opponents by preempting. But, in addition to lack of playing strength, there are also the usual two preempting flaws – one, that you might miss a better contract (here in spades), and two, you may well help give them a road map in the play of the hand.

Scores

Pass	100
3♣	50

Question 3

Imps; Love All. You, South, hold:

♠ KJ974 ♥ J3 ♦ K762 ♣ 84

S	W	N	E
---	---	---	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
?			

Which of the following choices do you prefer?

- i) Pass
- ii) Double

Analysis:

i) Pass. There are two big advantages to pass. First, the contract may be unbeatable. Second, doubling may help declarer in the play.

ii) Double. This is “where the money is”. Against a strong declarer, one would certainly be less comfortable. But you do have a huge surprise for them in the trump suit. Watching them go three down at 50 a trick would be depressing.

Scores

Double	100
Pass	80

Question 4

Imps; Love All. You, South, hold:

♠ AJ76 ♥ J4 ♦ 852 ♣ J752

S	W	N	E
---	---	1 ♠	4 ♥
?			

Which of the following choices do you prefer?

- i) Pass
- ii) 4 ♠

Analysis:

i) Pass At first, this looks a little cowardly, with such good support for partner. But the likelihood is that if partner cannot bid, then we cannot make anything. You have no real ruffing value unless partner has heart length – and that makes defensive prospects

better. They, of course, may be making but there is no reason to think they are favored to do so. Partner rates to have some useful minor cards over dummy's holdings.

Also, bidding 4♠ will occasionally have the undesired effect of partner getting us too high by bidding again.

ii) 4♠ The main advantage of 4♠ is that it may propel them into 5♥ down one. But overall, I don't think this counterbalances the negatives of bidding.

Scores

Pass	100
4♠	80

Question 5

4) Imps; N-S vul. You, South, hold:

♠ Q108 ♥ Q74 ♦ A2 ♣ AK1075

S	W	N	E
---	---	---	3♦
?			

A) Which of the following choices do you prefer?

- i) Double
- ii) Pass
- iii) 3NT

B) Which of the above choices do you least prefer?

- i) Double
- ii) Pass
- iii) 3NT

Analysis:

i) Double This is probably the "middle-of-the-road" action. You have more than minimum opening strength, some shortage in their suit, and support for all other suits. Many good things can happen (including partner passing).

ii) Pass Rather conservative. But partner may still act. And there is the point that, while SOME aggressive action may work, the chosen one will fail part of the time. This makes pass more attractive. But it feels to me like a “losing” call.

iii) 3N Not for the faint of heart. You know if you get doubled, you are in grave danger of going for a big number. Your inability to duck two diamonds may prove painful. And even if you don't get doubled, this may well be inferior and/or expensive. Still, it is the most practical way of reaching our most likely game contract.

By the way, this was the winning bid at the table, for whatever that is worth (not much, in my opinion).

Scores

Double	100
3N	90
Pass	70

Part (b) was scored as 100-[score for each choice in part (a)], and was only used to break ties.

Question 6

Matchpoints; Both vul. You, South, hold:

♠ 842 ♥ 1052 ♦ 93 ♣ AKQ109

S	W	N	E
--	1♣	Pass	2NT*
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
?			

*Forcing

Which of the following choices do you prefer?

- i) Double
- ii) Pass

Analysis:

i) Double You will defeat the hand whenever their clubs are 3-3, or if either opponent has Jxx. You also may occasionally defeat them, even when they have a club stopper. I believe you are more than 50% to defeat them. You know they have nowhere to run. So, assuming this is a normal contract, you are simply improving your matchpoint expectancy by doubling.

ii) Pass This would be far more attractive at imps, where doubling has a small window of gain, since they do not rate to go down more than one. If the contract is always failing by one trick, double will gain only three imps. If it is always succeeding, double will lose four (nine tricks) or eight (ten tricks) imps; or, if you run into a redouble, 9 or 13 imps.

Scores

Double	100
Pass	70

Question 7

Imps; E-W Vul. You, South, hold:

♠ AQ107532 ♥ 4 ♦ KJ942 ♣ ---

S	W	N	E
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
?			

A) Which of the following choices do you prefer?

- i) 2♦
- ii) 3♠
- iii) 4♠
- iv) Other ___

B) Which of the above listed choices do you least prefer?

- i) 2♦
- ii) 3♠
- iii) 4♠

Analysis:

i) 2♦ The scientific approach. This allows you to investigate a diamond contract, while limiting your hand. If partner bids one of your short suits and you follow with a spade bid, he will clearly be better (though far from perfectly) placed to decide whether he has the right cards for game.

ii) 3♠ The silly approach. Partner can have no idea of your hand, and will never be able to appreciate that the ♦Q is of far more value than higher cards in hearts and clubs.

iii) 4♠ The practical approach. This is your most likely final contract, and getting there this way may make life difficult for the opponents, both on opening lead and later in the defense. As an example, a “third-and-fifth” ♦2 may be led with dummy having Q10xxx, and RHO having ♦Ax. He may well think his partner has KJxxx and fail to give his partner a ruff, due to your having hidden your side suit.

iv) Other 2♠ seems pusillanimous. And 3♦ is too likely to get us to an unmakeable slam.

Scores

4♠	100
2♦	90
3♦	70
3♠	50
2♠	30

Part (b) was scored as 100-[score for each choice in part (a)], and was only used to break ties.

Question 8

Matchpoints; N-S Vul. You, South, hold:

♠ 94 ♥ A86 ♦ KJ1073 ♣ KQ4

S	W	N	E
--	--	--	1♠
?			

A) Which of the following choices/plans do you prefer?

- i) Double
- ii) 2♦
- iii) Pass, then over (2♠), pass, (pass), Double
- iv) Pass, then over (2♠), pass, (pass), 3♦
- v) Pass, then over (2♠), pass, (pass), Pass

B) Which of the above listed choices do you regard as least promising?

- i) Double
- ii) 2♦
- iii) Pass, then over (2♠), pass, (pass), Double

- iv) Pass, then over (2♠), pass, (pass), 3♦
- v) Pass, then over (2♠), pass, (pass), Pass

Analysis:

i) Double This gets you into the bidding. But, at matchpoints, I believe 2♦ gives a clearly superior chance of reaching the right partscore.

ii) 2♦ My choice. Bidding directly is safer at matchpoints. When you balance at matchpoints, it is like waving a red flag at the opponents, inviting them to double you – whereas atimps, they are more fearful of doubling you into game. 2♦ accentuates where you want to play. Double is too likely to lead to a poor heart contract – especially if partner has a singleton in one of the minors, say ♠Jxxx, ♥Kxxx, ♦AQxx, ♣x.

Basically, I see the likely goal with this hand as to push them to 3♠. 2♦ does that more effectively than double – the opponents are more likely to defend our 3-level contract if we are in the wrong suit (hearts – I wouldn't worry too much if partner bids clubs, where I have secondary honors and the ♥A on the side). The bidding is quite likely to go (1♠)2♦-(2♠)3♦. Now it will be difficult for them to double, and they may have a choice of defending 3♦ for down 1, or bidding 3♠, which may be close.

iii) Pass/Double You try to push them up, while only getting in the auction if they have a fit. If it goes, instead, 1♠-1N, 2♥-2♠ you may be boxed out of the auction (which could be good or bad). But you are asking for the dreaded -200.

iv) Pass/3♦ Difficult to compare this with (iii). Double may be safer. But you sometimes gain by avoiding a doubling “rhythm” – which they are more likely to get into at matchpoints. Of course, even if you buy it for 3♦ you might go for the dreaded -200 – no big deal atimps, but that's why I prefer the immediate overcall. Then if partner has no fit or values, we are out of the auction.

v) Pass/Pass This is my last choice. It carries all the risks of missing game or partscore, and fails to make life difficult for the opponents. It avoids the negative numbers, but is just too passive an action with a sound opening bid, a goodish suit, and no wastage in the opponents' suit.

Scores

2♦	100
Double	80
Pass/Double	70
Pass/3♦	60
Pass/Pass	50

Part (b) was scored as 100-[score for each choice in part (a)], and was only used to break ties.