

Chapter 4: Opening One of a Major

In Key Lime Precision, an opening bid of 1♥/♠ is normally a 5 card (or longer) suit with 11-15 HCP. We use a forcing 1NT response because this is the **ONLY MECHANISM** responder has to force game. Thus a 2 level response is non-forcing and **to play!!**

Why use 1NT as a game force?

This concept comes from the Viking Precision Club. It is used as part and parcel of their relay methods. There are a myriad of hands where responder wants to make a slam try or a game going bid of at least 3NT from their side. Also, through 1NT forcing partner knows that either they are playing 2 of the major **or** at game level or higher. This allows the better hand to be completely concealed throughout, thus not allowing the defense to pinpoint a potentially lethal lead. Also, since the forcing NT does not **IMMEDIATELY** guarantee game going values (remember, partner might have a weak raise), it is **LEGAL** under the General Convention Chart. This is an evolution in bidding, and something that I feel will make a solid mark upon systems for years to come.

What do I do then on single suited hands that can't play anywhere else?

The answer to this is simple: just bid it directly. All 2/1 responses in KLP V12 are **to play**. The suit should be at least 6 cards in length, and denies a quality doubleton in the opened major. This is an extension of negative free bids. This concept must be alerted as "non-forcing" at **all** times.

How do I raise partner's major?

In KLP, we use very specialized trump raises to show responder's shape, values, and trumps at their first turn. These raises appear in the Romex Forcing Club system, and when I first saw them I immediately took to them. These responses allow in **ONE** bid to show degree of fit, points, and shortage. We also use the Martel-Stansby G/F raise (more advanced than Jacoby 2NT) to show a hand that is mildly interested in slam opposite a maximum (14-15) opening. Lastly, splinters, and 3NT as pick-a-game (balanced with 3 trumps) complete the ensemble.

Listed below is the schedule of Romex Major Suit Raises:

Over 1♥:

- 2♠ - 4 trumps, single raise, unknown splinter (2NT asks for shortage)
- 3♣/♦/♥ shows that shortage in that bid suit (3♥ = ♠ shortage)

2NT - 4 trumps (NOT 5 or MORE!), G/F raise, unlimited strength
 3♣ → minimum (11-13), does not deny a shortage or void
 3♦ → no splinter, maximum (14-15), asks responder to clarify
 3♥ → other major splinter, maximum (14-15)
 3♠ → diamond splinter, maximum (14-15)
 3NT → club splinter, maximum (14-15)
 4X → 5 card suit headed by A or K, maximum (14-15)

Over 1♥ - 2NT - 3♣, 3♦ asks for opener's shape:

3♥ → some splinter
 (3♠ follow-on asks w/ 3NT=♠, 4♣=♦, 4♦=♣ (high, mid, low))
 (4♦ follow-on shows club splinter, slammish)
 3♠ → 4 card side suit
 3NT → 6322 or 5332
 (4♣ asks with 4♦ = 6322 and becoming Last Train)
 4♣/♦ → shows 4 card side suit
 4♥ → no splinter, minimum, does not desire slam at all

Over 1♥ - 2NT - 3♦, 3♥ asks for opener's shape:

3♠ → 4 card side suit
 3NT → 6322 or 5322 (4♣ asks with 4♦ = 6322, Last Train as well)
 4♣/♦ → 4 card side suit

In general, once the pair has entered the 2NT G/F complex, a bid of 3NT by responder is NOT natural - it is serious 3NT and asks partner to bid game directly if they are minimum, otherwise cue bid a control in passing.

3♣ → 4 trumps, single raise, NO shortage

3♦ → 4 trumps, limit raise, NO shortage

3♥ → 4 trumps, preemptive

3♠ → 4 trumps, splinter, G/F with no slam interest

3NT → 3 trumps, pick-a-game

4♣/♦ → 4 trumps, splinter, G/F with no slam interest

4♥ → 5 trumps (or longer), to play

4♠ → RKC Kickback in hearts

However, over a 1♠ we don't have the 2♠ response available to show the mini-splinter. Thus, we simply shift the responses up one bid, with 2NT showing the mini-splinter and 3♣ the G/F raise in spades. Thusly, all follow-up bids over 1♠ - 3♣ are in the same schedule, but shifted up one bid.

Over interference of 1M in a suit, we use negative free bids.

Dealing with 1M - X: Meckwell

When an opponent makes a takeout double, the auction has an overtone of confrontation. You can either be passive, or like I, seize control of the auction. I used to like Cappelletti over 1M -X, but I recently stumbled onto a logical extension that is played by Meckwell. It's similar in the concept of transfers, but it also contains a logical secondary reason: to show a weak raise AND give lead direction (analogous to McCabe Adjuncts).

Listed below is Meckwell over 1M - X:

1M - X - XX → shows values and establishes ownership of the auction, doesn't deny fit

1M - X - 1NT → forced transfer to 2♣ (if responder now bids 2M, this shows lead direction)

1M - X - 2♣ → forced transfer to 2♦ (likewise, correction to 2M shows lead direction)

1M - X - 2♦ → forced transfer to 2H over 1S, otherwise, a single raise in H's over 1♥

1M - X - 2M → weak raise

1M - X - 2NT → limit raise (Jordan)

1M - X - 3♣ → forcing raise

1M - X - 3M → preemptive