

4-Card Transfer-Oriented Canapé Symmetric Relay System

(affectionately known as TOSR)

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1. Description of Opening Bids

| | |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1C | 15+ HCP, any shape. |
| 1D | 10-14 HCP, 4+H, may have a longer suit, may be three-suited, may be balanced. |
| 1H | 10-14 HCP, 4+S, 0-3H, may have a longer minor suit, may be balanced. |
| 1S | 10-14 HCP, 4+/4+ in minors, may be three-suited with both minors. |
| 1NT | 11-14 HCP, balanced, no 4 card major (4333,4432,5332 with 5 card minor) |
| 2C | 10-14 HCP 6+C; or 6-9 HCP, 6+D; or 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ in H +S |
| 2D | 10-14 HCP 6+D; or 6-9 HCP, 6+H; or 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ in S+C |
| 2H | Acol II (8-9 PT) in H, usually less than 15 HCP; or 6-9 HCP, 6+S; or 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ in D+C |
| 2S | Acol II (8-9 PT) in S, usually less than 15 HCP; or 6-9 HCP, with 6+C; or 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ in H+D |
| 2NT | 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ in S+D or H+C |
| 3C | Weak III in D (transfer preempt) |
| 3D | Weak III in H (transfer preempt) |
| 3H | Weak III in S (transfer preempt) |
| 3S | Unspecified nine-card suit, no minimum strength |
| 3NT | Gambling in S, AKQxxxx, no outside controls |
| 4C-4S | Preemptive with suit bid |
| 4NT | Extreme minors |
| 5C,5D | Preemptive in suit bid |
| 5H,5S | 11 playing trick hands missing A & K of trumps |

2. 1C OPENING (15+ HCP any shape)

RESPONSES SUMMARY

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1D | Negative: either 0-7 HCP any shape, or less than 2 controls (A=2, K=1), or both. |
| 1H | 4+ S, 8+ HCP, 2+ controls. |
| 1S | Any 4333 or 4432, or any red two-suited hand, 8+ HCP, 2+ controls. |
| 1NT | 4+ H, 8+ HCP, 2+ controls, 0-3S, 0-3D. |
| 2C | 4+ D, 8+ HCP, 2+ controls, may be three-suited with both minors. |
| 2D | 5+ C, 8+ HCP, 2+ controls and no other suit longer than 3. |
| 2H+ | both MINORS, 8+ HCP, 2+ controls and no other suit. |

The transfer-oriented responses are designed to accommodate the desire, wherever possible, to have the unrevealed strong 1C hand declare the contract. The 1H response permits the unrevealed hand to declare a spade contract. The 1S response permits the unrevealed hand to declare a notrump contract in either case, and a diamond contract in the case of any red two-suiter, and when responder holds more than four hearts, the unrevealed hand may still be able to declare a heart contract. The 1NT response may enable the unrevealed hand to declare a heart contract, but not if responder holds four hearts and longer clubs. The 2C and 2D responses and rebids allow the unrevealed hand to declare both club and diamond contracts when appropriate.

Continuations After Positive Responses To 1C

2.1 Introduction

The 1C opener will almost always make the cheapest call which is a **relay** whose only meaning is "tell me more". Eventually the 1C opener will break the relay sequence to name the final contract. *NOTE:* 3NT is never a relay. When 3NT is the cheapest call, 4C is the relay.

2.2 Single-suited relay structure (5+ suit)

STEP 1 Give positive response in the single suit (1H,1NT,2C,2D).

STEP 2 After relay by 1C opener, rebid 2S or higher as indicated below.

Rebids after relay with single-suited positive:

- 2S **High shortage** - at most 2 cards in highest ranking outside suit, i.e. after 1C-1 \square \square -2C-2S shows a spade shortage and a hand with 5+ heart suit.
- 2NT **Middle shortage** - at most 2 cards in middle ranking outside suit; diamond shortage if a major is the long suit, heart shortage if a minor is the long suit. e.g. 1C-1H-1S-2NT shows spades and a diamond shortage; and 1C-2D-2H-2NT shows clubs and a heart shortage.
- 3C **Even shortage** - showing two or three doubletons. If 3C is bid directly (1C-1H-1S-3C) this shows either 6322 (i.e. two low doubletons) or 7222. If 3C is bid indirectly (via 2S - high shortage, i.e. 1C-1H-1S-2S-2NT-3C), this shows a high doubleton and one other doubleton, i.e. either 6232 or 6223. *See continuations below.*
- 3D **5332** type shape. If 3D is reached directly (i.e. not via 2S or 2NT) then this implies low shortage.
- 3H **6331** type shape. If 3H is reached directly (i.e. not via 2S or 2NT) then this implies low shortage.
- 3S **7330** type shape, etc.
- 3NT **7321** or **7231** type shape (only identity of 7 card suit and singleton known - low shortage), minimum (8-11 HCP)
- 4C **7321** or **7231** type shape (only identity of 7 card suit and singleton known - low shortage), maximum (12+ HCP), 0-2 controls; etc.

Continuations after 3C direct/indirect responses

A. Indirect 3C (Even shortage).

After the 3D relay,

- 3H 1 High and 1 Middle doubleton (i.e. 223 residue).
- 3S 1 High and 1 Low doubleton (i.e. 232 residue), minimum
- 3NT 1 High and 1 Low doubleton (i.e. 232 residue), maximum, and 2 controls; etc.

B. Direct 3C (Even shortage).

After the 3D relay,

- 3H Seven carder (i.e. 222 residue).
- 3S Six carder (i.e. 322 residue), minimum
- 3NT Six carder (i.e. 322 residue), maximum and 2 controls; etc.

2.3 Two-Suited Relay Structure

STEP 1 Give positive response in cheaper major suit (*for both minors or reds see later*)

STEP 2 After relay by 1C opener, rebid from 1NT to 2H:

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3C | High shortage. |
| 3D | Even shortage (6511, 5611 shape). |
| 3H <i>Relay</i> | 3S High shortage (5611). |
| | 3NT Low shortage (6511), minimum |
| | 4C Low shortage (6511), maximum, 2 controls; etc. |

3H **5521** type shape.

3S **5530** type shape.

3NT **5620** type shape (high shortage).

4C **6520** type shape, minimum

4D **6520** type shape, maximum, 2 controls; etc.

Note: Any bid of 3H upwards bid directly (i.e. not via 3C/3D) shows a LOW shortage.

Rebids when holding both minors

Initial positive response to 1C is 2H or higher as follows:

2H **Reverser** (i.e. 4 diamonds and 5+ clubs).

2S **5/5** type hand (i.e. 5+ diamonds and 5+ clubs)

2NT **High shortage** (if bid directly shows 4 clubs, 5+ diamonds and a spade shortage. If bid indirectly via 2H, shows 4 diamonds, 5+ clubs and a spade shortage).

3C **Even shortage**, 5422 or 7411 with longer diamonds. With longer clubs, bid 2H first then 3C over the relay, etc.)

3D *Relay* 3H **7411** (note, the cheapest bid here is not the most common shape)

3S **5422**, minimum

3NT **5422**, maximum, 2 controls; etc.

3D **5431** type shape.

3H **6421** type shape.

3S **7420** type shape.

3NT **6430** type shape, minimum

4C **6430** type shape, maximum, 2 controls; etc.

Note: To show longer clubs, bid 2H first. To show longer diamonds make a bid from 2NT upwards directly. With a spade shortage bid via 2NT, with a heart shortage bid directly from 3D upwards depending on hand shape.

Rebids when holding both red suits

Initial positive response to 1C is 1S, and after the 1NT relay, bid 2C showing the red two-suiter. Then rebid 2H or higher as follows:

- 2H **Reverser** (i.e. 4 hearts and 5+ diamonds).
- 2S **5/5** type hand (i.e. 5+ hearts and 5+ diamonds).
- 2NT **High shortage** (if bid directly shows 4 diamonds, 5+ hearts and a spade shortage. If bid indirectly via 2H, shows 4 hearts, 5+ diamonds and a spade shortage); etc.

Note: To show longer diamonds, bid 2H first. To show longer hearts make a bid from 2NT upwards directly. With a spade shortage bid via 2NT; with a club shortage bid directly from 3D upwards depending on hand shape.

2.4 Three-Suited Relay Structure

A three-suited hand will use either of the following structures:

(a) *Three-suited with both majors:*

- 1C 1H (Positive with spades)
- 1S 1NT (and hearts)
- 2C 2D (and a minor)

(b) *Three-suited with both minors:*

- 1C 2C (Positive with diamonds)
- 2D 2H (and clubs and a major - NB: this is not a reverser since minor two-suiters start at 2H)

After three-suiter has been established, step responses follow:

- 1st Step **High shortage.**
- 2nd Step **4441** (i.e. low shortage)
- 3rd Step **4450** (i.e. low shortage)
- 4th Step **4540** (i.e. low shortage)
- 5th Step **5440**, minimum
- 6th Step **5440**, maximum, 2 controls, etc.

2.5 Balanced Relay Structure

With any 4333 or 4432, or a [red two-suiter](#), with 8+ HCP and 2+ controls, respond 1S to an opening 1C. After the 1NT relay, a **CRASH** (Colour, **R**ANK, **S**Hape) relay structure is used.

2C Red two-suiter (*for continuations see Section 2.3*)
2D Two four card suits of the same **Colour** or 4333 with a four card major

| | | |
|----------|-----------|--------------------------------------------|
| 2H Relay | 2S | 4333 or 3433 |
| | 2NT Relay | 3C 4333 |
| | | 3D 3433 , minimum |
| | | 3H 3433 , maximum, 2 controls, etc. |
| | 2NT | 2443 |
| | 3C | 3442 |
| | 3D | 4324 |
| | 3H | 4234 , minimum |
| | 3S | 4234 , maximum, 2 controls, etc. |

Note : Bid the doubleton

2H Two four card suits of the same **Rank**.

| | | |
|----------|-----|-----------------------------------------|
| 2S Relay | 2NT | 2344 |
| | 3C | 4432 |
| | 3D | 4423 |
| | 3H | 3244 , minimum |
| | 3S | 3244 , maximum, 2 controls, etc. |

Note : Bid the doubleton

2S **4333** (bid directly shows a four card minor, bid via 2D shows 4 card major)

| | | |
|-----------|----|-----------------------------------------|
| 2NT Relay | 3C | 3343 |
| | 3D | 3334 , minimum |
| | 3H | 3334 , maximum, 2 controls, etc. |

2NT Doubleton spade (C/H), **2434**

3C Doubleton club (D/S), **4342**

3D Doubleton diamond (C/H), **3424**

3H Doubleton heart (D/S), **4243**, minimum

3S Doubleton heart (D/S), **4243**, maximum, 2 controls, etc.

Note : Bid the doubleton

Note : Two 4 card suits of the same shape are shown with an immediate response of 2NT or higher.

Reverse relay - not used with transfer responses to 1C opening

In auctions beginning 1C-1NT (i.e. balanced), if opener rebids 2C as a relay then this denies 15-17 HCP and 4333 or 4432 type shapes. When holding these two hand types (and only these two), opener is required to rebid a reverse relay of 2D or higher on the same basis as the CRASH structure employed by responder after the normal 2C relay. Responder now takes charge of the relays and the 1C opener is required to show controls starting with a minimum of 2.

6. Controls and minimum/maximum

In most relay auctions, after exact shape has been shown, next relay asks for hand strength, with a run-on to the number of controls held if the hand is maximum. Controls are counted as ace = 2 and king = 1, and singleton aces and kings are counted.

After positive responses to 1C by an unpassed hand

The response structure is:

- 1st step minimum (8-11 HCP)
- 2nd step maximum (12+ HCP) + 2 controls
- 3rd step maximum (12+ HCP) + 3 controls; etc.

After a 1st step minimum response the next relay asks for controls. The maximum number of controls in a minimum hand is five (A, A, K = 11 HCP = 5 controls). Therefore the responses are:

- 1st step 2 controls
- 2nd step 3 controls
- 3rd step 4 controls
- 4th step 5 controls

After controls are shown, denial cue bidding begins (see Section 2.7)

Note: when a [Game Probe Relay](#) (see Section 2.9) has been used, minimum/maximum is not shown as 10+ HCP is known.

After positive responses to 1C by a passed hand

A passed hand giving a positive response to a 1C opening is limited to 8-9 HCP unless it is either 4333, 4432, or 5332 with a 5-card minor, in which case it is 8-10 HCP. In either case, no minimum or maximum is shown after shape is fully described, and the relays run directly into the number of controls held (2,3 or 4), and thence into denial cue bidding as normal.

After semi-positive responses to 1C

Semi-positive hands (5-7 HCP, or 8+ HCP with 0-1 controls) may give level-adjusted relay responses after the sequence 1C-1D-1H, or after 1-level interference to the 1C opening. In both cases, the response structure applicable after an ask that would normally ask for minimum/maximum (or in the case of a run-on) is:

| | |
|----------|-------------------------|
| 1st step | 8+ points, 0-1 controls |
| 2nd step | 5-7, 0 control |
| 3rd step | 5-7, 1 control |
| 4th step | 5-7, 2 controls |
| 5th step | 5-7, 3 controls |

After the 1st step response & next relay, the responses are:

| | |
|----------|------------------|
| 1st step | 8-11, 0 control |
| 2nd step | 8-11, 1 control |
| 3rd step | 12-15, 0 control |
| 4th step | 12-15, 1 control |

2.7 Denial Cue-bidding

After controls have been shown, next relay starts denial cue bidding. Responder looks at their longest suit, then next longest suit. When ties in suit length occur, look at highest-ranking suit first. Singletons (including singleton honours) are not looked at in denial cue bidding and are shown by inference only. Doubletons are looked at once. Tripletons are looked at twice (on the second time round queens are investigated). Longer suits are looked at three times. On the first look at a suit, it is inspected for an ace or king. On the second look, it is inspected for an additional top honour (usually a queen) and on the third look, jacks are checked. If the first suit looked at does not have the required honour, the responder denies it by making the cheapest bid. If the responder holds a required honour in the longest suit but not in the second longest suit, then he/she bids the second cheapest bid. Future relays continue asking from where you left off. The highest relay ask is 5NT.

| | |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st step | No ace or king in longest suit. |
| 2nd step | Ace or king in longest suit and no ace or king in second longest suit. |
| 3rd step | Ace or king in longest suit and ace or king in second longest suit and no ace or king in third longest suit; etc. |

Solid-suit Exceptions

When holding a solid suit of at least six cards, responder denies that suit on the first scan if the suit is not headed by at least two of the A, K or Q. Having initially shown at least two of the top three honours, on the second scan, responder shows that suit only if it is AKQxxx or better. Having initially denied at least two of the top three honours, a second denial is made if none of the top three honours is held.

When holding a three-card to five-card suit headed by at least AKQ then on the first scan, responder will deny holding the suit, and on the second scan show the suit. The three-control difference should be recognisable to relayer.

Short-suit Cue-bidding

Occasions arise when the relayer is unconcerned about the controls in the responder's suit(s) (either because they are held by relayer, or must be held by responder, or are opposite relayer's singletons or voids). In such circumstances, after the number of controls has been shown, if the previous response was 4H or below, then 4NT is a short suit ask, and responder must begin denial cue bidding, but ignoring his suit(s). Singleton kings are still not shown. 4NT must be Step 2 or higher, and the exact number of controls must have been shown for short suit denial cue bidding to apply. After the response to 4NT, normal step 1 relays continue the short suit denial cue bidding.

2.8 The 3NT Weak Relay

There are a number of situations where the relayer fears that an auction is getting too high where responder might only have 3 or 4 controls. In these situations, the relayer bids 3NT as a weak relay. Responder is usually required to pass with fewer than 5 controls (except - see 4NT bid below) but with more bids as follows:

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------|
| 4C | 5 controls |
| 4D | 6 controls |
| 4H | 7 controls |
| 4S | 8 controls |
| 4NT | only 4 controls but lots of queens and jacks. |

Exception: if 3NT weak relay has been made when the responder has shown 5422 or 7411, then:

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 4C | 7411, 2+ controls |
| 4D | 5422, 5 controls |
| 4H | 5422, 6 controls |
| 4S | 5422, 7 controls |
| 4NT | 5422, only 4 controls but lots of queens and jacks. |

Relayer can resume relaying by making the cheapest bid. Any other bid is a signoff.

2.9 Game Probe Relay

The positive balanced 1NT response to the opening 1C requires responder to bid a reverse relay with a 15-17 balanced hand. This requirement allows responder to choose to play in a low-level suit suit or notrump contract with a poorly fitting minimal balanced hand of 8-9 HCP. It is clearly an inferior result to play in 3NT with a balanced 15 HCP hand opposite a balanced 8 HCP hand with poor fits and/or wasted values. Playing in 2H, 2S, 2NT or even in three-level contracts is likely to be superior if 3NT is uncertain.

After responder makes a positive suit response to 1C, if relayer has a balanced 15-16 HCP hand with no primary fit, or even a better hand with expectation of significant duplication of values, relayer may show this by bidding Step 2 for relay, rather than the normal Step 1. The Step 2 bid is known as a Game Probe Relay, and asks responder if that hand can sustain game opposite relayer's announced hand. It denies slam interest. If responder shows a one-, two- or three-suited hand at or below 2D, then the Game Probe Relay is available to opener to show a balanced 15-16 HCP hand with no fits (the 2D limit ensures the bidding can stop at 2NT)

Negative response

Responder replies Step 1 with a balanced (5332) or poor semi-balanced (5422, 6322) 8 HCP hand (up to a 10 HCP hand, with poor values in the hand's suits, or other wasted values). Opener then makes the appropriate signoff (which may include a pass)

Game Force response

With an appropriately unbalanced minimal hand, or nearly all 10+ HCP hands, responder makes a Game Force relay response at Step 2 or higher. The response given is that which would have been made over a normal Step 1 relay, but shifted up two steps. Normal relays then continue, but responder no longer gives the minimum/maximum responses. Specifically, over a control ask, responder makes a Step 1 response with 2 controls, with other steps showing more controls as normal. If relayer gives the highest

shape-showing relay response (which normally requires min or max with controls to be shown) then relayer shows first the 2 control hand, etc. Over a 3NT signoff (as in 2.8 3NT Weak Relay) responder bids on with 5+ controls only if responder's hand makes slam likely opposite relayer's announced hand (this usually means holding 15+ HCP also, as opener knows relayer's shape). The 4NT short suit ask applies subject to the usual Step 2 criterion.

After interference

When the opponents intervene, opener is better placed to judge the potential of the hand, in particular the ability to stop the opponents' suit(s). The Game Probe Relay is not available after any interference, including those that cause steps to be gained. Penalty doubles and passes may prove adequate compensation subject to vulnerability concerns.

2.10 Continuations after 1D negative response to 1C

After 1C-1D:

| | |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1H | 19+ HCP any shape. |
| 1S-2H | natural 15-18 HCP. |
| 2S+ | natural 15-18 HCP, good suit and playing strength; <i>except</i> |
| 2NT | 5/5 minors, 15-18 HCP. |
| 3NT | to play, based on long running suit with side stoppers, 15-18 HCP. |

After 1C-1D-1H:

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1S | Second negative, 0-4 HCP |
| 1NT | 5+ HCP and 4+ spades |
| 2C | 5+ HCP, balanced, or a red two-suiter |
| 2D | 5+ HCP and 4+ hearts and denies spades and diamonds |
| 2H | 5+ HCP and 4+ diamonds |
| 2S | 5+ HCP and 5+ clubs and denies other suit. |
| 2NT | 5+ HCP, reverser, 4 diamonds, 5+ clubs. |
| 3C | 5+ HCP 5/5 in the minors. |
| 3D | 5+ HCP, spade shortage, both minors with longer diamonds if bid directly. |
| 3H | 5+ HCP, even shortage, both minors with longer diamonds if bid directly. |
| 3S | 5+ HCP, 5431 shape with low shortage, and longer diamonds if bid directly. |
| 3NT | 5+ HCP, 6421 shape with low shortage, and longer diamonds if bid directly. |
| 4C | 5+ HCP, 7420 shape with low shortage, and longer diamonds if bid directly. |
| 4D | 5+ HCP, 6430 shape with 8+ points |
| 4H | 5+ HCP, 6430 shape with 0 controls; etc. (<i>NB maximum controls = 3</i>) |

NOTE: The full relay structure is used as normal but shifted up 2 steps.

After 1C-1D-1H-1S:

1NT 19-22 balanced.

2C 23+ any shape.

2D, 2H, 2S, 3C, Natural, non-forcing, 19-22 HCP.

2NT 19-22 at least 5/5 in minors.

3NT to play, based on long running suit with side stoppers.

After 1C-1D-1H-1S-2C:

Responder may give a third negative when holding 0-2(3)HCP or bid as follows:

2H 4M and 5+m (neither suit specified) then 2S asks with responses 2NT=H+C, 3C=H+D, 3D=S+C, 3H=S+D (low bids promise high-ranking shortages, consistent with remainder of the system).

2S Shows a hand describable with Puppet Stayman and transfers (all balanced, all long-major hands, both minors) and guarantees a rebid after any non-game bid by opener, who is not constrained to bid 2NT.

2NT Three-suited hand, then 3C asks and the short suit is bid naturally (3NT = club shortage).

3X Shows a single-suiter of (usually) at least 7 cards.

Notice that there is no question of right-siding hands once all the suit denominations have been bid at the one-level!

After 1C-1D-1H-1S-2C-2D:

2H and 2S are non-forcing, 2NT is 23+ balanced (Puppet Stayman and transfers), three-level bids are forcing.

Puppet Stayman Structure

After a 3C ask, opener responds 3H or 3S with a five-card suit, or 3NT with no four-card major. Opener responds 3D with at least one four-card major, whereafter responder bids 3H holding 4 **spades**, 3S holding 4 **hearts**, 3NT with no four-card major and 4D with **both** four-card majors.

After a 3D or 3H transfer, opener may superaccept by bidding 3H or 3S (as appropriate), deny support by bidding 3NT and show a normal acceptance by bidding 4H or 4S (as appropriate). After a 3NT denial, responder may repeat the transfer by bidding the suit below the one already shown.

After a 3S bid (both minors), opener bids 3NT with a hand not suited for 5C or 5D. With four- or five-card support, opener chooses a minor suit at the four-level to show extras and the five-level to deny extras. With both minor suits, opener may cue 4H or 4S or bid 4NT to deny the ability to cue.

3. 1D OPENING

REQUIREMENT: 10-14 HCP, 4+H, may be balanced, may have longer suit, may be three-suited

Point ranges for some of the responses below vary with vulnerability. 8+/6+ indicates 8+ non-vulnerable and 6+ vulnerable. 0-7/0-5 indicates 0-7 non-vulnerable and 0-5 vulnerable

RESPONSES SUMMARY

| | |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | To play in diamonds or 0-7/0-5 |
| 1H | RELAY - at least invitational to game - <i>8-10 with 3 hearts by a passed hand</i> |
| 1S | Natural 4+ spades, non-forcing, may be invitational, 8+/6+ |
| 1NT | Natural, non-forcing, 8-11 |
| 2C | Natural, 5+ clubs, non-forcing, may be invitational, 8+/6+ |
| 2D | Natural, 5+ diamonds, non-forcing, may be invitational, 8+/6+ |
| 2H | 8 - 12 HCP, 3 or 4 hearts, NOT 11-12 and 4 hearts (relay first) - <i>8-10 with 4 hearts by a passed hand</i> |
| 2S | Fit showing jump with spades, invitational in hearts |
| 2NT | At least 5-5 minors |
| 3C | Fit showing jump with clubs, invitational in hearts |
| 3D | Fit showing jumps with diamonds, invitational in hearts |
| 3H | Pre-emptive |
| 3S | Pre-emptive with at least nine cards in H + S |
| 3NT | To play |
| 4C | Pre-emptive with at least nine cards in H + C |
| 4D | Pre-emptive with at least nine cards in H + D |

After 1D-1H

| | |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 1S | Balanced, either 3433 or 4432 with hearts and another |
| 1NT | 4+ S, may be three-suited with both majors |
| 2C | 4+ D |
| 2D | 4+ C, 5+ H |
| 2H | Reverser, 5+ C, 4 H |
| 2S | High shortage, 5+H, etc. |

After 1D-1H-1S-1NT (R)

- 2C C shortage, either **3442** or **4432**
- 2D D shortage, either **3424** or **4423**
- 2H Even shortage, **3433**
- 2S S shortage, second high shortage, **2434**
- 2NT S shortage, second high shortage, **2443** minimum 10-12
- 3C S shortage, second high shortage, **2443** maximum 13-14, 0-2 controls, etc.

Note: bid the shortage

After 1D-1H-1S-1NT-2C-2D (R)

- 2H Second high shortage, **3442**
- 2S Second high shortage, **4432**, minimum 10-12
- 2NT Second high shortage, **4432**, maximum 13-14, 0-2 controls, etc.

Note: bid the shortage

After 1D-1H-1S-1NT-2D-2H (R)

- 2S Second high shortage, **3424**
- 2NT Second high shortage, **4423**, minimum 10-12
- 3C Second high shortage, **4423**, maximum 13-14, 0-2 controls, etc.

Note: bid the shortage

After 1D-1H-1NT-2C (R)

- 2D Three-suited, both majors (see 2.4 for continuations)
- 2H Reverser, 5+ H, 4S
- 2S 5/5, H + S
- 2NT 5+S, 4H, high shortage, etc.

After 1D-1H-2C-2D (R)

- 2H Reverser, 5+D, 4H
- 2S 5/5, H + D
- 2NT 5+H, 4D, high shortage, etc.

After 1D-2H

| | |
|-----|---------------------------------|
| 2NT | Inquiry |
| 3C | minimum with clubs, 3 hearts |
| 3D | minimum with diamonds, 3 hearts |
| 3H | minimum with 4 hearts |
| 3S | maximum with spades, 3 hearts |
| 3NT | maximum with 3 hearts |
| 4H | maximum (9 or 10) with 4 hearts |

2S, 3C,
3D Long suit trials

4. 1H OPENING

REQUIREMENT: 10-14 HCP, 4+S, 0-3H, may be balanced, may have a longer minor

Point ranges for some of the responses below vary with vulnerability. 8+/6+ indicates 8+ non-vulnerable and 6+ vulnerable. 0-7/0-5 indicates 0-7 non-vulnerable and 0-5 vulnerable

RESPONSES SUMMARY

| | |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | To play in hearts or 0-7/0-5 |
| 1S | RELAY - at least invitational to game - <i>8-10 with 3 spades by a passed hand</i> |
| 1NT | Natural, non-forcing, 8-11 |
| 2C | Natural, 5+ clubs, non-forcing, may be invitational, 8+/6+ |
| 2D | Natural, 5+ diamonds, non-forcing, may be invitational, 8+/6+ |
| 2H | Natural, 6+ H (or very strong 5), non-forcing but highly invitational |
| 2S | 8 - 12 HCP, 3 or 4 spades, NOT 11-12 and 4 spades (relay first) - <i>8-10 with 4 spades by a passed hand</i> |
| 2NT | At least 5-5 minors |
| 3C | Fit showing jump with clubs, invitational in spades |
| 3D | Fit showing jumps with diamonds, invitational in spades |
| 3H | Fit showing jump with hearts, invitational in spades |
| 3S | Pre-emptive |
| 3NT | To play |
| 4C | Pre-emptive with at least nine cards in S + C |
| 4D | Pre-emptive with at least nine cards in S + D |
| 4H | Pre-emptive with at least nine cards in S + H |

After 1H-1S

- 1NT 4+ clubs, could be balanced or two-suited
- 2C 4+ diamonds, could be balanced **4342** or **4243**
- 2D Balanced, 4333 with spades
- 2H Reverser, 5+ D, 4 S exactly
- 2S High shortage, 5+S, etc.

After 1H-1S-1NT-2C (R)

- 2D Balanced, **4324** or **4234**
- 2H Reverser, 5+ C, 4 S exactly
- 2S 5/5+ S + C
- 2NT 5+S, 4C, high shortage, etc.

After 1H-1S-1NT-2C-2D-2H (R)

- 2S Second high shortage, **4234**
- 2□□ Second high shortage, **4324**, minimum 10-12
- 3C Second high shortage, **4324**, maximum 13-14, 0-2 controls, etc.

After 1H-1S-2C-2D (R)

- 2H Balanced, **4243** or **4342**
- 2S 5/5+ S + D
- 2NT 5+S, 4D, high shortage, etc.

After 1H-1S-2C-2D-2H-2S (R)

- 2□□ Second high shortage, **4243**
- 3C Second high shortage, **4342**, minimum 10-12
- 3D Second high shortage, **4342**, maximum 13-14, 0-2 controls, etc.

5. 1S OPENING

REQUIREMENT: 10-14 HCP, 4+/4+ minors, may be three-suited

Point ranges for some of the responses below vary with vulnerability. 8+/6+ indicates 8+ non-vulnerable and 6+ vulnerable. 0-7/0-5 indicates 0-7 non-vulnerable and 0-5 vulnerable

RESPONSES SUMMARY

| | |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | To play with spades or 0-7/0-5 |
| 1NT | Natural, non-forcing, may include club tolerance, 8-11 - <i>natural, no club preference by a passed hand</i> |
| 2C | GAME FORCE RELAY - <i>natural by a passed hand 8-10/6-10</i> |
| 2D | Signoff |
| 2H | Fit showing jump for a minor - 2NT enquires |
| 2S | Fit showing jump for a minor - 2NT enquires |
| 2NT | Pre-emptive with both minors |
| 3C | Pre-emptive |
| 3D | Pre-emptive |
| 3H | Pre-emptive with 9 cards in hearts and a minor |
| 3S | Pre-emptive with 9 cards in spades and a minor |
| 3NT | To play |
| 4C | Preemptive |
| 4D | Preemptive |

After 1S-2C

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 2D | Three-suiter with both minors (see 2.4 for continuations) |
| 2H | Reverser: 5+ C, 4D |
| 2S | 5/5 |
| 2NT | High shortage, 5+D, 4C, etc. |

6. 1NT OPENING

REQUIREMENT: 11-14 HCP, balanced, 4333, 4432, 5332, no four card major

RESPONSES SUMMARY

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2C | Transfer to hearts, 2D = 3 card support, outside doubleton and maximum |
| 2D | Transfer to spades, 2H = 3 card support, outside doubleton and maximum |
| 2H | GAME FORCE RELAY - <i>diamond bust by a passed hand</i> |
| 2S | <i>Minors takeout</i> - either balanced game invitation, or takeout with 4+4+ minors, or diamond bust - <i>minors takeout only by a passed hand</i> |
| 2NT | transfer to clubs |
| 3C | 6-card suit, invitational, at least 2/3 top honours. |
| 3D | 6-card suit, invitational, at least 2/3 top honours. |
| 3H | 6-card suit, invitational, at least 2/3 top honours. |
| 3S | 6-card suit, invitational, at least 2/3 top honours. |
| 3NT | To play |
| 4C | Preemptive in hearts |
| 4D | Preemptive in spades |
| 4H | To play |
| 4S | To play |
| 4NT | Blackwood |

After 1NT-2H(R) GF established

(Diamond bust by a passed hand)

Note : minimum/maximum or number of controls is never shown past 3NT without a 4C ask

| | |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------|
| 2S | Flat, either 33(43) or (23)44 |
| 2NT | 5C, (332)5 |
| 3C | 5D, 2C, i.e. 3352 |
| 3D | 5D, 2S, i.e. 2353 |
| 3H | 5D, 2H, i.e. 3253 minimum, 10-12 |
| 3S | 5D, 2H, i.e. 3253, maximum, 13-14, 0-2 controls |
| 3NT | 5D, 2H, i.e. 3253, maximum, 13-14, 3+ controls |

After 1NT-2H-2S-2NT (R)

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|
| 3C | 3343 |
| 3D | 3334 |
| 3H | 3244 |
| 3S | 2344, minimum, 10-12 |
| 3NT | 3244, maximum, 13-14, 0+ controls |

Note: bid shortage

After 1NT-2H-2NT-3C (R)

| | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|
| 3D | 2D, 3325 |
| 3H | 2H, 3235 |
| 3S | 2S, 2335, minimum, 10-12 |
| 3NT | 2S, 2335, maximum, 13-14, 0+ controls |

After 1NT-2S balanced invitation, minors takeout, or diamond bust

| | |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2NT | minimum, 11-12 HCP |
| 3C | signoff, minors takeout with club preference or no preference |
| 3D | 3352 or 3343 |
| 3D | signoff, minors takeout with clear diamond preference (64) or diamond bust |
| 3H | 3244, game forcing |
| 3S | 2344, game forcing |
| 3C | maximum, 13-14 HCP, 4+C, may have 4D |
| 3D | signoff, minors takeout with clear diamond preference (64) or diamond bust |
| 3NT | conversion by a balanced invitation hand |
| 3D | maximum, 13-14 HCP, 4+D |
| 3NT | conversion by a balanced invitation hand |

Note: with equal length, opener will usually give a 3D rather than a 3C response to conceal the balanced hand when opposite diamond bust hands.

6.2 Major Suit Transfer Sequences

The most important factor is the absence of a four-card major from opener's hand. The presence of a 5-3 major-suit fit shows a

hand with a five-card minor, or four-four in the minors with a major-suit doubleton. Opener will hold 5-6 major-suit cards but 7-8 minor-suit cards.

With a 5-card or longer minor in a balanced or semi-balanced hand with invitational values, then tend to play in notrumps. Hands with major-suit singletons with weak to invitational strength should look for alternate contracts, as the defence has a 9-card fit to find. Options include transferring to a strong four-card major and hoping to strike a Moysian fit (with (14)(53)-type shapes), transferring to clubs, or bidding 2S as either a diamond transfer or a minor-suit takeout (with (13)(54)-type shapes).

With an invitational two-suiter including a 5-card major that is not 5422, transfer into the major, and:

1. if a super accept occurs:
 0. with a 55, bid Step 2. Pard will then bid Step 1 to ask for the second suit if he is interested (very probably).
 1. with a 54 or 64, bid the shortage at least the level of 2NT (i.e. show 15(43) with 2NT over 2D accept).
 2. if a normal accept occurs, bid the shortage naturally with any unbalanced hand. We'd like to show the 55, but we still need two balanced invitational bids, and we have only five bids to play with. Bid intelligently.
- After responder has shown 55 location or shortage location, opener may make a counter trial below three of the transfer suit with no wastage and at least a four-card holding. This will be very descriptive if a super-accept was previously given, but will not always be available. Opener's bids above three of the agreed major confirm no wastage, maximal values and show a first-round control in the suit bid.
 - With a balanced, semi-balanced or single-suited invitational hand including a 5-card major (5332, 6322, 6331, 5422), transfer into the major, and:
 1. if a super accept occurs, bid 3NT for pard to correct to 4H or 4S .
 2. if a normal accept occurs, bid 2NT with 5332 or 5422, or raise with 6332 or 6331
 - With a 6331 or 7330 hand with a semi-solid major and 15-17 HCP, transfer and splinter in the short suit. This is a slam try. With a stronger hand, cuebid if opener attempts to signoff.

After 1NT-2C

| | |
|----|------------------------------|
| 2D | 13-14, 3H, outside doubleton |
| 2H | Other hands |

After 1NT-2C-2D

| | | |
|-------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2H | | Weak, signoff |
| 2S | | 55 game try or better, values concentrated in suits |
| | 2NT | asking relay |
| | 3C, 3D | C,D suit |
| | 3H | S suit, H preference |
| 2NT, 3C, 3D | | S,C,D shortage <2, game try or better |
| | 3H | Wastage |
| | 4H | Game values anyway - had slam interest opposite no wastage |
| 3S, 4C, 4D | | Shortage in 6331 or 7330, semi-solid major suit, 15-17 HCP or better |
| 3NT | | Game values only, 5332, 5422, 6322 or 6331. |
| | 4H | Correction (nearly forced) |

After 1NT-2C-2H

| | | |
|------------|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2S, 3C, 3D | | S,C,D shortage <2, game try or better |
| | 3H | Wastage |
| | 4H | Game values anyway - had slam interest opposite no wastage |
| 2NT | | Invitational 5332, 5422 |
| 3H | | Invitational 6322, 6331 |
| 3S, 4C, 4D | | Shortage in 6331 or 7330, semi-solid major suit, 15-17 HCP or better |
| 3NT | | Game values only, 5332 or 5422 |
| 4H | | Game values only, 6332 or 6331 |

After 1NT-2D

| | |
|----|------------------------------|
| 2H | 13-14, 3S, outside doubleton |
| 2S | Other hands |

After 1NT-2D-2H

| | | |
|------------|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2S | | Weak, signoff |
| 2NT | | 55 game try or better, values concentrated in suits |
| | 3C | asking relay |
| | 3D | D suit |
| | 3H | H suit, S preference |
| | 3S | C suit |
| 3C, 3D, 3H | | C,D,H shortage <2, game try or better |
| | 3S | Wastage |
| | 4S | Game values anyway - had slam interest opposite no wastage |
| 4C, 4D, 4H | | Shortage in 6331 or 7330, semi-solid major suit, 15-17 HCP or better |
| 3NT | | Game values only, 5332, 5422, 6322 or 6331. |
| | 4S | Correction (nearly forced) |

After 1NT-2D-2S

| | | |
|---------------|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2NT | | Invitational 5332, 5422 |
| 3C, 3D, 3H | | C,D,H shortage <2, game try or better |
| | 3S | Wastage |
| | 4S | Game values anyway - had slam interest opposite no wastage |
| 3S | | Invitational 6322, 6331 |
| 3NT | | Game values only, 5332 or 5422 |
| 4C, 4D, 4H | | Shortage in 6331 or 7330, semi-solid major suit, 15-17 HCP or better |
| 4S | | Game values only, 6322 or 6331 |

7. 2C OPENING

REQUIREMENT: 10-14 HCP, 6+C; or 6-9 HCP, 6+D; or 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ H & S

RESPONSES SUMMARY

| | |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | Shows club suit, or weakness and C shortage that would rather risk playing a no-fit 2C contract than force a 3C contract to be played opposite the 10-14 HCP 6+C hand. |
| 2D | Non-forcing relay |
| 2H | Forcing relay |
| Suits | Correctable |

After 2C-2D

| | |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | 6-9 HCP, 6+D |
| 2H | 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ majors |
| 2S | Maximum semi-solid 6+C, at least 3 honours, doesn't want to declare possible 3NT |
| 2NT | Maximum semi-solid 6+C, at least 3 honours, wants to declare possible 3NT |
| 3C | Normal 10-14 HCP, 6+C |

After 2C-2D-2H

| | |
|------|---------|
| Pass | To play |
| 2S | To play |
| 2NT | Inquiry |

After 2C-2D-2H-2NT

| | |
|-----|-------------------|
| 3C | Minimum, better H |
| 3D | Minimum, better S |
| 3H | Maximum, better H |
| 3S | Maximum, better S |
| 3NT | Any 66 |

After 2C-2H:

| | |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2S | 5+/5+ in majors, then usual relays |
| 2NT | Normal 10-14 HCP, 6+C |
| 3C | Maximum semi-solid 6+C, at least 3 honours, doesn't want to declare 3NT |
| 3D | Minimum, 6+D |
| 3H | Maximum, 6+D |
| 3S | Maximum, solid 7+C with probable entry |
| 3NT | Maximum semi-solid 6C, at least 3 honours, want to declare 3NT |

8. 2D OPENING

REQUIREMENT: 10-14 HCP, 6+D; or 6-9 HCP, 6+H; or 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ S&C

RESPONSES SUMMARY

| | |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | Shows D suit, or weakness and D shortage that would rather risk playing a no-fit 2D contract than force a 3D contract to be played opposite the 10-14 HCP 6+D hand. |
| 2H | Non-forcing relay |
| 2S | Forcing relay |
| Suits | Correctable |

After 2D-2H

| | |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | 6-9 HCP, 6+H |
| 2S | 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ blacks |
| 2NT | Maximum semi-solid 6+D, at least 3 honours, wants to declare possible 3NT |
| 3C | Maximum semi-solid 6+D, at least 3 honours, doesn't want to declare possible 3NT |
| 3D | Normal 10-14 HCP, 6+D |

After 2D-2H-2S

| | |
|------|---------|
| Pass | To play |
| 2NT | Inquiry |
| 3C | To play |

After 2D-2H-2S-2NT

| | |
|-------|-------------------|
| 3C 3D | Minimum, better S |
| 3H | Maximum, better C |
| 3S | Maximum, better S |
| 3NT | Any 66 |

After 2D-2S :

| | |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2NT | Normal 10-14 HCP, 6+D |
| 3C | 5+/5+ in the blacks |
| 3D | Maximum semi-solid 6+D, at least 3 honours, doesn't want to declare 3NT |
| 3H | Minimum, 6+H |
| 3S | Maximum, 6+H |
| 3NT | Maximum semi-solid 6D, at least 3 honours, want to declare 3NT |

9. 2H OPENING

REQUIREMENT: Acol II in H(8-9 PT), usually < 15 HCP; or 6-9 HCP, 6+S; or 6-9 HCP 5+/5+ C&D

RESPONSES SUMMARY

| | |
|-------|-------------------|
| 2S | Non-forcing relay |
| 2NT | Forcing relay |
| Suits | Correctable |

After 2H-2S:

| | |
|------|-----------------------|
| Pass | 6-9 HCP, 6+S |
| 2NT | 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ minors |
| 3C | 8 PT in H |
| 3D | 8.5 PT in H |
| 3H | 9 PT in H |

After 2H-2NT:

| | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 3C | Minimum, 5+/5+ minors |
| 3D | Maximum, 5+/5+ minors |
| 3H | Minimum, 6+S |
| 3S | Maximum, 6+S |
| 3NT | 8-9 PT in H and suitable for notrump |
| 4C | 8-9 PT in H, also C suit |
| 4D | 8-9 PT in H, also D suit |
| 4H | 8-9 PT in H |

10. 2S OPENING

REQUIREMENT: Acol II IN S?(8-9 PT), usually < 15 HCP; or 6-9 HCP, 6+C; or 6-9 HCP 5+/5+ D&H

RESPONSES SUMMARY

| | |
|-------|-------------------|
| 2NT | Forcing relay |
| 3C | Non-forcing relay |
| Suits | Correctable |

After 2S-3C:

| | |
|------|---------------------|
| Pass | 6-9 HCP, 6+C |
| 3D | 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ reds |
| 3H | 8-8.5 PT in S |
| 3S | 9 PT in S |

After 2S-2NT:

| | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 3C | Minimum, 6+C |
| 3C | Minimum, 5+/5+ reds |
| 3D | Maximum, 5+/5+ reds |
| 3S | Maximum, 6+C |
| 3NT | 8-9 PT in S and suitable for notrump |
| 4C | 8-9 PT in S, also C suit |
| 4D | 8-9 PT in S, also D suit |
| 4H | 8-9 PT in S, also H suit |
| 4H | 8-9 PT in S |

11. 2NT OPENING

REQUIREMENT: 6-9 HCP, 5+/5+ in S&D or S&C

RESPONSES SUMMARY

| | |
|-------|-----------------|
| 3H | Forcing Inquiry |
| Suits | Correctable |

After 2NT-3H :

| | |
|-----|-------------------|
| 3S | Minimum, S+D |
| 3NT | Minimum, H+C |
| 4C | Maximum, better C |
| 4D | Maximum, better D |
| 4H | Maximum, better H |
| 4S | Maximum, better S |

12. COMPETITIVE BIDDING SITUATIONS

12.1 Interference in relay Auctions

3D Criterion

Once interference occurs it is vital that responder and relayer know whether relays are still available. If the hand shape that would have been shown with 3D can be shown at the level of 3NT or below then relays will continue (the 3D Criterion). Note that it is quite possible to gain up to two steps after interference. If relays are broken, then Rubinsohl applies over two level interference (see 12.2), and takeout doubles and natural bidding applies over three level interference.

There are two situations that arise which will be covered separately, using the following definitions which apply only after relays have begun :

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Relayer | Bids the asking relays |
| Responder | Answers the relays |
| 2 nd hand | Bids after relayer and before responder |
| 4 th hand | Bids after responder and before relayer |

Interference before relays have begun is covered in sections 12.2-12.4.

Interference by 2nd hand

Responder has two additional steps available with which to describe his hand, namely pass and double (or redouble if appropriate), and must determine by the 3D Criterion whether relays continue. The following relay structure will apply if responder has denied possession of at least 4 cards of the suit shown (if only one has been shown) (else see the Exception below):

| Call | Meaning |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Pass | Step 1 from the original relay |
| Double/Redouble | Step 2 from the original relay |
| Step 1 | Step 3 from the original relay, etc. |

After a relay step pass, double by relayer without further interference is for relay. After a relay step double/redouble, Step 1 by relayer without further interference is for relay. If further interference by 4th hand occurs, see immediately below.

If relays are broken, then the provisions of 12.2 apply for two- and three-level interference.

Interference by 4th hand

If responder has not denied possession of at least 4 cards of the suit shown (if only one has been shown), and if relays are not broken (3H Criterion), then relayer may pass for relay. Else, if relays are not broken (3D Criterion), then relayer may pass for relay.

In all cases double by relayer is for penalty of the suit shown.

If further interference by 2nd hand occurs, see immediately above.

If relays are broken, then the provisions of 12.2 apply for two- and three-level interference.

Exception to the 3D Criterion

After interference after a positive response to a 1C opening, and if responder has not denied holding the suit shown, then responder's double is strictly for penalty, and the 3H Criterion rather than the 3D Criterion applies for determining the relay status for interference by both 2nd and 4th hands.

After interference after a positive response to a 1C opening, either by a positive pass or by a normal positive response, then if responder has not denied holding the suit shown, responder needs on occasions to be able to penalise the interference rather than

give a relay response. Relayer can always penalise by doubling, rather than passing for relay, but responder's double would then systemically be the first or second step in the relay. Thus an exception is made in this case. Note that a balanced positive response has not denied holding the suit shown. It is still possible to give a relay response in the suit that would have been penalised. Hence a penalty double is not automatic (else opponents could always break the relays by psyching and correcting), and may be desirable when the penalties gained would be insufficient to compensate for game or slam.

If relays are broken, then the provisions of 12.2 apply for two- and three-level interference.

12.2 Interference after 1C opening

Natural Archimedes - Over X, 1H or 1NT

| | |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | Full positive, then natural relays |
| Double | 0 - 4 with Archimedes continuations |
| 1st step | Semi-positive in hearts, then natural relays |
| 2nd step | Semi-positive, spades, denies hearts, then natural relays |
| 3rd step | Semi-positive, balanced |
| 4th step | Semi-positive in clubs, denies majors unless three-suited, then natural relays |
| 5th step | Semi-positive in diamonds, denies other suits, then natural relays |

** Semi positive = 5-7 HCP or 8+ HCP with 0-1 controls. (see below)*

Transfer Archimedes - Over 1D, or 1S

| | |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | Full positive, then transfer relays |
| Double | 0 - 4 with Archimedes continuations |
| 1st step | Semi-positive in spades, then transfer relays |
| 2nd step | Semi-positive, balanced or both red suits, then transfer relays |
| 3rd step | Semi-positive, hearts or hearts and clubs, then transfer relays |
| 4th step | Semi-positive in diamonds, denies majors unless three-suited, then transfer relays |
| 5th step | Semi-positive in clubs, denies other suits, then transfer relays |

** Semi positive = 5-7 HCP or 8+ HCP with 0-1 controls. (see below)*

ARCHIMEDES CONTINUATIONS

After Double (0-4)

Non jump suit bid - 15-18

1NT - 15 - 22

2NT - double suited minor hand 15 - 22

Jump suit bid - 19 - 22

Cue bid 23+, game force

After bid - semi positive level adjusted (control responses)

Control responses

1st step 8+ points, 0-1 controls

2nd step 5-7, 0 control

3rd step 5-7, 1 control

4th step 5-7, 2 controls

5th step 5-7, 3 controls

After 1st step response & next relay

1st step 8-11, 0 control

2nd step 8-11, 1 control

3rd step 12-15, 0 control

4th step 12-15, 1 control

After positive pass (begins relays)

Double is relay

Other bids are level adjusted reverse relays

i.e. 1C 1H Pass Pass

X relay

1S 15-17, colour (4432) or 4333 or 3433

1NT 15-17, rank (4432)

2C 15-17, 3343 or 3334

2D 15-17, 2434

2H 15-17, 4342

2S 15-17, 3424

2NT 15-17, 4243, 0-2 controls

3C 15-17, 4243, 3 controls; etc.

if another bid opponents before double then pass = relay if loss is three steps or less

i.e. 1C 1S Pass 2D

Pass relay

X 15-17, colour (4432) or 4333 or 3433; etc.

if another bid opponents before double and loss is greater than three steps

X takeout

other suit natural

min NT bid stopper and minimum

cue stopper ask

jump cue Michaels

Relay responses

The guiding principle for responder is that they must use a relay structure that does not bid the denomination they intend to show. In general the transfer responses will still apply, with a few exceptions noted below.

Examples

Against an opponent using a transfer style overcall (e.g. TWERB), and assessing the subsequent interference with the 3C Criterion:

1C 1H (=S) P (+ve) 1S

P (relay) P X penalty

1NT S

2C balanced or red suits (transfer relays)

1C 1D (=H) P (+ve) 1H

P (relay) P X penalty

1S H

1NT S, 0-3H

2C balanced (natural relays)

Against overcalls showing the bid suit (with or without another suit), and assessing the subsequent interference with the 3C Criterion:

1C 1H (nat) P (+ve) P

X(relay) P P penalty

1S H

1NT S, 0-3H

2C balanced (natural relays)

1C X (??) P (+ve) 1S

P (relay) P X penalty, others as in the first case above

1C X (??) P (+ve) 1H

P (relay) P X penalty, others as in the second case above

1C X (??) P (+ve) 1D

P (relay) P X penalty

1H S

1S balanced or reds (transfer relays)

1C 1NT P (+ve) 2C

P(relay!) P X penalty

2D H

2H S

2S balanced (natural relays, prevent showing balanced or reds with 2H)

There may be other cases where the balanced/red suits options would have to be shown by 2D or 2H, in which case the natural responses should be used, unless this causes the major suits to be shown by bidding that suit.

Two level interference - Rubinsohl

Pass 0 - 4 HCP or penalty pass

X 5 - 7 HCP balanced.

2 bid 5 - 7 HCP, natural and non-forcing.

2NT transfer to clubs, *see below*.

3C transfer to diamonds, *see below*

3D transfer to hearts, *see below*

3H transfer to spades, *see below*

3S **HELP** - balanced game force, no stopper, no 4 card major

3NT Balanced game force, stopper(s), no 4 card major

Notes: Transfer into the overcall suit = balanced game force with at least one 4 card major

Cue of overcall by either opener or responder (except initial transfer) is stopper ask

Transfer to a suit at 3 level which could be bid at 2 level is invitational. Opener must break transfer with a maximum.

Reopening double by opener is usually mandatory with very few exceptions.

Three level interference

Bid by responder is game forcing.

Double by responder is takeout.

Bid by opener is non-forcing.

Double by opener is for takeout.

12.3 Interference after 1D opening

Suited overcalls

| | |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | If responder is an unpassed hand, and the 3D Criterion is satisfied (overcall $\leq 2C$), strongly encouraging a reopening double if suitable. |
| X | If responder is an unpassed hand, and the 3D Criterion is satisfied (overcall $\leq 2C$), double is for GF RELAY ; else double is takeout (negative) up to 3S; else double is for penalty |
| 2Y | Natural non-forcing, or cue raises of hearts |
| 2NT+ | Rubinsohl |
| 4C,4D | Splinters for H |

Notrump overcalls

| | |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| X | If responder is an unpassed hand, and the 3D Criterion is satisfied (1NT overcall), double is for GF RELAY ; if responder is a passed hand, double shows 8-10 and 3H ; else double is for penalty |
| 2Y | Natural non-forcing, or cue raises of hearts |
| 2NT+ | Rubinsohl |
| 4C,4D | Splinters for H |

After a double:

| | |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | Poor hand or poor in hearts but with diamonds |
| XX | Shortage in partner's suit and looking for blood. |
| 1H | GF RELAY (by passed hand, 8-10 with 3H) |
| 1S, 2Y | Natural non-forcing, or cue raises of hearts |
| Suit jump | Fit-showing |
| 2NT | Natural and invitational |
| 2H | Usual meaning |
| 3H | Preemptive |

After 1H takeout

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | Poor hand or poor in hearts |
| X | GF RELAY (by unpassed hand; by passed hand, 8-10 3H) |
| New suit | non forcing, may be invitational |
| 2NT | Natural and invitational. |
| Suit jump | Fit showing |
| 2H | Usual meaning |
| 3H | Preemptive |

12.4 Interference after 1H opening

Suited overcalls

| | |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | If responder is an unpassed hand, and the 3D Criterion is satisfied (overcall $\leq 2D$), strongly encouraging a reopening double if suitable |
| X | If responder is an unpassed hand, and the 3D Criterion is satisfied (overcall $\leq 2D$), double is for GF RELAY ; else double is takeout (negative) up to 3H; else double is for penalty |
| 2Y | Natural, non-forcing, or cue raises of spades |
| 2NT+ | Rubinsohl |
| 4C,4D,4H | Splinters for S |

Notrump overcalls

| | |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| X | If responder is an unpassed hand, and the 3D Criterion is satisfied (1NT overcall), double is for GF RELAY ; else double is for penalty |
| 2Y | Natural, non-forcing, or cue raises of spades |
| 2NT+ | Rubinsohl |
| 4C,4D,4H | Splinters for S |

After a double:

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | Poor hand or poor in spades but with hearts |
| XX | Shortage in partner's suit and looking for blood. |
| 1S | GF RELAY (by unpassed hand; by passed hand, 8-10 3S) |
| 2Y | Natural, non-forcing, or cue raises of spades |
| Suit jump | Fit showing |
| 2NT | Natural and invitational |
| 2S | Usual meaning |
| 3S | Preemptive |

After 1S takeout

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | Poor hand or poor in spades |
| X | GF RELAY (by unpassed hand; by passed hand, 8-10 3S) |
| Suit | Non-forcing, may be invitational |
| 2NT | Natural and invitational. |
| Suit jump | Fit showing |
| 2S | Usual meaning |
| 3S | Preemptive |

12.5 Interference after 1S opening

After a double:

| | |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pass | Poor hand, or poor minors but with spades |
| XX | Preference for C |
| 1NT | Natural |
| 2C | GF RELAY (by unpassed hand; by passed hand, no minor preference) |
| 2D | Natural |
| 2H/2S | Fit showing jump for a minor, 2NT inquires |
| 2NT | Preemptive with both minors |
| 3C | Preemptive |
| 3D | Preemptive |
| 3H | Hearts and a minor, at least 9 cards |
| 3S | Spades and a minor, at least 9 cards |

After an takeout cue (i.e. probably 2C or 2D)

| | |
|-------|--------------------------------------------|
| Pass | Poor hand or poor in other minor |
| X | GF RELAY |
| 2H/2S | Fit showing jump for a minor, 2NT inquires |
| 2NT+ | RUBINSOHL |

After an suit overcall (i.e. 2H or 2S)

| | |
|--------|------------------|
| Double | PENALTY |
| 2NT+ | RUBINSOHL |

12.6 Interference after 1NT opening

Rubinsohl, penalty doubles (at the 2 level) and SWINE. Over 3 level interference X = penalty, suits = forcing for 1 round.

12.7 Interference after 2C/2D/ 2H/2S/2NT openings

Double/redouble is correctable except where noted below.

After responder chooses to pass the opening 2C or 2D bids and fourth seat reopens with a double, both opener and responder need to take care not to play assuming the other holds a C suit, for neither need do so! If responder holds a club suit, he has announced preference to play there rather than in a contract suggested by responder's two possible hands. Opener needs to respect this preference unless his hand is gilt-edged or has extra shape, or extreme club shortage. Continuations by opener are:

2C P P X

P Non-committal, may or may not have club suit.

P P Holding club suit over the penalty passer.

XX Not holding club suit, no clear escape, opener bids playable denominations up-the-line.

2D,2H,2S Own suit, not correctable.

XX Good hand with semi-solid clubs.

P 2D,2H,2S Needs very good reason and a club void.

2D,2H Show systemic hand shapes with extra values or extreme club shortage.

2H,2S To play, shows own suit or a correction.

Continuations after the analogous 2D sequence are analogous.

12.8 Interference over Blackwood

DOPI and ROPI:

Double (or redouble) = zero

Pass = one

1st step = two, etc.

13. DEFENSIVE BIDDING SITUATIONS

13.1 Doubles

Precision Double - NOT USED

Double of 1 level opening by opponents in 2nd or 4th seat = 15+ with usual relay responses.

i.e. 1x - X or 1x - P - P - X = Precision double

Responsive double

In non-relay auctions, when partner has shown a suit and opponents have found a fit at the two level, double is for takeout promising the unbid suits. Note: if partner has made a takeout double and opponents have found a fit at the two level, double is responsive.

Relay double

If partner has opened 1C (or made a Precision double) and right hand opponent bids at the one level, a double (or redouble) promises a negative response with 0-4 HCP (see 12.2).

Subject to the 3D Criterion, other doubles or redoubles of suit or NT overcalls may be for relay, takeout (negative) or penalty as specified in Section 12.

Takeout doubles

Are played up to and including 4H

Takeout double with Rubinsohl

Used after opponent's weak two openings or after partner has opened 1C and opponents have made a weak jump overcall. Shows 5-7 semi-balanced.

Negative doubles

Used up to and including 3S, subject to the 3D Criterion being broken.

The higher the level, the more frequently the double in the negative position should be passed for penalties. See 12.3-12.5

Reopening doubles and balancing doubles

Show maximal values. When in doubt, do not reopen/balance, but this is automatic up to 2NT after 1C has been opened. Experience shows that the part score swings gained are outweighed by the games the opponents now bid and make or the penalties the opponents collect.

Positive slam doubles

In a competitive auction, when opponents have bid a slam to make, double in direct seat shows 2 or more defensive tricks. Double in passout seat shows exactly one defensive trick.

Lightner double

An unusual double asking for an unusual lead. A double of 3NT asks for dummy's first bid suit, or if no suit, asks for a spade lead.

Weak notrump double

A double of a Stayman or transfer response to a weak no trump shows a penalty double of 1NT.

SOS Redoubles

If not specified as an asking relay, relay response, part of the SWINE convention, in some correctable situations, the specific sequence 1S-(X)-XX, in sequences covered in Section 12.7, or a blood-search, redoubles are strictly penalty, although some judgement may be exercised at game level. SOS redoubles, as such, are not used.

Second-suit doubles

When the opposition have found a fit in a competitive auction and then bid a second natural suit, then doubles by either defender is for takeout of that second suit. In this way both defenders have an opportunity to penalise, and balancing doubles are almost mandatory.

Power Doubles

Power doubles are used in "The Overcall Structure". They are made of one-level suit openings with a balanced 15+ hand with at least a doubleton in the bid suit, when no other suitable systemic description is available.

Support Doubles and Redoubles

Support doubles and redoubles are used widely in "The Overcall Structure" when raising potential four-card suits

13.2 Overcalls - see also Appendix 3 - The Overcall Structure

Where applicable, the below may be superseded by the contents of Appendix 3 - The Overcall Structure

Simple overcalls

Are constructive in nature.

Responses:

New suit is constructive, non-forcing.

Cue bid shows 10+ hcp and support for the overcall.

Responder's bids with support after partners overcall

raise to 2 3 card support (except 4333 or adverse)

raise to 3 4 card support (except 4333 or adverse)

raise to 4 5 card support (except adverse)

jump raise preemptive.

After sequence like 1S-(2C)-2D-? or 1S-(2C)-P-?

| | |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 2H | 5+ H with C support or suit self sufficient at 3 level |
| X | 4S + C support |
| 2S | forcing, C support |
| 2NT | C support with defensive values |

1NT overcall

In the 4th (balancing) seat any vulnerability shows 12-15 HCP and balanced. Other NT overcalls are 16-18 HCP balanced.

By a passed hand, the 1NT overcall is clearly Unusual, and shows the highest and lowest unbid suits. Thus a Michaels Cuebid of a major suit in this position shows the other major and diamonds. In these sequences, the overcaller chose not to open a two-suited multi option for some reason.

Jump overcalls

Except : (1C)-2D by an unpassed hand (see below)

Two level - weak with a six-card suit.

Three level - weak with a seven-card suit.

Michaels

Direct cue of a suit shows 5/5, 6-10 HCP or 17+ HCP and at least one major.

A bid of 2NT shows 5/5, 6-10 HCP or 17+ HCP and at least one minor.

The sequence (1C)-2D by an unpassed hand is an Unusual 2NT style hand showing spades and diamonds. By a passed hand it is a jump overcall, with No-(No)-No-(1C)-1NT showing the Unusual spades and diamonds hand (dealer chose not to open a two-suited multi option for some reason).

Bidding in 4th seat after two suits by opponents

One banana - Pass - One grape - ?

Double is for takeout, opening values.

2 bananas is natural with bananas.

2 grapes is natural with grapes.

1NT = 15-18 HCP balanced.

2NT = weak 5/5 in unbid suits.

13.3 Defence to strong 1C opening

| | |
|--------|---------------------|
| Double | C+S, or D+S |
| 1D | D+H |
| 1H | Majors |
| 1S | S+C |
| 1NT | Minors |
| 2X | Weak jump overcalls |

13.4 SWINE convention

1NT - Double - ?

Pass forces opener to redouble.

next pass to play

2C C and D

2D D and S

2H H and S

2S S and C

XX forces opener to bid 2C, promises any weak single-suited hand.

2C C and a major.

2D D and spades.

2H,2S are all competitive

3C,3D

2NT game forcing two-suiter

13.5 Defenses to various conventional openings by opponents

European Multi 2D - i.e. strong hands or weak two in either major

Double takeout of spades

2H takeout of hearts

2NT strong balanced hand with stoppers in both majors

Forcing Pass

Pass

Brozel

1C clubs and hearts (0-9 and 4-4 min in the suits shown)

1D diamonds and hearts (0-9 and 4-4 min in the suits shown)

1H majors (0-9 and 4-4 min in the suits shown)

1S spades and a minor (0-9 and 4-4 min in the suits shown)

1NT minors (0-9 and 4-4 min in the suits shown)

2 levels bids are weak jump overcalls or a good 5 card suit (0-9 HCP)

Fert Bid

Pass 15+

Dbl 0 - 8

1NT 11 - 14 balanced

other bids 9 14

Transfer openings

bid of opponents suit takeout

Dbl good hand/good suit in suit opened; or 15+ unbalanced

or 19+ balanced

2NT 15-18 HCP, with stopper(s)

jump cue of suit shown Michaels - less than 15 HCP

CRO, RCO, OCR etc. bids

Dbl good hand/good suit in suit opened; or 15+ unbalanced or 19+ balanced

bid good hand, good suit 11-14

cue Michaels - less than 15 HCP

2NT 15-18 HCP, with stoppers in at least 3 suits

6. ***2NT Seldom Natural in Competition***

See appendix - not yet added.

14. LEADS, SIGNALS AND DISCARDS

Suit contracts

Leads from honours:

Overlead sequences except King from Ace-King

At trick one, top from doubleton honours

Leads from length:

2nd bottom from an odd number.

Bottom from four or 4th highest from 6 card or 8 card suits.

Signals:

Primarily reverse attitude on the opening lead from any suit led by partner.

Reverse (initial) count, except for

(even = higher, odd = lower) suit preference when obvious

Discards:

Usually initial count

suit preference when obvious

No trump contracts

Leads from honours:

Ace - asks partner to unblock king queen or jack. If no honour, give inverse count. Exception: against gambling 3NT, the ace lead asks for reverse attitude.

King - promises ace or queen and asks for reverse attitude.

Queen - either top of sequence or from KQ10. Partner must unblock the jack.

Jack - denies a higher honour, promises the ten.

Ten - suggests an interior sequence - AJ10, KJ10, A109, K109, Q109.

Leads from length:

4th highest

Signals:

Primarily reverse count.

Reverse attitude when obvious.

Suit preference when obvious.

Discards:

First discard at NT, McKenney suit preference

Reverse count when obvious, or after first discard

Suit preference when obvious.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - hand shapes

Single-suiters

2S high shortage

2NT middle shortage 2NT relay

3C even shortage 3C

3D 5332 3D relay 3D relay

3H 6331 3H 7222 3H 6223

3S 7330 3S 6332 3S 6232

3NT 7321

Two-suiters

2H reverser

2S 5/5 shape

2NT high shortage 2NT relay

3C even shortage 3C high shortage

3D 5431 3D relay 3D even shortage

3H 6421 3H 7411 3H 5521 3H relay

3S 7420 3S 5422 3S 5530 3S 5611

3NT 6430 3NT 5620 3NT 6511

4C 6520

Three-suiters

1 step high shortage

2 steps 4441 ask

3 steps 4450 4441

4 steps 4540 4450

5 steps 5440 4540

6 steps 5440

balanced

2D colour 4432 ;

or 4333/3433

2H rank 4432 2H relay

2S minor 4333 2S major 4333

2NT 2434 2NT 2344 2NT relay

3C 4342 3C 3442 3C low 4

3D 3424 3D 4324 3D high 4, min

3H 4234, min 3S 2443, min 3H high 4, max, 2 c's

3NT 4234, max, 2 c's 3NT 2443, max, 2 c's

Appendix 2 - Possible future additions

Rubens Advances (from Bridge World April 1981)

- Used when opponents overcall.
- A single or double raise of the opened suit is as normal according to partnership agreement.
- A NT bid is as per normal according to partnership understanding.
- To make a cue raise of the opened suit, bid the **suit below** the overcall.
- Any suit bid between the overcall and the suit below the overcall are natural and forcing
- Starting with the cue bid and up to but not including the raise are **transfer advances**.
 - * opener completes the transfer if he would have passed a non-forcing bid in that suit. At worst the advance would be made with a long weak single-suiter (7 or solid 6) with no particular fit with opener and is merely trying to improve the spot. This is the usual meaning).
 - * Opener can raise the transfer via a *superaccept*.
 - * A rebid of the **opened suit** is very strong and forcing.
 - * A cue bid of the **overcalled suit** is very strong and asks for a half stopper.
 - * A rebid of the **4th suit** is very strong and forcing.
 - * The transfer will normally pass the transfer acceptance. However bidding of the 4th suit is forcing while returning to the opened suit is invitational and equivalent to a fit showing jump. A cue of the overcalled suit is a half stopper ask.

- As we now have no need for immediate fit showing jump, the jump in a suit can now mean a splinter or a transfer splinter.
- The immediate jump cue asks for full stopper.

Appendix 3 - The Overcall Structure

revised by John E. Fout

Introduction

When the opponents open the bidding, they have already garnered an advantage. Standard defensive bidding methods generally allow the overcalling side to compete, but this requires holding a good hand. The overcalling side never have good hands; they want to compete anyway. The Overcall Structure has been created so that partners will be able to bid intelligently, catering for weak and/or distributional overcalling hands. It applies only in the direct seat after a one-level opening showing at least two cards in a known suit. If the opening bid is passed around to the fourth seat, the inability of the direct seat to act (i.e. to prebalance) will influence the tendency to balance - more hands will be passed at low level.

The basis for this system is that ease in handling a few relatively infrequent strong hands is traded off to increase the action available to lighter and more frequent hands. Specific description is used to reduce the strength necessary to compete successfully, and to hasten the arrival at the par contract. The overcalling hand may be weaker, but if its exposure to danger is shorter, it does not need as much raw power to be relatively secure.

One No Trump for Takeout (NTTO)

This is the central bid of the Overcall Structure. The NTTO comes up frequently and creates havoc in the opponents' auction while letting us know in what suits we should be competing. The NTTO can be described as a light three-suited takeout, showing three cards in all the unbid suits, and generally 6-15 HCP at equal vulnerability. The minimum shape here is 4432, and a NTTO must be made on any hand satisfying the above requirements, with a few exceptions opposite a passed hand.

Responses to a NTTO -- Uncontested Auction

Auction: 1X 1NT P ?

2-suit To play. If the NTTO bidder raises, expect a shapely maximum with four card support (in some cases it could be blocking with 5+ card support).

2-cue Asks for a four card major, but if advancer later bids a new suit, then this reveals an invitational sequence for a major but not necessarily invitational for a minor. A follow-up cue-bid by advancer demonstrates a strong interest in game - probably in the suit you've bid - opposite any hand with reasonable cover cards.

3-suit Pre-emptive even if opposite a maximum, unless bid at adverse vulnerability. Shows any six card suit or a good five card suit with a little shape.

2NT Lower unbid suits.

Responses to a NTTO - Contested Auction

After a double

A runout system is used to find eight-card fits.

Auction: 1-suit 1NT X ?

2-suit Five card suit

XX Exactly four cards in the highest unbid suit.

Pass Denies either of the above, but could still have a lower four card suit.

2-cue As for uncontested auction

Auction: 1-suit 1NT X P

P ?

XX Shows a five-card or longer suit. Advancer then responds in the lowest suit that would be reasonable to play in opposite a five-card suit.

2-suit Four-card suit, starts a run-out.

2-cue As for uncontested auction

After a new suit or a raise

Auction: 1-suit 1NT 2-suit ?

X Responsive style showing at least one of the unbid suits - usually the other major - but not promising both.

2NT (Lower) unbid suits with a weaker hand.

Suit Non-forcing and usually lead directing.

Cue Constructive responsive-double-style hand. Later rebidding a new suit or raising overcaller shows a good hand.

The Simple Overcall (SO) at the One Level

A simple overcall shows around 6-15 HCP and may quite often be made on a four-card suit, however statistically it tends to be a five-card suit. There are no suit quality requirements, and the shape requirements are that neither a NTTO nor a RJO could have been bid with this hand, nor is the shape 4333. These requirements are occasionally relaxed vulnerable, or opposite a passed partner, or with skewed playing strength. Four-card SOs are usually bid up-the-line, and a (higher-ranking) five-card suit is shown before a four-card suit. The inferences available from an SO are:

1. overcaller will have a shortage (<3) in at least one unbid suit because of his failure to use an NTTO
2. if the SO has a four-card suit, it has no lower-ranking four-card suit biddable at the 1-level
3. if the SO has a four-card suit, it has no unbid five-card suit (i.e either 4432, 4441 or with 5+ in the opened suit)
4. if the SO has a five-card suit (or longer) it has no higher-ranking unbid four-card suit
5. if the SO has a five-card suit (or longer) it has no unbid five-card suit
6. the SO hand tends not to be short in the opened suit
7. the higher the ranking of the overcalled suit, the more likely the hand holds a five-card overcall

Raises are generally cautious, and support doubles and redoubles are used to show three-card support where possible. The Law of Total Tricks is applied frequently.

Responses to a SO -- Uncontested Auction

Auction: 1-suit 1-suit P ?

The aggressive nature of our overcalls require a delicate response structure to handle various possibilities:

1-suit Not constructive, strong suggestion of shortage in overcaller's suit

1NT Lebensohl, requires 2C puppet (continuations later)

2-suit (non-jumps) Fit-showing, 3+ support and 4+ in bid suit, 10-12, non-forcing

2-cue opening hand with 4+ support, not forcing to game if overcaller is minimum

2/3-suit (jumps, including jump cues) Mini-splinters, 4+ support, 0-1 in suit bid, 10+

2NT Strong no-fit game try, looking for game in notrump or in own suit

Auction: 1-suit 1-suit P 1NT

P 2C P ?

Pass Runout to five-card C suit

2-raise Fit-showing, 2+ support and 4+ in overcaller's suit, 10-12, non-forcing

2-suit (lower than overcalled suit) To play, runout with five-card suit

2-suit (higher than overcalled suit) Invitational, five-card suit

2NT Invitational, balanced, holds stopper

3-suit Invitational, five-card suit

Responses to SO -- Contested Auction

The responses are similar but modified. A 1 over 1 tends to be more constructive. A new suit at the two level is a flower bid in that suit or length with that suit and enough values to force a level higher. Cue-bids are a limit raise or better for partner's suit while single jumps are still mini-splinters. Remember that support doubles and redoubles apply and come up quite frequently.

The Two Level Overcall (TLO)

The TLO approximates a normal five-card two-level overcall, but can be made on hands that would normally make a weak jump overcall (unavailable except 2S over 1C) that are too weak for an Intermediate Jump Overcall (see later). It will not be made on hands suitable for a NTTTO or a RJO. After a TLO, changes of suit are non-forcing. In competition, a double or redouble by advancer shows a good raise to three, while the direct raise does not show values. A cue-bid in competition just promises a good hand either in support of partner or in another suit.

The Roman Jump Overcall (RJO)

The two cheapest jump overcalls over a one level bid by opener show the suit bid and the higher touching suit with generally 6-15 HCP. It will not be made on 5431, 6430 or 5440 hands suitable for a NTTTO. If there are only nine cards in the shown suits, the lower ranking will always have five cards and the higher ranking will have four. Specifically:

1C 2D 5 diamonds and often only 4 hearts

1C 2H 5 hearts and often only 4 spades

1D 2H 5 hearts and often only 4 spades

1D 2S 5 clubs and 4 spades; 5-5 if vulnerable

1H 2S 5 clubs and 4 spades; 5-5 if vulnerable

1H 3C 5 clubs and 4 diamonds; tends to be 5-5

1S 3C 5 clubs and 4 diamonds; tends to be 5-5

1S 3D 5 diamonds and 4 hearts; tends to be 5-5

The point ranges and limitations are very sensitive to relative vulnerability.

Responses to a RJO - Uncontested Auction

Cue Best possible hand; either interested in one of overcaller's suits or the fourth suit. Responses are logical

2NT At least invitational values; tends to show interest in the higher ranking suit

Raises Blocking

4th-suit (non-jump) Non-forcing

(jump, non-game) Splinter

(game) To play

Responses to a RJO - Contested Auction

If the opponents double, redouble replaces the cue-bid above. Pass is to play. Any other bid is essentially as above.

If the opponents raise or bid the 4th suit, a double replaces the cue bid. A double at a very high level just shows values.

The Two-suited Cue Bid (QB)

This bid shows a 6-37 HCP hand with the two suits left out by the RJO, i.e. the suits above and below the cue bid suit. Specifically:

1C 2C 5 diamonds and 4 spades

1D 2D 5 clubs and 4 hearts

1H 2H 5 diamonds and 4 spades

1S 2S 5 clubs and 4 hearts, tends to be 5-5

The responses for these are exactly the same as for the RJO, but overcaller is unlimited here.

The 2 No Trump Overcall

The 2NT bid shows a strong two-suited hand with \square 4.5 AKQ losers (according to the Losing Trick Count). The non-touching suit is always held; over 1C it's hearts and over 1D it's spades and vice versa. Shape is normally 5-5 or a good 6-4. The shown suit is the anchor suit and the other (unknown) suit held is the back suit.

Responses to 2NT - Uncontested Auction

Anchor suit To play, very weak

Other suit To play in back suit, weak (can bypass lower back suit to show preference for higher back suit or the anchor suit)

Cue Asking, good invitation or better, doesn't promise more than one trick

Jump in anchor To play or invitational if not already game.

Other jump Splinter for anchor suit

Responses to 2NT - Contested Auction

If the opponents bid a suit, the bid of anchor suit is weak and to play. Double is the same as cue bid if anchor suit could be bid at 3 level, or value-showing if anchor suit cannot be bid at 3 level, and tends to deny fit for anchor suit.

If the opponents double, bidding anchor suit is to play, redouble is the same as cue bid above, and pass forces either a redouble or bid of second suit if lower than anchor.

The Power Double (PD)

Doubles cater for 15+ hands that tend to be balanced and hold 2+ cards in the opened suit. It tends not to be a strong two-suiter, but may have NTTO shape.

Responses are logical. A free bid limits a hand to less than invitational values. A jump shows invitational values. A cue-bid is forcing. Both responder and the PDer follow up with natural bids allowing room to find the best spot. South African Transfers apply over the PD - a transfer to four of a major by bidding the corresponding minor, C => H & D => S, and this allows the PDer to super accept by bidding the step in between. Notrump response ranges are 1 NT = a good 4 to a bad 7, 2 NT = a good 7 to a bad 9, 3 NT = 10-14, etc. A PD will often be passed for penalty when advancer has a good holding in the opened suit, or fairly balanced with some trump tricks. If the opener runs from the double, further doubles are for penalty, and bids of the initially-opened suit are natural and constructive.

Transfer-Oriented Symmetric Relay Extensions to the Power Double

Clearly after a PD opposite a non-passed hand (or even shapely passed hands) the overcalling side may well have a constructive game to bid, especially with the majority of the outstanding HCP conveniently located. If the double is passed around to advancer, with a positive hand and 4+ length in the opened suit responder will normally pass the double for a penalty more than the value of the overcalling side's possible game. The normal transfer relay structure applies with Step 1 negative, and the other steps shifted up appropriately, omitting any steps showing the suit opened. Exception : after a 1D opening, the responses are natural responses, not transfer responses, to avoid wrong-siding the hand. Care must be exercised when the opened suit is the reverser suit (clubs, using transfer responses, diamonds in the exception) - a single-suited hand's second response will be two steps lower, because the implicit reverser does not arise (e.g. (1C)-X-(P)-1H-(P)-1S-(P)-2D shows spades and a heart shortage since clubs cannot be held - two steps have been gained) - however after showing a balanced hand the relay structure is **not** altered to reflect the absence of the overcalled suit. After negative responses, PDer can bid naturally, showing a stopper and balanced with a NT rebid, or bidding a suit naturally. Many times this will right-side the hand with respect to the alternate non-relay auction.

The Intermediate Jump Overcall (IJO)

Bids at the 3 level when higher than the two cheapest jump shifts show a single-suited hand with the values to bid to the 3 level in competition. The hands generally range from 12 HCP and a 7 card suit to a bad 17 HCP with a six card suit. Suit quality is generally about a 1 loser maximum. The available bids are:

1C 3D /3H /3S

1D 3C /3H /3S

1H 3D /3S

1S 3H .

In a major, one top trick and a fit by responder is usually sufficient to bid game vul. vs. nonvul, but nonvul vs. vul even 1 & 1/2 tricks with a fit would probably be insufficient (overcaller has a NAMYATS bid available showing 8 to 8 1/2 tricks). All game bids are to play, and 4 level bids below game are usually slam tries for overcaller's suit.

NAMYATS

Bids at the 4 level are NAMYATS style showing 8 to 8-1/2 playing tricks. Bid 4 of the corresponding minor to show the strong hand while bidding 4 of the major shows the more pre-emptive hand: 4C => 4H and 4D => 4S . Over 1H and 1S, 4C and 4D are normal 4 minor pre-empts.

Responses to NAMYATS

Accepting the transfer denies interest in slam.

Bidding the step in between, shows a mild interest in slam.

Bidding a new suit asks for a control in that suit; 4NT would be RKC.

2S Jump Over 1C

This is the only existing jump pre-empt available below the 4 level; it shows a weak jump overcall, 6-10 HCP and at least a six-card suit with reasonable quality. A 1S overcall of 1C thus tends to deny the pre-emptive style hand.

3 Level Jump Cue Bid

This bid asks advancer for a stopper in the bid suit and tends to show a long minor with a couple of outside cards.

Alerts in the Structure

Clearly, many calls in the structure are alertable as they differ greatly from standard practices. In particular, NTTOs, SOs, TLOs and most of their responses are alertable. Even though the latter two are natural, they diverge from standard, both in the nature of positive inferences, and in the nature and number of negative inferences. These calls will be alerted - generally, this is only alerting the opponents to the negative inferences from the call. Clearly pre-alerts are required to explain the basic structure, along with the knowledge that the overcalling side are willing and able to describe all the negative inferences in specific cases if requested. Minimally, the side must disclose that most direct-seat actions have abnormal or supranormal meanings, and that balancing situations will use this information. Care must be taken to inform the opponents that a large number of negative inferences are commonly available, to avoid creating a highly illegal concealed partnership agreement.