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D.O.N.T with Monster Hands

Provided by Neil H. Timm and Bess Bailey

Marty Bergen in his article in Bridge Today (Sept/Oct 1989 issue, pp. 23-29) discusses his DONT convention (Disturbing Opponents' Notrump) which may be used in the direct or balancing seat after the opponents bid a strong notrump (14+HCPs), or after a 2NT bid by the opponents. The system as summarized, for example, by Larry Cohen in his book To Bid or Not to Bid, 1992, pp. 89-94) is commonly described as follows.

Double = Unspecified one-suiter (at least 5 cards), relay to 2C.

2C, 2D, 2H = Two-suiter (at least 5-4), shows named suit and a higher ranking suit, next higher suit is an asking bid for the second suit, except if 1NT opener's partner bids/doubles, then one must either double/redouble to find the higher ranking suit.

2S=Weaker than double, usually 6+ spades. Doubling and bidding spades always shows a very big hand.

While most players play DONT with weak to moderate hands and a single long suit or a two-suiter, Bergen also recommends that it be used when one has a major-minor (6-5 or better), blockbuster. In this situation, he suggests bidding

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BERGEN RESPONSES TO GAMBLING 3NT

4C says let's play in a Part Score 4C or 4D

4D is asking opener to bid a singleton: responses are 4H=Heart singleton, 4S=Spade singleton, 4NT=minor suit singleton, and 5C=no singleton.

Depending on the location of the singleton and your hand, responder is usually interested in playing in a game, 5C or 5D or a slam, 6C or 6D.

Example: Responder has

Spades: A K Q x Hearts: x x Diamonds: A
K Q x Clubs: x x x

With a heart singleton, you want to play in 6 clubs otherwise you would bid 5 clubs.

4H and **4S** are signoffs in responders long suit. Opener must pass.

4NT is invitational to slam, asking opener to bid a minor suit slam with an extra trick.

Example: Opener has a hand like

Spades: Q x x Hearts: x x Diamonds: x
Clubs: A K Q J x x x

5C asks opener to play in a game, either 5C or 5D.

5D is a signoff by responder, responder knows that the opener has long diamonds and wants to play game from his side.

6C is to play slam in 6C or 6D, opener is to pick the suit. Again, a bid of 6D by responder is to play slam in diamonds, responder knows that it is the long suit.

From the book by Marty Bergen (1985), Better Bidding with Bergen -- Volume One, Uncontested Auctions.

2NT after the 1NT bidder. Partner now bids three clubs as a relay bid. To identify the major-minor suits, he assigns digits to each of the four suits (clubs=1, diamonds=2, hearts=3, spades=4). Then with clubs and heart (1-3), one bids three diamonds; with clubs and spades (1-4), one bids three hearts; with diamonds and hearts (2-3), one bids three spades; and with diamonds and spades (2-4), one bids 3NT. Given the infrequency of the monster major-minor hand, one may find this sequence difficult to remember.

To overcome this problem, we suggest an alternative sequence of bids which involves bidding the lower ranking or higher ranking suit directly, after the 3C relay:

- With clubs and hearts, the rebid is 3 hearts;
- With clubs and spades, the rebid is 3 spades;
- With diamonds and hearts, the rebid is 3 diamonds;
- With diamonds and spades, the rebid is 3NT.

While these bids are usually forcing to game, one can stop in three of a minor or even bid three of a major when the two-suiter involves the "cheaper" two-suiters. This is not the case with Bergen's sequence of bids.

Bergen also recommends bidding 3NT (an unusual NT) to show major-major (6-5 or better), blockbuster two-suited hands. For this situation, we concur with Bergen that partner may select the major, or bid four of a minor with no preference.

Finally, Bergen recommends a 3 level bid with a long suit (7+ cards) and a preemptive hand.

To illustrate our bidding scheme, we consider the hand discussed by Bergen (1989, p. 28):

West		East	
Ss 8		Ss Q 6 4 2	
Hs K Q J 10 8		Hs 9 7 5	
Ds A K J 9 4 3	Ds Q 8		
Cs K		Cs 10 9 7 3	
South	West	North	East
1NT	2NT	pass	3C
pass	3D	pass	3H
4H			

Because East has the Q of diamonds, the contract is safe if hearts split.

However, if we replace the Q of diamonds with the 7. Then, with our scheme, East can bid below the level of game with the bid of 3Hs. With the Bergen approach, West must bid 3S, and hence is unable to end the contract in 3Hs and must bid 4Hs.

Alternatively, suppose in East's hand that the cards represented by Hs and Ds are reversed so that we have three diamonds and two hearts. Then, East can pass the 3D bid by

West. Bergen's scheme forces the bid of 4Hs or 4Ds, both potential overbids.

The goal of our bidding sequence for monster type hands is to keep the bidding low and to avoid being doubled by the opponents.

For our second example, suppose we have a similar hand, but the cards are:

West		East	
Ss 8		Ss Q 6 4 2	
Hs K Q J 10 8		Hs 9 7 5	
Cs A K J 9 4 3	Cs Q 8		
Ds K		Ds 10 9 7 3	
South	West	North	East
1NT	2NT	pass	3C
pass	3H	pass	4H

For this hand using Bergen's approach, West would bid 3Ds, and East would again bid game in hearts. The two bidding schemes are equivalent.

We bring Bergen's Bridge Today 1989 extensions of his DONT system to the attention of the club membership since members who use DONT may be unfamiliar with the monster hand bids.

OVERVIEW: Roman Key Card Blackwood 1430*

4NT when Hearts or Spades are the agreed upon suit (Key Card Ask)

5C = 1 or 4 Key Cards

5D = 0 or 3 Key Cards

5H = 2 or 5 Key Cards without the Queen of Trump

5S = 2 or 5 Key Cards with the Queen of Trump or holding a 5th Trump

Kickback

Use 4 Diamonds as Key Card ask when CLUBS is the agreed Upon suit

Use 4 Hearts as Key Card ask when DIAMONDS is the agreed Upon suit

Voids

5NT = 0, 2 or 4 an even number of Key Cards with a void

6 of suit below the trump suit = odd number key cards (1/3) in the suit below the trump suit

6 trump suit = odd number of key cards (1/3) with a void in higher ranking suit

DOPI/ROPI Interference at the 5 level **DBL/RE-DBL**: 0 or 3 Key Cards and **PASS**: 1 or 4 Key Cards

DEPO Interference at the 6 level **DBL**: Even # Key Cards (0/2/4) or **PASS**: Odd # (1/3)

QUEEN ASK: After 5C, 5Ds is Queen Ask **AND** After 5D, 5Hs is Queen Ask

Responses:

Denial: Return to the five-level of the agreed upon suit

6 Level of agreed Suit: With Queen and **no** side-suit king or extra trump

6 Level of Lower King Suit: With Queen and 1/2 side-suit kings

5NT: With Queen **without** a side-suit king, but trump extra

5NT is a Specific King ASK (NOT NUMBER OF KINGS)

YES: Bid Lowest King Suit BELOW the agreed upon trump suit

NO: Return to the agreed upon trump suit

To ask for a SECOND king, the asker bids the suit. **Without**, return to the agreed suit.

Holding a SECOND king: Make a 1st step response, including 6NT with Kxx(x)

Make a 2nd step response with Kx

Raise the ask suit with Kx

SPECIFIC SUIT ASK (SSA) After 5C: 5H,6C,6D is SSA. After 5D: 5S,6D,6H is SSA

Make a 1st step response, including 6NT with third-round control Qx(x), Ax, AQx, xx

Make a 2nd step response with second-round control Kxx(x)

Make a 3rd step response with Kx

Raise the ask bid with KQx and JUMP to the trump suit with a singleton

***With NO AGREED upon SUIT use standard BLACKWOOD CONVENTION for Ace Asking and 5NT for NUMBER of Kings Ask**

From the Book by Eddie Kantar (2004) -- Roman Keycard Blackwood, Slam Bidding for the 21st Century.

BERGEN MAJOR SUIT RAISES

Provided By Neil H. Timm

High Card Pts (hcp)	No Interference	Over Double	Suit bid	Passed Hand
2 Trumps				
5-9 Pts	*1NT then 2 Major	pass	pass	pass
3 Trumps				
5-7 Pts	*1NT then 2 Major	pass	pass	pass
8-10(bad)Pts	@2 Major(Constructive)	2 Major	2 Major	2 Major
10-12 Pts	*1NT then 3 Major	Redouble	Cue Bid	@2 Clubs
13-15 Pts	*1NT then 4 Major 2 over 1 good suit *3NT if (3-3-[4-3])	Redouble	Cue Bid or show good suit	N/A
15+ Pts Balanced	@4 Clubs (Swiss)	@4 Clubs	@4 Clubs	N/A
4 Trumps				
0-6 Pts	@3 Major (Weak)	@3 Major	@3 Major	@3 Major
7-9 Pts	@3 Clubs	@3 Clubs	2 Major	2 Major
10-12 Pts	@3 Diamonds	@3Diamonds	Cue Bid	@3Diamonds
13+ Singleton (Concealed Splinter)	@3 Other Major then Step Bids#	@3Oth Maj	@3Oth Maj	N/A
13+ No Singleton	2 over 1 Bid	2 over 1 Bid	2 over 1 Bid	N/A
15+ Pts	@Jacoby 2NT	@Jacoby 2NT	@Jacoby 2NT	N/A
5 Trumps				
0-7 Pts No Singleton	Bid Game	Bid Game	Bid Game	Bid Game
8-10 Pts Singleton	@4 Diamonds (Swiss)	@4 Diamonds	@4 Diamonds	@4 Diamonds

Note: With 5hcp and three card trump support, pass unless holding either a singleton or at least one trump honor with all other hcps in one side suit. *=Forcing @=Alert

After 3Ss bid 3NT to find singleton, then 4C/4D/4H/4S denote Singleton. After 3Hs, bid 3Ss, again steps denote the singleton, for example, 3NT denotes club singleton, etc.

Responses to the Swiss BID of 4 CLUBS

4H/4S says weak hand 12-15 with strong trump suit.

4D/(4 of other Major) shows a singleton or Void with slam interest.

4NT says weak hand (12-15) with weak trump suit, not interested in slam.

5C shows (5-5) hand with major and clubs, with slam interest.

After these bids the responder is Captain. 4NT/5NT are RKC asking bids.

A bid of the major at the 5 level is sign-off.

Modified (Simple) Kokish Bids with CONTROLS after a 2 C Opening

Provided by Larry Lande

After a 2C opening, controls are A=2, K=1:

- 1) 2 D = 1 or 0
- 2) 2 H = 2 Controls (A or KK).
- 3) 2 S = 3 Controls (AK, different suits).
- 4) 2NT=3 Controls (KKK or AK, same suit). Responder should bid 2NT with 3 K's and little else, while with AK in the same suit, responder may bid the suit, raise partner's suit, or use some conventional bid (Stayman, Gerber, Transfer, Etc.).
- 5) 3C=4 or more Controls.
- 6) With a good 6+ suit (QJTxxx, KJ9xxx, KQJxxx), and fewer than 2 controls and nothing more than a J in the other suits, bid that suit at the 3-level over 2 C. You cannot show a poor club suit unless you happen to have 7+, then bid 4 C.
- 7) If an opponent INTERFERES over a 2 Club opener, the X (or XX) is the weakest bid you can make (1 or fewer controls and less than 5HCPs). Bidding would show 1+ controls and a good 5+ card suit (jump bids by responder remain the same).
- 8) After a 2 C opening and any response, if RHO's bids, a DOUBLE shows shortness in the RHO's suit. If you have a 6+ card suit, then a bid is ambiguous as to the length in RHO's suit, but is preferred to a X for shortness. However, with a void with 6-4-3 shape, then X. (e.g. 2C p 2D 4H and you hold AKJx void AKQTxx KQx. The X is better than bidding anything else.

After 2C 2D.

- 1) 2H forces responder to bid 2S. Then
 - a) 2NT=25+ HCPs and balanced game force.
 - b) 3H=6+H with no side suit.
 - c) 3C/3D/3S=4-card suit with 5+H. A subsequent re-bid of that suit would show 5+ of that suit with longer hearts (unless hearts were supported, then its just a cue bid).
- 2) 2S=5+ spades, forcing for 1 round. 3C=bust and you may pass the next bid by opener.
- 3) 2NT=22-24 HCPs and a balanced hand.
- 4) 3H/3S/4C=4-card suit with 5+D. However, with only 5 diamonds, opener must have a better than a 3-loser hand.
- 5) 3C=6+ Clubs. There's an unstopped suit (worse than Jxx) for 3NT. So bid a stopper if possible. 3NT says I have nothing but a possible stopper - if you rebid 4 Clubs, opener will pass.
- 6) 3D=6+ Diamonds. There's an unstopped suit (worse than Jxx) for 3NT. So bid a stopper if possible. 3NT says I have nothing but a possible stopper - if you rebid 4 Diamonds, opener will pass.
- 7) 3NT=9 winner hand with a solid, 6+card minor suit.

MONTREAL RELAY BIDS

Provided by Neil H. Timm

*1 Club Opener + Responses (1st and 2nd Seats Only)

Open 1 Club with 11-19 High Card Points or **Double** in second seat if Bid was Stolen

High Card Points (hcp)	Responses	Opener's Rebid 2 Clubs Forcing
6-9 Points	1 D 5+ Diamonds 1 H 5+ Hearts 1 S 5+ Spades	Re-Bid 6+ Suit or Bid 4-Card Suit or Bid 3-card Suit with A or K
10-12 Points	2C 5 Hearts 2D 5 Spades 2H 6+ Hearts 2S 6+ Spades 2NT No 5+ Major	3 Clubs Forcing, Next Level Bids 1 st Level Higher 10 Points 2 nd Level Higher 11 Points 3 rd Level Higher 12 Points
13+ Points	3C 5 Hearts 3D 5 Spades 3H 6+ Hearts 3S 6+ Spades 3NT No 5 Card Major	4 Clubs Forcing, Next Level Bids 13-14 4 Diamonds 15-16 4 Hearts 17-18 4 Spades 19+ 5NT

Note: With one or two 4 card majors, may bid 2NT with 13+ Points so that partner may bid their 4 card Major Suit if Available. With no 4 Card Major bid 3NT. With a larger hand bid 4NT Blackwood since no agreed upon suit.

*= Alert --- if asked announce as Artificial and Forcing.

All bids are alertable. The system is designed to play in a major suit (5-3 or 4-4 fits) or NT.

For persons who play 2/1, in the 3rd and 4th seats, one may play **Inverted Minors** (Single Raise 13+ hcps and double raise Weak <10 hcps and at least 4 pieces, alert) with **Criss-Cross** (1D pass 3Cs or 1C pass 2Ds) a limit raise, 9+ to 12- hcps and four card support (alert) with **Flip-Flop** where after a minor suit bid and a take out double, a jump to 2NT shows a preemptive raise for the minor (alert) and a jump raise in the minor shows a limit raise (9+ to 12- hcps). See, for example, the Book by Max Hardy (2002), "Advance Bridge ---Bidding for the 21st Century.

