

Arturo Franco - Marco Pancotti

# Blue Team Club

Translated into English from Italian by D. J. Neill

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## Preface

This second edition of the Blue Team Club comes after a year of diffusion of the first edition. To my great satisfaction and, I believe, to the satisfaction of Arturo as well, the availability of complete outline of the system has augmented the spread. It is fitting that a true and proper Club be furnished with (and how could one do less?) a proper Internet site ([www.mclink.it/personal/MC6246/BlueTeamClub](http://www.mclink.it/personal/MC6246/BlueTeamClub)).

The electronic format of this document is therefore, from this edition on, directly reachable from the site. Furthermore, always at the site, are instructive examples of sequences, hands from the table, variants in the system structure and anything else that could be useful to whoever wants to explore the system.

The Club today is composed of about ten Milan players who are using the Blue Team Club in real play and who are meet every week under the supervision of Arturo Franco.

This edition reflects numerous adjustments, minor and fundamental, in sequences that, in the previous version, had not been reported in a completely correct fashion.

My wish is that, thanks to this work, the Club can soon find new associates, even from another city or from other countries.

The site always has an email address: [BlueTeamClub@go.to](mailto:BlueTeamClub@go.to). I continue to enthusiastically invite questions, errors and omissions found, bidding examples and whatever can be used to better the completed work.

This English version would not exist without the help of Daniel J. Neill. Thanks a lot, Daniel, from us and from all the Web.

And thanks to all those that helped me.

Milan, 14 September, 1999

Marco Pancotti

## Characteristics of the System

The system described represents Arturo Franco's version of the Blue Team Club.

It is characterized by the following aspects:

- ❑ Strong club with control-showing responses;
- ❑ Basically natural one-level suit openings, with 1♦ destined also to describe balanced hands with longer clubs;
- ❑ canape structure [*bid short suit, then long suit - DJN*] for reverser hands
- ❑ Bidding structure so as to best anticipate a major fit
- ❑ classic 1NT opening, 15-17 HCP without a 5-card major;
- ❑ 2♣ and 2♦ openings with a good 6+ card suit, as a base for further competition and, right from the start, preemption of the enemy's majors;
- ❑ 2♥ and 2♠ openings with a solid sub-opening hand, 8-12 HCP, decent suit and probable side values (thus a little dangerous for the opponents to overcall);
- ❑ 2NT opening used with both majors, 7-11, which preempts the opponents' minor fit(s).

The responses, for the most part natural, may utilize relay sequences to reveal the length and strength of the opener's hand.

A good part of the attention of the system is dedicated to the determination of the quality of fit, identification of side controls, and the knowledge of the side suits. There are mechanisms to differentiate the strength of the hand in many tight ranges.

The system, in any case, does not refrain from exercising a preemptive effect, in that all the two-level openings are at the same time descriptive, solid and annoying for left-hand opponent. At the same time, the partner of opener knows with great precision the characteristics of the hand, and can, in case of enemy interference, always exercise the most correct competitive decision.

### Conventional Symbols

In the text, the following symbols are used:

F1	Forcing one round
GI, GI+	Invitational to game, Invitational to game or better
GF, GF+	Game-forcing, Game-forcing or better
SI	Slam seeking
[Hxx, Hxxx]	3 or 4 cards to an A, K, or Q - DJN]

By convention, opener is North, and responder is South.

## The Principle Ideas of the System

The basic principles on which the system is based, all right from the ideas of Arturo Franco, are basically three, and each merit adequate space for explaining.

1. *Bridge is a game of suits*
2. *It is better not to enter the race than not to be able to win*
3. *Don't tell the opponents how to play the hand*

### **Bridge is a game of suits**

The cards don't always play the same way. On offense, a queen is somewhat useless in with two low cards, however it is a certain trick with an ace and king. On defense a suit headed by three major honors might not come to a trick, whereas a hand with a double fit, each to concentrated honors in a long suit, on offense, produce a quantity of tricks absolutely disproportionate in respect to their HCP total. Two mirroring 4333's require a huge number of honors to develop tricks, but the presence of a singleton or void reduces drastically the strength necessary for game or slam in a suit.

They are, these, all familiar principles to any player agonista, but they seem to be forgotten when other used systems are examined.

The systems that adopt the five-card major are among those that more than others ignore this simple principle. Requiring 5 cards to open 1♥ or 1♠ causes the 1♣ or 1♦ openings to be often made on 2 or 3 low cards. This approach favors the opponents entering the bidding and hinders the discovery of a 4-4 major fit. But, still more serious, it doesn't allow the responder to estimate with clarity the potential of the proper bidding in which the first minor bid may consist of a solid 6 card suit or 3 small cards.

Studying the hands in the world championships one can observe with what frequency occur game and slam swings in hands where the partnership that play 5-card majors has had to opened one of a minor only to, after having found a fit in a major, not find a further way to communicate the distributional values of the actual hand.

Also, certainly the incorrect application of the law of tricks is a clear sign of ignoring the fact that bridge is a game of suits. The breakdown of high cards and the presence of unusual distributions carry such an importance, in truth, on the play of the hand, such that renders nearly insignificant the use of the law of total tricks. Larry Cohen, in his books, places such and so many conditions for a correct application of his laws, to render obvious how imprecise the Law is in the absence of the distributional information.

To be able to take correct competitive action, in fact, it is necessary to know the suits and the distribution of partner's high cards and to inform partner likewise of one's own high cards and suits. Otherwise the appraisal of the offensive and defensive potentialities of the deal could be based alone on absolutely generic considerations, and so often lead to wrong competitive choices.

Not always, obviously, does the auction allow the exchange of all necessary information. A good system, consequently, tries to anticipate the problem through a structure of openings and responses that permits a rapid transmission of the essential elements of the hand in terms of distribution, strength, and honor concentration.

The Blue Team, to this regard, adopts the following schemes:

- ❑ All openings other than 1♣ are limited to 16 points. In competition, therefore, the opener can hold an aggressive stance, if the makeup of his hand demands, knowing he isn't tricking his partner on the high card strength and defensive strength of his hand.
- ❑ The openings of 1♥ and 1♠ are very frequent, since the system provides for opening a 4-card major on any normal hand. Competition over a major is handled more easily from the immediate knowledge of a 4-4 or 5-4 fit, which is very useful on offense and similarly useless on defense.
- ❑ No-trump bids, whether by opener or responder, maintain almost always natural significance and describe balanced hands with distributed honors or concentration in the short suits, also sometimes with a 3 card fit for partner's major.
- ❑ The openings of 2♣ and 2♦ place the opener with 6+ cards and at least 2 top honors. They constitute a robust foundation for competition in the minors, an area in which the natural systems, and in particular those with 5-card majors, show weakness.
- ❑ The openings of 2♥ and 2♠ are always made with hands with a strength limit of 12 HCP. This action guarantees the fact that the opening of one of a major, followed by a bid which shows at least 6 cards in the opened suit, indicates non-minimum strength, on which partner may compete with modest hands. At the same time, the guarantee of decent values allows, in competition, the penalizing of an overaggressive opponent.

The limited nature of the opening permits direct and conclusive bidding that does not give out information, to the enemy side, of the actual distribution. It is possible, for example, to respond 1NT, to the opening of 1♦, with four of a major, where opener, when she has a 4-card major, systematically has a balanced hand with just 4 bad cards in the major. Or there is frequently the sequence 1♠-2/3♠, in a 4-4 fit, that hides completely a 5-card side suit in which, all the same, the defensive side decides to reopen, with bloody results.

The emphasis on the importance of the strength of the hands is illustrated by the different ways to bid the 12-16 HCP hands. The system makes the distinction between weak, average, and reverser hands. No hand can be characterized as a reverse unless it is in the position to take by itself 8 tricks (or 7 ½ in a one-suiter). Thus, a reverse sequence shows a strong hand (15-16 HCP), with concentration of honors in the long suit.

It is difficult, moreover, for a one-suited hand with dispersed honor strength or a 2-suiter with 9 cards in the suits to produce 8 tricks with only 16 HCP. So reverse sequences guarantee long 2-suiters or strong 1-suiters, hands in which it is fundamental to value the honors that are "in" (high honors in the bid suits), and to devalue the honors "out" (Aces and intermediate honors on the outside of the declared suits).

For normal hands with good strong honors, the system allows the responder to know, in the second round, whether the hand should be considered minimum or maximum, always limited by the fact that it wasn't opened 1♣ and a reverse was not made.

The precision that derives from this approach allows an accurate assessment of game and slam, superior to a number of natural systems. The huge range of opening strength is in fact handicap in natural sequences, where a same level change of suit can come from a hand with 17-18 HCP while reverses can be made with less than 19 HCP.

Because of this approach the system cannot include conventions like Multi 2D or Michaels that don't show immediately the suits on which it is based, nor

can it accommodate weak NT, that, often, ends with exercising against ones own side the preemptive effect that was meant to hinder the opponents.

In the Blue Team Club, finally, there will not be found relay sequences in which one of two players is completely passive and knows nothing of the distribution of the partner. Where the distributional relays are seen, the responder has the essential elements to judge if her own cards are "in" or "out" and therefore the ability to promote or hold back her partner's ambitions.

### ***It is better not to enter the race than not to be able to win***

In a competitive contest dominated by aggressiveness, this principle is an inviting reminder, for the effectiveness of proper bridge, to not forget good sense and knowledge of the fundamentals of the game.

In the Blue Team Club the bidding is not intended exclusively to destroy opponents' bidding. All the openings and responses are always with the objective of limiting the strength and precise distribution and the goals are, at the same time, constructive and destructive.

Openings should be solid, and the structure of responses is already aggressive enough and is oriented toward finding game "to the limit". The 2-level openings surely have a preemptive effect, but they do not expose the opener to excessive risks and guarantee a sufficient solidity to bid game or slam without fearing a nasty surprise in some suit length or suit quality of the opener.

The jump overcalls always show a solid hand, 1-suited or 2-suited, under the limits of a reverse, but with characteristics of strength and distribution to render improbable a heavy penalty and plausible the assignment of a final contract.

Playing Blue Team does not mean giving up disturbing the opponents' bidding. Indeed, in the system, for example, is seen the overcall in a 4-card major, to permit interfering with hands where one can't double and where a 5-card minor is too weak to be bid. The opening of 2NT is strongly preemptive, whereas as in overcalling is seen the use of Ghestem to show two-suiters that, in favorable vulnerability, can be very limited in high card strength.

Just like openings, 1♥ and 1♠ overcalls, used both in short-long and long-short bidding style [*canape and non-canape - DJN*], often constitute the base for a blocking barrage throughout the whole auction.

Those that are looked down upon by the Blue Team are the sub-minimum openings, the 2-level openings with no restriction on suit quality, the conventions that do not immediately name a suit, the weak jumps, the weak preempts, the weak NT and the myriad of gadgets invented meant only to create a chaotic situation, and to cost one's own side disastrous penalties.

The attitude suggested by the system is to take maximum advantage of the assets of the same system, without trying to win also where the Blue Team Club does not offer a particular advantage. To win at bridge don't expect to win points at all the hands, it is sufficient to score as well as possible for one's own side and to punish the opponents each time they err.

### ***Don't tell the opponents how to play the hand***

This principle should be applied not only to offensive bids, but to defensive bids as well. In Blue Team each suit opening bid is limited to 16 HCP and the opener, in the second or third bid, is always in the best position to show her own strength, showing if she has a reverser hand, a maximum, or a

minimum. The result of this approach is soon responder is in a great position, when he can exclude slam, to make the final call.

The system therefore encourages following direct sequences, that don't allow the enemy into the auction and that do not give out distributional info.

Sequences like 1♠-3♠;4♠, or 1♦-3NT, or 1♥-2♣;2♥-4♥ are typical of the system, that, often, doesn't reward the opponents with a real indication of suits which are effective to attack. Using systematically this approach, sometimes (rarely) one will miss a slam, but it will always be a close slam, difficult to reach for the opponents too. The payback will come from the innumerable "stolen" games thanks to avoiding the good leads from other defenders who knew more about their opponents' hands.

The partnership Hamman-Wolff, which has always played a variant of the Blue Team Club, has always avoided opening 1♦ with a good 4-card major to allow the responder to hide her own 4-card major and proceed directly to 3NT. A sequence 1♦-3NT, in Blue Team, is extremely efficient in how much it reveals about opener's hand, about which only one thing is known, and can be carried out with a vast variety of distributions.

Also the four card major opening, always anticipating a fit, allows simple and rapid quantitative sequences, that reveal nothing of the presence of a 5-card side suit.

On defense, however, the system tries to facilitate overcalling in the auction without transmitting too much info to the opponents. The overcalls 1♥ or 1♠, for example, can also be made in canape, and show a great variety of hands, some of which, in other systems, cannot properly overcall or must overcall as a weak jump.

The weak jump overcalls and responses are instead avoided, because, when the opponents get to NT, they can rapidly isolate the "dangerous" hand and play against the partner, certain of the fact that, most of the time, the only communications available is in the overcalled long suit.

In studying the system it is good to remember the three base ideas. One will discover very soon that each sequence, each architectural choice, each convention in fact, is always the application of one or more of these principles.

## Opening Bids in the System

The system adopts the following scheme of openings and responses:

I. Opening 1♣: 17+ HCP, any distribution, artificial and forcing.

Responses: control-showing, 1♦ negative, 1♥ max 2 controls but 7+ HCP (GF), 1♠ to 2♦ to show 3-6 controls. Other responses show particular 1-suited, some weak, some strong.

The auction continues on natural lines with some relays dedicated to the handling of strong balanced hands and some minimum 5-5 two-suited.

II. Opening 1♦: 12-16 HCP, maybe without diamonds, artificial but not forcing

Responses: Natural, normally in long-short order, but short-long (canape) is used for a reverse (stronger than a minimum opening).

Possible relays to describe the opener's distribution.

III. Opening 1♥/1♠: 12-16 HCP, natural, forcing.

Responses: Natural, normally in long-short order, but short-long (canape) is used for a reverse (stronger than a minimum opening).

Frequent use of relays to find out opener's distribution.

The raises allow an accurate between weak and strong fit and between hands with a singleton/void and balanced or semi-balanced.

IV. Opening 1NT 15-17 HCP, natural, without a 5-card major.

Responses: Non-forcing stayman, canape transfers, special sequences for the 5-5 GI and SI hands.

Some sequences allow finding the 4-4 minor or discovering a singleton which makes NT dangerous.

V. Opening 2♣: 12-16, 6+ cards in clubs to at least 2 top honors, possibly 4 cards in a side suit.

Responses: 2♦ distributional relay, other natural responses and, if a new suit, forcing.

VI. Opening 2♦: 12-16, 6+ cards in diamonds in a one-suited hand headed by at least two top honors.

Responses: 2♥ relay with a balanced hand, other responses natural, and if a new suit, forcing.

VII. Opening 2♥/♠: 8-12 in a solid 6 card suit. Third and first seats can be quite weak hands.

Responses 2NT strong relay with responses.

New suit forcing, preemptive raises.

VIII. Opening 2NT: 2-suited with the majors, 7-11.

Responses 3♣ distributional ask on the preempting major suits.

## Opening 1♦

This is the strong opening of the system, used with 17+ HCP hands (18+ with balanced hands). It features the showing of controls according to the following chart:

- 1♦      0-6, 0-2 controls, forcing one round;
- 1♥      7+, 0-2 controls, forcing to game or 4 of a minor;
- 1♠      3 controls, GF;
- 1NT      4 controls, GF;
- 2♣      5 controls, GF;
- 2♦      6 controls, GF;
- 2♥/♠     6 cards in the major, 3-6 HCP concentrated in the suit (with a strong hand respond 1♥, with less concentrated points, 1♦);
- 2NT      solid seven card suit with a side void, no side control;
- 3♣/♦     KQxxxxx in the suit and nothing on the side;
- 3♥/♠     KQ/KJxxxxx in the suit and nothing on the side;
- 3NT      Solid seven card suit with no side void, possible side controls;

In case of interference:

- X      Pass = 0-4, XX = 7+, max 1 ctr., 1♦ 5-6 HCP, 1♥ = 7+ HCP, 2 ctr., 1♠ = 3 ctr., 1NT = 4 ctr., 2♣ = 5 ctr., 2♦ = 6+ ctr.
- 1♦     Pass = 0-6, X = 7+ HCP, max 1 ctr., 1♥ = 7+ HCP, 2 ctr., 1♠ = 3 ctr., 1NT = 3/4 ctr. and stopper in the suit shown by the overcall, 2♣ = 4 ctr., 2♦ = 5+ ctr.
- 1♥     Pass = min, X = 7+ HCP, max 2 ctr., 1♠ = 3 ctr., 1NT = 3/4 ctr. with stopper, 2♣ = 3 ctr. without a stopper, 2♦ = 4 ctr. without a stopper, 2♥ = 5+ ctr.
- 1♠     Pass = min, X = 7+ HCP, max 2 ctr., 1NT = 3/4 ctr. with a stopper, 2♣ = 3 ctr. without a stopper, 2♦ = 4 ctr. without a stopper, 2♠ = 5+ ctr.
- 1NT+    Pass = 0-7, X = 7+ balanced, suit = 7+ unbalanced

Note the use of the redouble, that shows a hand rich in honor strength (7+ HCP) but quite poor in controls (0-1). The opener can easily judge where to play or to punish the opponents.

Over suit interference, moreover, the jump bid of a suit shows a 7-card suit but the bid of 2NT (non-jump) shows a balanced hand of 7+ HCP with a stopper.

A final summary:

- the overcalls of double and 1♦ are "helpful" in that they scale down a level the step responses and, in the case of the double, allows distinguishing between 0-4 HCP and 5-6 HCP. The cue bid, over suit interference, indicates the most controls possible.

## Responding 1♦

Over the response of 1♦, that can even come from a worthless hand, the opener bids:

- 1♥/♠    Natural, passable only by an absolute minimum. A quite natural continuations is applied, taking into account South's maximum of 6 HCP. North can have a balanced 21-22 HCP with at least a 4-card major or a balanced 18-20 with both 4-card majors

- 1NT      18-20 balanced with at most one 4-card major. With both majors it is better to bid 1♥. The same responses to an opening 1NT are used, remembering that responder has at most 6 HCP.
- 2♣      Forcing one round, used by a hand with long clubs or with a balanced 25+. Continuations follow the opening of 2♣ with the exception that 1♣-1♦;2♣-2♦;2♥-2♠;2NT shows the balanced 25+;
- 2♦      At least 5 diamonds, forcing one round. Also possible a strong 3-suiter with a singleton club;
- 2♥      One/two-suiter forcing to game with at least 5 hearts or a balanced 23-24. Over the 2♠ relay North, with the balanced 23-24, bids 2NT;
- 2♠      Game forcing, one/two-suiter with at least 5 spades;
- 2NT      Balanced 21-22 without a 4-card major or 5-card minor. Conventional continuations;
- 3♣      2-suited minimum hand, 5-5, with the minors (17-20);
- 3♦      2-suited maximum hand, 5-5, with the minors (21+);
- 3♥/♠     Nine tricks playing in the suit, one-suiter.

It is interesting to note that all the balanced hands can be shown, with adequate precision of their ranges, by the level of 2NT. In order to facilitate the memorization of ranges it is enough to remember that the more "low" the sequence, the stronger the hand (2NT immediately with 21-22, 2♥...2NT with 23-24 and 2♣...2NT with 25+).

#### **Criteria for the rebid of opener after 1♦**

North, with a minimum 5-4 2-suiter (17-21) and at least one major, bids the major followed by the other suit (the two majors always long-short order, the major-minor 2-suiters in canape order, major first).

South, who must strive to rebid at least once, with a minimum, can hold the bidding open a second round, using the same sequences used over an opened major. In particular, it is necessary that South not deny the 3-card major fit with opener in cases of a major of ambiguous length (the opener bids a major before a minor).

The partnership finds itself bidding as over a natural opening, with about a 5-HCP range, but from 17-21 instead of 12-16 and with a responder that is definitely weak. The main differences are:

- ❑ the second bid of 2♣ and 2♦ is always natural (5+ cards) and is not forcing, whereas the second bid of 2♥ is natural and semi-forcing, passable only with a minimum and a misfit;
- ❑ after 1♣-1♦;1♥ the rebid of 2NT shows a balanced hand of exactly 6 HCP.
- ❑ when the opener bids 1♥ or 1♠, receives the rebid of 2♣ or 2♦ (non forcing) and bids 2NT, this creates a one round force without denying other suits, and she immediately bids over 2NT only with a 5-carder or maximum hand.
- ❑ In the sequence 1♣-1♦; 2♣/♦-2♥/♠ 2NT shows a misfit and is passable. Also passable is rebidding a suit or the single raise, but a new suit is forcing one round.

To recap:

Over 1♣-1♦;1♥

- |— 1♠ natural, forcing
- |— 1NT natural, non-forcing
- |— 2♣/♦ natural, non-forcing; then 2NT or new suit is F1
- |— 2/3♥ natural raise, non-forcing
- |— 2♠ hand with singleton, GI+, forcing
- |— 2NT 6 HCP balanced, non-forcing
- |— 3♣/♦ 6-crd suit to 2 top honors, non forcing
- |— 3♠ 6 spades, 2-6 HCP with strength on the side

Over 1♣-1♦;1♠

- |— 1NT natural, non-forcing
- |— 2♣/♦ natural, non-forcing; then 2NT or new suit is F1
- |— 2/3♠ natural raise, non-forcing
- |— 2NT hand with singleton, GI+, forcing
- |— 3♣/♦ 6-crd suit to 2 top honors, non forcing
- |— 3♥ 7 hearts with side strength
- |— 3♠ 6 spades, 2-6 HCP with side strength

With a very strong hand North can, after having bid a major, jump in a minor showing a long strong 2-suiter (4 losers), for which a small fit in one of the two suits may be enough for game. In this case the hand is bid in long-short fashion.

When the opener has a maximum 2-suited hand in the majors (20-22) he bids in reverse fashion, canape, even with only 9 cards in the suits.

With a 2-suited hand with less than 4 losers and a long it is possible to bid first the minor and then the major, sequences through which it is possible to show both the minimum (4 losers or 20-22 HCP) and the maximum (3 losers, or 23+ HCP) at a reasonably safe level. The bid of the minor is in fact forcing, and a maximim bid by North shows a GF hand.

To game forcing hands with at least a 5-card major (3 losers) is available the immediate jump in a major.

The 2-suited minor 5-5 hands are bid immediately with the bids of 3♣ (4/5 losers) and 3♦ (3/4 losers or less).

#### **General Criteria for bids after opening 1♣**

The following rules, in general, apply:

- ❑ After a response of 1♦, one tends to use the same sequence of bids and relays after an opening bid, with the necessary varying of strength requirements:
- ❑ After the strong responses (from 1♥ up):
  - a) The immediate raise of partner's major shows at least an honor third (4 low are not equal to an honor third) and an unbalanced hand, but with a weak side 5-card suit that is eventually shown as North bids the first step as a relay;
  - b) The immediate raise in a minor suit shows at least an honor third and a side 5-crd minor; a side 5-crd major is always shown immediately, even at the cost of delaying showing the minor fit;

- c) The non-jump bid of NT shows a balanced hand (no 5-crd suit) and can hide a fit, even honor third;
- d) The bid of a new major by South over North's bid major denies an honor third fit with opener's major
- e) After having bid NT, the bidding of partner's suit below game shows the honor third fit (and denies, logically, a five card side suit with the fit). Lacking a major honor it is necessary to force to game or make a cue bid intending a delayed raise, which ensures that a direct simple raise always contains a major honor.
- f) The jump in a new suit shows at the same time at least an honor third fit and a solid side 5-crd suit (in the other minor if a fit in a minor).
- g) The jump in a major over opener's minor shows an almost self-sufficient suit (AKQxxx).
- h) The bid of NT by South is substituted for the relay suit after a rebid of 2♣ and 2♦ by North (over which 2♦ and 2♥ are the relay);
- i) When North bids 1NT (balanced) and South shows a five card major so applies the same principles used over an opening 1NT. North, therefore, shows an honor third fit with 2NT, whereas lacking the honor third fit bid he bids a side 4-crd suit, eventually giving a delayed raise with 3 or 4 low.
- j) The bid of 3NT is nearly always to play, except when North has shown a spade-heart 2-suiter and the fit in hearts is already certain. In this case the bid serves to fix the spade suit as trump.
- k) The bid of NT by opener always tends to show a minimum hand.

The following reviews the concepts of the immediate raise.

	No raise	Weak raise	Strong raise
Balanced	NT	NT	NT
Weak 5-card suit	Suit	Suit	Immediate Fit
Strong 5-card suit	Suit	Suit	Jump in a suit

#### The Rebid of 2♣

These continuations are also seen over opening 2♣, but the sequence 1♣-1♦; 2♣-2♦; 2♥-2♠; 2NT shows 25+ balanced(GF).

Since it is necessary to make some changes to the continuations over 2♣, the entire structure is displayed.

- 2♣-2♦ Relay ask, without a 5-card major or decent 5-card diamond suit
- 2♥ maximum hand, or intermediate hand with 4 hearts (20-22)
    - 2♠ GF Relay
      - 2NT 25+ balanced
        - 3♣ Baron-like relay
        - 3♦ 5+ diamonds, 0-4 HCP, possibly a 4-card major
        - 3♥/♠ 5+ clubs, 4 in the major (without the Baron club)
      - 3♣ 5+ clubs/4 hearts (20-22 HCP)
        - 3♦ just diamonds, or a slammish heart fit
        - 3♥ heart fit, sign-off
        - 3♠ RT a spades, no RT a diamonds, o fit a hearts da SI
        - 4♣ club fit
        - 3NT/4♥ to play
        - 3♦ 5+ clubs/4 diamonds and a maximum (23+ p., GF)
        - 3♥ 5+ clubs/4 hearts, maximum (23+ HCP, GF)
        - 3♠ 5+ clubs/4 spades, maximum (23+ HPC, GF)
        - 3NT 6+ clubs, maximum one-suiter with 3 stoppers, GF
        - 2NT with 4 hearts, weak hand (3-4 HCP), passable with a minimum
        - 3♣ with 4 spades, weak hand (3-4 HCP), passable with a minimum
      - 2♠ 5+ clubs/ 4 spades, intermediate hand (20-22 HCP)
      - 2NT single-suiter(20-22 HCP) or 2-suiter with diamonds and no sing.
        - 3♣ to play
        - 3♦ natural, 4/5 cards, 5+ cards if very weak
        - 3♥/♠ stopper or natural, North bids as if it were as stopper
        - 3NT natural with no major stoppers (otherwise 3♥ or 3♠)
      - 3♣ minimum single-suiter (17-19), non-forcing
        - 3♦ asks stoppers (3♥= H stop, 3♠= S stop, 3NT= no major stop)
        - 3♥/♠/NT stoppers (NT = diamonds), possible another stopper
      - 3♦/♥/♠ 6-5 reverse (GF)
      - 3NT 6 clubs/5 diamonds GF

2♣-2♥ 5 hearts, F1

- 2♠ 5+ clubs/4 spades, at least intermediate (20+)
- 2NT 1F, holding spades/diamonds, normally 19+ HCP one-suiter
- 3♣ 6 clubs, minimum (17-19), heart misfit, non-forcing
- 3♦/♠ reverse in the suit, GF
- 3♥ 3+ card raise, minimum
- 3NT to play
- 4♣/♦ heart reverse with/without the club ace
- 4♥ heart raise, maximum hand, no slam

2♣-2♠ 5 spades, F1

- 2NT F1, holdings in hearts/diamonds, usually one-suited, 19+
- 3♣ 6 clubs, minimum (17-19), no spade fit, non-forcing
- 3♦/♥ reverse in the suit, GF
- 3♠ at least 3 card raise, minimum
- 3NT to play
- 4♣/♦/♥ spade reverse with (4♣)/without (4♦/♥) ace of clubs
- 4♠ spade raise, maximum

2♣-2♠

X-3♥ 5 spades/4+ hearts, GI

2♣-2NT five diamonds<sup>1</sup>, F1

- |— 3♣ relay without 3 card support
  - |— 3♦ asks for stoppers with the usual continuation
  - |— 3♥/♠ natural, 4 cards
  - |— 3NT major stoppers, to play
- |— 3♦ 3 card raise
- |— 3♥/♠ 6-4+ reverse, GF (with 6-4 bid 3♣)
- |— 3NT to play, natural without diamond interest

2♣-3♦ 5 spades/4+ hearts game forcing

- |— 3♥/3♠ agreeing the suit and inviting a cue-bid

2♣-3♥/3♠ invitational 6-carder not suitable for the immediate 2♥/♠ response

2♣-3NT 5 spades/5 hearts

**Rebid of 2♦**

Different from the opening 2♦, which is only a one-suiter, the rebid of 2♦ can be made with a 2-suiter (forcing one round). South is obliged, if balanced, to bid 2♥ over which:

1♣-1♦; 2♦-2♥

- |— 2♠ 4 spades and a minimum, or any maximum (exc. minor 2-suiter)
  - |— 2NT GF relay
    - |— 3♣ minimum 2-suiter with 4 spades (4 losers)
    - |— 3♦ maximum one-suiter
    - |— 3♥ 5+ diamonds - 4 hearts, maximum (GF)
    - |— 3♠ 5+ diamonds - 4 spades, maximum (GF)
    - |— 3NT solid diamonds and 9 tricks (GF)
  - |— 2NT minimum heart-diamond 2-suiter (4/5 losers)
  - |— 3♣ club-diamond 2-suiter, F1
  - |— 3♦ minimum diamond 1-suiter (17-19)
  - |— 3♥ 6+ diamonds, 5 hearts, GF
  - |— 3♠ 6+ diamonds, 5 spades, GF
  - |— 3NT reverse with 6 diamonds-5 clubs GF

**Rebid of 2♥**

The 2♥ rebid is normally GF with 5+ hearts, but may be 23-24 balanced. South bids 2♠ with any minimum hand, but with a good 5-card suit and 5/6 HCP (usually KQxxx) shows the suit immediately (2NT for spades).

Over the 2♠ relay North bids 2NT if balanced, changes suit with a GF 2-suiter and repeats hearts with a GF 1-suiter. Further bidding is natural.

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<sup>1</sup> Notare che sull'apertura di 2♣ la risposta di 2NT mostra hand con visuale di slam, mentre dopo l'apertura di 1♣ serve a mostrare 5+ cards a diamonds.

**Rebid of 2NT**

The rebid of 2NT shows 21-22 HCP balanced without a 4-card major or 5-card minor. Asking bids for majors therefore don't exist. South can pass, sign off in 3NT or bid:

3♣ Negative relay, forcing 3♦ over which South can:

- pass
- bid 3♥ or 3♠, to play
- bid 3NT to show a weak club suit [not sure of implication - DJN]

3♦ Asking for minors, over which North bids:

- 3♥ with 4-4 minors and 3 hearts
- 3♠ with 4-4 minors and 3 spades
- 3NT with 4333

3♥/♠ 5+ card suit, GF

**Responding 1♥**

The 1♥ response to 1♣ shows high card strength to guarantee game in 3NT or a major, but with at most 2 controls.

Further bidding is natural in long-short fashion, with 1♠ by North showing 5+ cards in the suit (so it is possible to raise with honor third support).

Balanced 24+ HCP hands with 5 spades are bid first with 1♠, and over the eventual 1NT response, then 2♣.

1♣-1♥; 1♠

- 1NT balanced, no decent 5 carder, possible honor third in spades
  - 2♣ natural, or balanced SI
    - 2♦ no honor third spade raise
      - 2♥ 5 spades/4 clubs, natural continuations
      - 2♠ 6 spades/ 4 clubs, natural continuations
      - 2NT 5332, SI
      - 3♣ 5 spades/5 clubs, natural continuations
    - 2♥ honor fourth club fit
    - 2♠ honor third spade fit, no honor fourth club fit
    - 2NT spade and club fit, honor third in spades
  - 2♦/♥/♠/NT natural
  - 3♣/♦/♥ slammish 2-suiter
- 2♣/♦/♥ 5-carder, without honor third in spades
- 2♠ honor third support, with bad 5 card side suit
- 3♣/♦/♥ honor third support, good 5-cards in suit bid [fit jump]
- 3♠ raise, solid 5-cards (like jumping in a spade suit)

## Responding 1♦

In the case of the 1♦ (3 controls) response the situation is GF and further bidding is natural. Make sure with minimum 2-suiter to show them below 3NT to allow the correct contract in case of a misfit.

There are in fact 2 dangerous situations:

- when, with non-touching 5-5 suits, North's rebid risks having to bid above 3NT;
- when with 5-5 minors South has to decide to show a club fit at the 4 level without knowing if there are slam chances;

In these cases North directly bids 2NT (useless for the balanced hands which will all be shown slowly) over which:

1♣-1♠; 2NT

- |— 3♣ relay
  - |— 3♦ 5-5 diamonds and spades
  - |— 3♥ 5-5 clubs and hearts
  - |— 3♠ 5-5 majors
  - |— 3NT 5-5 minors

1♣-1♠; 2♥/♠-2NT;

- |— 4♣/♦/♥ = 3-suiter with void in the bid suit

## Responding 1NT

The 1NT response presents the problem of finding a 4-4 when North has a balanced hand. For this reason, North inverts the meanings of 2♣ (balanced, or semibalanced with clubs) and 2NT (at least 6 clubs, one-suiter), leaving all other bids natural.

1♣-1NT;

- |— 2♣ balanced or 2-suiter with 5+ clubs
  - |— 2♦ relay, denying a 5 card major
    - |— 2♥/♠/NT/3♣ 4 card suits, balanced
    - |— 3♦ slammish 5 clubs, 4 diamonds
    - |— 3♥ slammish 5 clubs, 4 hearts
    - |— 3♠ slammish 5 clubs, 4 spades
  - |— 2♥/♠/NT 5-card suits (NT = diamonds)
- |— 2♦/♥/♠ length in the suits
- |— 2NT 6 clubs

## Responding 2♦

Also 2♣ creates the problem of finding the 4-4 fit. For this reason 2♦ for the hands with at least 4 diamonds whereas 2NT is reserved for balanced hands without 4 diamonds.

In this way the subsequent 3♣ asking bid can have more responses than to normal Stayman, all to find another 4-4 fit.

1♣-2♣

- 2♦ 4+ diamonds
  - 2♥ balanced, further bids are 4-card suits
  - 2♠/NT/♣ 5 card spades/hearts/clubs
  - 3♦ diamond fit
  
- 2♥/♠ 5-cards
  
- 2NT balanced wihtout 4 diamonds
  - 3♣ asking
    - 3♦ at least one 4-card major, without 4 clubs
      - 3♥ asks (3♠/NT= 4 spade/hearts)
    - 3♥ 4 hearts, 4 clubs
    - 3♠ 4 spades, 4 clubs
      - 3NT 4/5 clubs, no major.
  - 3♦/♥/♠ 5-card suits
  - 3♣/♦ 5+ cards

## 3♣ after the 2NT rebid

The sequence 1♣-1♠..2♦;2♥-2NT;3♣ and 1♣-1♠..2♦;2♠-2NT;3♣ are artificial, and show many types of hands:

a) 1♣-X;2♥-2NT;3♣ can be 2-suited with 4+ clubs, 2-suited with 4 spades or slammish and balanced;

b) 1♣-X;2♠-2NT;3♣ can be 2-suited with 4+ clubs or slammish and balanced.

In both cases, 3♦ by South denies a 3-card fit with opener's major. The sequence has thus the following meanings:

1♣-X;2♥-2NT;

- 3♣ 2-suiter with 4+ clubs or with 4+ spades o slam balanced
  - 3♦ no 3rd heart fit
    - 3♥ 5+ hearts, 4 clubs
    - 3♠ 5+ hearts, 4 spades
    - 3NT slam balanced
    - 4♣ 5+ hearts, 5+ clubs
    - 4♦ balanced at least small slam, invites cue-bids
  - 3♥ 3 card heart fit, no spade or club interest
  - 3♠ heart fit, spade interest (3NT = spades, 4X = heart cue)
  - 3NT 3 card heart fit, interest in clubs
  
- 3♦ 5 hearts, 4+ diamonds
- 3♥ heart 1-suiter
- 3♠ 6 hearts, 5 spades

**1♣-X; 2♦-2NT;**

- 3♣ 2-suiter with 4+ clubs or balanced slammish
  - 3♦ no 3-card spade fit
    - 3♥ 5+ spades, 4+ clubs
    - 3♠ 6 spades, 4+ clubs
    - 3NT slammish balanced
    - 4♣ 5+ spades, 5+ clubs
    - 4♦ balanced, at least small slam, asks for cue
  - 3♥ 3 spades, interest in clubs
  - 3♠ 3 spades, no club interest
- 3♦ 5 spades, 4+ diamonds
- 3♥ 5 spades, 4+ hearts
- 3♠ just spades

### **Responding 2♥ and 2♦**

Shows a 6 card suit 3-6 HCP concentrated in the suit (con 7+ respond 1♥, with 3-6 HCP and scattered strength, 1♦). Opener can find out the exact texture of the suit with 2NT, over which:

- 3♣ QJ or K (3 HCP)
- 3♦ KJ or A (4 HCP)
- 3♥ AJ or KQ (5 HCP) (or KQJ)
- 3♠ AQ (6 HCP not KQJ)

### **Responding 2NT**

2NT shows a solid 7 card suit with a void on the side.

3♣ asks location of the void, and responder bids the void.  
There is no upper limit of strength.

### **Responding 3NT**

3NT shows a solid 7 card suit with no void.

4♣ asks for side controls, whereas 4♦ asks for the suit.

## Opening 1♦

A conventional opening, it shows 12-16 HCP without 4 biddable hearts or spades (in an unbalanced hand, though, open the any quality major). One can open 1♦ with short diamonds (even a void) with long clubs not good enough to open 2♣ (that consists of 6+ cards to two top honors). 1♦ is somewhat constrained in a system that opens 4-card 1♥ and 1♠ and has 2♣ and 2♦ for the one-suiters with at least 2 top honors.

The responses to 1♦, with the following details, are:

- 1♥ can be bid with a hand with only 3 hearts but 5+ diamonds and a non-minimum (rebids 2♦) or with a reverser (rebids 3♦, but here with 4 hearts).
- 2♣ is natural, but forces 2♦ by all normal hands to allow description of South's hand, which is often a canape reverse;
- 2♦ forces opener to bid 2♥, and is often the base of a reverse to a 5+ card major; only used with GF or limit (in which case the diamonds are rebid) diamond single suiters.
- 2NT shows balanced 15-19 HCP with no 4-card major

The following bids are some characteristics:

- over the 1♥ response, 1♠ by North is conventional, and shows diamond-club 2-suiter with 5+ diamonds, or a hand with 4 bad spades;
- over the sequence 1♦-1♥/♠;1NT, or 1♦-1♥;1♠, South uses the relay 2♣ to ask about the strength and distribution of North;
- North's rebid of 2♣ shows a club one-suiter or the minor 2-suiter with longer clubs, thus guaranteeing clubs and leaving diamonds ambiguous;
- South's 2♣ followed by 2NT is balanced invitational without a 4 card major, whereas 3NT is 12-14, also without a major.

## Responses to 1♦

The responses to 1♦ follow:

- 1♥/♠ natural, 4+ cards 6+HCP Possible canape. With 4/5 diamonds and a non-minimum, 1♥ may also be just 3 cards, so then bidding diamonds at the 2 or 3 level shows values or a reverse;
- 1NT natural, 6-10 even with a 4-card major;
- 2♣/♦ forcing, 4+ cards in clubs/diamonds, possibly the base of a reverse into a 5+ card major in a strong hand;
- 2♥/♠ GF, at least 6 good cards;
- 2NT 15-19 balanced with no 4-card major or 5-card minor;
- 3♣/♦ natural, solid seven-card suit (AKQ)

## Opener's rebids

After 1♥/♠ North bids mainly naturally:

- 1NT with a balanced hand without 4-card support for the major;
- 1♠ (over 1♥) with 4 bad spades or a club-diamond hand with at least 5 diamonds;
- A simple raise of the bid major with 4 cards (if hearts, definitely a bad suit, otherwise open 1♥) or with 3 good cards and a singleton in the other major (possibly 5 clubs);
- 2♣ with 5+ clubs (if 6+ clubs, then no two top honors, else open 2♣). The length of diamonds is not yet known;
- 2♦ with 6 diamonds (not to two top honors) or, over 1♠, with 5 decent cards;

- jump raise with a reverse, 4+ diamonds and 5+ cards in responder's suit;
- reverse in the other major, with 4+ diamonds and 5+ in the reverse suit
- 2NT with a maximum 5-5 minor 2-suiter (14-16)
- 3♣ with a great 5-5 minor 2-suiter reverser(8 winners)
- 3♦ reverse with 6 diamonds and 4 clubs (just diamonds not possible, otherwise open 2♦).

### **Artificial Sequences after Opening 1♦**

The first artificial sequence over opening 1♦ is

- 1♦-1♥; 1♠ — a) 4 bad spades
  - b) 5 diamonds/4 clubs
  - c) 5 diamonds/5 clubs, minimum hand
- 1NT to play, North bids 2♣ in cases (b) or (c)
- 2♣ asking relay, GI+
  - 2♦ 5 diamonds/4 clubs, minimum, no 3 hearts
  - 2♥ balanced with 3 hearts and 4 spades
  - 2♠ 4 diamonds, 4 spades, without 3 hearts
  - 2NT 5 diamonds/4 clubs, maximum without 3 hearts
  - 3♣ 5 diamonds/5 clubs, minimum, no 3 hearts
  - 3♦ 5 diamonds/4 clubs/3 hearts, minimum
  - 3♥ 5 diamonds/5 clubs/3 hearts, minimum
  - 3♠ 6 diamonds/ 4 clubs/ 3 hearts, minimum
  - 3NT 5 diamonds/4 clubs/3 hearts, maximum
  - 4♣ 5 diamonds/5 clubs/3 hearts, maximum
  - 4♦ 6 diamonds/ 4 clubs/ 3 hearts, maximum
- 2♦ 5 diamonds, 3-4 hearts and hand semipositive
- 2♥ to play
- 2♠ spade reverser (with 4 spades go through 2♣ relay)
- 2NT without a good spade fit, 5 diamonds/4 clubs
- 3♣ without a good spade fit, 5 diamonds/5 clubs, minimum
- 3♦ without a good spade fit, 5 diamonds/4 clubs, maximum
- 3♥/4♣/4♦ cue-bid with a good spade raise and good hand
- 3♠ 4 card spade raise in a minimum hand
- 3NT sign-off, 5 diamonds/4 clubs, minimum misfit

Over 2♣, to help remember, it is possible to extrapolate the following rules:

1. 2♦ and 2NT show 5 diamonds and 4 clubs and show respectively minimum and maximum without 3 hearts;
2. 2♥ and 2♠ are balanced or semibalanced without 4 clubs and respectively with/without 3 hearts;
3. 3♣ shows the 5-5 minimum without 3 hearts (the 5-5 maximums without 3 hearts are bid immediately with 2NT);
4. 3♥ and 4♣ show 5-5 with 3 hearts respectively minimum/maximum;
5. 3♦ and 3NT show 5-4 with 3 hearts and respectively minimum/maximum;
6. 3♠ and 4♦ show 6-4 with 3 hearts and respectively minimum/maximum.

A second artificial sequence occurs with 2♣ after a 1NT rebid.

```

1♦-1♥/♠; 1NT-2♣
    |
    |— 2♦ no 3-card support
    |   |
    |   |— 2♠/♥ (new suit) distributional relay
    |   |   |
    |   |   |— 2♠ (over 2♥ relay) 5-4 minors, singleton support
    |   |   |
    |   |   |— 2NT 4-4 minors
    |   |   |
    |   |   |— 3♣/♦ 5 card suit
    |   |   |
    |   |   |— 2♥/♠ 5 card suit GI, North can sign off in 2NT
    |— 2♥ (after 1♠) with 5-4 minors, 2-2 majors
    |— 2 partner's major
    |   |
    |   |— one-step is relay, over which:
    |   |   |
    |   |   |— 3♣/♦ 4 card suit
    |   |   |
    |   |   |— 3♥/♠ 5 card in respective minor (♥=♣, ♠=♦)
    |   |   |
    |   |   |— 2/3NT with 4-4 minors
    |— 2♠ (su 1♥) with 5 clubs, 4 diamonds and points in minors
    |— 2NT maximum 3 card raise

```

It is good to remember that South, with a balanced 11-12, over 1NT simply bids 2NT, whereas with a weak hand and long clubs, bids 2♣ and then rebids 3♣ (sign-off). Thus after 2♣ by South, a bid in any new suit by South creates a GF situation in a 5-4, 4-5 or 5-5 2 suiter.

A third artificial sequence occurs over a 2♣ rebid by opener showing 5+ clubs and 2-4 diamonds. Here, South, with 2♦, can ask for distribution.

To understand this ask one must take into account that North cannot have diamonds, and that the sequence 1♦...2♣ is equivalent to the natural sequence 1♣...2♣, excluding the solid suit shown by opening 2♣. 2♦ is not therefore natural but is really a new suit, that implies at least a semi-positive hand and that wants to find an eventual 3-card fit in the bid major or if opener has diamonds.

The general rule is that the 3-card major comes before showing diamonds. The immediate 3♣ and 2NT are used to show a club one-suiter (minimum and maximum) whereas the other bids show both minors.

The asking sequence is constructed as to allow playing in 2NT or 3♣ in case of a club-based hand of minimum strength.

```

1♦-1♥; 2♣-2♦ distributional ask
  — 2♥ 3-heart raise (bad hearts; if good, better to raise earlier)
    |— 2♠ distributional ask
      |— 2NT 5 good clubs, 3 hearts and a maximum
      |— 3♣ 6 clubs, 3 hearts and minimum
      |— 3♦ 5+ clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 hearts, minimum
      |— 3♥ 6+ clubs, 3 hearts, maximum
      |— 3♠ 5 clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 bad hearts, maximum
      |— 3NT 5 clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 hearts to top honor, max

      — 2♠ 5 clubs, 4 diamonds, minimum
      — 2NT maximum single-suiter in clubs
      — 3♣ minimum single-suiter in clubs
      — 3♦ 5 clubs, 4 diamonds, minimum
      — 3♥ 6 clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 hearts, minimum
      — 3♠ 6 clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 bad hearts, maximum
      — 3NT 6 clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 hearts to top honor, maximum

1♦-1♠; 2♣-2♦ distributional ask
  — 2♠ 3 spades
    |— 2NT distributional ask
      |— 3♣ 6 card one-suiter, minimum
      |— 3♦ 5+ clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 spades, minimum
      |— 3♥ 5+ good clubs, maximum
      |— 3♠ maximum one-suiter in clubs
      |— 3NT 6 clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 spades, maximum

      — 2♥ 5 clubs, 4 diamonds, minimum
      — 2NT maximum single-suiter in clubs
      — 3♣ minimum single-suiter in clubs
      — 3♦ 5 clubs, 4 diamonds, maximum
      — 3♥ 6 clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 spades, minimum
      — 3♠ 6 clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 spades without top honor, minimum
      — 3NT 6 clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 spades without top honor, minimum

```

1♦-1♥/♠; 2♦-2NT forcing relay, asking for 3 card support

A fourth artificial sequence occurs on responding 2♣ to the opening.

- 1♦-2♣
- 2♦ obligatory relay with all non-reversers
  - 2♥ reverse with 4+ clubs and 5+ hearts
    - 2♠ balanced, lacking a spade stop (4<sup>th</sup> suit)
    - 2NT balanced, stops in unbid suits
    - 3♣ club raise
    - 3♦ weak one-suiter in diamonds
    - 3♥ honor third raise, balanced or with 5 diamonds
    - 3♠ at least honor third raise, long diamonds ( $\spadesuit=\heartsuit$ )
    - 3NT at least honor third raise, long clubs
    - 4♣ 5 clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 hearts, no top honor, maximum
    - 4♦ 5 diamonds, 4 clubs, 3 hearts, no top honor, maximum
    - 4♥ void in spades, honor third or better heart raise
  - 2♠ reverse with 4+ clubs and 5+ spades
    - 2NT balanced with heart stop, no honor third spade support
    - 3♣ club raise
    - 3♦ diamond one-suiter
    - 3♥ balanced without heart stop (4<sup>th</sup> suit)
    - 3♠ 3 card spade raise to an honor
    - 3NT spade raise to honor, long in clubs
    - 4♣ 5 clubs, 4 diamonds, 3 spades, maximum, no top spade
    - 4♦ 5 diamonds, 4 clubs, 3 spades, maximum, no top spade
    - 4♥ heart void, 3 spades to honor
  - 2NT balanced 11-12
  - 3♣ GF
  - 3♦ clubs/diamond slammish reverse in canape or equal lengths
  - 2♥ reverse with 4+ diamonds and 5+ hearts
  - 2♠ reverse with 4+ diamonds and 5+ spades
  - 2NT diamond one-suiter without 2 top honors, maximum
  - 3♣ 5-5 minors, non-minimum
  - 3♦ 6 diamonds - 4 clubs reverser

As an aid, it is sufficient to remember that over responder's reverse, the bids are mainly natural(other major = 4<sup>th</sup> suit).

If partner bids at the four level it denies a spade honor but shows fit and length in the bid suit.

The bids of

3♠ / 3NT over a heart reverse  
3NT over a spade reverse

guarantee at least an honor third fit.

A fifth artificial sequence is the response of 2♦.

```
1♦-2♦ game forcing relay
|— 2♥ with most non-reverse hand
|  |— 2♠ diamond/spade reverse
|  |— 2NT diamond/heart reverse
|  |— 3♣ GF with 5+ diamonds and 3/4 clubs
|  |— 3♦ GF in a single-suited diamond hand
|    |— 3♥ fit in diamonds and heart stop
|    |— 3♠ fit in diamonds and spade stop
|    |— 3NT both major stops
|— 2♠ diamond/spade reverse
|— 2NT diamond/heart reverse
|— 3♣ diamond/club reverse
|— 3♦ diamond single-suiter
```

The last artificial sequence is over 2NT, which shows 15-19 points, which is needed to distinguish between minimum (15-17) and maximum (18-19) and to maybe find a minor fit.

```
1♦-2NT 15-19, no five carder, no 4-card major
|— 3♣ ask to find minor fit
|  |— 3♦♦ 4 diamonds, no 4 clubs, 15-17
|  |— 3♥ 4-4 minors, 3 hearts, 15-17
|  |— 3♠ 4-4 minors, 3 spades, 15-17
|  |— 3NT 4 clubs, no 4 diamonds, 15-17
|  |— 4♣ 4 cards, 18-19
|  |— 4♦ 4 cards, 18-19
|  |— 4♥ 4-4 minors, 3 hearts, 18-19
|  |— 4♠ 4-4 minors, 3 spades, 18-19
```

## Opening 1♥/♠

Natural openings, showing 12-16 HCP with 4+ cards in the suit. It is limited by the opening of 1♣, used for stronger hands, and by 2♥/♠ (one suit with 8-12 pts) used with 6 card suits which, in the absence of the weak 2, would have to be bid 1♥...2♥ or 1♠...2♠.

The general method of the opening is natural, following the theory of finding the major fit, with 3 exceptions:

- ❑ the major 2-suiter is opened in any order if 1♠ then 2♥ to avoid a reverse;
- ❑ the 2-suiter with 4-5 clubs, or with 6 clubs not headed by 2 honors, is opened in the major;
- ❑ the 2-suiter reverser (8 playing tricks, long good suit) is opened in canape order, with the exception of those with 4 clubs, which are opened in the major.

The balanced hands with four card majors are opened in a major. With 4-4 majors, one opens 1♥ regardless of the relative quality of the suits. With an unbalanced hand (2 or 3 suited) one opens in the 4 card major.

## Responses to the opening of 1♥/1♠

Responses to 1♥ and 1♠ are mainly natural, with the following agreements:

- ❑ over 1♥ the responses of 1♠, 2♣ and 2♦ guarantee only 4 cards, which could be the beginning of a reverse.
- ❑ The invitational raises are distinguished between balanced (double raise = no singleton, after which any cue bid is an honor) and unbalanced (2♠ over 1♥ and 2NT over 1♠);
- ❑ The strong GF+ 2-suiter of 5+ clubs/4 diamonds is bid with 2♣...3♣, and could be just 4 diamonds (eventually shown by the opener);
- ❑ To avoid uselessly going past 3NT the strong 2-suiters with 5+ diamonds/4 clubs are bid in ascending order with slammish hands, and descending order with GF hands;
- ❑ 2♦ is dedicated to particular hands, where South is not interested in distributional details (otherwise she uses the 2♣ relay). It is bid, other than with diamond hands, with GF balanced hands or with hands with a fit for the major too weak to use a cue (which guarantees 3 to two honors, or an honor fourth). The sequence 2♦... 2NT is GF;
- ❑ jumping to 3♠ over 1♥ is made with a broken 7 card suit (KJxxxxx) and nothing on the side, and has no similar cousin after a 1♠ opener. The splinter raise goes through 2♠ (which shows a singleton) followed by 3♠ (splinter in spades, GF).
- ❑ 3NT is reserved for a balanced hand with a 4-5 card without a 4 card side suit, 13-15 HCP. Opener can immediately evaluate slam chances.

The structure of responses is the following:

- 1♠      4+ spades, forcing, possibly the start of a canape reverse;
- 1NT      natural, 6-10 without 4 spades;
- 2♣      natural, forcing to at least 2NT. Over 1♥ it is possibly the start of a canape reverse (stronger hand than opener, always SI). The sequence 2♣...3♣ is GF, whereas 2♣...raising a rebid suit and 2♣...2NT are invitational to game. 2♣...3♦ is a slammish canape reverser;
- 2♦      natural, forcing to at least 3♦. Over 1♥ can be the start of a canape reverser. 2♦...3♦ is GI, whereas 2♦...2NT is game-forcing and can hide a fit which is worse than 2 honors. 2♦...3♣ is GF, but in long-short order;

2♥/♠ natural, 6-10 with 4 hearts/spades;  
 2♠/NT artificial, 4+ card fit, with a singleton (limit or slam) that is shown after 2NT/3♣ relay;  
 2NT strong single-suiter in spades (over 1♥);  
 3♣/♦ strong single-suiter;  
 3♥/♠ GI with a 4 card fit without void;  
 3♠ 7 weak spades and nothing outside (inadequate for responding 1♠);  
 3NT 13-15, 4-5 card balanced raise with no outside 4 card suit;  
 4♣/♦ GF splinter but not SI;  
 4♥ to play (over 1♠)  
 4♥/♠ to play (raise).

### Natural Sequences over 1♥ and 1♠

After responding at the one-level (1♠ or 1NT) the simple change of suit is ambiguous in terms of length (perhaps long-short, perhaps short-long) and strength (with 5-4 one could have 15-16 HCP).

Though many sequences are natural, Blue Team Clubs adopt some "treatments" that characterize it and follow:

- Repeating the major always shows an interesting hand (15-16 in 5332 or 13-14 with 6 cards) while with 5332 and 13-14 HCP the second bid is 1NT, and the one-suited 11-12 HCP 6+ card majors are opened with a weak 2. With a 13+ HCP 6 card major one repeats it, even with a 4 card side suit.
- Over rebidding the major, South can bid 2NT as a relay over which North bids 3♣ balanced, repeating the major with 6+ weak (13-14), bidding 3♦/NT with the 2-suiter (maximum, otherwise one first changes and rebids the major) and bids the other major with a maximum one-suiter (15-16). An exception is 3♠ in the sequence 1♥-1♠;2♥-2NT;3♠ that shows just a 3 card fit and nothing about minimum/maximum.
- With 5/6 cards in a major and 4/5 clubs, and a concentrated 15-16 HCP, one should bid 1♥/♠...3♣, a unique long-short jump (or 5-5) in the system.
- In the sequence 1♥-1♠;2♠ the bid 2NT looks for a singleton minor or, for 5 hearts and 2-2 minors. 3♠ is bid with a balanced minimum and no game interest. A new suit (not hearts) however shows a singleton and is GI+. Thus slam-bidding is simplified by knowing immediately about singletons (in either hand) and that eventual cue bids suits are always honors.
- After 1♥-1♠, 1♥-1NT and 1♠-1NT the bid of 2NT is used to show a maximum 3-suited hand with void in the other major or 3-suited with 5 diamonds and void in the other major (the 2-suiters with 5 clubs and a void in the other major are shown via 2♣). Over these sequences, any simple preference to a minor is to play, whereas 3♥ or 3♠ is forcing.
- The strong 2-suiters (1♥...2♠, 1♥/♠...3♣/♦/3♥) are not ambiguous in terms of suit lengths (always short-long if the second suit isn't clubs, 6-4 or 5-5 if the second suit is clubs) and, when jumping from a higher suit into diamonds or hearts, guarantees a solid 6 card second suit.

The more complex "natural" sequences are shown below:

1♥-1♠; 2♥- 2NT asking bid

- 3♣ 5332, 15-16 HCP or 5-4 max with diamonds
  - |— 3♦ asking (with interest in diamonds or spades)
    - |— 3♥ = 5 hearts-4 diamonds, no 3 spades
    - |— 3♠ = 5332 with 3 spades
    - |— 3NT = 5332 without 3 spades
    - |— 4♣ = 3-5-4-1 (4♦ fixing diamonds as trump)
  - |— 3♦ 6 hearts, 4 diamond, maximum
  - |— 3♥ 6 hearts (min or max but without 3 spades)
  - |— 3♠ 6 hearts, 3 spades (min o max)
  - |— 3NT 6-4 (4 clubs), maximum

1♥-1♠; 2♥-2♠ semi-forcing with 5+ spades, responses like 2NT. North always bids with a fit in spades

1♥-1♠; 2♠

- 2NT asks for a singleton, GI
  - |— 3♣/♦ singleton in suit
  - |— 3♥ con la quinta e resti 2-2
  - |— 3♠ minimum balanced hand
  - |— 3NT maximum balanced hand
- 3♣/♦/♥ singleton, GI+ (inviting cue-bids)

1♥-1♠; 2NT maximum 3-suiter with a singleton/void in spades

- |— 3♣/♦ to play
- |— 3♥ forcing! (odd maybe, but strong hands need this bid)
- |— 3♠ forcing, then
  - |— 3NT spade singleton
  - |— 4♣ with 5♦ and spade void
- |— 3NT to play
- |— 4♣/♦ natural, slammish, with a high honor in the suit

1♥-1♠;

- 3♣ reverse with 6 hearts and 4+ clubs or 5-5
  - |— 3♦ asking
    - |— 3♥ 6-4+ without 3 spades
    - |— 3♠ 6-4+ with 3 spades
    - |— 3NT 5-5 without 3 spades
    - |— 4♣ 5-5 with 3 spades
- |— 3♦ reverse with 6+ diamonds
- |— 3♥ 8 trick one-suiter
- |— 3♠ 4 card fit in spades, maximum hand
- |— 3NT spade reverse without first round control of clubs or diamonds
- |— 4♣ spade reverse with first-round club control
- |— 4♦ spade reverse with first-round diamond control

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1♥-1NT; 2♥
    |— 2♠ relay
        |— 2NT 5 hearts, 4 spades max
        |— 3♣ 5332 15-16
        |— 3♦ 6 hearts and 4 diamonds
        |— 3♥ minimum one-suiter (13-14)
        |— 3♠ maximum one-suiter (15-16)
        |— 3NT 6-4 with 4 clubs

    |— 2NT 5-5 minors

1♠-1NT; 2♠
    |— 2NT relay
        |— 3♣ 5332, 15-16
        |— 3♦ 6-4 with 4 diamonds and maximum (15-16)
        |— 3♥ single-suiter maximum (15-16)
        |— 3♠ single-suiter minimum (13-14)
        |— 3NT 6-4 with 4 clubs and maximum (15-16)

1♥-1NT; 2♠ reverse in hearts/spades
    |— 2NT asks distribution
        |— 3♣ 6 spades, 3 clubs
        |— 3♦ 6 spades, 3 diamonds
        |— 3♥ 5-5
        |— 3♠ any 6-4-(2-1)

1♥-1NT; 2NT maximum 3-suiter with singleton or void in spades
    |— 3♣/♦ to play
    |— 3♥ forcing
    |— 3♠ forcing, to find out if there is a 5-carder
        |— 3NT 4441
        |— 4♣ 5 diamonds
    |— 3NT to play

1♠-1NT; 2NT maximum 3-suiter with singleton or void in hearts
    |— 3♣/♦ to play
    |— 3♥ forcing
    |— 3♠ forcing, to find out a 5-carder
        |— 3NT 4441
        |— 4♣ 5 diamonds
    |— 3NT to play

1♥-1NT; 3NT      5 hearts - 6 spades reverser
1♥-1NT; 3♠       4 hearts - 7 spades reverser
1♠-1NT; 3NT      5 spades - 6 hearts reverser
1♠-1NT; 4♥       4 spades - 7 hearts reverser

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It is important, before studying the conventional sequences, to understand the underlying rule of raising opener's suit when searching for slam as the system features a rigid distinction between 3 and 4 card raises and between solid raises(at least 2 honors in 3 or 4 cards), decent raises (one major honor, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> ) and low quality suit support.

The table below represents the possible sequences that describe opener's length and quality, and that describe responder's fit quality. It is intended, naturally, that responder, if he uses one of these sequences, must have enough strength for game to have prospects for slam.

#### Possible sequences for approaching slam

	3 card raise, 0 or 1 top honor	3 card raise, 2 top honors	4 card raise, all small cards	4 card raise, 1 top honor	4 card raise, 2 top honors
Four card opener			Splinter  2♦...2NT ...raise	Splinter  2♦...raise  1♠/2♣/♦... relay... cue-bid	Splinter  1♠/2♣/♦... cue-bid
Five card opener	2♦...2NT ...raise	2♣/♦... cue-bid	2♦...2NT ...raise	1♠/2♣/♦... cue-bid	1♠/2♣/♦... cue-bid

### **Checkback over opening 1♥ and 1♠**

The first artificial sequence is that of 2♣ when South responds 1♠ and North rebids 1NT (called Checkback).

1♥-1♠; 1NT-2♣

- 2♦ No 3 spades
  - 2♥ GI with a 3 heart raise
  - 2♠ GI with 5 great/6 bad spades
  - 2NT GF, no 3 hearts, no 5 great spades
  - 3♣ to play
  - 3♦ SI, asking opener to cue-bid. Normally with a strong single-suiter and non-solid suit or with a balanced hand
  - 3♥ strong balanced hand, 3 hearts, GF
  - 3♠ 6 spades, GF
  - 3NT to play
  - 4♣/♦ cue-bid with a 4 card heart fit, not 2 top honors
- 2♥ 5 hearts and 3 crds in spades
  - 2♠ invitational
  - 2NT invitational
  - 3♣ to play
  - 3♦ SI, asking opener to cue-bid
  - 3♥ 3 hearts, invitational
  - 3♠ GF, 5+ spades
  - 4♣/♦/♥ cue-bid, heart fit, no 2 top honors
- 2♠ 3 card spade raise, no 5 hearts, minimum
  - 2NT GF, inviting opener to bid another 4 crd suit
  - 3♣ to play
  - 3♦ SI, asking opener to cue-bid
  - 3♥/♠ GF+
- 2NT 3 card spade raise, no 5 hearts, maximum
  - 3♣ min. 3-suiter with sing. spade (if max, bid 2NT earlier)

Notice that after the 2♣ relay, 3♦ is still conventional a balanced slam hand. North should begin cue-bidding assuming the hand will be played in NT.

Natural bids by South, alternatives to 2♣, are:

1♥-1♠; 1NT

- 2♦ to play
- 2♥ 5 spades and 3 hearts, less than invitational
- 2♠ to play
- 2NT GI without 5 spades and without 3 hearts
- 3♣/♦ reverse in short-long fashion, GF+
- 3♥ GI
- 3♠ GI with 6 good cards
- 4♣/♦ cue-bid with heart fit to 2 top honors (otherwise use 2♣)

## Bidding 2-suited as North after opening 1♥/1♦

There are certain sequences that, when first bid, are ambiguous as to suit length. Such are:

- a) 1♥-1♠; 2♣
- b) 1♥-1♠; 2♦
- c) 1♥-1NT; 2♣
- d) 1♥-1NT; 2♦
- e) 1♠-1NT; 2♣
- f) 1♠-1NT; 2♦

In all cases South's rebids are natural, except a bid that is left as an asking relay.

The relay is 2♦ in a), 2NT in b), e) and f) whereas in c) and d), where hearts is opened and the response is 1NT, 2♠ is the relay with 3 hearts, but 2NT is used as a non-forcing relay that shows game interest, but without 3 hearts and is passable by a minimum canape.

Remember that after responding 1NT South cannot use a suit as a relay, except 2♠ after the opening of 1♥ (spade cannot be held, since 1NT denied spades).

To allow easy memorization, of the relays 2♠ and 2NT the following general rules are adopted:

- **2NT**, or passing a non-forcing 2NT, shows a minimum hand, suited for NT and, normally, with a 5-card minor; possible is a 5-card major after the non-forcing NT which denies a 3 card fit;
- **Repeating the minor** always shows a 5 card suit and a minimum hand; when it is possible to bid 2NT, or to pass partner's nonforcing 2NT, it shows a bad hand for NT;
- **Repeating the major** shows a 5 card suit in a maximum hand when 3 card support is unlikely, and a minimum hand when 3 card support is shown. With a 5-card major, but support denied, one can pass nonforcing 2NT. If the relay is forcing, with a 5 card major and a maximum, one bids the other minor. With a maximum, 5-card major, and guaranteed 3 card support, one bids game.
- Bidding the **other minor** is only used to show a minimum in long-short suit order. If the relay guarantees a 3 card major fit, it is used, however, when the bidding was short-long with 3 card in the other minor (not higher than 3♦).
- **3 of the other major** and **3NT** are reserved for maximum 2-suited (3NT long-short or short-long). 3NT is always a possible contract, and tends to show a stopper in the other major or 4 card suit (when it makes sense from the previous bidding). 3 of the other major can be bid to show weakness in the critical suit (the four-card suit or the other major), or to show a 3 card fit in the sequence 1♥-1♠; 2♦-2NT; 3♠.

The rule has some exceptions in the fact that, in certain cases, North cannot have a minimum or cannot have a stopper in the other major. In these cases some modifications, always logical and easy to remember, are made.

The following table highlights the important parts of the 2♠ and 2NT relays after opening 1♥ and responding 1NT.

		Forcing relay (2♠) with 3♥	Forcing relay (2NT) not promising 3♥	Non-forcing relay (2NT) without 3♥
5-4	Minimum	3♥	3 oth. minor(om)	Pass
5-4	Maximum	4♥	3♥	3♥
4-5	Minimum	3m	3m	Pass or 3m
4-5	Maximum	3♠/3NT	3♠/NT	3♠/NT
4-5-3om	Min/Max	3om (max 3♦)		3om (max 3♦)

The following table deals with relays after the 1♠ opening and 1NT response.

Forcing relay (2NT)		
5-4	Minimum	3om
5-4	Maximum	3♥
4-5	Minimum	3m
4-5	Maximum	3♠/NT

The various sequences follow below.

**a) 1♥-1♠; 2♣**

The first sequence is characterized by the fact that South has shown spades and that the relay is the fourth suit; thus the responses are mostly natural and look for a 3 card spade fit.

1♥-1♠; 2♣-2♦

- 2♥ 5 hearts, 4 clubs, no 3 spades, minimum
- 2♠ 3 spades
  - 2NT forcing distributional relay
    - 3♣ 4 hearts, 5 clubs, 3 spades min
    - 3♦ 5 hearts, 4 clubs, 3 spades min
    - 3♥ 5 hearts, 5 clubs, 3 spades min
    - 3♠ 5 hearts, 4 clubs, 3 spades, max
    - 3NT 4 hearts, 5 clubs, 3 spades max
    - 4♣ 5 hearts, 5 clubs, 3 spades max
  - 2NT max and a diamond stopper or three suited with a spade void
    - 3♣ asking bid
      - 3♦ 3 suited with a void in spades and 4 hearts
      - 3♥ 3 suited with a void in spades and 5 hearts
      - 3♠ 5-5-3-0 with a void in spades (10 cards)
      - 3NT 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, diam. stopper, maximum
    - 3♣ 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, minimum, possible diamond stop
    - 3♦ 4 hearts, 5+ clubs maximum, no diamond stop
    - 3♥ 5 hearts, 4 clubs, good hand, no diamond stop
    - 3♠ 5 hearts, 5+ clubs, maximum, no diamond stop
    - 3NT 5 hearts, 4 clubs, maximum with a diamond stop

The other natural alternative bids to 2♦ are:

1♥-1♠; 2♣

- 2♥ sign-off
- 2♠ sign-off
- 2NT 2-suiter with 5+ diamonds, weak; invites correction to 3♦
- 3♣ invitational with 4+ clubs
- 3♦ spade/diamond reverse
- 3♥ invitational
- 3♠ forcing (with an invitational hand bid 2♦)
- 3NT to play
- 4♣ spade/club reverse
- 4♦ spade/heart reverse with 2 high heart honors  
(otherwise go through 2♦ relay)

Some final observations:

- with a spade one-suiter South, after 1♠, can rebid them (sign-off), bid 2♦ looking for 3 crd support in an invitational hand or jump immediately with a GF hand (but not a self-sufficient suit, otherwise an immediate 2NT);
- with spades/diamonds in a weak canape South, not able to bid 2♦ in a natural sense, bids 2NT as a transfer to diamonds;
- with a balanced invitational hand South, not able to bid 2NT, goes through 2♦;
- the 2♦ relay is used to very simply and quickly describe the following hands:
  - a) spade one-suiter, weak or GF;
  - b) raise with weak hearts GI, or SI with 2 top honors;
  - c) club raise, GI or SI;
  - d) spade-diamond hand, weak or GF;
  - e) balanced hand which wants to play 3NT;

**b) 1♥-1♠; 2♦**

The second sequence is characterized by the fact that South has shown spades but there is no relay available at the 2 level, and 2♥ and 2♠ are both natural.

As might be noted, 2♦ excludes a maximum hand with 5 hearts, unless it is 5-5. With 5-4 at most one bids 2♥, as a one-suiter, to later bid 3♣ (as if it was a 5332) and, over the 3♦ relay, reveal whether it is one-suited or 2-suited.

**1♥-1♠; 2♦**

- |— 2NT forcing asking relay
  - |— 3♣ 5+ hearts, minimum hand or 5-5 maximum
    - |— 3♦ asking relay, interest in spades
      - |— 3♥ minimum, 5+ hearts without 3 spades
      - |— 3♠ minimum, 5+ hearts and 3 spades
      - |— 3NT maximum, 5-5, without 3 spades
    - |— 3♦ min, 4 hearts, 5+ diamonds, possibly 3 spades
    - |— 3♥ min, 5-5, no 3 spades
    - |— 3♠ max, 4 hearts, 5+ diamonds and 3 spades max
    - |— 3NT max, 5 diamonds, no 3 spades
    - |— 4♣ 5 diamonds, 5 hearts, 3 spades

The natural alternative bids to the 2NT relay are the following

**1♥-1♠; 2♦**

- |— 2♥ sign-off
- |— 2♠ sign-off
- |— 3♣ reverse in spades/clubs SI in canape, or 4<sup>th</sup> suit
- |— 3♦ invitation with 4+ diamonds
- |— 3♥ invitation
- |— 3♠ forcing (with an invitation hand go through 2NT)
- |— 3NT to play
- |— 4♣ reverse in spades/hearts with 2 top honors in hearts
- |— 4♦ reverse in spades/diamonds

Final observations:

- with a spade one-suiter South, after 1♠, can rebid them (sign-off), bid 2NT to look for a fit in an invitation hand or jump with a GF hand (not a solid suit, otherwise an immediate 2NT);
- with spades/clubs in a weak canape South, not having a convenient bid, passes or corrects to 2♥;
- with a balanced invitation hand South, 2NT not available in a natural sense must use the relay and can play in a 5 card suit opposite a minimum response by North, or bid 3NT after a maximum response;
- 2NT is therefore reserved to describe quickly and simply many hands, such as:
  - a) weak or GF+ spade one-suiter;
  - b) hand with a weak heart raise, GI or SI with two major honors;
  - c) diamond raise, GI or SI;
  - d) two-suiter, spades/clubs GF+;
  - e) balanced to play 3NT.

**c) 1♥-1NT;2♣**

The third sequence is characterized by the response of 1NT and therefore the possibility of using the forcing relay 2♠, that guarantees 3 hearts, and the nonforcing 2NT, that denies 3 hearts.

**1♥-1NT;2♣**

- |— 2♠ forcing relay with 3 hearts
  - |— 2NT 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, minimum, spade stop
  - |— 3♣ 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, minimum and denying spade stop
  - |— 3♦ 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, maximum and 3 diamonds
  - |— 3♥ 5+ hearts, 4+ clubs, minimum
  - |— 3♠ 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, maximum, no spade stop
  - |— 3NT 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, maximum, spade stop
  - |— 4♥ 5+ hearts and maximum

Note the first 2 responses (2NT and 3♣) are minimum hands and thus playable contracts. Moreover, since South is limited with at most 3 hearts, all the responses, except for 3♥ and 4♥, are canapes.

**1♥-1NT;2♣**

- |— 2NT non-forcing relay without 3 hearts
  - |— pass with any 5-4 minimum that is suited to NT
  - |— 3♣ 4+ hearts, 5+ clubs, minimum and denying a spade stop
  - |— 3♦ 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, maximum and 3 diamonds
  - |— 3♥ 5+ hearts, 4 clubs, maximum, probably no spade stop
  - |— 3♠ 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, maximum, no spade stop
  - |— 3NT maximum and spade stop, any distribution

In this case, a 3-card heart fit denied, North passes or bids 3NT even with 5 hearts. 3♥ suggests playing in hearts even with doubleton support, and comes only from a hand with 6 hearts or 5 good hearts without a fit in spades.

The natural alternatives to 2♠ and 2NT are the following

**1♥-1NT;2♣**

- |— 2♦ to play
- |— 2♥ to play
- |— 3♣ 8-10 with 4+ clubs

**d) 1♥-1NT;2♦**

The fourth sequence is also characterized by the response of 1NT and thus the ability to use 2♠ (with 3 hearts), or 2NT (without 3 hearts).

1♥-1NT;2♦

- |— 2♠ forcing relay with 3 hearts
  - |— 2NT 4 hearts, 5+ diamonds, minimum
  - |— 3♣ 4 hearts, 5+ diamonds, 3 clubs
  - |— 3♦ 4 hearts, 5+ diamonds, minimum in a bad hand for NT
  - |— 3♥ 5+ hearts, 4+ diamonds, minimum
  - |— 3♠ 4 hearts, 5+ diamonds, maximum, no spade stop
  - |— 3NT maximum and spade stop, to play even with 5 hearts
  - |— 4♥ 5+ hearts, maximum and a bad hand for NT

Also in this case the first 2 natural responses (2NT e 3♦) are minimums and therefore passable. The hands with the 5 card major are rebid cheaply (minimum) or in a jump (maximum), whereas all other responses deny 5 hearts.

1♥-1NT;2♦

- |— 2NT non-forcing relay without 3 hearts
  - |— pass with any 5-4 minimum suited for NT
  - |— 3♣ 4+ hearts, 4+ diamonds, 3 clubs
  - |— 3♦ 4 hearts, 5+ diamonds, minimum
  - |— 3♥ 5+ hearts, 4+ diamonds, maximum
  - |— 3♠ 4 hearts, 5+ diamonds, maximum, no spade stop
  - |— 3NT maximum with spade stop, to play even with 5 hearts

Observe that 3♣ shows 3 clubs without revealing lengths. South in fact, if not interested in 3NT, can always rebid 3♦ over which North, with a maximum, 5 hearts and 4 diamonds, can correct to 3♥.

The natural alternatives to 2♠ and 2NT relays are the following

1♥-1NT;2♦

- |— 2♥ to play
- |— 3♣ to play
- |— 3♦ 8-10 with 4+ diamonds

**e) 1♠-1NT; 2♣**

The fifth sequence is characterized by having to use as a relay 2NT  
**1♠-1NT; 2♣**

- 2♦ to play
- 2♥ to play
- 2♠ to play
- 2NT non-forcing asking relay
  - 3♣ 4 spades, 5+ clubs, minimum
  - 3♦ 5+ spades, 4+ clubs, minimum
  - 3♥ 4 spades, 5+ clubs, maximum, no heart stop
  - 3♠ 5+ spades, 4+ clubs, maximum
  - 3NT 4 spades, 5+ clubs, maximum, heart stop
- 3♣ 8-10 with 4+ clubs

In this sequence North, with a minimum and 5 spades, must bid 3 of a minor.  
The 2NT relay must therefore be able to manage the response of 3♦, that forces the partnership to at least 3♠.

**f) 1♠-1NT; 2♦**

The sixth sequence is the most compressed, with the necessity of usin the 2NT relay

**1♠-1NT; 2♦**

- 2♥ to play
- 2♠ to play
- 2NT asking relay
  - 3♣ 5+ spades, 4+ diamonds, minimum
  - 3♦ 4 spades, 5+ diamonds, minimum
  - 3♥ 4 spades, 5+ diamonds, maximum, no heart stop
  - 3♠ 5+ spades, 4+ diamonds, maximum
  - 3NT 4 spades, 5+ diamonds, maximum, heart stop
- 3♣ to play
- 3♦ 8-10 with 4+ diamonds

## The 2♦ response to opening 1♥ or 1♠

The 2♣ response begins an organized conventional sequences.

a) 2♦ response, used in all hands with a 5 card major

1♥-2♣

- |— 2♦ no 5 hearts
  - |— 2♥ relay
    - |— 2♠ minimum unbalanced hand
    - |— 2NT GF relay
      - |— 3♣ with 5 clubs
        - |— 3♦ asking
          - |— 3♥ rest of hand is 2-2
          - |— 3♠ spade sing.
          - |— 3NT diamond sing.
        - |— 3♦ with 5 diamonds and the rest 3-1
          - |— 3♥ singleton ask
            - |— 3♠ with singleton spade
            - |— 3NT with singleton club
          - |— 3♥ 4 hearts and 6 clubs ( $\heartsuit=\clubsuit$ ), not 2 top clubs
          - |— 3♠ 4 hearts and 6 diamonds ( $\spadesuit=\diamondsuit$ )
          - |— 3NT 4 hearts, 5 diamonds and the rest 2-2
          - |— 4♣ 4 hearts, 4 diamonds, 5 clubs, spade void
          - |— 4♦ 4 hearts, 4 clubs, 5 diamonds, spade void
          - |— 4♥ 4 hearts, 4 spades, 5 clubs, diamond void
          - |— 4♠ 4 hearts, 4 spades, 5 diamonds, club void
        - |— 3♣ GF with 6 clubs
        - |— 3♥ GF+, 4+ hearts not to 2 top honors, no side Ace
        - |— 3NT to play
        - |— 3♠/4♣/4♦ GF+, Ace cue, 4+ hearts not to 2 top honors
      - |— 2NT balanced 12-14
      - |— 3♣/♦ 4 hearts/5 minor, max
        - |— 3♥ 4 hearts, 6 clubs
        - |— 3♠ 4 hearts, 6 diamonds,
        - |— 3NT 4 hearts, 5 diamonds 2-2
        - |— 4♣ 4 hearts, 4 diamonds, 5 clubs, spade shortage
        - |— 4♦ 4 hearts, 4 clubs, 5 diamonds, spade shortage
        - |— 4♥ 4 hearts, 4 spades and 5 clubs (diamond shortage)
        - |— 4♠ 4 hearts, 4 spades and 5 diamonds (club shortage)
      - |— 2♠ reverse in clubs/spades
      - |— 2NT balanced GI (11-12)
      - |— 3♣ single-suiter in clubs or 2-suited clubs/diamonds GF+
      - |— 3♦ 4+ clubs, 5+ diamonds SI
      - |— 3♥ GF with fit, ok support (top honor fourth, not 4 small)
      - |— 3♠/4♣/♦ cue-bid with heart fit (four to two top honors)
      - |— 3NT to play

In the case of opening 1♠ the sequences over 2♣ are the following

```

1♠-2♣
  |— 2♦ no 5 spades or 4 hearts
  |— 2♥ relay
    |— 2♠ hand minimum unbalanced
      |— 2NT relay GF
        |— 3♣ with 5 clubs
          |— 3♦ asks for singleton
            |— 3♥ singleton heart
            |— 3♠ 2-2
            |— 3NT singleton diamond
        |— 3♦ with 5 diamonds and the rest 3-1
          |— 3♥ asks which singleton
            |— 3♠ singleton club
            |— 3NT singleton heart
        |— 3♥ 4 spades and 6 clubs ( $\heartsuit=\clubsuit$ ), no top 2 clubs
        |— 3♠ 4 spades and 6 diamonds ( $\spadesuit=\diamondsuit$ )
        |— 3NT 4 spades, 5 diamonds and the rest 2-2
        |— 4♣ 4 spades, 4 diamonds, 5 clubs, heart void
        |— 4♦ 4 spades, 4 clubs, 5 diamonds, heart void
      |— 3♣ 6 carder, GF
      |— 3♠ 4+ spades, no top honor, GF+, no side aces
      |— 3NT to play
      |— 4♣/♦/♥ 4+ spades, no top honor, GF+, ace cue

    |— 2NT balanced 12-14
    |— 3♣/♦ two-suiter 4 spades/5m, max
    |— 3♥ 4 spades, 6 clubs
    |— 3♠ 4 spades, 6 diamonds
    |— 3NT 4 spades, 5 diamonds 2-2
    |— 4♣ 4 spades, 4 diamonds, 5 clubs and heart shortage
    |— 4♦ 4 spades, 4 clubs, 5 diamonds heart shortage

  |— 2♠ GI with 3-card spade fit
  |— 2NT GI balanced
  |— 3♣ GF+, single-suiter or two-suiter with 4 diamonds
  |— 3♦ SI with 4+ clubs/5+ diamonds
  |— 3♥/4♣/♦ cue-bid with a good spade fit (four to 2 top honors)
  |— 3♠ GF+, spade fit to 1 top honor (with 2, cue-bid; none, relay)
  |— 3NT to play

```

b) 2 major response, containing 5 cards in the suit, and others are substantially natural.

1♥-2♣;

- 2♥ 5 hearts
- 2♠ reverse in clubs/spades
  - 2NT minimum
  - 3♣ raise with small clubs
  - 3♦ 5 hearts and 5 diamonds
  - 3♥ 6 hearts, good hand
  - 3♠ fit a spades, at least honor third
  - 4♣ strong hearts/clubs to an honor (12/14, else 2NT)
  - 4♠ spade fit without an honor
- 2NT limit (11-12)
- 3♣ reverse in a club one-suiter GF or 5 clubs/4 diamonds
- 3♦ reverse in clubs/diamonds, slammish
- 3♥ limit
- 3♠/4♣/4♦ cue-bid with heart fit, min HHx or Hxxx
- 2♠ reverse in hearts-spades
- 2NT distributional relay
  - 3♣ 4-6 with 3 clubs
  - 3♦ 4-6 with 3 diamonds
  - 3♥ 5-5
  - 3♠ 4-6 with rest 2-1
  - 3NT 4-5
- 2NT 5 hearts, 4 clubs, minimum
- 3♣ reverse in hearts/clubs 5-5
- 3♦ reverse in hearts/diamonds 4-6
- 3♥ solid six card suit
- 4♣ 6 hearts, 4 clubs

1♠-2♣ ;

- 2♥ 5 spades/4 hearts
  - 2♠ spade fit, limite
  - 2NT distr. relay, GF even with a spade fit
    - 3♣ 5-4, 3 clubs
    - 3♦ 5-4, 3 diamonds
    - 3♥ 5-5
    - 3♠ 6-4
    - 3NT 5-4-2-2
  - 3♣ club one-suiter, GF
  - 3♦ slammish reverse in clubs/diamonds
  - 3♥ heart fit, GF, Hxxx at least (else 2NT or cue-bid)
  - 3♠ spade fit, GF+, HHx or Hxxx support (otherwise 2NT)
  - 4♣/4♦ cue-bid with at least HHxx heart fit
- 2♠ 5 spades, no 4 hearts
  - 2NT limit
  - 3♣ club single-suiter GF, or two-suiter 5 clubs/4 diamonds
  - 3♦ reverse in clubs/diamonds, slam
  - 3♥ GF+ clubs/hearts long-short
  - 3♠ limit
  - 4♣/4♦/4♥ cue-bid with spade fit HHxx or Hxxx
- 2NT 5 spades, 4 clubs, minimum
- 3♣ reverse in spades/clubs 5-5
- 3♦ reverse in spades/diamonds 4-6
- 3♥ reverse in spades/hearts 4-6
- 3♠ solid 6 card suit
- 4♣ 6 spades and 4 clubs

### **The response of 2♦ to the openings of 1♥ or 1♠**

2♦ can be natural, or a balanced GF, or a hand with a fit in opener's major less than Hxxx(honor fourth). In the case of 1♥ the rebid of 2♥ is made with all unbalanced hands of 5+ hearts, whereas the canape hands are bid immediately (non-minimum) or via 2NT (balanced 12-14 or 4-5 minimum).

1♥-2♦ natural, or balanced GF

- 2♥ relay, 5+ hearts
  - 2♠ reverse in diamonds/spades
  - 2NT strong balanced, possible bad heart fit
    - 3♣/♦ 4+ cards
    - 3♥ at least 6-card single-suiter
    - 3♠ balanced maximum
    - 3NT to play, discouraging
  - 3♣ 5 diamonds, 4 clubs, no slam
  - 3♦ limit
  - 3♥ limit
- 3♠/4♣/4♦ heart fit, HHx or Hxxx
- 2♠ reverse in hearts/spades
- 2NT natural or minimum canape
  - 3♣ asking
    - 3♦ long diamonds
    - 3♥ long clubs
    - 3♠ 4 card minor (4♣ asks)
    - 3NT 4333
  - 3♦ non-forcing
    - 3♥ Hxx heart fit (otherwise use 3♣ asking)
    - 3♠ reverse in diamonds/spades, GF
- 3♣/♦ canape, non-minimum
- 3♥ reverse one-suiter, fixing trump suit
- 3♠ reverse 4 hearts-7 spades
- 3NT reverse 5 hearts-5 clubs
- 4♣ reverse in hearts/clubs, long-short
- 4♦ reverse in hearts/diamonds, short-long

1♠-2♦ natural, or balanced GF

- 2♥ 4 hearts
  - 2♠ three card fit, limit
  - 2NT relay, possibly weak fit
    - 3♣ 5-4, 3 clubs
    - 3♦ 5-4, 3 diamonds
    - 3♥ 5-5
    - 3♠ 6-4
    - 3NT 5-4-2-2
  - 3♣ 5 diamonds, 4 clubs, no slam
  - 3♦ limit
  - 3♥ 4-crd support, GF, not 2 honors
  - 3♠ fit GF, Hxxx or HHx in spades
  - 4♣/♦ heart fit, HHxx
- 2♠ 5 spades
  - 2NT strong balanced, possible bad spade fit
    - 3♣/♦ 4 cards
    - 3♠ at least 6 card single-suiter
    - 3♥ balanced maximum
    - 3NT balanced minimum
  - 3♣ 5 diamonds, 4 clubs, no slam
  - 3♦ limit
  - 3♥ heart stopper, no club stopper
  - 3♠ limit, fit
  - 4♣/♦ fit, HHx or Hxxx
- 2NT natural, or minimum canape
- 3♣/♦ two-suiter, non minimum, short-long
- 3♥/4♣/4♦ reverse

### **Game invitations if definite fit**

There are two situations in which one can make a game invitation (or slam), both based an inquiry for a singleton or shortage.

In the first case it is the opener who asks responder to show an eventual singleton or, lacking one, concentration of strength.

1♥-2♥; 2♠ asking relay

- 2NT any bal., or singleton spade or diamond in minimum hand
  - |— 3♣ interest in balanced maximum
    - |— 3♦ balanced maximum
    - |— 3♥ balanced minimum or unbalanced
  - |— 3♦ interested in singleton diamond
    - |— 3♥ no singleton diamond
    - |— 4♥ singleton diamond
  - |— 3♥ interest in singleton spade
    - |— Pass no singleton spade
    - |— 4♥ singleton spade
- 3♣ singleton club, minimum or maximum
  - |— 3♦ asks minimum/maximum
    - |— 3♥ minimum
    - |— 4♥ maximum
- 3♦ singleton diamonds, maximum
- 3♥ singleton spade, maximum

1♠-2♠; 2NT relay interrogativo

- 3♣ balanced, or singleton club or heart in minimum hand
  - |— 3♦ interested in balanced maximum
    - |— 3♥ balanced maximum
    - |— 3♠ balanced minimum or unbalanced
  - |— 3♥ interested in singleton heart
    - |— 3♠ no singleton heart
    - |— 4♠ singleton heart
  - |— 3♠ interested in singleton club
    - |— Pass no singleton club
    - |— 4♠ singleton club
- 3♦ singleton diamond, minimum or maximum
  - |— 3♥ asks minimum/maximum
    - |— 3♠ minimum
    - |— 4♠ maximum
- 3♥ singleton heart, maximum
- 3♠ singleton club, maximum

In competition, there may not be enough space to distinguish the invitational raise from the competitive one.

The system remains as is only over a double, that takes up no space. In all other cases:

- the suit raise is competitive
- a new suit shows game interest and, if there is a choice of new suits below 3 of the major, indicates honor strength in the bid suit
- the double shows a balanced maximum, except in the case where the interference has taken up all the room (e.g. 1♥-2♥; overcall of 3♦). In this last case, the double is the only available bid for an invitation to game.

The second game-invitational bid is also made by the opener, this time showing a singleton

1♥-2♥

- |— 2NT singleton spade
- |— 3♣ singleton club
- |— 3♦ singleton diamond
- |— 3♥ barrage

1♠-2♠

- |— 3♣ singleton club
- |— 3♦ singleton diamond
- |— 3♥ singleton heart
- |— 3♠ barrage

The third game-invitation (or slam) is instead made by responder, indicating immediately the presence of a splinter.

1♥-2♠ GI or SI with a singleton, and 4 card support for hearts

- |— 2NT relay, asking about the singleton
  - |— 3♣/♦/♥ singleton club/diamond/spade, limit
  - |— 3♠ singleton spade, SI
  - |— 3NT/4♣ singleton club/diamond, SI
  - |— 4♦ shortage in spades, SI
  - |— 4♥ singleton spade, no slam interest

1♠-2NT GI or SI with a singleton, and 4 card support for spades

- |— 3♣ relay, asking about the singleton
  - |— 3♦/♥/♠ singleton diamond/heart/club, limit
  - |— 3NT/4♣/4♦ singleton club/diamond/heart, SI
  - |— 4♥ void in hearts, SI
  - |— 4♠ singleton heart, no slam interest

## Interference over openings of 1♦/♥/♠

In cases of opponents' interference, one follows the rules below.

### **Over a double:**

In the case of opponent's double:

- ❑ new suit at 1 level is normally 5 cards and forcing;
- ❑ new suit at 2 level is passable;
- ❑ redouble shows 10+ HCP, balanced or semibalanced.

Over the opening of 1♥ and 1 ♠

- ❑ the simple raise remains natural (maybe a little weaker than normal), whereas the jump raise is weak and unbalanced;
- ❑ 2NT shows a balanced 4 card limit raise
- ❑ jump shifts are natural and invitational, unbalanced;
- ❑ 1NT is 8-10 HCP with at most 2 cards in the opening suit
- ❑ the pass followed by double shows a 3 card constructive raise (8-10 HCP)

### **Over a suit:**

Over the interference in a suit over an opening one bid, the following rules:

- ❑ new suit at any level is forcing;
- ❑ double shows a balanced hand of any strength [?-DJN] or 8-11 unbalanced
- ❑ 1NT is constructive (8-10) with a stopper in their suit;

Over openings of 1♥ and 1 ♠

- ❑ the simple raise at the 2 level is competitive, whereas the jump raise shows a 4 card limit raise;
- ❑ the cue-bid shows a strong hand with support for opener
- ❑ the jump-cue is a splinter

After 1♦ and overcall, 2♦ shows a fit (at least 5 cards) and limit strength.

### **Interference of 1NT**

Over interference of 1NT (balanced 15-18)

- ❑ double is penalty;
- ❑ cheapest raise or non-jump in new suit shows a weak unbalanced hand;
- ❑ the jump raise is unbalanced and constructive, game still possible

### **Two-suited interference**

Bidding one of the opponents' shown suits is shortage.

Double shows a misfit and the desire to double the opponents in at least one of their suits.

## 1NT Opener

Shows balanced 15-17, without 5-card major. Exceptionally one can understand 6♣-3-2-2 with bad clubs or 2-2-4 with a 5 card minor and doubleton honors.

South has available non-forcing Stayman, transfers to hearts and spades, relays of 2♠ and 2NT for the minors and for 5-5 invitationals 2-suiters.

### Limited responses

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| Pass | 0-7 HCP balanced or 3-3-2 with a 5 card minor   |
| 3♣/♦ | 6-carder to 2 top honors and nothing else. Opener can bid 3NT or pass based on her own hand.  |
| 3♥/♠ | 6 card suitto 2 top honors and nothing on the side, or a broken 7 card suit. North should value a fit, aces, and only solid side-honor sequences.                                 |
| 3NT  | To play. 9-15 balanced without a 4+ card major. Possibly a 5 card minor(not more than 14 HCP) or 6 card minor (not more than 12 HCP)  |
| 4♣/♦ | Texas. 9-13 HCP with 6/7 hearts (4♣) or spades (4♦) and the convenience that the hand with the tenaces will become declarer. The opener concludes with 4♥ over 4♣ and 4♠ over 4♦. |
| 4♥/♠ | To play. Same requirements for previous Texas bids, but allowing the responder to guard her tenaces, or Kx or Qx(x).  |
| Ex:  | with KQ10xxx - Axx - xx - xx bid 4♦<br>with KJ10xxx - Kx - Qxx - Qx bid 4♠  |

### Transfer responses

- 2♦      one bids with
- 0-8 HCP with 5 hearts or 0-7 HCP with 6 hearts;
  - 7-8 HCP (limit) with 4 hearts and another 5-6 card suit;
  - 9-14 HCP (game) with 5 hearts and semibalanced (5322 or 5422);
  - slammish with 5 hearts and 5 spades;
  - slammish with 5 hearts and 5+ cards in a minor;
  - 6+ card solid heart suit and 6½-7 playing tricks.

Opener, without superacceptance, must bid 2♥, over which responder bids:

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| Passo | 0-6 HCP and 5+ hearts  |
| 2♠    | 7-8 HCP (limit) with 4 hearts and 5 spades   |
| 2NT   | 7-8 HCP (limit) and 5 hearts   |
| 3♣/♦  | 7-8 HCP (limit) and 5/6 cards in the minor   |
| 3♥    | 5-7 HCP (limit) and 6 hearts not to two major honors<br>(otherwise better to bid immediate 3♥) |
| 3♠    | 5-5 majors, slammish, at least 3 major honors in the suits                                     |
| 3NT   | 9-14 HCP, 5 hearts, semibalanced   |
| 4♣/♦  | slammish 5-5 with at least 3 major honors in the suits   |
| 4♥    | 6½-7 playing tricks and 6/7 solid hearts (AKQ, AKJ, AQJ, KQJ, KQT).                            |

The successive development is as follows:

- 1NT - 2♦  
2♥ - 2♠

2NT asks for location of singleton.

1NT - 2♦

2♥ - 2NT 3♥/4♥ preference to play in hearts with minimum/maximum Pass/3NT preference for NT and minimum/maximum

*OPTIONAL*

3♣ asks for singleton (3♥ for clubs and 3NT without singleton)

*OPTIONAL*

3♦ to know quality of hearts (3♥ weak, 3♠ medium, 3NT 2 major honors).

1NT - 2♦

2♥ - 3♣ 3♥/4♥ to play (3♥ even with 3 cards if one has a doubleton club and solid hearts)

3♦/♠ maximum, shows stopper in suit, and denies stopper in 4<sup>th</sup> suit. Denies 4 hearts.

3NT maximum and side stoppers

Pass minimum and prefers to play in the minor

1NT - 2♦

2♥ - 3♦ 3♥/4♥ to play (3♥ even with 3 cards if one has a doubleton diamond and solid hearts)

3♠ maximum, spade stopper, lacking a club stopper

3NT maximum and both side stops

Pass any other cases

1NT - 2♦

2♥ - 3♠ 3NT (first step) asks number of major honors in the 2 suits (4♣=3, 4♦=4, 4♥=5, 4♠=6). Then:

- game in one of the majors if insufficient honors
- cue-bid with sufficient honors for slam

Cue-bid (Ace) with 3 major honors (and thus solid major suits) searching for grand slam.

1NT - 2♦

2♥ - 4♣/♦ First step asking for top honors in suits (4♠ over 4♦ since 4♥ shows a minimum and misfit) with step responses (3-6)

Cue-bid (Ace) with 3 top honors in the suits looking for grand slam.

1NT - 2♦

2♥ - 4♥ If the 6½ playing tricks can sustain slam one cue-bids an ace. Otherwise one passes.

2♥

one bids with

- 0-8 HCP 5 spades or 0-7 HCP with 6 spades;
- 7-8 HCP (limit) with 4 spades and another 5-6 card suit;
- 9-14 HCP (game) with 5 spades, semibalanced (5322 or 5422);
- game hand with 5 spades and 5 hearts;
- slam hand with 5 spades and 5+ cards in a minor;
- 6+ solid spade suit with 6½-7 playing tricks.

Opener, without superacceptance, must bid 2♠, over which responder bids:

Pass 0-6 HCP and 5+ spades

2NT 7-8 HCP (limit) and 5 spades

3♣/♦/♥ 7-8 HCP (limit) and 5 cards in the bid suit (even 6 in a minor)

3♠ 5-7 HCP (limit) and 6 spades not to 2 top honors (else better to bid immediate 3♠)

3NT 9-14 HCP, 5 spades semibalanced

4♣/♦ slammish 5-5, at least 3 top honors in the suits

4♥ 5-5 majors, no slam

4♠ 6½-7 playing tricks and 6/7 solid spades (AKQ, AKJ, AQJ, KQJ, KQT).

The continuations are the same as after the transfer to hearts, obviously with normal adjustments.

2♠

one bids with:

- touching 2-suiter, 6-8 HCP (limit);
- slammish 5+ diamonds, SI

Opener must bid 2NT over which responder bids:

- 3♣ 5-5 minors;
- 3♦ 5-5 diamonds-hearts;
- 3♥ 5-5 hearts-spades;
- 3♠ 5-5 spades-clubs;
- 3NT 5 diamonds, SI;
- 4♣ 5-5 minors, SI;
- 4♦ 6 diamonds, SI.

In successive developments, the opener:

- will make the final bid if 5-5 GI;
- if interested in slam, will fix trumps if 5-5 minore (4♦ for diamonds, cue-bid for clubs) and proceed to look for slam;
- will cue-bid over the diamond one-suiters.

2NT      one makes with:

- weak club one-suiter;
- long non-touching two-suiter (diamonds-spades, clubs-hearts), GI;
- one/two-suiter minors, GF, and a major singleton;
- single-suiter, 5+ clubs, SI;
- slammish minors 2-suiter (more strength than shown via 2♠).

Opener must bid 3♣ over which the responder continues:

- Pass weak clubs;
- 3♦ singleton major, that can be relayed with 3♥ over which 3NT shows a spade singleton and 3NT shows heart singleton;
- 3♥/♠ 5-5 non-touching, GI;
- 3NT 5 clubs, SI;
- 4♣ 6 clubs, SI;
- 4♦ 5-5 minors as a solid slam invitation.

In successive developments, opener:

- will make the final bid if 5-5, GI;
- will ask for singleton (if weak in a major) and, once it is known, decide whether to sign off in 3NT, search for a minor fit, or propose a 4-3 fit in the other major;
- will fix trump over 5-5 minors (4♥ for clubs, cue-bid for diamonds) and proceed to search for slam;
- will make, if interested in slam, a cue-bid over one-suited clubs.

### ***The super-acceptance of a major transfer***

Over the transfers 2♦ and 2♥ North, with a four card fit, maximum, rich in texture and and a useful doubleton (xx or AX) can, instead of completing the transfer, bid the doubleton (2NT for doubleton in transfer suit). Over this bid, the rebid of the transfer suit is still a transfer, and then South can place the contract.

### ***Application of transfer responses***

For a more correct application of transfer responses, it is possible to give the following

1) With a part score hand:

- With at least a 5 card major or 6 clubs, transfer and pass the forced response.

2) With game-invitational hand:

- With a five card major in a one-suited hand or 2-suited with a minor, transfer and rebid 2NT;
- with a one-suited major of at least 6 cards (not two top honors) make the transfer and raise the major;
- with 5-5 bid 2♠ if the two suits touch and 2NT if they alternate
- with a 4 card major and a long suit on the side, make the transfer to the major and then bid the long suit (with 6-4 with a long it is better to transfer to the major and raise it).

3) With a game hand:

- with a 5 card major (without the other 5 card major) transfer to the major and rebid 3NT;
- with a singleton in a major, without the other 4 card major, bid 2NT and, over 3♣ (forced by opener), bid 3♦ showing the presence of a singleton major;
- with a 5-5 majors hand to spades and rebid 4♥ to give choice of games;
- with a 5-5 minor hand bid 2♠ then 4♣ to show both minors with mild slam interest (with just game, one can instead bid the singleton major);
- with a 6 card major bid immediate game or, alternatively, bid Texas (4♣ or 4♦).

4) With a slam hand:

- with a big 2-suited major hand bid 2♦ and then jump to 3♠;
- with a big 2-suited minor hand bid 2NT and then jump to 4♦;
- with a minor-major 2-suiter transfer to the major and rebid 4♣/4♦;
- with a 6 card solid major single-suiter (6½-7 playing tricks) transfer and then raise to game (without slam hopes it is better to bid Texas immediately).

### **Sequences following the transfer to a major**

1NT-2♦; 2♥

- Pass
- 2♠ 5 spades in a canape, GI
  - 2NT asks for singleton
    - 3♣/♦ singleton in suit
    - 3♥ no singleton
    - 3♣/♦ strength in the suit, GI
- 3♣ GI canape
  - 3♦/♠ maximum and stopper, no 4<sup>th</sup> suit stop
- 3♦ GI canape
  - 3♠ maximum and stopper, lacking club stop
- 2NT limit, balanced or semi-balanced
- 3♥ limite with 6 card suit
- 3♠/4♣/4♦ 5-5 with at least 3 top honors in the suits, SI
  - first step, asks for number of major honors in suits
  - cue-bid 3 major honors in South's 2 suits, sees grand slam
- 3NT balanced or semi-balanced game hands
- 4♥ mild SI (with just game, bid game or Texas directly)

1NT-2♥; 2♠

- Pass
- 3♣/3♦/♥ GI canape (North, with a maximum, shows a stopper)
- 2NT limit balanced or semi-balanced
- 3♠ limit with 6 carder
- 4♣/4♦ 5-5 with at least 3 top honors, SI
  - |— first step, asking for number of honors
  - |— cue-bid 3 top honors in South's suits, hoping for grand
- 3NT balanced or semi-balanced game hands
- 4♥ 5-5 majors, game, North passes or corrects
- 4♠ mild SI (with just game, use texas or bid game directly)

### **Sequences following the 2♠ and 2NT transfers**

1NT-2♠; 2NT (forced)

- 3♣/♦/♥/♠ 5-5 touching suits GI (3♠ with spades-clubs)
- 3NT one-suiter 5 diamonds, SI
- 4♣ 5-5 minors, slam potential
  - |— 4♦ setting diamonds as trump
  - |— cue-bid agreeing clubs
- 4♦ one-suiter (longer) diamonds, SI

1NT-2NT; 3♣ (forced)

- Pass
- 3♦ singleton major without a 4-card major
  - |— 3♥ asks which singleton
    - |— 3♠/NT singleton spade/heart
- 3♥/♠ 5-5 non-touching suits, GI
- 3NT single-suiter, 5 clubs, SI
- 4♦ 5-5 minors, sure slam
  - |— 4♥ agreeing clubs
  - |— cue-bid agreeing diamonds
- 4♣ club single-suiter, SI

### **Response of 2♦**

The limited responses and transfers cover an immense range of hands.

All the other distributions are described via 2♣, that consists of:

- weak 4-4 majors or 5 diamonds and 4-3 in the majors;
- balanced invit. (7-9) with or without a 4 card major, and rebid of, the next round, 2NT or 3 in a major fit;
- game hands with a 4 card major;
- game hands with a 5 card major, unbalanced or with a worthless doubleton, that are inadequate for transfers;
- slam hands not biddable via transfers.

The responses to 2♣ are exclusively:

- 2♦ no 4 card major;
- 2♥ 4 hearts, possibly 4 spades;
- 2♠ 4 spades, denies 4 hearts.

The development of the auction continues:

- 1NT-2♣; 2♦ without 4 card major. Responder bids:
- Pass 5 diamonds (and 7 cards in the majors);
  - 2♥ 4-4 majors, weak (opener passes or corrects to 2♠);
  - 2♠ 5+ spades, GF+;
  - 2NT GI balanced;
  - 3♣ asking for distribution;
  - 3♦ to show a singleton major (and 4 in the other major, else one should use the sequence 2NT...3♦);
  - 3♥ 5+ hearts, GF+;
  - 3♠ 6 spades headed by the AKQ, strong hand(SI);
  - 3NT to play

- 1NT-2♣; 2♥ 4 hearts. Responder bids:

- Pass 3/4 hearts, weak hand;
- 2♠ 5+ spades, GF+;
- 2NT GI balanced. If accepting game, bid 3♠ with 4 spades, since responder can have 4 spades in the appropriate hand;
- 3♣ as a final distribution ask;
- 3♦ to show a singleton minor;
- 3♥ 4 hearts, GI;
- 3♠ 6 spades to the AKQ, strong (SI);
- 3NT to play, implying 4 spades, which is correctable to 4♠ if opener has 4-4 majors;
- 4♣/♦ cue-bid with heart fit;
- 4♥ to play.

- 1NT-2♣; 2♠ 4 spades

- Pass 3/4 spades weak hand;
- 2NT GI balanced;
- 3♣ as a final distribution ask;
- 3♦ to show a singleton minor;
- 3♥ 5+ hearts, GF+;
- 3♠ 4 spades, GI;
- 3NT to play;
- 4♣/♦ cue-bid, spade fit;
- 4♥ cue-bid, spade fit;
- 4♠ to play.

## Sequences following 2♦

- 1NT-2♣
  - |— 2♦ No major
  - |— 2♥ 4 hearts and spades, North pass/corrects
  - |— 2♠ 5+ spades, forcing
    - |— 2NT Hxx support
      - |— 3♣/♦/♥ 4 card suit (SI, looking for 4-4 fit)
      - |— 3♠ 6 card suit, possible 3NT
      - |— 3NT 15 HCP, North continues only with superb hand
      - |— 4NT 17 HCP, North passes only with a bad hand for slam
      - |— 4♣/♦ cue-bid
    - |— 3♣/♦ 4 card suit, possible fit but not honor third
    - |— 3♥/♠ 44 minors, 3 cards in bid suit (if 3♠ no top honor)
    - |— 3NT to play (misfit and minimum)
  - |— 2NT GI balanced
  - |— 3♣ another ask
    - |— 3♦ a 5 card minor
      - |— 3♥ asking which
        - |— 3♠/NT 5 diamonds/clubs
      - |— 3♥/♠ 44 minors, 3 card fragment in bid suit
    - |— 3NT 4333
      - |— 4♣ asks which minor
        - |— 4♦ 4 diamonds
        - |— cue-bid with 4 clubs
  - |— 3♦ a singleton major
    - |— 3♥ asks which
      - |— 3♠/NT singleton spade/heart
  - |— 3♥ 5 hearts, GF
    - |— 3♠ honor third support
    - |— 3NT 2 hearts
    - |— 4♣/♦ 3 bad hearts, 4 card suit
  - |— 3♠ AKQxxx strong hand

1NT-2♣; 2♥

- 2♠ 5 spades, GF+
  - |— 2NT honor third in spades (next bids are 4 card suits)
  - |— 3♣/3♦ 4 card suit, not honor third in spades
  - |— 3♥ 4333
  - |— 3♠ 4 spades
  - |— 4♣/♦ cue-bid with Hxxx spade support
- 2NT GI balanced
- 3♣ "ReStayman"
  - |— 3♦/♠/NT 4 diamonds/spades/clubs
  - |— 3♥ 4333
- 3♦ singleton minor
  - |— 3♥ asks which
    - |— 3♠/NT singleton diamond/club
- 3♥ GI
- 3♠ AKQxxx strong hand
- 3NT to play
- 4♣/♦ cue-bid, Hxxx heart fit

1NT-2♣; 2♠

- 2NT GI balanced
- 3♣ "ReStayman"
  - |— 3♦/♥ 4 diamonds/clubs
  - |— 3♠ 4333 minimum
  - |— 3NT 4333 maximum
- 3♦ singleton minor
  - |— 3♥ asks which
    - |— 3♠/NT singleton diamond/club
- 3♥ 5+ hearts, GF+
  - |— 3♠ honor third
  - |— 3NT 2 hearts
  - |— 4♣/♦ 3 hearts not Hxx, 4 card suit
- 3♠ GI
- 3NT to play
- 4♣/♦ cue-bid, Hxxx spade fit

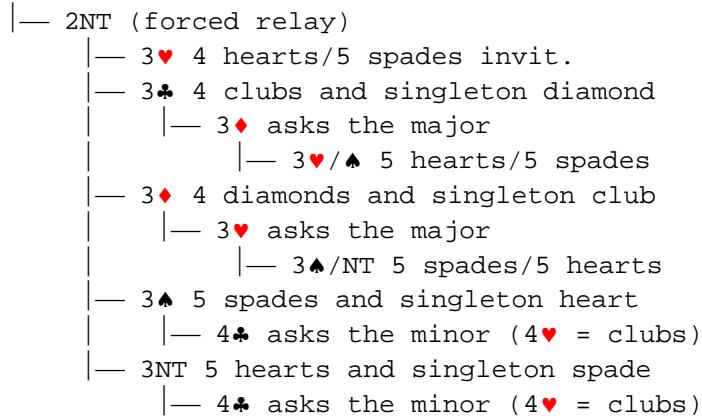
## Possible variants

Into the basic system it is possible to introduce some variants (not played by Arturo Franco). These are:

1. Inverting the meaning of 2♠...4♣ (mild slam try) and 2NT...4♦ (SI). The idea is to leave an extra step for the strong hand to cue-bid hearts.
2. Modifying the meanings of 2♠...3NT and 2NT...3NT to show 6 card minors (respectively diamonds and clubs) with a singleton in the other minor. The singleton major is already shown with 2NT...3♦, but the singleton minor cannot be shown in the base system. SI hands with a 5 card minor must, using this variant, be bid through another sequence (e.g. 2♠/NT...4NT).
3. 6-4/5 major-minor game hands can be bid effectively by transferring first into the (2♠ for diamonds and 2NT for clubs) and then bidding the major at the four level, 4♥/♠.
4. 5-4-3-1 game hands with a 5 card major are not easily bid, since going through 2♣ does not manage, in particular with hearts, to show both the 5 card major and the singleton. In order to avoid passing 3NT one can adopt the second conventiona where the sequence 2♦...2♠ is ambiguous and can show either a two-suiter hearts/spades GI, or any 5431 GF with a 5 card major and 4 card minor. The sequence that is derived is the following:

1NT - 2♦

2♥ - 2♠



It is clear that, adopting this variant, an eventual singleton in South cannot be known if she has the GI hand with a major, as laid out in the basic system.

## **Opponents' interference over the 1NT opening**

### Over X

In case of interference by double by 2<sup>nd</sup> hand:

- ❑ Pass shows the desire to play in 1NT;
- ❑ Redouble shows at least 7/8 HCP and is forcing to at least or the double of the opponents;
- ❑ 2♣ shows clubs, or a hand without a 5 card suit. Over a later double South:
  - passes with clubs
  - redoubles as SOS inviting partner to bid a suit
  - bids a good 4 card suit
- ❑ 2♦, 2♥ o 2♠ show weak 5 card suits.

In the case of a balancing double, the responder, if passed around to him, may:

- ❑ pass with a decent hand (5-7 HCP)
- ❑ bid a 5 card suit, if possible
- ❑ redouble as SOS to request a 4 card suit bid.

A possible variant of this scheme is:

1. Pass by responder is made also with two 4 card suits. Opener, if passed back to her, always redoubles, permitting South, with a weak hand, to bid the cheapest of her 4 card suits.
2. 2♣, instead of showing just 5 clubs, is also bid with all 4333 weak hands, with 4441 hands with a singleton club, and with 5-5 majors. Over the eventual double, South passes with clubs, redoubles with 4333, bids 2♦ with the 3 suiter, and 2♥ with 5-5 majors.
3. 2♦ is bid with 5-4 weak majors. Over enemy double, the redouble shows 5 spades whereas 2♥ shows 5 hearts.

This method has the obvious advantages of clarity and precision, but has the disadvantage of not being able to play 1NT doubled (either playing in a suit or playing in 1NT redoubled) and permits the opponents to let us play (undoubled) absurd contracts like 2♣ or 2♦ with 2/3 total trumps! At least at matchpoints, it is better played NV than V.

### Oppents' suit interference

In the case of an overcall, the following is used:

#### 2♣ overcall:

- ❑ Double is takeout-oriented, and shows interest in the majors, GI+. Opener may pass with 4+ clubs, or can bid:
  - At the lowest level possible, with a minimum;
  - At the 3 level in a 4 card major with a maximum and a stopper in their suit (thus leaving the option of playing in 3NT);
  - Cue-bid clubs without a stopper, with or without a 4 card major, but with a maximum. South bids a suit, looking for a fit;
  - 3NT with a maximum, stopper, and no 4 card major.
- ❑ 2NT shows a stopper, GF+ or a weak club suit (when 2♣ is conventional). North must bid 3♣ over which South bids:
  - Pass weak clubs;
  - 3♦ balanced and interested in a major. North shows a major (4♥ with both majors) or bids 3NT without a major;

- $3\heartsuit/\spadesuit$  with a 5 card suit.
- $3\clubsuit$  is Stayman without a stopper, over which North bids:
  - $3\diamondsuit$  without a major without a stopper;
  - $3\heartsuit$  with 4 hearts, possibly 4 spades;
  - $3\spadesuit$  with 4 spades, without 4 hearts;
  - 3NT without a major, but with a stopper.
- Simple suit bid is to play;
- Jump in a suit is GF with 5+ cards and lacking a stopper (otherwise go through 2NT).

Over the interference of  $2\diamondsuit$  one applies the same rules but takes into account that, when  $2\diamondsuit$  is a transfer to hearts, the bids of hearts assume conventional meanings:

1NT -  $2\diamondsuit$  -  $2\heartsuit$ : equivalent to a takeout double. The double shows 5+ diamonds and a distributional hand

1NT -  $2\diamondsuit$  -  $3\clubsuit$

$3\heartsuit$ : 4 spades and no heart stop ( $3\spadesuit$  shows both spades and a stop)

1NT -  $2\diamondsuit$  -  $3\heartsuit$ : 3 suited or solid/semi-solid one-suiter slam hand. North assumes the 3 suiter and thus bids her cheapest suit. The later bid of  $4\heartsuit$  confirms a 3-suiter, whereas a new suit sets the trump suit and invites cue-bids.

Over  $2\heartsuit$  and  $2\spadesuit$  one applies similar rules, and where hearts is a transfer to spades, all the spade bids are conventional (as noted above).

Over a 2-suited overcall, the following rules apply:

- Double shows at least 5 cards in an artificial overcall, of any strength, so that with a minimum, opener tends not to raise;
- Pass followed by a double is penalty;
- Pass followed by a cue-bid of another suit is GF, showing a stop in the bid suit (after which one will be in a position to double) and lacking a stop in the suit in which the opponents would have played;
- A cheap bid in a suit not shown by the opponents is weak, to play;
- An immediate cue-bid of one of the opponents' suits shows a strong hand with the corresponding suit (minor for minor, major for major)
- 2NT and  $3\clubsuit$  remains asking for majors all the time the opponents don't show a major 2-suiter, showing a game hand respectively with or without stoppers in their suits.

### Interference over the $2\clubsuit$ ask

In the case of interference after 1NT - P -  $2\clubsuit$  one bids as follows:

- over an enemy double one redoubles with 5 clubs, one passes with 4 clubs without a major and one bids as normal with 2/3 clubs or with 4 clubs and a 4 card major. South, after a pass, bids  $2\diamondsuit$  with 5 weak,  $2\heartsuit$  with 4-4 majors weak, 2NT natural and  $3\clubsuit$  as Stayman.
- Over suit interference North doubles with 4/5 cards in the suit and passes otherwise. South, if he wants a response to Stayman bids  $3\clubsuit$ . Double by South is always penalty.

### Interference over a major transfer

Over a double, North:

- Passes with 2 card support, either min or max. South redoubles as an invitation to game, bids the shown suit to play, or else bids with the system;
- Redoubles with 2 card support and 4/5 cards in the transfer suit, to suggest playing there doubled;
- Completes the transfer with 3 or 4 card support.

Over a suit bid, North passes always, and South may:

- Double with semi-balanced invitation and 3 cards in the bid suit;
- Bid normally with the system otherwise

## Opening 2♣

One/two-suiter with 6+ clubs to at least 2 top honors. Possibly a 4 or 5 card side major, but with a 5 card major one tends to open 1M.

Responses:

- 2♦ asking relay, usually without a 5 card major
- 2♥/♠ 5 cards, F1
- 2NT GF+, looking for diamond slam
- 3♣ Barrage
- 3♦ Two-suiter 5 spades/4 hearts GF
- 3♥/♠ invitational 6 card suit
- 3NT 5-5 majors GF+

2♣-2♦ asking bid

- 2♥ maximum, or minimum with 4 hearts
  - 2♠ relay GF+ seeking 6♣ 4♥ min
    - 2NT one-suiter, maximum
      - 3♣ asks for stops
        - 3♦ 1 stop
          - 3♥ hearts/diamonds stoppers
          - 3♠ spades/diamonds stoppers
          - 3NT spades/hearts stoppers
          - 3♥ H/D stoppers
          - 3♠ S/D stoppers
          - 3NT H/S stoppers
      - 3♣ 6 clubs/4 hearts minimum
        - 3♦ feature for 3NT, or strong hearts
        - 3♥ to play
        - 3♠ feature for 3NT or strong ♥ without ♦ cue
        - 4♣ club fit, SI
      - 3♦ 6 clubs/4 diamonds, maximum
      - 3♥ 6 clubs/4 hearts, maximum
      - 3♠ 6 clubs/4 spades, maximum
      - 3NT maximum with 3 stoppers
    - 2NT relay with 4 hearts, GI, passable
    - 3♣ relay with 4 spades, GI, passable with a minimum
  - 2♠ 6 clubs/ 4 spades, minimum
  - 2NT 6 clubs, minimum, 2 stoppers
    - 3♣ to play
    - 3♦ asks stoppers
      - 3♥ hearts/diamonds stoppers
      - 3♠ spades/diamonds stoppers
      - 3NT hearts/spades stoppers
  - 3♣ minimum one-suiter, 1 stopper
    - 3♦ asks which
      - 3♥/♠/NT stopper in the suit (NT = diamonds)
  - 3♦/♥/♠ 6-5 reverse

2♣-2♥ 5 hearts, 1F  
|— 2♠ 6 clubs/4 spades  
|— 2NT 1F, holdings in spades/diamonds, maximum  
|— 3♣ 6 clubs, minimum  
|— 3♦/♠ reverse in the suit  
|— 3♥ 3 card raise, minimum  
|— 3NT to play  
|— 4♣/♦ reverse in hearts with/without club Ace  
|— 4♥ 3 card raise, maximum

2♣-2♠  
|— 2NT 1F, values in hearts/diamonds, maximum  
|— 3♣ 6 clubs, minimum  
|— 3♦/♥ reverse in the suit  
|— 3♠ 3 card raise, minimum  
|— 3NT to play  
|— 4♣/♦/♥ reverse spades with/without club Ace  
|— 4♠ 3 card raise, maximum

2♣-2NT GF, looking for slam in diamonds  
|— 3♣ forced relay for normal hands without 3 diamonds  
|— 3♦ asking for stoppers  
|— 3♥/♠/NT natural, 4 cards (NT = diamonds)  
|— 3♦ 3 card diamond raise  
|— 3♥/♠ reverse 6-5  
|— 3NT no interest in ♦, stoppers in majors

2♣-3♣ barrage

2♣-3♦ GF, 5 spades/4 hearts

2♣-3♥/♠ invitational 6 hearts/spades

2♣-3NT 5 spades 5 hearts

If the opponents double, double is takeout and new suit is forcing.

## Opening 2♦

12-16 HCP with single-suit to at least 2 major honors. Without these, opener should bid 1♦ and then repeat the suit.

The bids angle toward a major fit (if length in South) or, else, toward 3NT. If interference, double is penalty.

Responses:

2♥	balanced, asking bid
2♠	5 spades, 1F
2NT	5 hearts, 1F
3♣	5 clubs, looking for slam (or looking for 3NT)
3♦	Barrage
3♥/♠	6 card suit, invitational
3NT/4♥/4♠	to play
4♣	Splinter
4♦	Barrage
4NT	Blackwood

2♦-2♥ balanced, asking relay

- |— 2♠/2NT/3♣ minimum, stopper (2NT = hearts)
- |— 3♦ maximum, only one stopper
  - |— 3♥ hearts/clubs stoppers
  - |— 3♠ spades/clubs stoppers
  - |— 3NT hearts/spades stoppers
- |— 3♥ maximum, hearts/clubs stoppers
- |— 3♠ maximum, spades/clubs stoppers
- |— 3NT maximum, hearts/spades stoppers

2♦-2♠ 5 spades, F1

- |— 2NT minimum, clubs/hearts stoppers
- |— 3♣ maximum, club stopper, could hide bad 3 card spade support
- |— 3♦ minimum
- |— 3♥ maximum, heart stop, could hide bad 3 card spade support
- |— 3♠ 3 card fit, minimum
- |— 3NT to play (maximum with hearts/clubs stoppers)
- |— 4♣/♦/♥ cue bid, diamond Ace, with top honor third of spades
- |— 4♠ 2 spade honors without cue-bid

2♦-2NT 5 hearts, F1

- |— 3♣ maximum, club stopper, could have bad 3 card heart support
- |— 3♦ minimum
- |— 3♥ 3 card support, minimum
- |— 3♠ maximum, spade stopper, could have bad 3 card heart support
- |— 3NT to play (maximum with spades/clubs stoppers)
- |— 4♣/♦/♠ cue bid, diamond ace, top honor in hearts
- |— 4♥ 2 top heart honors, without cue-bid

2♦-3♣ natural, looking for slam (limit by passed hand)

- |— 3♦ minimum
- |— 3♥ heart strength (A/K), fit in clubs
- |— 3♠ spade strength (A/K), fit in clubs
- |— 3NT to play
- |— 4♣ accepts invitation to slam, to determine if small or grand slam

## Opening 2♥/♠

Weak bid with a 6 card suit and 8-12 HCP. The suit is normally decent and lacks in defensive strength.

### Responses

2♠/3♣/3♦

2NT

Natural, 1F

Asking, North can:

- With a minimum rebid the suit cheaply or jump rebid (7 carder not good enough for a 3-bid);
- With a maximum hand show a side stopper;
- With AKQxxx and nothing on the side bid 3NT;
- With a 6-4 maximum jump shift in the side suit;

Raise

Preemptive

Jump in a suit

solid suit, GF.

Over a new suit response, opener can:

- Raise with an honor third fit;
- Repeat the opening suit in a minimum misfit;
- Bid 3NT to play;
- Bid a 3 card suit as a stopper or as an advance cue-bid with a maximum fit but without a top honor in responder's suit;
- Raise to 4 in responder's major lacking a top honor or a side cue (and thus a very good opening suit).

Over interference, double is penalty.

### **South's bid after an initial pass**

When South does not have a strong hand, 2NT is the only forcing bid. New suits are passable.

## Opening 2NT

Weak 5+ hearts/ 5+ spades. Is quite preemptive, but South can ask to know minimum/maximum and eventually shortage.

2NT-3♣ asking

- 3♦ minimum;
- 3♥/♠ forcing, fixing trumps
  
- 3♥ 6 hearts - 5 spades maximum
  - 3♠ or immediate cue-bid sets spades as trumps
  - 3NT sets hearts as trumps
  
- 3♠ 6 spades - 5 hearts maximum
  - 3NT hearts are trumps
  - cue-bid spades are trumps
  
- 3NT 5-5 maximum without shortage;
  - 4♣ hearts trumps
  - 4♦ spades trumps
  
- 4♣ club shortage, maximum;
  - 4♦ spades trumps
  - 4NT hearts trumps
  
- 4♦ diamond shortage, maximum;
  - 4NT hearts trumps
  - cue-bid spades trumps

2NT-3♦ to play! (misfit with diamonds)

As a mnemonic aid, one should remember:

- 4♣/4♦, when not cue-bids, fix respectively hearts and spades
- 3/4NT always fix hearts
- cue-bid immediately, if 3/4NT available, fix spades

## Interference over Opponents' openings

The system uses a basically natural system of overcalling, but in which the one-level overcalls may be canape. The system does not provide for weak jumps, and uses Ghestem.

The general structure is thus below.

Intervention	Description
Double	Natural, at least 3 cards in any unbid major or a strong hand (16/17+). One even doubles with 5 spades and 3 hearts, so as not to lose the heart fit. A double followed by a major is limited, with 12-15 HCP
1♦	Natural, solid suit (for offense) or good hand.
1♥/♠	4+ cards, may be canape or balanced 15-18. A further canape is definitely a 5 card suit. Further repeating of the major, NT and take-out double all show a 5 card original overcall.
1NT	15-18 without 4 card major
2♣	Natural always, 5+ cards
2♦ over 1♥/♠	Natural, 5+ cards
2♦ over 1♣/♦	Two-suiter majors (Ghestem)
2♥/♠ jump	Jump overcall in a good 6 card suit, 12-15 p.
2♥/♠ cue	Two-suiter 5+ other major/5+ clubs (Ghestem)
3♣ over 1♥/♠	Two-suiter 5+ other major/5+ diamonds (Ghestem)
3♣ over 1♣/♦	Two-suiter spades-clubs (minimum over 1♦)
3♦ over 1♦	Two-suiter spades-clubs maximum
2NT over 1♥/♠	Two-suiter minors
2NT over 1♣/♦	Two-suiter hearts-other minor (minors)
3♦/♥/♠	Double jump = barrage (1♣-3♦)
3♦/♥/♠	Simple jump = 7 cards, opening strength (1♠-3♦)
3♥/♠ over 1♥/♠	Asks for stopper for 3NT

### Double of a suit

The responses to the double are mainly natural. A cheap bid shows 0-7 HCP. With 8-11 HCP and a 5 card suit one jumps (only 4 over 1♥-X) whereas with just 4 cards, one cue-bids (not GF). With GF strength, one cue-bids and the bids a suit. With a 5 card major and adequate strength, one can also jump directly to game.

The strength with which one cue-bids or jumps is basically the same that one has when one invites to game over the 1NT opener.

After a jump response to a double, 2NT is an asking relay with hopes of game or slam.

1♠ response to a double of 1♥ can be 3 cards in a minimum hand.

1NT is always constructive 8-10 HCP with a stopper in the enemy suit.

La sequence (1m) - X - pass - 1♠  
 pass - 3♥  
 shows 6+ hearts, 4 losers and 3 spades, whereas  
 (1m) - X - pass - 1♠  
 passo - 2m - pass - 2X  
 passo - 3♥  
 shows the same strength but without 3 spades.

### **Overcalling 1 of a suit**

Since 1♥/♠ overcalls can be 4 cards, the structure should be able to rapidly distinguish between 3 and 4 card support.

It is important to distinguish between the sequences where 3<sup>rd</sup> hand passes and 3<sup>rd</sup> hand bids. In the case of pass, the simple raise, that shows 8-11 HCP, should be given with both 3 and 4 card support (the 4 card overcall is always made with a good suit). If 3<sup>rd</sup> hand bids, the raise is always 4 cards, whereas in the case of a 3 card raise with values one doubles then raises. The new suit at the one level is forcing, whereas strong hands (13+) without a biddable suit at the one-level make a cue-bid.

The jump shift in a new suit shows a good long suit (12-15) not playable in any other suit.

Structure of responses:

Situation	Response	Description
3 <sup>rd</sup> hand passes	Simple raise	Competitive, 3/4 card fit
"	Jump raise	Mainly barrage with 4+ card fit Vulnerable, GI unbalanced
"	Simple cue bid	4 cards fit GI+, or 13+ HCP with any distribution.
"	Cue bid at 3 level	GI+ with 4+ cards. Overcaller signs off at 3 level only with very weak hand
"	1NT	Constructive, 9-12 with stopper
"	New suit at same level	Forcing, 4+ cards in the suit
"	New suit at higher level	Non forcing, 5+ cards in the suit
"	Jump in new suit	Good 6 card suit, invitation
"	2NT over 1♥/♠ overcall	13-15 balanced
3 <sup>rd</sup> hand bids	Double	9-12 maybe with a 3 card fit
"	Simple raise	Competitive, 4+ card fit
"	Jump raise	NV, barrage with 4+ cards Vulnerable, GI unbalanced
"	Cue-bid at 2 level	4+ card fit GI+, or GF in any distribution.
"	Cue-bid at 3 level	GI+ con fit di 4+ cards
"	2NT non-jump	10-12 with stopper(s) in the enemy suit(s)
"	New suit	Forcing at 1-level, 1♠ always 5crd Non-forcing at 2-level
"	Jump in new suit	Good 6-crd suit, invitation

## **Overcalling 1NT**

Balanced 15-18 without a 4 card major (with one, prefer to double if 15-16 and bid a 4-crd suit with 17-18).

Only forcing response is the cue-bid. All others are passable if cheaply bid, and invitation if a jump.

## **2-level overcalls (non-jump)**

All new suits at the same level are forcing one round, and do not deny a 3 card fit.

The new suit at a higher level is non-forcing and denies a good fit with partner.

Simple raises are constructive whereas the jump raise is preemptive non-vulnerable or constructive unbalanced vulnerable.

## **Overalling the enemy 14-18 NT (strong)**

One only uses Landy (2♣ with major 2-suiter), whereas all other bids are 11-14 HCP natural, with a 6 card or solid 5 card suit.

Over Landy, 2♦ asks for the better major.

The double by 2<sup>nd</sup> hand shows a strong hand at least 2 HCP stronger than the minimum for their NT range.

## **Overcalling the enemy 11-15 NT (weak)**

The double is used for all hands with at least 13 HCP with the provision that, if minimum, doubler has at least 3 spades. With 10-12 HCP, one uses Landy or overcalls.

## **Doubling a weak two**

After North doubles West's weak 2 bid, South, with an intermediate hand and 4+ cards in the other major, bids 2NT conventionally, over which North bids:

3♣	with a minimum, promising 4+ cards in the other major;
3♦	with a maximum without 4 cards in the other major and without a stopper;
cue-bid	maximum and 4 cards in the other major;
3 other major	maximum and 5 cards in the other major;
3NT	maximum, stopper, good hand for NT.

## **Leads against slam**

Honors are underled: A denies King; King from AK; Queen from KQ. Obviously over a king lead partner, with the Ace, encourages whereas without the ace, she gives count.

**Defense to 2♦ Multi**

X = 4+♦ with opening count. (possibly canape with clubs)

Pass and then X over 2♥ or 2♠ = penalty

2NT = tends to be balanced with the minors

***Variations in leading honors***

According to partnership, in suit contracts one can use Rusinow leads (K from AK, Q from KQ, etc.) in a bid suit. In this case, in fact, there is not ambiguity between leading from an honor sequence and leading from a doubleton.