

**Arturo Franco - Marco Pancotti**

# **Blue Team Club**

Third Edition ( Sept, 2001 )

Translated into English from Italian by Daniel. J. Neill

NOTE - this version uses Marco's modified Scanian responses to 1N  
( see his site for the original, i.e. without Scanian )

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## **Preface to the Second Edition**

This second edition of the Blue Team Club comes after a year of circulation 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.mcmlink.it/personal/MC6246/BlueTeamClub](http://www.mcmlink.it/personal/MC6246/BlueTeamClub)).

The electronic format of this document is therefore, from this edition on, directly available 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

## Preface to the Third Edition

About 6 months after the release of the second edition, it was necessary to make a complete review of the text to correct some imperfections and complete some sequences that were still ambiguous.

In the meantime, to our great satisfaction, the system has been downloaded from the Internet around 100 times per month, about 70% of the time the English translation by Daniel J. Neill. Evidently, despite being a system created more than 30 years ago, it still has its fascination and its admirers.

A discussion group on the Internet has been created. Those interested can visit <http://clubs.yahoo.com/clubs/blueteamclub>. There can be found interesting observations, hands from actual play, and questions/answers about the system (nearly always answered by Arturo personally). In order to save tedious searching, we summarize the most important changes from the previous version (*And the only ones I changed. They are in blue font. The page numbers are approximate. -DJN*):

Pag. 13	Some changes in responses after interference over 1♣
Pag. 15	1♣-1♦; 1♠ correction
Pag. 17	1♣-1♦; 2♣-2♦; 3♣ correction
Pag. 18	Comments on hands with 5 diamonds, 4 clubs, 3-1 majors
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Pag. 71	Introducing invites in both majors after an opening 2NT.
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We also have a very large number of bookmarks that you can use to locate any specific bidding sequence. Names for these bookmarks begin with "x\_" so that they appear after the names for the top-level sections' bookmarks. The third and subsequent characters of the bookmark name correspond to the bids within the bidding sequence. For example, the bidding sequence of 1♣-1♦-1♥-1♠-1NT would have a bookmark named "x\_1C\_1D\_1H\_1S\_1NT".

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A hyperlink within the document is like a link on a web page. By clicking the link, you jump to a different location within the document. All of the hyperlinks are colored blue and are underlined.

A very common hyperlink within this document is "[[see below](#)]" within a bidding diagram. This tells you that there is another, lower-level diagram that describes for the bid in question, and you can jump to that diagram by clicking the link.

## Conventional Symbols

The following symbols are used to indicate the strength of a hand:

F1	Forcing one round
GI	Game invitational
GI+	Game invitational or better
GF	Game forcing
GF+	Game forcing or better
SI	Slam invitational

The following symbols are used to indicate the quality of trump support:

xxx	3 card support without A, K or Q
Hxx	3 card support with A, K or Q
HHx	3 card support with AK, AQ or KQ
xxxx	4 card support without A, K or Q
Hxxx	4 card support with A, K or Q
HHxx	4 card support with AK, AQ or KQ

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



## Revision History

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Second Italian language version	
September, 1999	Daniel J. Neill
Translate second version from Italian to English	
February 21, 2000	Luke Gillespie
Add the "About This Document" section	
Define bookmarks for the first few top-level sections	
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Add the "About This Document" section	
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Corrected various minor typos in text	
Present document and html version on WebPage	
<a href="http://members.rogers.com/blueclub">http://members.rogers.com/blueclub</a>	
Sept, 2001	Gunther Schutzenmeier
Updated as per the third edition	
rewritten by Marco Pancotti and	
translated by Dan Neill	

## 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.

## The Principal 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 Club, 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 over aggressive 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, systemically 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 suits.

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 one's 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-suiters, 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-suiters.
- 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.
- 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 strong raises distinguish 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. Possibly 5422 with solid doubletons in the majors
- Responses: Treatment modified from the "Scanian Way", that uses transfer to the majors sometimes with 4 carders, transfer to the minors after Stayman and the use of certain sequences to identify weakness in both hands.
- V. Opening 2♣: 12-16, 6+ cards in clubs to at least 2 top honors, possibly 4 cards in a side suit major.
- Responses: 2♦ distributional relay, 2NT is 5+ Diamonds, other natural responses are natural 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 good 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: 8-12 major 2 suiter, at least 5-5.
- Responses 3♣ distributional ask for major suits.
- IX. Opening 3♣: 11-13 minor 2 suitor without a 3 card major.
- Responses Responses partly artificial with 3♥ as a distributional relay.
- X. Opening 3♦/♥/♠: Solid preempt with 3 top honors or 2 and a side Ace or King.
- XI. Opening 3NT: Clubs, similar to a 3 level preempt, losers depending on position and vulnerability.
- XII. Opening 4♦/♥: Constructive preempt in Hearts/Spades, 8 winners with a side Ace.
- XIII. Opening 4♥/♠: Preempt in Hearts/Spades with at most 7 winners.



## Opening 1♣

<a href="#">1C-1D</a>	<a href="#">1C-1H</a>	<a href="#">1C-1S</a>	<a href="#">1C-1NT</a>	<a href="#">1C-2C</a>
<a href="#">1C-2H/2S</a>	<a href="#">1C-2NT</a>	1C-3C/3D	1C-3H/3S	<a href="#">1C-3NT</a>

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 stronger hand respond 1♥, with a weaker suit, 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. without a stopper, 1NT = 3/4 ctr. with stopper, 2♣ = 4 ctr. without a stopper, 2♦ = 5 ctr., 2♥ = 6+ 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.

## 1♣-1♦;

<a href="#">1C-1D;1H</a>	<a href="#">1C-1D;1S</a>	1C-1D;1NT	<a href="#">1C-1D;2C</a>	<a href="#">1C-1D;2D</a>
<a href="#">1C-1D;2H/2S</a>	<a href="#">1C-1D;2NT</a>	1C-1D;3C/3D		

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  $1\clubsuit-1\diamond; 2\clubsuit/\diamond-2\heartsuit/\spadesuit$  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  $1\clubsuit-1\diamond; 1\heartsuit$

- |—  $1\spadesuit$  natural, forcing
- |— 1NT natural, non-forcing
- |—  $2\clubsuit/\diamond$  natural, non-forcing; then 2NT or new suit is F1
- |—  $2\heartsuit/3\heartsuit$  natural raise, non-forcing
- |—  $2\spadesuit$  raise with singleton, GI+, forcing
- |— 2NT 6 HCP balanced, non-forcing
- |—  $3\clubsuit/\diamond$  6-card suit to 2 top honors, non forcing
- |—  $3\spadesuit$  6 spades, 2-6 HCP with strength on the side

Over  $1\clubsuit-1\diamond; 1\spadesuit$

- |— 1NT natural, non-forcing
- |—  $2\clubsuit/\diamond$  natural, non-forcing; then 2NT or new suit is F1
- |—  $2\heartsuit$  natural, forcing
- |—  $2\spadesuit/3\spadesuit$  natural raise, non-forcing
- |— 2NT raise with singleton, GI+, forcing
- |—  $3\clubsuit/\diamond$  6-crd suit to 2 top honors, non forcing
- |—  $3\heartsuit$  7 hearts with side strength
- |—  $3\spadesuit$  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 maximum 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  $3\clubsuit$  (4/5 losers) and  $3\diamond$  (3/4 losers or less).

### General Criteria for bids after opening $1\clubsuit$

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-card minor; a side 5-card 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-card 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-card 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-card 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
<b>Balanced</b>	NT	NT	NT
<b>Weak 5-card suit</b>	Suit	Suit	Immediate Fit
<b>Strong 5-card suit</b>	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 slamish heart fit
        - 3♥ heart fit, sign-off
        - 3♠ stop in spades, no ♦ stop, or fit in hearts, 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+ HCP, 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♦ diamond stopper (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

\*Note that over a 2♣ opener a 2N response shows slam interest, while after 1♣-1♦-2♣, it just shows diamonds.

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

\*With 5♦-4♣-(3-1) and a minimum hand, opener should rebid the 3-card major at the 1-level if it has a couple honors. Else, an imperfect 1NT rebid is best.

### 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).

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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.

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.

### Rebid of 2NT

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

1♣-1♦; 2NT

- 3♣ puppet to 3♦, intending to signoff in a suit
  - 3♦ no game interest in diamonds
    - pass signoff in diamonds
    - 3♥ signoff in hearts
    - 3♠ signoff in spades
    - 3NT signoff in clubs
  - 3♥ game interest in diamonds but not clubs
    - pass signoff in hearts
    - 3♠ signoff in spades
    - 3NT diamonds
    - 4♣ signoff in clubs
- 3♦ asks for minor suits
  - 3♥ 2=3=4=4
  - 3♠ 3=2=4=4
  - 3NT 3=3=3=4 or 3=3=4=3
- 3♥ 5+ card suit, GF
- 3♠ 5+ card suit, GF
- 3NT to play
- 4♣ 6 card suit with two top honors
- 4♦ 6 card suit with two top honors

### 1♣-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♣/♦/♥ slamish 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)

### 1♣-1♠;

In the case of the 1♠ (3 controls) response the situation is GF and further bidding is natural. Make sure with minimum 2-suiters 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

### 1♣-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♦ slamish 5 clubs, 4 diamonds
    - 3♥ slamish 5 clubs, 4 hearts
    - 3♠ slamish 5 clubs, 4 spades



- |
  - |— 2♥/♠/NT 5-card suits (NT = diamonds)
- |— 2♦/♥/♠ length in the suits
- |— 2NT 6 clubs

### 1♣-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 without 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 slamish and balanced;
- b) 1♣-X;2♠-2NT;3♣ can be 2-suited with 4+ clubs or slamish 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 or slam balanced
    - |— 3♦ no 3card 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 slamish
- 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

### 1♣-2♥ and 2♠;

Shows a 6 card suit 3-6 HCP concentrated in the suit (with 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)

### 1♣-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.

### 1♣-3NT ;

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

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

## 1♦ Opening Bid

<a href="#">1D-1H</a>	<a href="#">1D-1S</a>	<a href="#">1D-1N</a>
<a href="#">1D-2C</a>	<a href="#">1D-2D</a>	<a href="#">1D-2N</a>

A conventional opening, it shows 12-16 HCP, without 4 biddable hearts or spades in a balanced hand or without 4 in a major, no matter how poor, in an unbalanced hand. One can open 1♦ with short diamonds (even a void) with long clubs not good enough to open 2♣ (which would guarantee 6+ cards to two top honors). 1♦ is somewhat limited 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.

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)

### 1♦-1♥;

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♦).

1♦-1♥;

- 1♠ either 4 weak spades OR 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs [see below]
- 1NT 12-14 balanced, not 4 weak spades [see below]
- 2♣ 5+ clubs [see below]
- 2♦ 6+ diamonds
- 2♥ either 4 weak hearts or 3 good hearts, singleton spade
- 2♠ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ diamonds
- 2NT 5 diamonds, 5 clubs, not 3 hearts, maximum
- 3♣ reverse with 5 diamonds, 5 clubs
- 3♦ reverse with 6 diamonds, 4 clubs
- 3♥ reverse with 5+ hearts, 4+ diamonds

1♦-1♥; 1♠-

The 1♠ rebid shows either a balanced 12-14 with 4 weak spades or a minor two-suiter with 5+ diamonds and 4+ clubs.

1♦-1♥; 1♠

- 1NT to play, opener bids 2♣ with minor 2-suiter
- 2♣ relay, GI+ [\[see below\]](#)
- 2♦ semi-positive with 5 diamonds, 3-4 hearts
- 2♥ to play
- 2♠ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ hearts
  - 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

The 2♣ relay asks opener to describe his hand. Opener rebids as follows:

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.

1♦-1♥; 1♠-2♣;

- 2♦ 3=1=5=4 or 2=2=5=4, minimum
- 2♥ balanced with 3 hearts: 4=3=4=2 or 4=3=3=3 or 4=3=2=4
- 2♠ balanced w/o 3 hearts: 4=2=4=3 or 4=2=3=4
- 2NT 3=1=5=4 or 2=2=5=4, maximum
- 3♣ x=y=5=5, not 3 hearts, minimum
- 3♦ 1=3=5=4, minimum
- 3♥ 0=3=5=5, minimum
- 3♠ 0=3=6=4, minimum
- 3NT 1=3=5=4, maximum
- 4♣ 0=3=5=5, maximum
- 4♦ 0=3=6=4, maximum

### 1♦-1♥; 1NT-

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

1♦-1♥; 1NT-2♣

- 2♦ no 3 card heart support
  - 2♥ 5 card suit, GI
    - 2NT signoff
  - 2♠ distributional relay
    - 2NT 3=2=4=4
    - 3♣ 3=2=3=5
    - 3♦ 3=2=5=3
- 2♥ 3-card heart support, minimum
  - 2♠ relay
    - 2NT 2=3=4=4
    - 3♣ 3=3=3=4
    - 3♦ 3=3=4=3
    - 3♥ 2=3=3=5 or 3=3=2=5 (♥=♣)
    - 3♠ 2=3=5=3 or 3=3=5=2 (♠=♦)
- 2♠ 5 clubs, 4 diamonds (??? 2=2=4=5)
- 2NT 3 card heart support, maximum

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.

### 1♦-1♥; 2♣-

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 may not 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 one-suiter, maximum
    - 3♣ one-suiter, minimum
    - 3♦ 5+ clubs, 4 diamonds, minimum
    - 3♥ 5+ clubs, 4 diamonds, maximum
- 2♠ 5 clubs, 4 diamonds, minimum
- 2NT single-suiter in clubs, maximum
- 3♣ single-suiter in clubs, minimum
- 3♦ 5 clubs, 4 diamonds, maximum
- 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♥/1♠; 2♦**

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

**1♦-1♠;**

1♦-1♠;

- 1NT balanced 12-14 [\[see below\]](#)
- 2♣ 5+ clubs [\[see below\]](#)
- 2♦ 6+ diamonds
- 2♥ reverse with 5+ hearts, 4+ diamonds
- 2♠ either 4 weak spades or 3 good spades, singleton heart
- 2NT maximum with 5 diamonds, 5 clubs, not 3 spades
- 3♣ reverse with 5 diamonds, 5 clubs
- 3♦ reverse with 6 diamonds, 4 clubs
- 3♠ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ diamonds

**1♦-1♠; 1NT-**

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

1♦-1♠; 1NT = balanced 12-14

- 2♣ relay [\[see below\]](#)
- 2♦ semi-positive with 5 diamonds, 3-4 hearts (LG)
- 2♥
- 2♠ to play
- 2NT balanced 11-12
- 3♣ reverse with 4 spades, 5 clubs
- 3♦ reverse with 4 spades, 5 diamonds
- 3♥ reverse with 4 spades, 5 hearts
- 3♠ 6 spades, forcing
- 3NT to play

### 1♦-1♠; 1NT-2♣; (Relay)

1♦-1♠; 1NT-2♣

- 2♦ no 3-card support
  - 2♥ distributional relay
    - 2♠ 1=3=4=5 or 1=3=5=4
    - 2NT 2=3=4=4
    - 3♣ 2=3=3=5
    - 3♦ 2=3=5=3
  - 2♠ 5 card suit, GI
    - 2NT signoff
- 2♥ 2=2=4=5 or 2=2=5=4
- 2♠ 3-card support
  - 2NT relay
    - 3♣ 3=3=3=4 or 3=4=2=4 with weak hearts
      - 3♦ asks for pattern
        - 3♥ 3=4=3=3
        - 3♠ 3=4=2=4
        - 3NT 3=3=3=4
    - 3♦ 3=3=4=3 or 3=4=4=2 with weak hearts
    - 3♥ 3=2=3=5 or 3=3=2=5 (♥=♣)
    - 3♠ 3=2=5=3 or 3=3=5=2 (♠=♦)
    - 3NT 3=2=4=4
- 2NT maximum 3 card raise

### 1♦-1♠; 2♣-

1♦-1♠; 2♣-2♦ distributional ask

- 2♥ 5 clubs, 4 diamonds, minimum
- 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
- 2NT single-suiter in clubs, maximum



- |— 3♣ single-suiter in clubs, minimum
- |— 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

## Responder's general rebids after a reverse by opener

In general after opener's reverse, 2NT by responder is an asking relay (1♦-1x;2M) over which :

- 3 of one of the 2 remaining suits is always 6-4 with 3 cards in the bid suit
- 3m is always 5-5-2-1
- 3M is always 6-4-2-1
- 3NT is always 5-5-3-0 with 3 cards in the lower side suit
- 4♣ is always 5-5-3-0 with 3 cards in the higher side suit
- 4m is always 6M-5m

For example : 1♦-1♥-2♠, 1♦-1♠-2♥, 1♦-1NT-2♥/♠ -2NT relay then :

- |— 3♣ = 6M, 4 diamonds, 3 clubs
- |— 3♦ = 5M, 5 diamonds, and the rest 2-1
- |— 3♥ = 6 spades/4 diamonds/3 hearts, or 6 hearts/4 diamonds/2-1
- |— 3♠ = 6 hearts/4 diamonds/3 spades, or 6 spades/4 diamonds/2-1
- |— 3NT = 5M, 5 diamonds, 3 clubs
- |— 4♣ = 5M, 5 diamonds, 3 other M
- |— 4♦ = 6M, 5 diamonds

**N. B. Use this scheme whenever opener has shown a reverse with canape or even-length. The above structure assumes a major-minor two-suiter, so substitute the highest suit for the major and the lowest suit for the minor.**

Use the scheme exactly over the following additional sequences :

- 1♦-2♣-2♥/♠
- 1♦-2♦-2♠

For 1♦-2♦-2NT (diamond/heart reverse) 3♣ relays, then:

- |— 3♦ = 5-5, 2-1
- |— 3♥ = 6 hearts, 4 diamonds, 2-1
- |— 3♠ = 6 hearts, 4 diamonds, 3 spades
- |— 3NT = 5-5, 3 clubs
- |— 4♣ = 6 hearts, 4 diamonds, 3 clubs
- |— 4♦ = 5-5, 3 spades
- |— 4♥ = 6 hearts, 5 diamonds

## 1♦-2♣;

1♦-2♣;

- |— 2♦ obligatory with all non-reversers [\[see below\]](#)
- |— 2♥ reverse with 5+ hearts, 4+ diamonds
- |— 2♠ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ diamonds

- |— 2NT diamond one-suiter without 2 top honors, maximum
- |— 3♣ 5-5 minors, non-minimum
- |— 3♦ reverse with 6 diamonds, 4 clubs

**1♦-2♣; 2♦-**

1♦-2♣; 2♦

- |— 2♥ reverse with 5+ hearts, 4+ clubs [see below]
- |— 2♠ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ clubs [see below]
- |— 2NT balanced 11-12
- |— 3♣ GF
- |— 3♦ 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs, SI

1♦-2♣; 2♦-2♥;

- |— 2♠ balanced without spade stopper (4<sup>th</sup> suit)
- |— 2NT balanced, stops in unbid suits
- |— 3♣ club raise
- |— 3♦ weak one-suiter in diamonds
- |— 3♥ Hxx heart support, balanced or with 5 diamonds
- |— 3♠ Hxx heart support, long diamonds (♠=♦)
- |— 3NT Hxx heart support, 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

1♦-2♣; 2♦-2♠;

- |— 2NT balanced with heart stopper, not Hxx spade support
- |— 3♣ club raise
- |— 3♦ diamond one-suiter
- |— 3♥ balanced without heart stop (4<sup>th</sup> suit)
- |— 3♠ Hxx spade support
- |— 3NT Hxx spade support, long clubs
- |— 4♣ 3=1=4=5, xxx spade support, maximum
- |— 4♦ 3=1=5=4, xxx spade support, maximum
- |— 4♥ 3=0=x=y, Hxx spade support

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

both guarantee at least an honor third fit.

**1♦-2♦;**

1♦-2♦ game forcing relay

- |— 2♥ with most non-reverse hands [\[see below\]](#)
- |— 2♠ diamond/spade reverse
- |— 2NT diamond/heart reverse
- |— 3♣ diamond/club reverse
- |— 3♦ diamond single-suiter

### 1♦-2♦; 2♥-

- 1♦-2♦; 2♥
- |— 2♠ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ diamonds
  - |— 2NT reverse with 5+ hearts, 4+ diamonds
  - |— 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

### 1♦-2NT;

The 2NT response shows a balanced hand of 15-19 points without a 4-card major or a 5-card minor. The 3♣ rebid lets responder distinguish between minimum (15-17) and maximum (18-19) and to investigate a minor suit fit.

- 1♦-2NT;
- |— 3♣ ask to find minor fit
    - |— 3♦ 3=3=4=3, 15-17
    - |— 3♥ 2=3=4=4, 15-17
    - |— 3♠ 3=2=4=4, 15-17
    - |— 3NT 3=3=3=4, 15-17
    - |— 4♣ 3=3=3=4, 18-19
    - |— 4♦ 3=3=4=3, 18-19
    - |— 4♥ 2=3=4=4, 18-19
    - |— 4♠ 3=2=4=4, 18-19
  - |— 3♦
  - |— 3♥ reverse with 5+ hearts, 4+ diamonds
  - |— 3♠ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ diamonds

### 1♥ Opening Bid

1H-1S	1H-1N	1H-2C	1H-2D	1H-2S

One of a major bids are natural openings, showing 12-16 HCP with 4+ cards in the suit. 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 regular order if not 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.

Balanced hands with four card majors are opened in a major if it is biddable ( at least Qxxx or JTxx ). 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 reverse. 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 singleton 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:

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

## Bidding 2-suiters 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♥ (spades 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-suiters (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.

1♥-1♠; 2♣

Some final observations:

- ❑ with a spade one-suiter South, after 1♠, can rebid them (sign-off), bid 2♦ looking for 3 card 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♦**

Final observations:



- ❑ with a spade one-suiter South, after 1♠, can rebid them (sign-off), bid 2NT to look for a fit in an invitational 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 invitational 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.

### 1♥-1♠;

- 1♥-1♠;
- 1NT balanced 12-14 [\[see below\]](#)
  - 2♣ natural, lengths unspecified [\[see below\]](#)
  - 2♦ natural, lengths unspecified [\[see below\]](#)
  - 2♥ 5+ hearts, could have 4 diamonds [\[see below\]](#)
  - 2♠ four card support, minimum [\[see below\]](#)
  - 2NT 1=4=4=4 or 0=4=5=4, maximum [\[see below\]](#)
  - 3♣ reverse with 5+ hearts, 4+ clubs [\[see below\]](#)
  - 3♦ reverse with 4 hearts, 6 diamonds
  - 3♥ 8 trick one-suiter
  - 3♠ 4 card spade support, maximum
  - 3NT reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ hearts, no 1<sup>st</sup> round minor control
  - 4♣ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ hearts, Ace/void of clubs
  - 4♦ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ hearts, Ace/void of diamonds

### 1♥-1♠; 1NT

The 1NT rebid shows a balanced hand with 12-14 HCP.

- 1♥-1♠; 1NT
- 2♣ relay [\[see below\]](#)
  - 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 with 4 spades, 5+ clubs
  - 3♦ reverse with 4 spades, 5+ diamonds
  - 3♥ GI
  - 3♠ GI with 6 good cards

- |— 4♣ cue-bid with HHxx heart fit (otherwise use 2♣)
- |— 4♦ cue-bid with HHxx heart fit (otherwise use 2♣)

**1♥-1♠; 1NT-2♣**

1♥-1♠; 1NT-2♣;

- |— 2♦ Not 3 spades
  - |— 2♥ GI with a 3 heart raise
  - |— 2♠ GI with 5 great/6 bad spades
  - |— 2NT GF, not 3 hearts, not 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 cards 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, not 5 hearts, minimum
  - |— 2NT GF, inviting opener to bid another 4 card suit
  - |— 3♣ to play
  - |— 3♦ SI, asking opener to cue-bid
  - |— 3♥/♠ GF+
- |— 2NT 3 card spade raise, not 5 hearts, maximum
- |— 3♣ min. 1=4=4=4 minimum (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.

**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♦ relay [\[see below\]](#)
- |— 2♥ sign-off
- |— 2♠ sign-off
- |— 2NT weak 2-suiter with 5+ diamonds; invites correction to 3♦
- |— 3♣ invitational with 4+ clubs
- |— 3♦ reverse with 4 spades, 5 diamonds
- |— 3♥ invitational

- |— 3♠ forcing (with an invitational hand bid 2♦)
- |— 3NT to play
- |— 4♣ reverse with 4 spades, 5 clubs
- |— 4♦ reverse with 4 spades, 5 hearts, 2 high heart honors (otherwise go through 2♦ relay)

### 1♥-1♠; 2♣-2♦

- 1♥-1♠; 2♣-2♦;
- |— 2♥ 5 hearts, 4 clubs, not 3 spades, minimum
  - |— 2♠ 3 spades
    - |— 2NT forcing distributional relay
      - |— 3♣ 4 hearts, 5 clubs, 3 spades min
      - |— 3♦ 4 hearts, 5 clubs, 3 spades max
      - |— 3♥ 5 hearts, 4 clubs, 3 spades min
      - |— 3♠ 5 hearts, 4 clubs, 3 spades, max
      - |— 3NT 5 hearts, 5 clubs, 3 spades
  - |— 2NT max + diamond stopper\* or three suited with spade void
    - |— 3♣ asking bid
      - |— 3♦ 0=4=4=5, maximum
      - |— 3♥ 0=5=4=4, maximum
      - |— 3♠ 0=5=5=3, maximum
      - |— 3NT 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, diamond stopper, maximum
  - |— 3♣ 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, minimum, possible diamond stopper
  - |— 3♦ 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, no diamond stopper
  - |— 3♥ 5 hearts, 4 clubs, good hand, no diamond stopper\*\*
  - |— 3♠ 5 hearts, 5+ clubs, maximum, no diamond stopper
  - |— 3NT 5 hearts, 4 clubs, maximum with a diamond stop
  - |— 4♣ 4 hearts, 6 clubs, 3 spades, maximum
  - |— 4♦ 5 hearts, 5 clubs, 3 spades, maximum
  - |— 4♥ 6 hearts, 4 clubs, 3 spades, in-between (Axx Jxxxxx - AKQx)

\*2-suiter with 4 hearts only.

\*\*No hand with 5♥ can be minimum, otherwise it would have rebid 2♥ over the 2♦ relay.

### 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.

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

- 1♥-1♠; 2♦
- |— 2♥ sign-off
  - |— 2♠ sign-off

- |— 2NT forcing asking relay [\[see below\]](#)
- |— 3♣ reverse in spades/clubs SI in canape, or 4<sup>th</sup> suit
- |— 3♦ invitational with 4+ diamonds
- |— 3♥ invitational
- |— 3♠ forcing (with an invitational hand go through 2NT)
- |— 3NT to play
- |— 4♣ reverse with 4 spades, 5 hearts, 2 top heart honors
- |— 4♦ reverse with 4 spades, 5 diamonds

**1♥-1♠; 2♦-2NT**

1♥-1♠; 2♦-2NT;

- |— 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, not 3 spades
- |— 3♠ 3=4=5=1 or 3=4=6=0, maximum
- |— 3NT max, 5 diamonds, not 3 spades
- |— 4♣ 3=5=5=0, maximum

**1♥-1♠; 2♥-**

1♥-1♠; 2♥

- |— 2♠ semi-forcing with 5+ spades [\[see below\]](#)
- |— 2NT relay [\[see below\]](#)
- |— 3♣
- |— 3♦
- |— 3♥
- |— 3♠

**1♥-1♠; 2♥-2♠**

Responder's rebid of 2♠ is semi-forcing with 5+ spades. Opener should only pass with a misfit for spades.

1♥-1♠; 2♥-2♠;

- |— Pass misfit for spades (singleton?)
- |— 2NT undefined
- |— 3♣ 5332, 15-16 HCP <OR> 5 hearts, 4 diamonds, maximum
  - |— 3♦ asking (with interest in diamonds or spades)
    - |— 3♥ 5 hearts, 4 diamonds, not 3 spades
    - |— 3♠ 3=5=2=3 or 3=5=3=2
    - |— 3NT 2=5=3=3
    - |— 4♣ 3=5=4=1 (4♦ fixes diamonds as trump)
- |— 3♦ 6 hearts, 4 diamonds, maximum

- |— 3♥ 6 hearts, not 3 spades (min or max)
- |— 3♠ 6 hearts, 3 spades (min or max)
- |— 3NT 6 hearts, 4 clubs, maximum

**1♥-1♠; 2♥-2NT**

1♥-1♠; 2♥-2NT;

- |— 3♣ 5332, 15-16 HCP <OR> 5 hearts, 4 diamonds, maximum
  - |— 3♦ relay (with interest in diamonds or spades)
    - |— 3♥ 5 hearts, 4 diamonds, not 3 spades
    - |— 3♠ 3=5=2=3 or 3=5=3=2
    - |— 3NT 2=5=3=3
    - |— 4♣ 3=5=4=1 (4♦ fixing diamonds as trump)
- |— 3♦ 6 hearts, 4 diamonds, maximum
- |— 3♥ 6 hearts, not 3 spades (min or max)
- |— 3♠ 6 hearts, 3 spades (min or max)
- |— 3NT 6 hearts, 4 clubs, maximum

**1♥-1♠; 2♠**

1♥-1♠; 2♠

- |— 2NT asks for a singleton, GI
  - |— 3♣ singleton club
  - |— 3♦ singleton diamond
  - |— 3♥ 4=5=2=2
  - |— 3♠ minimum balanced hand
  - |— 3NT maximum balanced hand
- |— 3♣ singleton club, GI+ (invites cue-bid)
- |— 3♦ singleton diamond, GI+ (invites cue-bid)
- |— 3♥ singleton heart, GI+ (invites cue-bid)

**1♥-1♠; 2NT**

The 2NT rebid shows a maximum with either 1=4=4=4 or 0=4=5=4 distribution. Note that if opener has 0=4=4=5 or 0=5=4=4 he should rebid 2♣.

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

- |— 3♣ to play
- |— 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
- |— 4♦ natural, slammish, with a high honor in the suit

**1♥-1♠; 3♣**

The 3♣ rebid shows a reverse with either 5-5 or 6-4 in hearts and clubs.

1♥-1♠; 3♣

- 3♦ asking
  - 3♥ 6 hearts, 4 clubs, not 3 spades
  - 3♠ 3=6=0=4
  - 3NT 5 hearts, 5 clubs, not 3 spades
  - 4♣ 3=5=0=5
- 3♥
- 3♠
- 3NT
- 4♣
- 4♦
- 4♥

**1♥-1NT;**

1♥-1NT;

- 2♣ natural, lengths unspecified [\[see below\]](#)
- 2♦ natural, lengths unspecified [\[see below\]](#)
- 2♥ 6 hearts <OR> 5332, 15-16 HCP [\[see below\]](#)
- 2♠ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ hearts [\[see below\]](#)
- 2NT 1=4=4=4 or 0=4=5=4, maximum [\[see below\]](#)
- 3♣ reverse with 5+ hearts, 4+ clubs [\[see below\]](#)
- 3♦ reverse with 4 hearts, 6 diamonds
- 3♥ 8 trick one-suiter
- 3♠ reverse with 7 spades, 4 hearts
- 3NT reverse with 6 spades, 5 hearts

**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♦ to play
- 2♥ to play
- 2♠ forcing relay with 3 hearts [\[see below\]](#)
- 2NT non-forcing relay without 3 hearts [\[see below\]](#)
- 3♣ 8-10 with 4+ clubs

**1♥-1NT; 2♣-2♠**

1♥-1NT; 2♣-2♠;

- 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, 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**

1♥-1NT; 2♣-2NT;

- |— 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.

### **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♥ to play
- |— 2♠ forcing relay with 3 hearts [\[see below\]](#)
- |— 2NT non-forcing relay without 3 hearts [\[see below\]](#)
- |— 3♣ to play
- |— 3♦ 8-10 with 4+ diamonds

### **1♥-1NT; 2♦-2♠; ( Forcing Relay )**

1♥-1NT; 2♦-2♠;

- |— 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 and 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 )

1♥-1NT; 2♦-2NT;

- |— 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♥-

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♠-

1♥-1NT; 2♠ reverse in hearts/spades

- |— 2NT asks distribution
  - |— 3♣ 6=4=0=3
  - |— 3♦ 6=4=3=0
  - |— 3♥ 5-5
  - |— 3♠ 6-4 with rest 2-1

### 1♥-1NT ; 2NT-

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



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|      |— 4♣ 5 diamonds
|— 3NT to play

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### 1♥-1NT; 3♣

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1♥-1NT; 3♣
|— 3♦ asking
|   |— 3♥ 6 hearts, 4 clubs, not 3 spades
|   |— 3♠ 3=6=0=4
|   |— 3NT 5 hearts, 5 clubs, not 3 spades
|   |— 4♣ 3=5=0=5
|— 3♥
|— 3♠
|— 3NT
|— 4♣
|— 4♦
|— 4♥

```

### 1♥-2♣;

The 2♣ response begins an organized conventional sequences.

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1♥-2♣;
|— 2♦ 4 hearts \[see below\]
|— 2♥ 5+ hearts \[see below\]
|— 2♠ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ hearts [see below]
|   |— 2NT distributional relay
|       |— 3♣ 6=4=0=3
|       |— 3♦ 6=4=3=0
|       |— 3♥ 5-5
|       |— 3♠ 6-4 with rest 2-1
|— 2NT 5 hearts, 4 clubs, minimum
|— 3♣ reverse with 5 hearts, 5 clubs
|— 3♦ reverse with 4 hearts, 6 diamonds
|— 3♥ solid six card suit
|— 3♠ reverse with 7 spades, 4 hearts (LG)
|— 3NT reverse with 6 spades, 5 hearts (LG)
|— 4♣ 6 hearts, 4 clubs

```

### 1♥-2♣; 2♦

The 2♦ rebid indicates that the opening bid was based on a four card heart suit. Responder can relay with 2♥

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1♥-2♣; 2♦
|— 2♥ relay \[see below\]
|— 2♠ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ clubs
|— 2NT balanced GI (11-12)
|— 3♣ single-suiter in clubs or 2-suited clubs/diamonds GF+
|— 3♦ 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs, SI

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- |— 3♥ GF with Hxxx heart fit
- |— 3♠ cue-bid with HHxx heart fit
- |— 3NT to play
- |— 4♣ cue-bid with HHxx heart fit
- |— 4♦ cue-bid with HHxx heart fit

**1♥-2♣; 2♦-2♥**

1♥-2♣; 2♦-2♥ = relay

- |— 2♠ minimum unbalanced hand [\[see below\]](#)
  - |— 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 clubs, maximum
  - |— 3♦ distributional ask
    - |— 3♥ 2=4=2=5
    - |— 3♠ 1=4=3=5 (singleton spade)
    - |— 3NT 3=4=1=5 (singleton diamond)
- |— 3♦ 4 hearts, 5 diamonds, singleton, maximum
  - |— 3♥ singleton ask
    - |— 3♠ 1=4=5=3 (singleton spade)
    - |— 3NT 3=4=5=1 (singleton club)
- |— 3♥ 4 hearts, 6 clubs, maximum (♥=♣)
- |— 3♠ 4 hearts, 6 diamonds, maximum (♠=♦)
- |— 3NT 2=4=5=2, maximum
- |— 4♣ 0=4=4=5, maximum
- |— 4♦ 0=4=5=4, maximum
- |— 4♥ 4=4=0=5, maximum (♥=♣)
- |— 4♠ 4=4=5=0, maximum (♠=♦)

1♥-2♣; 2♦-2♥; 2♠

- |— 2NT GF relay
- |— 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

**1♥-2♣; 2♥**

1♥-2♣; 2♥

- |— 2♠ reverse with 5 spades, 4 clubs
  - |— 2NT minimum
  - |— 3♣ raise with small clubs
  - |— 3♦ 5 hearts and 5 diamonds
  - |— 3♥ 6 hearts, good hand
  - |— 3♠ fit in 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♦ 5 diamonds, 4 clubs, SI
- 3♥ limit with 3 hearts (11-12)
- 3♠/4♣/4♦ cue-bid with heart fit, min HHx or Hxxx

## 2♠ Rebid

1♥-2♣; 2♠

- 2NT distributional relay
  - 3♣ 6=4=0=3
  - 3♦ 6=4=3=0
  - 3♥ 5-5
  - 3♠ 6-4 with rest 2-1
- 3♣
- 3♦
- 3♥
- 3♠

## 1♥-2♦;

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♥ 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, GF
  - 3♦ limit
  - 3♥ limit
  - 3♠ heart fit, HHx or Hxxx
  - 4♣ heart fit, HHx or Hxxx
  - 4♦ heart fit, HHx or Hxxx
- 2♠ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ hearts
- 2NT natural or minimum canape
  - 3♣ asking
    - 3♦ 4+ diamonds
    - 3♥ 4+ clubs
    - 3♠ 4 spades
    - 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 with 4 hearts, 7 spades
- | — 3NT reverse with 5 hearts, 5 clubs
- | — 4♣ reverse with 6 hearts, 4 clubs
- | — 4♦ reverse with 4 hearts, 6 diamonds

## Game invitations if definite fit

There are two situations in which one can make a game invitation (or slam), both based on 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

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 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

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, no slam  
|— 4♥ void in spades, SI

## 1♠ Opening Bid

1S-1NT	<a href="#">1S-2C</a>	<a href="#">1S-2D</a>	<a href="#">1S-2S</a>	<a href="#">1S-2NT</a>

### 1♠-1NT ;

1♠-1NT;

- 2♣ natural, lengths unspecified [\[see below\]](#)
- 2♦ natural, lengths unspecified [\[see below\]](#)
- 2♥ 5 spades, 4 hearts
- 2♠ 6 spades <OR> 5332, 15-16 HCP [\[see below\]](#)
- 2NT 4=1=4=4 or 4=0=5=4, maximum [\[see below\]](#)
- 3♣ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ clubs [\[see below\]](#)
- 3♦ reverse with 4 spades, 6 diamonds
- 3♥ reverse with 4 spades, 6 hearts
- 3♠ 8 trick one-suiter
- 3NT reverse with 5 spades, 6 hearts
- 4♥ reverse with 4 spades, 7 hearts

### 1♠-1NT ; 2♣-

1♠-1NT; 2♣

- 2♦ to play (corectable to 2♥ if holding 3H-1D)
- 2♥ to play (correctable with a singleton or void in hearts)
- 2♠ to play
- 2NT non-forcing relay
  - 3♣ 4 spades, 5+ clubs, minimum
  - 3♦ 5+ spades, 4+ clubs, 3 diamonds, max
  - 3♥ 5+ spades, 4+ clubs, 3 hearts, max
  - 3♠ 5+ spades, 4+ clubs, 2-2, 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♠.

### 1♠-1NT ; 2♦-

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

1♠-1NT; 2♦

- 2♥ to play
- 2♠ to play
- 2NT relay
  - 3♣ 5+ spades, 4+ diamonds, minimum

- | — 3♦ 4 spades, 5+ diamonds, minimum
- | — 3♥ 5+ spades, 4+ diamonds, 3 hearts, maximum
- | — 3♠ 5+ spades, 4+ diamonds, maximum
- | — 3NT 4 spades, 5+ diamonds, maximum
- | — 3♣ to play
- | — 3♦ 8-10 with 4+ diamonds

**1♠-1NT; 2♥-****1♠-1NT; 2♠-**

- 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; 2NT-**

- 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; 3♣-****1♠-2♣;**

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

- 1♠-2♣;
- | — 2♦ 4 spades [\[see below\]](#)
  - | — 2♥ 5 spades, 4 hearts
    - | — 2♠ spade fit, limit
    - | — 2NT 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♦ 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs, SI

- 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, not 4 hearts
  - 2NT limit
  - 3♣ club single-suiter GF, or two-suiter 5 clubs/4 diamonds
  - 3♦ 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs, SI
  - 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

**1♠-2♣; 2♦**

1♠-2♣; 2♦ = 4 spades

- 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 (♥=♣), no top 2 clubs
      - 3♠ 4 spades and 6 diamonds (♠=♦)
      - 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

**1♠-2♦;**

- 1♠-2♦; natural, or balanced GF
- | — 2♥ 5 spades, 4 hearts [\[see below\]](#)
  - | — 2♠ 5 spades, not 4 hearts [\[see below\]](#)
  - | — 2NT natural, or minimum canape
    - | — 3♣ asking
      - | — 3♦ diamonds (4+)
      - | — 3♥ 4-1-4-4 (singleton heart)
      - | — 3♠ 4-3-3-3
      - | — 3NT clubs (4+)
  - | — 3♣/♦ two-suiter, non minimum, short-long
  - | — 3♥ reverse with 4 spades, 6 hearts
  - | — 3♠
  - | — 3NT reverse with 5 spades, 6 hearts
  - | — 4♣ reverse with 5+ spades, 4+ clubs
  - | — 4♦ reverse with 4 spades, 6 diamonds

**1♠-2♦; 2♥-**

- 1♠-2♦; 2♥
- | — 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-card support, GF, not 2 honors
  - | — 3♠ fit GF, Hxxx or HHx in spades
  - | — 4♣/♦ heart fit, HHxx

**1♠-2♦; 2♠-**

- 1♠-2♦; 2♠

- 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, GF
- 3♦ limit
- 3♥ heart stopper, no club stopper
- 3♠ limit, fit
- 4♣/♦ fit, HHx or Hxxx

## Game invitations if definite fit

There are two situations in which one can make a game invitation (or slam), both based on 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♠; 2NT asking relay

- 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 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♠

- |— 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♠-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♥ singleton in hearts, no slam
  - |— 4♠ void in hearts, SI

## 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 with two defensive tricks
- ❑ 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 Opening

<a href="#">1NT</a>	<a href="#">1NT-2C</a>	<a href="#">1NT-2D</a>	<a href="#">1NT-2H</a>	<a href="#">1NT-2S</a>
<a href="#">1NT-2NT</a>	<a href="#">1NT-3 bids</a>	<a href="#">1NT- other</a>	<a href="#">Interf</a>	

### *Basis of the system*

Every system has its "treatment" for the 1NT opening, and even Blue Club 2000 cannot lack one. In this case does not come from reworking the original system, but from a completely new system. The NT of Blue Club is a variant of that put forth by Lindkvist, Nisland and Wirgen in the text, "Notrump Bidding – the Scanian Way".

The work done by the Scandinavians, in fact, blends well with the basic principles of Blue Club 2000. Their system has the following characteristics:

### *Characteristics of the Scandinavian method used by the Blue Club*

- covers a vast number of possible distributions of South, many more than standard Blue Club and most other systems cover;
- is fast and efficient in invitational and game-forcing sequences, supplying nothing but the information a player needs to make a decision;
- allows an adequate exchange of information in hands where South envisions slam, without excessive complicated difficult relay sequences;
- strains to give minimal information about opener's hand in sequences where other systems cannot do a good job (Stayman);
- allows play in a suit where other systems do not have sequences available for investigating a possible fit without creating a forcing situation;
- follows the normal tactics used when opening 1NT, tending to make the strong hand declarer, about which as much distributional information is known;
- though not elementary, once understood it does not demand much mnemonic effort.

In short, the principles of Arturo Franco (finding suit fits while concealing non-essential details) go hand in hand with the objectives expressed by Lindkvist, Nisland and Wirgen.

### *System objectives and its fundamentals*

In their text, the Scandinavians expressed their opinion on what makes a good system over the opening 1NT. Their intention was to construct a method in a way, among other things, that:

- adequately handles the major suits;
- quickly identifies the end goal of the auction (game or slam) to allow North to consider his own hand with respect to the target. An acceptance of a game-invitation could even happen on cards, but one, instead, would decline a slam-invitation;
- minimizes the exchange of information when the objective is only to play in game or a part score;
- makes play more likely from the undisclosed hand, avoiding, for who plays the hand, explaining too much about her own hand to the defense;
- but nevertheless supplies details on South's hand when requested, which is when North has a good idea of the possible final contracts and therefore needs to know something more about partner's hand.

## The tools used in handling the 1NT opening

The various tools used in Blue Club 2000 are:

### Stayman

*Stayman for a major fit*

It is used for the classic function of finding a major fit, but only with very weak hands (non-forcing Stayman), game-forcing hands. The invitational hands with four-card majors are actually bid through transfers.

*Smolen convention*

Over a 2♦ response Blue Club has adopted the Smolen convention, where one jumps in one of the majors with 5 or 6-4 and her strength (game or slamish).

*Repeated Stayman*

Following the Stayman 2♣ responder has available a second asking bid (3♦) to find out more about opener's hand, and, in particular, to identify four-card minors.

*Stayman as a base for transferring to the minors*

Stayman can be used even without interest in the majors as a base for transfers to the minors, which are subsequently revealed.

### Transfers to the majors

*Transfers to the majors even with just 4 cards*

Major-suit transfers are not used in the standard manner. In fact, besides showing many hands with at least 5 cards in the suit, they are even used in game-invitational hands with only 4 cards in the suit.

*Superacceptance*

Opener can simply complete the transfer, but with a maximum, good texture, four-card fit and a "useful" (x) doubleton can "superaccept" by bidding the doubleton.

*Auction following the transfer*

After normal completion of the transfer, responder follows the same rebid structure, no matter which suit is transferred:

- ❑ 1<sup>st</sup> step = invitational to game, 4 cards if the suit is spades, 4/5 cards if hearts
- ❑ 2NT (only over 2♦-2♥) 4-4 majors invitational to game
- ❑ 3♣ GF+ with 5 cards in the major
- ❑ 3♦ GI or SI with 6 cards in the major (if SI, then without a singleton)
- ❑ 3♥ GI, 2-suited in the majors, 4 spades - 5 hearts over 2♥ and 5-5 over 2♦
- ❑ 3♠ 6+ cards in the major, SI with a singleton
- ❑ 3NT 5332 or 5422, choice of games
- ❑ 4♣/♦ 5-5 with at least 3 top honors in the two suits (otherwise go through 3♣)

## Transfers to the minors

Different from many other systems, the transfers to the minors are not direct (with 2♠ or 2NT) but go first to 2♣ and then 2NT (transfer to clubs) or 3♣ (transfer to diamonds).

*Continuations after the minor-suit transfer*

Like the major-suit transfers, the minor-suit transfers can show a weak hand, but can even be the base for slam bids with 4 cards in the minor and considerable strength, even slam.

The bid following the transfer immediately shows the strength of responder and the presence of a singleton in the other suit.

*Use of the transfer with a weak diamond one-suiter*

Since the weak single-suiter in diamonds can be shown by a direct 2♠, going through Stayman shows a four-card major (which one hopes to find a fit) or when one fears a double of 2♠ which would allow the opposition to find the "economically."

## 2♠ response

The bid of 2♠ is used in the system when

*Use of the "transfer" 2♠ (balanced or a hand with minor suits)*

- ☐ balanced GI without four-card majors (like 2NT in standard)
- ☐ two-suited minors, weak or GI
- ☐ weak single-suiter in diamonds
- ☐ two-suited minors GF, with a singleton in one major and max 3 cards in the other major.

## 2NT response

The bid of 2NT is used in the system for:

*Use of the 2NT ask*

- ☐ GI hands with a minor single-suiter where one needs an Hx+ fit
- ☐ balanced GF hands without interest in majors where one fears the lead in a weak doubleton

## Jumps to 3 of a suit

Used for hands with a singleton/void in the suit bid and, in the case of 3♥ or 3♠, with 4 cards in the other major.

## Comparison between the treatment of Blue Club 2000 and that of the Blue Team Arturo Franco

*Advantages of the Scanian methods compared to classical Blue Team*

- Compared to the classic treatment, this method allows handling with greater accuracy the following types of
- a) weak hands, single-suited in diamonds, two-suited minors or two-suited with 4 cards in a major and 6+
  - b) GI hands 5-5 in non-touching suits, that in classic Blue Team cannot be played cheaply in 3 of the minors
  - c) GI hands 5-4 with a singleton, that, in case of accepting the invitation, cannot be shown with precision; play 3NT with a weak or short side suit when there is an alternative;
  - d) game or slam hands, two-suited in the majors, shown precisely in terms of strength and distribution
  - e) SI hands with a 6-card suit (major or minor), where much depends on what North holds in the singleton
  - f) hands in which South is balanced with a weak doubleton, where one doesn't want to play in 3NT in case of a weak doubleton in the same suit

*Disadvantages of the Scanian methods compared to classical Blue Team*

Compared to classical Blue Team this system cannot handle GI hands with a four-card major and five-card minor. In this method, in fact, one can show the four-card major and the strength but the five-card minor remains unknown.

Otherwise, in this treatment, the sequence 1NT-2♦; 2♥-2♠ shows 4+ hearts GI (without 4 spades) and does not show five hearts. North is therefore constrained to bid 2NT all the time that she has a minimum with 3 hearts, and to bid 2NT whenever she is not 5-5, even when an 8-card heart fit may exist but 2NT is convenient.

Overall one will find that this is a small price to pay for a series of advantages, and is a light price anyway since, in a computer-simulation, these potentially "dangerous" situations one risks occur in about 4 hands per 1000 opened. Many of these are playable in 2NT.

## Weak hands

With a weak hand South can:

*Handling weak hands through Stayman or transfers*

- g) Bid 2♣ Stayman and pass, bid 2♥ over 2♦ (pass or correct), bid 2NT or 3♣ over any response as a transfer to hearts and diamonds and pass the forced completion of the transfer.
- h) Transfer to hearts or spades and pass
- i) Bid 2♠ with a minor two-suiter and pass (over 3♣ or 3♦) or bid 3♣ (pass or correct) over 2NT, which shows a minimum hand
- j) Bid 2♠ with a diamond single-suiter, and then bid 3♦ over 2NT or 3♣

In short, adequately represented are:

*Showable distributions in weak hands*

- ☐ All single-suiters, including diamonds, which is not expressable in classic Blue Team
- ☐ Two-suiters with at least 8 cards in the majors
- ☐ Two-suiters with 4 cards in a major and a six-card minor, where, after having looked for the major, it is impossible to play in the minor, impossible in classic Blue Team
- ☐ Two-suiters in the minors, not biddable in classic Blue Team



## Game-invitational hands

With a GI hand, South can:

*Using Stayman and transfers with GI hands*

- k) Bid 2♣ with 5 spades, excluding 5-5 majors which is bid by transferring to hearts (2♦) and rebidding 3♣
- l) Transfer to hearts and rebid 2♠. With this sequence South shows a GI strength hand with all the possibilities except a 6-card single-suiter in hearts and a 4-4 majors two-suiter;
- m) Transfer to hearts and rebid 2NT, showing 4-4 majors invitational;
- n) Transfer to hearts and rebid 3♦, showing a six-carder in hearts, invitational to game or invitational to spades;
- o) Transfer to hearts and rebid 3♥, showing 5-5 majors invitational;
- p) Transfer to spades and rebid 2NT, showing exactly 4 spades invitational to game;
- q) Transfer to spades and rebid 3♦, showing six-carder in spades, invitational to game or invitational to spades;
- r) Transfer to spades and rebid 3♥, showing 4 spades and 5+ hearts invitational;
- s) Bid 2♠ with a GI balanced hand without four-card majors, inviting opener to bid 2NT with a minimum and a preference between minors with a maximum (in case responder has the weak two-suiter minors);
- t) Bid 2♠ with two-suited minors invitational to game, inviting opener to bid 2NT with a minimum and a preference between minors with a maximum; in this last case one shows a singleton or bids 3NT;
- u) Bid 2NT with a six-card minor single-suiter to 1/2 top honors, asking opener to bid any weak doubleton or bid only if the eventual doubleton of North does not coincide with either South's six-card minor or South's six-card major.

The following distributions are therefore able to be shown:

*Distributions shown with game-invitational hands*

- ☐ balanced with at least one four-card major, after which opener, in case of a misfit, does not give out a cue bid; her distribution;
- ☐ balanced without four-card majors, over which opener just shows minimum or maximum without revealing distributional details;
- ☐ hands with a five-card major, but with ambiguity in the sequence 2♦...2♠ where South can have 4 or 5 cards;
- ☐ two-suited 4-4 and 5-4 majors
- ☐ any 5-5
- ☐ six-card single-suiters, major or minor

So it only loses, with respect to classical Blue Team, handling 4-5+ with a four-card major.

## Game hands

With a hand strong enough to play game, but not strong enough for a slam try, South can:

*Use of Stayman and transfers in game hands*

- a) sign off directly in game, bidding 3NT, 4♥, 4♠ or transfer to the corresponding major through the bids (South African Texas);
- b) transfer to a major and sign off in 3NT, showing 5 cards in the major and balanced (5332) or semibalanced (four-card minor);
- c) bid Stayman and then, over 2♥ or 2♠, sign off in 4 of the suit shown by North or 3NT
- d) bid Stayman and, after 2♦, sign off in 3NT, usually, but not necessarily, having shown interest in the minor
- e) bid Stayman and then, after 2♥, sign off in 3NT. North may not correct the final contract because South, in spades, can search for that fit with the asking bid 3♦;
- f) bid Stayman and, over the 2♥ response, further inquire about distribution through the asking 3♦, showing interest in spades;
- g) bid Stayman followed, over 2♦, by a jump in a major, showing 4+ cards in the major shown and 5+ cards in the other major (Smolen convention). After this South will clear up the exact lengths of her suits;
- h) bid Stayman, transfer to clubs via 2NT and then rebid 3♦, showing a six-card minor with a singleton in the other minor. North, with the 3♥ relay, can ask where the singleton is (and thus the six-card suit), to which South can respond 3♠ with a singleton in diamonds and 3NT with a club singleton;
- i) bid Stayman then transfer to a minor and, finally, bid the major in which a singleton is held (without disturbing the fit in spades if opener's Stayman response was 2♥). This sequence guarantees six-cards in the minor
- j) bid Stayman, transfer to a minor, and jump to 4 of a major, showing 5+ in the minor and 6 in the major, showing strength.
- k) transfer in to a major and rebid 3♣, a relay used for all hands with a five-card major, a singleton and a four-card minor for 5422 SI hands
- l) bid 2♠ and, over any response by North, bid 3♥ or 3♠, showing 5-4 minors with a singleton in the suit with more than four cards in the other major;
- m) bid an immediate splinter (from 3♣ to 3♠) showing a singleton in the suit without excluding four-card majors (3♦) or guaranteeing the four-card major (3♥ and 3♠);
- n) Bid 2NT, to verify the presence of some weak doubleton

*Distributions shown with game hands*

The system easily covers all hands in which South has 4 or more card majors, and shows singletons to avoid an easily-defeated 3NT in case of a misfit.

With a minor-suited hand South signs off quickly in 3NT but, with both single-suiters and two-suiters, South shows a singleton with safety in mind, to verify a stopper in the unguarded suit.

Finally the responder, with a balanced hand without majors, can bid a tactical 2♣, to fool the opponents about the majors, or bid 2NT when the hand contains a weak doubleton.

## Slam hands

With slam hands, the system offers many options.

### Balanced hands

With balanced hands responder can:

- Bid Stayman and, over the response 2♥ or 2♠, jump to 4♣ or 4♦ to show a slam hand with HHxx support
- Bid Stayman, ask further with 3♦ and then go past 3NT with a minor-suit raise, cue-bid or 4NT (total m quantitative)
- Bid Stayman and, after 2♥ or 2♠, ask for more via 3♦ and, subsequently, raise the original response s sequence shows a slam hand but without HHxx support in the trump suit and tends to be balanced.

### 5332 hands with a five-card major

With semibalanced slam hands (5332) with a five-card major South first transfers to the major, then bids:

- 4NT immediately, quantitative, non forcing
- 3♣ (five-card major GF+) then 4NT, stronger than the immediate 4NT but still passable
- 3♣ (five-card major GF+) followed by 5NT, forcing at least to a small slam

### 5332 hands with a five-card minor

With semibalanced slam hands (5332) with a five-card minor South first goes through the delayed transfer to bids 3NT (MSI), 4NT (SI) or 5NT (slam force).

### Six-card major single-suiter

With the six-card major single-suiters South has at her disposal various options:

- Bid Texas and then ask for aces (RKCB for that major)
- Transfer to hearts or spades and sign off in 4♥ or 4♠, MSI without a singleton, whereas with SI one pr
- Transfer to hearts or spades and rebid 3♠ with a singleton or 3♦ without singleton (3♦ is initially ambi could be a GI hand and not SI)

### Six-card minor single-suiter

With a six-card minor single-suiter the auction always goes through Stayman followed by transfer to the long clubs if a singleton in a minor). Thus:

- one shows a singleton, having the shrewdness, in the sequence 2♣...2NT...3♦ (minor single-suiter) to 3NT with a club singleton and slam strength. Better to bid 4♣. If over these sequences North shows a with a cue-bid, or else can reopen over 3NT by her partner and show a slam hand;
- one bids 4 of the minor into which she has transferred without a singleton

### Two-suiter with at least 9 cards in majors

With at least 9 cards in the majors South first of all bids Stayman and then:

- Over 2♦, with 6-4 use Smolen by jumping to 3♥ or 3♠, the four-card suit, showing at the same time 5 other major. Therefore, after 3NT (misfit), South shows MSI by bidding 4 of the six-card suit, and show 5 of the suit.
- Still over 2♦, with 5-5 or 6-5 and at least 3 TH's in the two long suits, South jumps to 4♣ or 4♦, showing singleton/void, whereas with a slam hand but with no more than 2 TH's in the majors bids Smolen with bids 4♠ (stronger than Smolen with 3♥...4♥, which just shows game).

### Two-suiter with at least 9 cards in minors

With slam and at least 5-4 in the minors the auctions starts with 2♠...3♥/♠ showing the singleton. If North South reopens showing the 5-card suit and slam interest.

With 5-5 and at least 3 TH's in the two suits South can take two paths: show diamonds first (2♣...3♣) and j or show clubs first (2♣...2NT) and jump to 4♦, SI.

<i>Two-suiter with 5+ cards in a major and 4+ in a minor</i>	The auction starts with a transfer to the major followed by 3♣ that shows a GF+ hand with 5+ cards in the major and then shows her distribution and slam strength.
<i>Two-suiter with 5 cards in a minor and 4 in a major</i>	<p>The two-suiters with 9 cards in the suits and longer minor are bid in different ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>k) With 5-4-3-1 one immediately jumps in the singleton, reopening over 3NT by bidding the five-card minor.</li> <li>l) With 5-4♥-2-2 one bids Stayman and, in absence of a fit one bids as if having 5332.</li> <li>m) With 5-4♠-2-2 one bids Stayman and bids as if holding 5332 over 2♦. Over 2♥ (which doesn't deny a spade fit via 3♦ and bids 4 of North's four-card suit or 4NT if a fit is not found).</li> </ul>
<i>Two-suiter with 6+ cards in a minor and 4 in a major</i>	<p>This type of distribution always begins with Stayman. In case of a major fit South has available 3 possible sequences (stronger than the immediate cue-bid with HHxx support):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v) Transfer to a minor followed by a jump raise. This is, of the slam invites, the weakest and is easily passed if he does not have the perfect fit;</li> <li>w) Transfer to a minor, then bid the singleton cheaply, then raise the major. This is stronger than the previous sequence;</li> <li>x) Transfer to a minor, and jump in the other major. This is the strongest of the sequences and shows a strong hand with the other major.</li> </ul>
<i>Three-suiter</i>	One jumps to 3 of the singleton/void and, subsequently, keeping the auction open over 3NT (with 4NT if 444 and five-card minor if 5440)

## 1NT – Structure of responses

*Responses to 1NT without interference*

Opening 1NT is used for balanced hands with 14-16 HCP, but the system is even used over 1♣-1♦;1NT (balanced). The responses are:

- 2♣ normally Stayman, but can be used with minor-suited hands of various strengths;
- 2♦ transfer to hearts, perhaps only 4 cards;
- 2♥ transfer to spades, perhaps only 4 cards;
- 2♠ balanced GI without majors, two-suiter minors of various strengths or weak single-suiter in diamond
- 2NT long minor GI or balanced GF con a weak doubleton somewhere
- 3♣/♦ three-suiter with a singleton in the suit
- 3♥/♠ three-suiter with a singleton in the suit
- 3NT to play
- 4♣/♦ Texas to hearts and spades without slam interest
- 4♥/♠ to play
- 4NT Blackwood, standard 4 aces

## Responses to Stayman

*Responses to Stayman*

The responses to Stayman only number three, since Stayman is non-forcing.

- 1NT-2♣
- 2♦ no major
  - 2♥ 4 hearts, possibly 4 spades ([see below](#))
  - 2♠ 4 spades, no 4 hearts ([see below](#))

## 2♦ Response (no major)

### Continuation with a weak major two-suiter or invitational with five spades

*Handling a weak major two-suiter and invitational hands with 5 spades*

The reply 2♥ shows two-suiters with 8, 9 or 10 cards in the majors to be of a 4-3 fit at the two-level, when it is inconvenient to play 1NT. The is instead the only sequence to show GI with 5 spades.

- 1NT-2♣; 2♦
- 2♥ 4+/4+ major, North passes or corrects to 2♠
  - 2♠ 5 spades, GI
    - pass with 2/3 spades and minimum
    - 2NT 2 spades and a non-minimum hand
    - 3♣/♦/♥ 3/4 spades with a good bid suit, game try
    - 3♠ 3/4 spades and a non-minimum hand, no outside good
    - 3NT/4♠ to play



## Transfers to the minors

These are used with six-card minors. Possibly a four-card major, most probably with a transfer to diamonds for which is available an immediate 2♠

*Transfer to the minors for weak hands or GF+ hands with or without a singleton*

```

1NT-2♣; 2♦
|— 2NT transfer to clubs
|   |— 3♣ forced
|       |— pass with 6+ clubs, possibly a four-card major, w
|       |— 3♦ singleton in a minor, six-cards in the other m
|           |— 3♥ asks for singleton
|               |— 3♠ singleton diamond, game or slam
|               |— 3NT singleton club, game strength only
|               |— 4♣ singleton/void club, slam
|               |— 4♦ void diamonds, slam
|       |— 3♥/♠ singleton heart/spade, six-cards in clubs, 0
|       |— 3NT single-suiter in clubs, MSI, no singleton
|       |— 4♣ 6+ clubs, SI without a singleton
|       |— 4♦ SI 5-5 minors, at least 3 TH's in suits
|           |— 4♥ asks number of TH's (3,4...)
|       |— 4♥/♠ 5+ clubs, 6 hearts/spades, game only
|— 3♣ transfer to diamonds
|   |— 3♦ forced
|       |— pass with 6+ diamonds, possibly a four-card major
|       |— 3♥/♠ singleton heart/spade, six-cards in diamonds
|       |— 3NT single-suiter in diamonds, MSI, no singleton
|       |— 4♣ 5-5 minors at least 3 TH's, less strength than
|           |— 4♦ asks number of TH's (3,4...)
|       |— 4♦ 6+ diamonds, SI without a singleton
|       |— 4♥/♠ 5+ diamonds, 6 hearts/spades, game only

```

## Asking for the minors

Used with slam interest in at least a 4-4 minor fit

*Search for a minor fit*

```

1NT-2♣; 2♦
|— 3♦ asking for minors
|   |— 3♥ 4/5 clubs
|       |— 3NT to play
|       |— 4♣ fixing the suit, no spade cue-bid, no A of dia
|       |— 3♠/4♦/♥ cue-bid (4♦=Ace of diamonds, no spade cu
|       |— 4NT quantitative, possibly five diamonds
|   |— 3♠ 4/5 diamonds, continuations as over 3♥
|   |— 3NT 4-4 minors, 4♣ and 4♦ fix the suit

```

## Smolen

The Smolen convention allows accurate description of the two-suited major hands with at least 9 cards in the

*Search for a major fit*

```

1NT-2♣; 2♦
|— 3♥/♠ 4+ cards in the major, 5+ cards in the other major, G
|   |— 3NT misfit for the majors
|       |— 4♣/♦ 5-4 majors, 3 of the minor
|       |— 4♥ over 3♥ 5-5 game, over 3♠ 4-6 game (six heart

```

- |
  - |— 4♠ over 3♥ 6-4 game (6 spades, MSI), over 3♠ 5-5
  - |  less that 3 TH's in the two suits
  - |— 4NT 5-4-2-2, slam
  - |— 5♥/♠ six cards, stronger slam try than 4♥/♠
- fit in the other major
  - |— 4♠ or pass 4♥ with game
  - |— cue-bid with slam





## Other sequences over the 2♦ response

The last sequences over the 2♦ response are sign-offs (game) or shows slam interest (5-5 majors or Blackwood)

*Sign-off responses, SI 5-5 majors and Blackwood*

- 1NT-2♣; 2♦
- |— 3NT to play, not necessarily with 4-card majors
  - |— 4♣/♦ 5-5 slammish majors, stiff/void in suit, 3+ top honors
    - |— 1st step=asking for 3,4,5,6 TH's
    - |— other (not game) = cue-bid with 3 TH's (in the shown suit)
  - |— 4♥/♠ 4-6 majors not SI, North reopens only with very good
  - |— 4NT standard Blackwood, 4 aces

## 2♥ response (4 hearts, possibly 4 spades)

### Continuations with 5+ spades, GI

In the case where South holds 5 spades GI he bids 2♠, with continuations those examined over a 2♦ response

*Handling GI hands with 5 spades*

- 1NT-2♣; 2♥
- |— 2♠ 5 spades, GI
    - |— pass with 2/3 spades and minimum
    - |— 2NT 2 spades and a non-minimum
    - |— 3♣/♦/♥ 3/4 spades and good bid suit, game try
    - |— 3♠ 3/4 spades and a non-minimum, no good suit
    - |— 3NT/4♠ to play

### Transfers to the minors

The transfers to the minors follow the lines already seen after the response of 2♦. Of note is that an eventuality shows a singleton heart, even if North has 4, and does not show a fit as one would instinctively predict. This is to upgrade a hand with a fit for the minor and Axxx – x in the major.

*Transfers to the minors after a response in a major*

- 1NT-2♣; 2♥
- |— 2NT transfer to clubs
    - |— 3♣ forced
      - |— pass with 6+ clubs, weak, possibly 4 spades
      - |— 3♦ with a singleton minor, continuations like over
      - |— 3♥ six clubs, singleton heart, possibly four spades
      - |— 3♠ six clubs, singleton spade, possibly four hearts
      - |— 3NT single-suiter in clubs, MSI, without singleton
      - |— 4♣ six clubs, SI, no singleton
      - |— 4♦ 5-5 minors, 3+ TH's in the suits, SI
        - |— 4♥ asks number of TH's in the suits (3, 4, 5)
      - |— 4♥/♠ 5+ clubs, 6 hearts/spades, game
  - |— 3♣ transfer to diamonds
    - |— 3♦ forced
      - |— pass with 6+ diamonds, weak, possibly 4 spades
      - |— 3♥/♠ singleton heart/spade, six diamonds, GF+
      - |— 3NT single-suiter in diamonds MSI, without singleton
      - |— 4♣ 5-5 minors, 3+ TH's in the suits, MSI
        - |— 4♦ asks number of TH's in the suits (3, 4, 5)
      - |— 4♦ six diamonds, SI, no singleton

|— 4♥/♠ 5+ diamonds, 6 hearts/spades, game

### Asking for the minors, or for spades

Since the response of 2♥ does not deny 4 spades, the response to the ask is more complicated, to accommodate 4 types of hands. For this reason the response 3♥ is used for both 4333 hands and 4-4 hands with four clubs.

Asking for the minors, or  
spades, after the response of  
2♥

```

1NT-2♣; 2♥
|— 3♦ asking for minors
|   |— 3♥ 4 clubs or 4-3-3-3
|   |   |— 3♠ interest in clubs
|   |   |   |— 3NT 4-3-3-3
|   |   |   |— 4♣ 4 clubs minimum
|   |   |   |— 4♦/♥ cue-bid with 4 clubs maximum
|   |   |— 3NT no interest in clubs
|   |   |— 4♣/♦/♥ heart fit, slam, not 2 TH's in hearts
|   |   |— 4NT quantitative, possibly five diamonds
|   |— 3♠ 4 spades
|   |   |— 4♣/♦ cue-bid with spade fit
|   |   |— 4♥ heart fit, slam, not 2 TH's in hearts
|   |— 3NT 4 diamonds
|   |   |— 4♣/♦ diamond fit
|   |   |— 4♥ heart fit, balanced, slam, not 2 TH's in hearts

```

### Other sequences over 2♥ response

The other sequences, apart from 3NT which is to play, show a fit in hearts, limit, 4♥ to play, 4♣/♦ cue-bid with at least 2 TH's in hearts, 3♠ with fit in majors and SI, 4NT Blackwood, others Voidwood)

Sequences to play (3NT and  
4♥) or GI or SI with heart  
fit

```

1NT-2♣; 2♥
|— 3♥ heart fit, GI
|— 3♠ at least 9 cards in the majors, fit, SI
|   |— 3NT=singleton? (4♣/♦ = singleton, 4♥=no singleton min)
|— 3NT to play, says nothing about spades
|— 4♣/♦ cue-bid, heart fit, SI at least 2 TH's in hearts
|— 4♥ to play
|— 4NT RKCB for hearts
|— 4♠/5♣/5♦ Voidwood

```



## 2♠ response (4 spades, not 4 hearts)

### Transfer continuations

Transfer continuations follow the same rules as over 2♥

Transfers to the minors over 2♠	1NT-2♣; 2♠	— 2NT transfer to clubs
		— 3♣ forced
		— pass with 6+ clubs, weak, possibly 4 hearts
		— 3♦ singleton minor, continuations as over 2♦
		— 3♥ six clubs, singleton heart, possibly four spades
		— 3♠ six clubs, singleton spade, possibly four hearts
		— 3NT single-suiter in clubs, MSI, without singleton
		— 4♣ six clubs, SI, no singleton
		— 4♦ 5-5 minors, 3 TH's in the suits, SI (stronger)
	3♣...4♣)	— 4♥ asks number of TH's (3, 4...)
		— 4♥/♠ 5+ clubs, 6 hearts/spades, game
		— 3♣ transfer to diamonds
		— 3♦ forced
		— pass with 6+ diamonds, weak, possibly 4 hearts
		— 3♥/♠ singleton heart/spade, six diamonds, GF+
		— 3NT single-suiter in diamonds MSI, without singleton
		— 4♣ 5-5 minors, 3 TH's in the suits, MSI (weaker)
	2NT...4♦)	— 4♦ asks number of TH's (3, 4...)
		— 4♦ six diamonds, SI, no singleton
		— 4♥/♠ 5+ diamonds, 6 hearts/spades, game

### Asking for the minors

After 2♠ the asking for the minors is very simple, and there are only 3 cases:

Asking for the minors after 2♠	1NT-2♣; 2♠	— 3♦ asking about minors
		— 3♥ 4 clubs
		— 3♠ 4 diamonds
		— 3NT 4333

### Other sequences over 2♠

The other sequences, apart from 3NT which is to play, shows a spade fit 4♠ to play, 4♣/♦ cue-bid with at least 2 TH's in hearts, 3♥ with 9+ cards in the majors and SI, 4NT Blackwood, others are Voidwood)

Sequences to play (3NT and 4♠) or GI or slam in spade fit	1NT-2♣; 2♠	— 3♠ spade fit, GI
		— 3♥ at least 9 cards in the majors, fit, interest in slam
		— 3♠=singleton? (3NT= no singleton, 4♣/♦ = singleton)
		— 3NT to play, says nothing about hearts
		— 4♣/♦/♥ cue-bid, spade fit, SI with at least 2 TH's in spades
		— 4♠ to play

- |— 4NT RKCB for hearts
- |— 5♥/5♣/5♦ Voidwood

**2♦ transfer**

The transfer 2♦ guarantees at least 4 hearts and is made with many strong distributions. The two possible responses are normal completion of the transfer and superacceptance, which is bidding the doubleton with a maximum 4-card "useful" doubleton, xx or Ax.

The basic structure of responses is:

*Structure of responses over the transfer 2♦*

- 1NT-2♦
- 2♠, 2NT(♦), 3♣ = 2 cards in the suit, max four-card raise
  - 2♥ normal accept
    - pass weak with 5+ hearts
    - 2♠ GI, 4/5 hearts
    - 2NT GI, 4-4 majors. North picks final contract
    - 3♣ GF, 5+ hearts
    - 3♦ GI or SI, 6+ hearts, if SI then no singleton
    - 3♥ GI 5-5 majors. North picks final contract
    - 3♠ 6+ hearts, SI with a singleton
    - 3NT 5332 or 5422, game. North picks final contract
    - 4♣/♦ 5-5 SI
    - 4♥ 6+ hearts, MSI (otherwise a direct 4♣ or 4♥)
    - 4NT 5332 or 5422, SI, North can pass

*Superacceptance*

After a superacceptance South retransfers and passes, signs off in game bids as a slam try.

Over normal acceptance South can pass, invite of force game, in the latter asking distribution.

**Continuations after 2♠ GI**

2♠ after normal acceptance of the transfer shows GI with 4 or 5 hearts. a minimum bids 2NT, whereas with a maximum can ask for South's distribution.

*GI with 4 or 5 hearts*

- 1NT-2♦; 2♥ - 2♠ 4/5 hearts, GI
- 2NT 2/3 hearts, minimum
    - 3♣/♦ 5-5 GI, North picks final contract
  - 3♣ asking distribution, maximum
    - 3♦ 4 hearts, singleton in a minor
      - 3♥ singleton?
      - 3♠=diamonds, 3NT=clubs
    - 3♥ 5 hearts
    - 3♠ 4 hearts, singleton spade
    - 3NT 4 hearts, no singleton

**Continuations after 2NT GI**

2NT shows 4-4 majors, GI. North can pass, bid 3 or 4 of the major, or sign off in 3NT. With a weak doubleton in a minor, North can verify first if it is covered by 3NT or not.

*GI with 4-4 majors*

- 1NT-2♦; 2♥ - 2NT 4-4, GI
- pass, 3♥/3♠/3NT/4♥/4♠ to play
  - 3♣/3♦ weak doubleton in the suit?
    - 3♥ yes, weak doubleton in the suit
    - 3NT no, suit covered



**3♣ GF**

With 5 hearts and a game hand South always bids 3♣, no matter what the distribution. North normally asks only with a misfit, otherwise she discusses between the Hxx(x)+ and xxx(x) fits.

*GF hands with five hearts*

- 1NT-2♦; 2♥ - 3♣ 5+ hearts, GF+
- 3♦ asking, misfit or xxx fit with interest in 3NT
    - 3♥ short spades or 5422
      - 3♠ (xxx heart fit) or 3NT
        - 4♣/♦ 5422 slam
          - 4♠/5om = implied minor fit
    - 3♠ short diamonds, possibly SI
    - 3NT short clubs GF
    - 4♣ short clubs, TS
    - 4♦ 6+ hearts, 4 diamonds, SI
    - 4♥ 6+ hearts, 4 clubs, SI
    - 4♠ 5-4-4-0 void in spades
  - 3♥ Hxx(x) or better heart fit
    - 3NT/4♥ to play
    - 3♠ SI without four-card minors, not necessarily c
    - 4♣/♦ slam, 4 cards in the suit
  - 3♠ 3+ hearts, no TH, no four-card minors, maximum
  - 4♣/♦ 3+ hearts, no TH, 4 cards in the suit

**3♦ with a six-card suit**

With 6+ hearts South can invite game or, if strong, can show slam in bidding 3♦.

*Six-card heart suit, GI or slam*

- 1NT-2♦; 2♥ - 3♦ 6+ hearts, GI or SI
- 3♥ minimum, over which South cue-bids with SI
  - 3NT to play if GI, South reopens with SI
  - 3♠/4♣/4♦ cue-bid with maximum and heart fit

**3♥ with 5-5 majors, GI**

- 1NT-2♦; 2♥ - 3♥ GI 5-5 majors
- pass/4♥ heart preference
  - 3NT to play
  - 3♠/4♠ spade preference

**3♠ with SI six-card suit and a singleton**

When South has six hearts, slam strength and a singleton it is important opener knows which suit because she is the balanced hand with dispersed

*SI six-card suit with a singleton*

- 1NT-2♦; 2♥ - 3♠ SI 6+ hearts and a singleton
- 3NT asks for singleton
    - 4♣/♦/♥ (= ♠) singleton in the suit

**Other sequences**

Of the other sequences the more interesting are jumping in a minor, dedicated 5-5 slam hands with at least 3 TH's in the suits

Sequences with 5-5 slam

1NT-2♦; 2♥ - 3NT 5332 or 5422, game

|— pass/4♥ to play

1NT-2♦; 2♥ - 4♣ 5-5 hearts/clubs, slam with at least 3 TH's

|— 4♦ = #TH's?

|— 4♥ = 3, 4♠=4, etc.

|— 4♥/5♣ minimum and misfit

|— 4♠/4NT cue-bid in spades or diamonds, 3 TH's, invites

1NT-2♦; 2♥ - 4♦ 5-5 hearts/diamonds, slam with at least 3 TH's

|— 4♠ = #TH's?

|— 4♠ = 3, 4NT=4, etc.

|— 4♥/5♦ minimum and misfit

|— 4NT, 5♣ cue-bid in spades or clubs, 3 TH's, invites

**2♥ transfer**

The transfer 2♥ guarantees at least 4 spades. If GI, South promises 4 spades otherwise the hand is shown via 2♣

Structure of responses over the transfer 2♥

1NT-2♥

|— 2NT(♥), 3♣, 3♦ = 2 cards in the suit, four-card max raise

|— 2♠ normal transfer

|— pass weak with 5+ spades

|— 2NT GI, 4 spades

|— 3♣ GF, 5+ spades

|— 3♦ GI or SI, 6+ spades, if SI then no singleton

|— 3♥ GI 4 spades / 5+ hearts. North picks final contract

|— 3♠ 6+ spades, SI with a singleton

|— 3NT 5332 or 5422, game. North picks final contract

|— 4♣/♦ 5-5 SI

|— 4♠ 6+ hearts, MSI (otherwise a direct 4♦ or 4♠)

|— 4NT 5332 or 5422 SI, North can pass

**Continuations over 2NT, GI with 4 spades**

After the reply 2NT North can pass or ask for further distribution, in particular the location of a singleton.

Sequence with four spades  
GI

1NT-2♥; 2♠ - 2NT 4 spades, GI

|— 3♣ asking distribution, maximum

|— 3♦/♥/♠ = singleton diamond, heart, club

|— 3NT no singleton

**3♣, GF**

With 5 spades GF South always bids 3♣, no matter the distribution. North asks only with a misfit, otherwise shows quality of trump support.

GF with five spades.

1NT-2♥; 2♠ - 3♣ 5+ spades, GF+

|— 3♦ asking, misfit or xxx fit with interest in 3NT

|— 3♥ short hearts or 5422

|— 3♠ (xxx spade fit) or 3NT

|— 4♣/♦ with 5-4-2-2, slam

|— 4♥/5♠ = fit in the minor

|— 3♠ short diamonds

- | — 3NT short clubs GF
- | — 4♣ short clubs, SI
- | — 4♦ 6+ spades, 4 diamonds, SI
- | — 4♥ 5-4-4-0 void in hearts
- | — 4♠ 6+ spades, 4 clubs, SI
- | — 3♥ raise with 3/4 spades, no TH, no 4 card minor
- | — 3♠ Hxx+ raise
  - | — 3NT/4♠ to play
  - | — 4♥ SI without a four-card minor
  - | — 4♣/♦ slam, 4 cards in the suit
- | — 4♣/♦ 3+ spades, no TH, four-cards in the suit

### 3♦ with six spades

Six spades, GI or SI

As over the transfer to hearts, 3♦ guarantees six spades and shows GI or SI

1NT-2♥; 2♠ - 3♦ 6+ spades, GI or SI

- | — 3♠ minimum, over which South cue-bids if SI
- | — 3NT to play if GI, South reopens if SI
- | — 3♥/4♣/4♦ cue-bid with maximum and heart fit

**3♥ with 4-5 majors***4-5 majors, GI*

With GI and 4 spades/5 hearts the system provides a canape transfer  
 1NT-2♥; 2♠ - 3♥ GI 4-5 majors  
     |— pass/4♥ heart preference  
     |— 3NT to play  
     |— 3♠/4♠ spade preference

**3♠ with SI six-card suit and a singleton***Hands with 6 spades and a singleton, SI*

3♠, like over the transfer 2♦, is dedicated to hands with 6+ cards in the suit and a side singleton, SI  
 1NT-2♥; 2♠ - 3♠ SI with 6+ spades and a singleton  
     |— 3NT asks for singleton  
     |— 4♣/♦/♥ singleton in the suit

**Other sequences***Sequences with 5-5, slam*

Again 5-5 slam hands to at least 3 TH's in the suits are described.

1NT-2♥; 2♠ - 3NT 5332 or 5422, game  
     |— pass/4♠ to play  
 1NT-2♥; 2♠ - 4♣ 5-5 spades/clubs, slam with at least 3TH's  
     |— 4♦ = # TH's?  
         |— 4♥ = 3, 4♠=4, etc.  
     |— 4♠/5♣ minimum and misfit  
     |— 4♥, 4NT cue-bid in hearts or diamonds, 3 TH's, invites cu  
 1NT-2♥; 2♠ - 4♦ 5-5 spades/diamonds, slam with at least 3 TH's  
     |— 4♥ = # TH's?  
         |— 4♠ = 3, 4NT=4, etc.  
     |— 4♠/5♦ minimum and misfit  
     |— 4NT, 5♣ cue-bid in hearts or clubs, 3 TH's, invites cu

## 2♠ transfer

2♠ is used for GI balanced hands without four-card majors. Different from Stayman, where these hands are handled through Stayman, this treatment is used to find out whether opener's hand is minimum or maximum, without giving out distributional details.

When North holds a maximum she does not sign off in 3NT, but indicates a preference between the minors, since 2♠ can be made with a minors two-suiter or with a diamond one-suiter. In each case, a four-card major is denied.

*Balanced GI hands without a major*

1NT-2♠ weak diamond single-suiter, GI balanced, 5-5 minors, two-suited minor

*5-5 minors, weak*

*Diamond single-suiter*

*Two-suited minors, strong*

- 2NT = minimum
  - pass = balanced. GI
- 3♣ 5-5 minors weak or GI, North passes or corrects to 3♦
- 3♦ diamond single-suiter, sign-off
- 3♥ 5+/4+ minors, singleton heart, max 3 spades, GF+
- 3♠ 5+/4+ minors, singleton spade, max 3 hearts, GF+
- 3♣ = maximum, club preference if South has 5-5 minors
  - pass = 5-5 minors weak
  - 3♦ weak diamond single-suiter, sign-off
  - 3♥ 5+/4+ minors, singleton heart, max 3 spades, GF+
  - 3♠ 5+/4+ minors, singleton spade, max 3 hearts, GF+
- 3♦ = maximum, diamond preference if South has 5-5 minors
  - pass = 5-5 minors weak or diamond single-suiter
    - 3♥ 5+/4+ minors, singleton heart, max 3 spades, GF+
    - 3♠ 5+/4+ minors, singleton spades, max 3 hearts, GF+

## 2NT asking bid

When South has a minor single-suiter to two TH's of intermediate strength, North often wants to be in game, but it is necessary that North have the other three cards, or, if not, three spot cards. With a weak doubleton, in fact, the communication is often insufficient to run the suit.

At the same time there are hands which South could, because of HCP's, bid, but where a weak doubleton gives him fear of quickly going down.

For both these situations is the 2NT bid, which simply asks opener to bid his best suit, unless she holds a weak doubleton. In this case North bids the doubleton and the danger can be diagnosed. Later bids over 3NT, in fact, show that both hands have the same weak doubleton and look for a more secure contract.

*Bidding the weak doubleton*

- 1NT-2NT minor single-suiter GI, or balanced with an unstopped doubleton
  - 3♣/♦/♥/♠ weak doubleton in the suit
  - 3NT no weak doubleton

## Splinters

The 3-bids are all splinters, and show GF+ strength and a singleton/void in the suit shown.

*3♣ and 3♦ splinters*

Over a minor-suit splinter four-card suits are bid up the line. South does not bid above 3NT, if not having a slam hand, unless North shows inadequate control in the short suit.

*3♥ and 3♠ splinters*

The major-suit splinters are like those in the minors but they guarantee a four-card suit in the other major. The 5431 hands with 9 cards in the minors actually give a false impression of the transfer 2♠.

## Other responses

The last responses possible by South are South African Texas (4♣ for hearts and 4♦ for spades), the sign-off and 4 in a major) or the immediate Blackwood.

Remember that to bid 4NT quantitative one first bids Stayman, then one can ask for the minors, and finally, one can bid 4NT in the quantitative sense.

Transfers 4♣ and 4♦

North completes the transfer into the corresponding major

4NT

Standard Blackwood, 4 aces

## 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 2NT 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♥ or 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.

## Opponents' 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♥/♠ with a 5 card suit.
- ❑ 3♣ is Stayman without a stopper, over which North bids:
  - 3♦ without a major without a stopper;
  - 3♥ with 4 hearts, possibly 4 spades;
  - 3♠ 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♦ one applies the same rules but takes into account that, when 2♦ is a transfer to hearts, the bids of hearts assume conventional meanings:

1NT - 2♦ - 2♥: equivalent to a takeout double. The double shows 5+ diamonds and a distributional hand

1NT - 2♦ - 3♣

3♥: 4 spades and no heart stop (3♠ shows both spades and a stop)

1NT - 2♦ - 3♥: 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♥ confirms a 3-suiter, whereas a new suit sets the trump suit and invites cue-bids.

Over 2♥ and 2♠ 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♣ 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♣ ask

In the case of interference after 1NT - P - 2♣ 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♦ with 5 weak, 2♥ with 4-4 majors weak, 2NT natural and 3♣ 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♣. 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



## 2♣ Opening Bid

One/two-suiters 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 ♦/♠, and/or maximum (possible 3 card fit)
- 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♥ 4 card raise minimum

2♣-2♠

- 2NT 1F, values in ♦/♥, and/or maximum (possible 3 card fit)
- 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♠ 4 card raise, minimum

2♣-2NT GF, looking for slam in diamonds

- 3♣ forced relay for normal hands without 3 diamonds
  - 3♦ asking for stoppers with normal continuations
  - 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 overcall, double is takeout and new suit is forcing.

## 2♦ Opening Bid

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, F1
2NT	5 hearts, F1
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♥ Response

2♦-2♥;	
	— 2♠ spade stopper, minimum
	— 2NT heart stopper, minimum
	— 3♣ club stopper, minimum
	— 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♠ Response

The two spade response shows a five card spade suit and is forcing for one round. With a minimum hand, opener raises with three card support, bids 2NT with both hearts and clubs stopped and otherwise bids 3D. With a maximum hand, opener

2♦-2♠	5 spades, F1
	— 2NT minimum, clubs/hearts stoppers
	— 3♣ maximum, club stopper, possible xxx spade support
	— 3♦ minimum
	— 3♥ maximum, heart stopper, possible xxx spade support
	— 3♠ 3 card fit, minimum
	— 3NT to play (maximum with hearts/clubs stoppers)
	— 4♣ cue bid, diamond Ace, Hxx spade support
	— 4♦ cue bid, diamond Ace, Hxx spade support
	— 4♥ cue bid, diamond Ace, Hxx spade support
	— 4♠ HHx spade support, can't cue bid

## 2NT Response

The two spade response shows a five card heart suit and is forcing for one round. With a minimum hand, opener raises with three card support and otherwise bids 3D. With a maximum hand, opener ..

2♦-2NT 5 hearts, F1

- |— 3♣ maximum, club stopper, possible xxx heart support
- |— 3♦ minimum
- |— 3♥ 3 card support, minimum
- |— 3♠ maximum, spade stopper, possible xxx heart support
- |— 3NT to play (maximum with spades/clubs stoppers)
- |— 4♣ cue bid, diamond ace, Hxx heart support
- |— 4♦ cue bid, diamond ace, Hxx heart support
- |— 4♥ HHx heart support, maximum (can't cue bid)

## 3♣ Response

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♦	Natural, 1F
2NT	Asking, North can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- With a minimum rebid the suit cheaply or jump rebid (7 cards not good enough for a 3-bid);</li> <li>- With a maximum hand show a side stopper;</li> <li>- With AKQxxx and nothing on the side bid 3NT;</li> <li>- With a 6-4 maximum jump shift in the side suit;</li> </ul>
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♣ game forcing relay, OR invite with hearts

- 3♦ minimum;
  - 3♥ invite
  - 3♠ forcing, fixing spades, SI
  - 4♣/4♦ forcing cue, fixing hearts, SI
- 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♦ asks better major, OR invite in spades

- 3♥ preference
  - 3♠ invitational
- 3♠ preference

As a mnemonic aid, one should remember:

- ❑ 4♣/4♦, when bid immediately and therefore not cue-bids, fix respectively hearts and spades
- ❑ 3/4NT always fix hearts
- ❑ cue-bid immediately, if 3/4NT available, fix spades
- ❑ Over an enemy double:
  - pass = to play
  - XX = "they're in trouble"
  - 3♣/♦ = to play

## 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 then 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.

The sequence (1m) - X - pass - 1♠  
 pass - 3♥  
 shows 6+ hearts, 4 losers and 3 spades, whereas  
 (1m) - X - pass - 1♠  
 pass - 2m - pass - 2X  
 pass - 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, invitational
"	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+ with fit of 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, invitational



## Overcalling 1NT

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

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

## Overcalling 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.

## Defense vs. strong club

The overcalls of a strong 1♣ show two-suiters and is the only case where we use the weak jump shift.

Double	= hearts/clubs two-suiter
1♦	= natural or both minors
1♥/♠	= natural
1NT	= spades/clubs two-suiter
2♣	= 6+ clubs
2♦	= both majors
2♥/♠	= weak jump (!)
2NT	= hearts/diamonds two-suiter
3♣	= spades/diamonds two-suiter

## Slam-bidding

### Slam-bidding

Slam-bidding is one of the most debated subjects, and most important, of all bidding theory. The reward for slam is so significant, and the penalty in case of a mistake so great, that a good part of the basic structure of modern bidding systems are made for easily reaching the good slams and, of consequence, allowing early identification of the necessity of stopping in game.

Blue Club 2000 is a system of the Italian school, and as such still uses the methods that, around 40 years ago, changed the world of competitive bridge, introducing common concepts from which nearly all systems evolved.

For the construction of slams we need some "building blocks" that make up the structure and which should be carefully assembled and used, to avoid irrationality and inconsistency in the process of slam-bidding.

*Exploitation of limited  
HCP-ranges*

The first "building block" consists of knowing the system well. Whereas playing natural systems each opening can be a very strong hand, in Blue Team 1♣ is dedicated to all hands with 17+ points or hands with 9+ winners and good suits, even some with only 15/16 points.

The suit openings are therefore limited, but can easily contain hands with 8 winners. In that case opener makes a canape reverse, or opens 2♣ or 2♦ and shows a maximum hand. The system, in any case, can further separate intermediate hands into two-suiters of 9/10 cards insufficient for a reverse but strong enough to be considered a maximum upon inquiry of responder. From that point of view, therefore, the system, thanks to the limits on the natural opening, allows separation into three levels of strength all within the 12-16 HCP range.

The opening that, if not a reverse, shows the minors for eventual slam bidding is 1♦, used, most of the time, for balanced weak hands or unbalanced hands with the minors that do not qualify for an opening of 2♣ or 2♦. One finds therefore it is an opening that, in the slam-bidding phase, should be treated with some delicacy.

The responder too should show his strength in a similar way. For example, with a two-suiter of at least 9 cards, 4 controls and 14+ HCP in response to an opening of 1♦ it is important to make a canape reverse, which shows the 4-card suit for an eventual 4-4 fit and, at the same time, shows a good hand. Not responding in a reverse sequence, when it was possible to do so, is therefore sure indication of lack of one of the requirements, in terms of strength, or in terms of distribution.

In conclusion, the partnership which plays Blue Team should always sign off, during the bidding, if the hand needed for slam is not consistent with the sequence chosen by partner. Different from natural systems, where the strength range is large, in the Blue Team it is easy to exclude at a low level the slam chances; and for the hands which are distributionally powerful, even if limited in points, bidding slam is very difficult in natural systems.

*Solidity of the trump suit as a basis for slam-bidding*

Another of the fundamental "building blocks" in the Blue method for slam bidding is that of identifying quickly the hands with trump holdings too weak for slam.

Following that principle, the system provides, in particular for hands with a major fit, diverse ways to show a fit with a strong hand. First is the solid raise, which contains at least 2 TH's if the fit is potentially only eight cards, and at least 1 TH if the fit is for sure at least nine cards. Second is the good raise, which is at least Hxx in case of an eight-card fit. Third is the minimum raise, constituted by three or four small cards.

The principle can sometimes be applied even to hands with a minor fit, whereas other times one only succeeds in distinguishing between a fit with small cards only and a fit with a top honor. But in general the system succeeds in signalling quickly the presence of trumps too weak for slam.

Because of this, the system often delays the communication of a fit in an apparently unnatural way. The problem is that an immediate raise is, in many sequences, indicative of a good fit (at least Hxx), whereas an immediate cue-bid shows at least 2 TH's. Thus the hands with an insufficient fit should be shown slowly and make a forcing bid which allows a proceeding delayed raise.

That approach can seem unnatural compared to the principle of "fast arrival", where the slow sequence is often more strong than a fast sequence. But one only has to accept and understand an equally rational principle. An immediate fit in a forcing situation always shows a minimum of trump suit quality, whereas an immediate jump cue-bid, when it would be possible to make a limited raise, shows an eight-card fit (at least 2 TH's) and slam prospects.

Unfortunately in not all the sequences is it possible to distinguish between a trump fit with an honor and one with none. In this case it is necessary that none of the two partners go past the level of game without a major honor in trump, whereas one whose partner has refused to voluntarily go past game should be careful not to go past game with only one top trump if she has reason to suspect that her partner's problem is in trumps.

The method of cue-bidding should therefore serve as an instrument to verify the quality of the agreed trump suit, and not only to verify the presence of adequate controls.

*Finding the 4-4 fit*

Another "building block" says that, upon reaching a 5-3 fit in a potential slam hand, the system should allow finding a 4-4 fit in a side suit, as it is often possible, if there are useful discards and if the 4-4 fit is solid enough, to take one trick more in the 4-4 fit than in the 5-3.

There is of course an exception to this rule. If the 4-4 fit is weak and the 5-3 is solid, it may be possible to get rid of a pair of losers in a third suit using the 5-3 fit, but the losers in trump are by definition unavoidable.

*Cue-bids*

The key on which all slam bidding in the Italian school hinges is however the cue-bid. While the American school from the post-war period made an initial distinction between cue-bids of first and second round controls, the Italian school Blue Team, which at the beginning was using the Neapolitan Club, already had adopted mixed cue-bidding and 4NT Declarative-Interrogative (DI), and so never Blackwood if not made as a jump.

Moreover the American school, at least initially, essentially used the cue-bid for checking for controls in various suits, while the Italian school gave the cue-bid more meanings, like a solid trump suit and, in certain sequences, a better-than-minimum strength for what was previously shown.

Mixed cue-bidding has diffused to such a point that there are many variants. The American school tends to reserve 4NT for verification of keycards, nearly always adopting Roman Key Card Blackwood (RKCB), which is Blackwood which considers the K of trump equally with the aces and which allows verification below the 5 level of the presence of the Q of trump. Only a few pairs (Hamman-Wolff, for example) have completely adhered to the Italian approach.

The problem on verification of the keycards still exists, and only the great bidding judgement of the members of the Blue Team (and Hamman-Wolff, obviously) has ensured they always stay out of slam, not always to tell the truth<sup>2</sup>, off two aces.

Recently, in Italy, among advanced and expert players has spread a convention called "Turbo", which appears to be a combination of the ideas of the Italian school and an opportunity to check on keycards before bidding slam.

Turbo, adopted for example by Bocchi-Duboin and Buratti-Lanzarotti, is very simple and consists of reserving 4NT, in a cue-bidding sequence, to show an even number of key-cards (0-2-4 including the K of trump), whereas a cue-bid over 4NT instead shows strength in the suit bid and an odd number of key-cards (1-3-5 including the K of trump).

In its simplicity Turbo is most effective. The cue-bidding sequence should not be broken, so as to show secondary controls like the Q or doubleton, while checking on key-cards can be done only at the cost of a cue-bid in the last-bid suit. Sometimes it can be hard to distinguish between 1 and 3 key-cards, or 0 and 2, but the technique for handling the later auction allows resolving that problem very simply.

After verification of key-cards, the 5NT bid is used to check on the Q of trump. In absence of the Q of trump one bids 5NT, whereas with it one bids the grand or makes a new cue-bid at the six-level.

In Blue Club 2000 will be seen adopted Turbo in all sequences where one doesn't know the exact number of controls. This includes all sequences starting with a non-1♣ opening or those beginning with 1♣ where, whether because of responses of 1♦, 1♥, 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠, or because enemy interference has removed the precision of the responses, one hasn't knowledge of the exact number of controls. But the times where responder has given a response from 1♠ to 2♠, without enemy interference, Turbo is not in effect and cue-bidding is handled in the classic way, with the bid of 4NT dedicated to the counter-cue-bid or quantitative meanings.

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<sup>2</sup> In the famous Italy-USA final of 1983 Belladonna and Garozzo, on the penultimate hand, bid a slam off two aces. The beauty is that Belladonna jumped to 4NT (Blackwood) and Garozzo responded correctly, showing only one ace. Irony of a sort. It almost seemed like Blackwood, ignored for years by the Italians, had wanted its revenge. In '79, the last win for Italy, Franco and De Falco bid a slam missing two aces. Arturo maintained that it came from an error by Dano, but that error consisted of making a cue-bid at the 4-level with KQ in the suit in a heavily contested auction, where cue-bidding space was limited. I think that many players would have made the same bid.

## Slam-bidding Tools in Blue Club 2000

Blue Club 2000, obviously, remains faithful to the basic principles of classic Blue Team, but introduces some new ideas, which are discussed below.

### The cue-bid and Turbo

*General scheme for handling the cue-bid*

The cue-bidding method applied to Blue Club 2000 follows that of the traditional Italian school. Consequently cue-bids are mixed, indifferent between A, K, singleton, void or Q in the long suit of partner, and are bid cheaply, without bidding first round controls before second round controls.

A cue-bid can be voluntary or "provoked". If one of the two players has a hand of unlimited strength and begins cue-bidding the partner should continue the cue-bidding sequence at least until game. Going past game is always a willful act, which implies strength, whereas bidding game shows that one's ability to hold open the auction has been exhausted.

Therefore, when one of the two players has limited her strength (bidding NT or making an immediate splinter, e.g.), this does not require the partner to keep a cue-bidding sequence alive, not even below the game level. In that case a cue-bid by partner, even below the game level, shows at least some interest in slam.

*Turbo as a tool for verifying the number of key-cards*

Though generally respecting the classic style of Blue Team, Blue Club 2000 adopts an important exception. The bid of 4NT, in sequences where there is uncertainty about the total number of controls held, shows an even number of key-cards. A cue-bid past 4NT, therefore, shows an odd number of key-cards.

Later, 5NT allows one to check on the queen of trump. Bidding 5NT *denies* holding the Q (no Queen, or the even number of key-cards was zero di Q di trump), whereas a successive cue-bid, or immediately bidding a grand slam, *implies* the Q of trump.

This convention, called "Turbo" in this way allows very early identification of key-cards, but is never used over the opening of 1♣ when responder has been able to show exactly the number of her controls. In that case, really, it is convenient for 4NT to revert to a responsive cue-bid.

*When a cue-bid is doubled*

Another important difference between the classical school and Blue Club 2000 relates to treatment of a doubled cue-bid. When the future declarer is the one who made the double cue-bid, partner redoubles with first-round control, passes with 2<sup>nd</sup> round control and continues cue-bidding without any control (or returns to the trump suit).

In Blue Club 2000, instead, when the cue-bidder is slated to be dummy and the control comes under immediate attack, a Polish suggestion is adopted, which says that:

- y) The redoubled shows first-round control (A or void).
- z) The pass shows worry that the enemy has doomed the potential K of partner on the lead, with the ace behind it. This implies 2 or more cards in the suit. The one who made the doubled cue-bid returns to the trump suit with the feared "positional" cue (Kx), continues cue-bidding with a secure second-round control (KQx or x) and redoubles with first-round control (A or void).
- aa) Continuing the cue-bidding shows help in the doubled suit (at least Qx) which could protect a control such as Kx.

*Showing a singleton or void in the sequences where there was never a chance to splinter*

A further difference between the classic school and the method adopted by Blue Club 2000 lies in the possibility, in some cases, of distinguishing between a singleton/void and the cue-bid of an honor. When a player bypasses a cue-bid, but reopens with 4NT (key-card even), cue-bidding the bypassed suit (key-card odd) or repeating a cue-bid already made (void in the suit and odd number of key-cards) this shows controls in all the side suits and a singleton/void in the suit of the first cue-bid. Naturally this situation is rare, since it must be when the singleton is the higher available suit and all the other suits are adequately controlled. When it occurs, however, one finds it a great way to quickly and very descriptively show one's controls.

*Cue-bidding partner's long suit*

Finally, different from that seen in the Blue Team of Arturo Franco, in Blue Club 2000 one avoids cue-bidding at the first opportunity a singleton/void in the suit of partner, unless of course there is large source of tricks (ruffs or a long side suit). Partner, in fact, will tend to consider this cue-bid an honor card and will consider his long suit a side source of tricks.

On the second opportunity, obviously, the cue-bid of shortness is shown without a problem, and at that point is easily identifiable as such. Often, instead, one shows a Q in partner's long suit, especially when one has shown few controls and despite this, partner shows interest in slam.

*Summary*

To recap:

6. the cue-bids are bid cheaply, following the rule "cue-bid bypassed = cue-bid denied", not distinguishing between A, K, singleton or void;
7. at the first opportunity one does not, normally, make a cue-bid of a singleton/void in the long suit of partner, while one can always show a Q in that suit, above all if afraid of not being able to show it later;
8. if a player denies a cue-bid in suit X, making a cue-bid in suit Y, and in order to reopen the auction shows explicitly or implicitly control of suit X, this is showing a strong hand, with a singleton/void in suit Y and control of all the suits;
9. the bid of 4NT, made in a cue-bidding sequence, shows an even number of key-cards;
10. if a player can bid 4NT and doesn't do so, making a higher cue-bid or returning to the trump suit, this shows an odd number of key-cards;
11. if the trump suit is clubs or diamonds and the first bid above the 4-level is 4NT, without any cue-bids having been made, that 4NT is "to play" and not Turbo;
12. in the case of a double of a cue-bid, partner redoubles with an Ace or void, continues cue-bidding with protection of the doubled cue-bid (second-round control or Q) and passes to let partner show the type of cue-bid she made. In this final case the cue-bidder continues cue-bidding with a protected second-round control (KQ or x), redoubles with first-round controls and returns to the trump suit with an unprotected cue-bid.

## Turbo and the subsequent auction

### *Continuations after Turbo*

Once the number of key-cards is known there are various situations:

1. sometimes one can figure out with certainty the number of key-cards is insufficient. In that case it is necessary to sign off immediately at the 5 level in the trump suit, and make no further invitations. Partner could reopen, but only with a useful void, which makes up for lack of one ace.
2. other times one knows there is exactly one key-card missing, and consequently it is possible to bid a small slam but not a grand; in that case, if one has enough general playing strength, one should immediately bid the small slam.
3. other times one has the strength and sufficient key-cards to bid a grand slam, but doesn't know for sure about the Q of trump; in that case one should immediately bid 5NT, showing the lack of the Q of trump and willingness to play grand slam.
4. in many cases, instead, the key-cards are sufficient, but there is still something lacking to bid slam, be it a little or a lot; in that case in that case the bidding is continued at the 5-level, indicating uncertainty as to the level of the contract. Partner, with a minimum, does not go above the 5-level, whereas with a maximum goes beyond the 5-level, eventually showing or denying the Q of trump. In case of a minimum, further bidding shows that the uncertainty was whether the level should be 6 or 7.

### *Handling uncertainty after Turbo*

There may be many reasons for uncertainty: weakness in trumps, lack of a specific control, needing third-round controls, needing intermediates, etc. For sure the problem cannot be just number of key-cards, otherwise one would just sign off at the 5 or 6 level in trump. But sometimes one wants to distinguish between 0 and 2 key-cards, or 1 and 3 key-cards, when both cases make sense from the previous bidding.

So the partner of the one who expressed uncertainty should make the decision, or should indicate previously undisclosed strength that could help partner make a final decision. For example, one should always sign off at the 5-level in trumps if possessing the minimum number of key-cards, and with a hand with many honors, bid in such a way to indicate the greater number of key-cards.

### *Turbo and cue-bids*

As one can figure out, therefore, Turbo does not replace cue-bidding, but completely follows the philosophy, letting continue the dialogue which is fundamental to that style even after knowing the number of key-cards and even when the objective is just the small slam. Not uncommon is a sequence that, having identified sufficient key-cards, one stops at the 5-level for lack of playing strength or fits in the suits shown.

## Turbo 5NT

### *Checking on the Q of trump*

When the bid 5NT has been bid cheaply, following a sequence of cue-bids, this shows a lack of the Q of trump, considered necessary (*In serious bridge -DJN*) for playing at the 7 level. Partner possessing the Q of trump nevertheless does not oblige her to bid 7. Partner can in fact continue with the cue-bidding, until maybe selecting 7NT or figuring out a weakness in a suit which should be solid for grand slam.

Bypassing 5NT without signing off in slam shows the Q of trump but uncertainty about the grand. Being certain of all the key-cards and three major honors in trump, partner is nearly always in a position to know if her cards are good for grand slam.



## Josephine

*The asking bid for number of top honors in trump*

Sometimes one jumps to 5NT, or is the final bid of a sequence started with a strong club in which one knows exactly the number of controls present.

In that case 5NT is used to ask the number of top honors (TH's) in trump.

*Josephine for the majors*

Responses:

1) spades trump

- 6♣ = no TH
- 6♦ = one TH
- 6♥ = two TH's
- 6♠ = one TH + one card more than previously shown
- 7♠ = three TH's

2) hearts trump

- 6♣ = no TH
- 6♦ = one TH
- 6♥ = one TH + one card more than previously shown
- 7♥ = two honors major

*Josephine for the minors*

When clubs or diamonds is trump, it is better to use 5♠ as Josephine, to leave at least two responses for clubs

3) diamonds trump

- 5NT = no TH
- 6♣ = 1 TH
- 6♦ = one TH + 1 card more than previously shown
- 7♦ = two TH's

4) clubs trump

- 5NT = 0/1 TH
- 6♣ = 1 TH + 1 card more than previously shown
- 7♣ = 2 TH's

## Voidwood

*Using Voidwood*

A rare bid, but very efficient. One uses it only with interest in number of key-cards, but, with a void, so that the ace in that suit is useless and should not be shown. In that case jumps in the void suit to the 5-level, over which partner bids key-cards according to the scale 0/3-1/4-2 without the Q of trump, 2 with the Q of trump.

## Kickback Roman Key Card

### *Using Kickback*

Since the system relies on cue-bids, it is rare that one should immediately ask for key-cards like using Kickback. Sometimes, however, once the fit is found, the only thing one needs to know are the key-cards and the Q of trump. In these cases it is inefficient to launch into a long series of cue-bids. It is better to jump immediately to the suit just above the trump suit (4NT = spades, 4♠=hearts, 4♥=diamonds, 4♦=clubs) and in this way to find out the key-cards and whether the Q of trump is held. After this, one can hold open the auction, showing side kings, or bidding 4/5NT which deny a side K.

The idea of using the suit directly above the trump suit was popularized by Bergen, and is one of the little things from that author that has found its way into Blue Club 2000.

The reason it is such a good idea is that once key-cards are shown, there is always room to ask for the Q of trumps.

Still remains the problem of when the fit is explicitly agreed. For simplicity let us say that a fit is agreed when a suit has been raised, or when only one of the two players has shown a suit while the other has shown a balanced hand or has made a cue-bid. In that case the partner who has shown the suit can fix trump by jumping immediately to the 4-level in the suit above the one shown by partner.

The more important cases are in the sequence 2♣-2♦; 2NT/3♣ with Kickback as 4♦, in the sequence 2♦-2♥; 2x with Kickback as 4♥ and over 1NT-2♣; 2♥ with Kickback as 4♠.