

KS⁺ - A Modification of KS

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Introduction

The bidding system to be presented in this document is a variation on KS. The basic structure is similar to KS as described in:

[EK] Kaplan-Sheinwold Revised (typewritten notes, 1972).

Its main features are weak notrump openings (12-14 HCPs), five card majors, inverted minors, (Semi-)forcing 1NT response over 1M and 2m/1M game forcing. One consequence of this structure is that a suit opening at the one-level shows either a 5^+ card suit or a strong (15^+ HCPs) hand (the only exception occurs with (4441) hands.)

The significant changes from KS are the introduction of intermediate hands (8-8.5 playing tricks) with long suits through multi- $2\diamond, 2\heartsuit$ and $2\spadesuit$, narrowing down the strength range of a one-level opening bid and allowing natural reverse sequences. Also, many sequences were significantly improved, among them all sequences after 1NT, $2\clubsuit$, forcing raises after 1M, and many more.

But perhaps the most significant improvement is the systematic treatment of competitive auctions, incorporating many new ideas including some of the successful methods introduced by Marty Bergen.

This document is organized in almost independent modules, each one dealing with continuations to a specific opening bid, with certain artificial gadgets which are incorporated into the system or with special isolated aspects of the bidding.

Any sequence of bids separated by a "-" indicates that opponents are silent, while a sequence of bids separated by a "=" is showing the bids of all the players. A shape within "(" and ")" shows any permutation of the given shape, while a shape within "[" and "]" shows exactly one shape. For example (4333) is the same as ([4333] or [3433] or [3343] or [3334]) and [44(32)] shows ([4432] or [4423]).

The following notation is used in this document: m=minor, M=major, om=other minor, OM=other major, X is either double or when preceded by a digit is any new suit, XX=redouble. "Forcing" usually means "forcing for one round."

Throughout this document I have tried to provide the probabilities of some relevant hands. I have produced these with the program "dealer" written by Hans Sater (sater@sater.home.cs.vu.nl).

I strongly encourage the readers to send me their remarks and criticisms on this document. I will especially welcome analysis of real life hands bid using this system showing its virtues or defects.

I would like to thank Miklos Gyimesi, Dan Hirschberg, Matthew Merzbacher and Andrew Wiggin for their useful comments.

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What's New?

- 7/13/93** Dropped two-way Drury for reverse drury.
- 7/13/93** Texas transfers after $2\heartsuit-2x-2NT$.
- 7/13/93** Added description of minor suit preempts and four level major suit preempts.
- 7/13/93** A cue bid after $1m-2m$ is not game forcing anymore. A game force is established when we bid past $3m$.
- 2/14/94** A full description of auction after $1m-1M-2m$.
- 2/14/94** Support doubles dropped.
- 2/14/94** New sequences for minor suit signoff and slam going hands with minor suits after $2\heartsuit-2M-2NT$.
- 2/14/94** A $2m/1M$ response may be used with a useful 5^+ suit, even with 4 card support.
- 2/14/94** After $1NT$ and a transfer to m , $4m$ is defined as RKC.
- 2/14/94** A revised trump queen asking sequence after an RKC response.
- 2/16/94** Added the missing description of the auction after $1\heartsuit-1M-2\clubsuit$.
- 2/18/94** Added Smolen.
- 2/18/94** New void and splinter raises. $1M-3NT$ is not a 13-15 HCP balanced hand anymore.

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Chapter 1

The 1NT opening bid

An opening bid of 1NT shows 12-14 HCPs and a balanced hand, either (4333),(5332) or (4432), very seldom with a 5 card major. Occasionally a bad 15 HCPs point hand or a three quick trick hand such as ♠xx ♥Axxx ♦AKxx ♣xxx will be also opened 1NT. Occasionally a (6322) hand with a 6 card minor will be opened with 1NT in third seat.

1.1 The auction after 1NT=p

2♣ Stayman- Usually an invitational or better hand *with or without a 4 card major*. Opener bids 2♦ with no 4 card major, 2M with a 4 card major, 2♥ with both. 2♣ can be also bid with a weak hand with 43 or better in the majors. The following table shows in which contract you should expect to land having different hand shapes.

shape	Major fit		Diamond					fit	
	7	8	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
[4432]	0.0%	51.5%	4.1%	16.8%	18.0%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
[4441]	0.0%	51.3%	0.0%	5.6%	19.7%	16.7%	6.6%	0.0%	0.0%
[4450]	0.0%	51.4%	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	22.5%	14.2%	4.0%	0.0%
[(43)42]	30.6%	25.8%	0.0%	4.7%	16.7%	15.5%	6.8%	0.0%	0.0%
[(43)51]	30.6%	25.9%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	19.3%	13.2%	4.3%	0.0%
[(43)60]	30.4%	25.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.4%	21.8%	10.6%	2.3%

And of course, there is also the possibility of talking opponents out of a penalty double when it is not clear how good a fit there is.

After 1NT-2♣-2♦:

- pass** Garbage Stayman
- 2♥,2♠** 54 in the majors, invitational.
- 2NT** Invitational.
- 3m** 5⁺ card suit, game forcing, slam oriented.
- 3M** Smolen , 4 cards in M, 5 cards in OM, forcing. Opener signs off in game with a minimum, bids 3♠ (M=♥) with a good had, or cue bids a minor with a very good hand.
- 4♣** Gerber
- 4♦,4♥** Delayed Texas transfers, 6⁺4 in the majors, no slam interest, or a very strong hand with void, planning to Voidwood .

4NT,5NT	Quantitative.
5M	GSF.
5m,6X	Signoff.

After 1NT-2♣-2M:

pass	Garbage Stayman.
2♠	4 ⁺ card suit, invitational.
2NT	Invitational.
3m	5 ⁺ card suit, forcing, slam oriented.
3M	Invitational.
3♠(M=♥),4♥(M=♠)	Sets M as trump suit, and responder plans to RKC in M in his next bid.
4♣	Gerber
4NT,5NT	Quantitative.
5M	GSF.
5m,6X	Signoff.

2♦,2♥,2♠,2NT Jacoby transfers- The reader may wonder why a weak notrump system needs these transfers. While it is true that opposite a game going hand there is no urgency for opener to be the declarer, there are other benefits to Jacoby transfers. For example, holding ♠Kx ♥KJxxx ♦Kxx ♣Jxx opposite a 1NT opener, it is hard to invite to a game in hearts without transfers. Also, holding ♠xx ♥KJxxxx ♦x ♣xxxx I would certainly want the 1NT opener to be the declarer. Of course, the suit being transferred into is 5⁺ cards long, with ambiguous strength. Over 2♦ or 2♥, opener will transfer on the cheapest level with two or three trumps, to the three-level with four trumps and 12-13 HCPs, and will bid his doubleton with four trumps and 14 HCPs. With 4 trumps (4333) shape and maximum opener may bid 2NT.

A 2NT rebid by responder will be invitational, 3NT will be offering a choice of games. After a transfer to a major a new suit is forcing and natural, except for 1NT-2♦-2♥-2♠ which shows an invitational hand, with at least 55 cards in the majors. A transfer to a major followed by 4NT is quantitative- opener may cue bid cheapest ace or king. To inquire about aces, responder transfers on the four-level and then bids 4NT.

Responder with a weak hand with both minors will transfer to diamonds and pass opener's response.

Over 2♠ or 2NT opener refuses to transfer (by bidding next step) with two or three small trumps, with the exception of 1NT-2NT in which responder may have a weak hand with both minors; in this case opener will transfer with better diamonds than clubs. This guarantees finding a minor suit fit when responder has both minors.

After a transfer to a minor, a new suit is a cuebid showing strong slam interest; 3NT asks opener to start cue bidding with maximal fitting hand; 4m is RKC in m.

Here is a description of some auctions after a Jacoby transfer:

Sequence	Non-passed responder	Passed responder
2♦-2♥-2♠	5 ⁺ 5 ⁺ in ♥,♠, invitational	5 ⁺ 5 ⁺ in ♥,♠, invitational
2♦-2♥-3m	5 ⁺ 4 ⁺ in ♥, m, forcing	5 ⁺ 4 ⁺ in ♥, m, invitational
2♥-2♠-3m	5 ⁺ 4 ⁺ in ♠, m, forcing	5 ⁺ 4 ⁺ in ♠, m, invitational
2♠-3♣-3♦	5 ⁺ 5 ⁺ in ♣,♦, forcing	impossible
2♠-2NT-3♣	signoff	signoff
2♠-2NT-3♦	5 ⁺ 5 ⁺ in ♣,♦, forcing	impossible
2NT-3♣-3♦	signoff	signoff
Transfer to a minor and new suit	cuebid- strong slam interest	impossible
Transfer to a minor followed by 4m	RKC	impossible
Transfer to any suit followed by 4NT	quantitative- choice of contracts; opener may cuebid	impossible
Transfer to a minor followed by 4m	RKC	impossible
Transfer to M followed by jump to 4M	6 ⁺ card suit mild slam interest	impossible
Transfer to ♠ followed by 3♥	6 ⁺ -5 ⁺ in majors invitational	6 ⁺ -5 ⁺ in majors invitational
Transfer to ♠ followed by a jump to 4♥	5 ⁺ -5 ⁺ in majors no slam interest	5 ⁺ -5 ⁺ in majors
Transfer to ♥ followed by jump to 3♠	5 ⁺ -5 ⁺ in majors game forcing	5 ⁺ -5 ⁺ in majors game forcing (rare!)

3♣,3♦,3♥,3♠ Splinters in ♦,♥,♠,♣ respectively. Game forcing with strong slam interest opposite a good fitting hand. Opener cue-bids shortness with a good fitting hand, jump cue-bids with an *super* fitting hand, otherwise he bids suits up the line or 3NT with good stoppers in responder's short suit.

If a partnership holds 27⁺HCPs in three suits together with some fits, chances are that there will be no losers in those suits, while 23⁺HCP's will usually guarantee at most one loser. Hence, responder will splinter with 15⁺HCPs in his three suits without singleton ace or 12⁺HCP's with singleton ace, while opener will give a positive response with 10-11 HCPs outside short suit and no fourth suit ace or 8-9 HCPs with fourth suit ace, while a super-positive response requires about 12-14 HCPs with no fourth suit ace or 10-12 HCPs with fourth suit ace.

Lets see some examples:

♠A93	♠KQ5	1NT	3♠	Responder needs a super positive response to have a slam- and he gets it. Suits are bid up the line, a fit is found and the slam is bid.
♥KQ73	♥A952	5♣(++)	5♦	
♦K954	♦AQT87	5♥	6♥	
♣J2	♣9	p		

♠A93	♠KQ5	1NT	3♠	A mere positive response is not enough, opener signs off in game.
♥KQ73	♥A952	4♣(+)	4♦	
♦J2	♦AQT87	4♥	p	
♣KT75	♣9			

♠A93	♠KQ5	1NT	3♠
♥KQ73	♥AJ52	4♣(+)	4♦
♦J2	♦AKT87	4♥	6♥
♣KT75	♣9		

A positive response is enough now.

♠QJ7	♠K942	1NT	3♣
♥AK8	♥QT943	3♦(+)	3♥
♦JT95	♦A	4♥	6♥
♣Q54	♣AKJ		

♠T86	♠KQJ72	1NT	3♦
♥AK5	♥3	3NT	p
♦J76	♦KQ		
♣KJ83	♣AQ976		

Opener signs off in 3NT with no fitting hand and a double stopper.

Dealing with interference after 1NT=p=3X

After an overcall in responder's shortness, opener doubles with a positive response, bids a suit with a super-positive response or passes asking opener to double; he will then either pass for penalties or will bid a suit showing a non-fitting hand.

When 3X is doubled, redouble shows a positive response, a new suit is a super-positive response and pass asks partner to redouble; he will bid a suit with a non-fitting hand, or double opponents if they bid on.

- 3NT Signoff. May conceal a 4 card major.
- 4♣ Gerber.
- 4♦,4♥ Texas transfers. 6⁺card suit no slam interest.
- 4♠ Freakish hand with 6-5 in the minors or better. Opener choses a minor.
- 4NT,5NT Quantitative. Opener may accept by bidding suits up the line.

The following table gives the probabilities for different hand shapes opposite a 1NT opener:

(4432)	23.1%	(5332)	16.1%
(5431)	12.7%	(4333)	11.6%
(4441)	3.1%	(5440)	1.1%
(6xxx)	14.8%	(7xxx)	2.7%
(8xxx)	0.3%	[44(32)]	4.1%
[xx55]	0.5%	[55xx]	0.7%
[5xx5]	0.6%	[5xx6]	0.1%
[6xx5]	0.1%	[xx64]	0.4%
[64xx]	0.5%	[(4x)(6x)]	0.5%

1.2 The auction after 1NT=double

The following scheme is used regardless of the meaning of the double:

- redouble** Our hand, sets a forcing pass situation.
- 2♣,2♦,2♥,2♠** Signoff.
- pass** Opener is asked to show a five card minor or to redouble with none. After opener redoubles, responder starts bidding suits up the line.
- 2NT** Two suited monster.
- 3X** Weak hand, 7⁺ card suit.
- 3NT** Solid 7⁺ card minor, nothing else outside. Opener is expected to bid 4♣ without reasonable stoppers.

1.3 The auction after 1NT=2X (Rumpelsohl)

- double** Penalty. Opener may take it out with only two trumps.
- 2Y** Signoff.
- 2NT** Opener must bid 3♣. Responder bids:
 - pass** A weak hand with 5⁺ clubs.
 - New suit** Invitational.
 - 3X** A four card major and no stopper in X.
 - 3NT** Signoff with stopper in X.
- 3♣,3♦,3♥** Transfers to ♠,♥,♠ respectively. Either signoff or game forcing. Responder will bid over opener's response with a game forcing hand. A transfer into X is Stayman with a stopper in X.
- 3♠** Responder has values for game with no stopper or 4⁺ card major, and usually length in both minors. Opener is asked to bid 3NT with stoppers, or show his better minor without stoppers.
- 3NT** Signoff if opener has opponents suit stopped. Denies a stopper.

An overcall over 1NT often shows two suits. In this case the scheme above should be modified accordingly. If one of the two suits is known, that suit is used to cue-bid and stoppers refer to that suit.

If the two suits are known, either can be used to cue-bid, and the cue-bid in a particular suit shows a stopper there. Also any attempt to reach a no-trump contract guarantees a stopper in one of them.

1.4 The auction after 1NT=p=2♣=2X

Opener rarely bids. A double would be for penalties. 2M shows a good fitting maximum [4423] hand when X=♦, otherwise it shows a maximum hand with a two small cards in X.

1.5 The auction after $1NT=p=2\clubsuit=X$

In general, the opener will indicate whether they should be playing in $2\clubsuit$ -doubled. Therefore, pass shows a good 4 card suit allowing opener to redouble for business, redouble shows a 5 card suit.

1.6 The auction after $1NT=p=2\diamond=X$ and $1NT=p=2\heartsuit=X$

Responses are unchanged except that opener must pass with two cards in partner's suit.

1.7 Late doubles after $1NT=p=p$

Opener's double is for takeout, showing exactly xx in opponents' suit. Responder's double is penalty-oriented: opener must take out with xx in opponents suit or other poor defensive hand.

Chapter 2

1♣ and 1♦ opening bids

A 1♣ or 1♦ opening bid shows one of the following types of hands:

- (a) A balanced hand too strong to be opened with 1NT.
- (b) A sound opening hand with a 5⁺ card minor suit.
- (c) A minimal unbalanced hand with a good 5⁺ card minor suit and 4 card major suit.
- (d) A [4441],[4414] or [4144] hand. (A minimal [1444] hand should be opened with 1♥, unless the ♥ suit is very weak).

A 1m opening bid is sound in all seats

Opener should bid his longest minor suit. With equal length he usually bids the strongest, except for hands in which he plans to rebid 2♣ over a specific response (♠AJx ♥xx ♦Kxxx ♣AKxx, for example, is opened with 1♦, and over a 1♠ response, opener bids 2♣.)

Over 1♣, responder should overpass a 5⁺ diamond suit in favour of a 4 card major suit with less than game forcing values.

Since hands with long minor suits and 8-8.5 playing tricks are introduced through the multi-2♦, the sequence 1m-1x-3m, and reverses after a 1m opening bid have a different meaning than in KS. When multi-2♦ cannot be used, those sequences should be modified back to their KS meaning, ie. 1m-1x-3m game forcing and Roth-Stone reverses.

Responses to 1m:

- 1♦,1♥,1♠** A 4⁺ card suit, unlimited.
- 1NT** 5-9 points, seldom with a 4 card major. Does not promise any stoppers in unbid suits. After 1♣, 1NT does not deny ♣ support or a diamond suit.
- 2m** 9⁺ points, forcing 4 card support.
- 2♣(m=1♦)** 5⁺ clubs, 10⁺ points, does not promise a rebid over 2♦ or 2NT.
- Jump shift** Very good 6⁺ suit or good support in m, game forcing, slam oriented.
- 2NT** 10-12 points, balanced, no 4 card major, usually no 4 card support.
- 3m** Preemptive, 5 card support, shortness, less than one quick trick outside m.
- Double jump shift** Splinter, 4⁺ card support, game forcing, slam oriented.
- 3NT** 13-15 points, balanced, no 4 card major, usually no 4 card support.

- 4M Signoff, weak hand with a long broken suit.
- 4NT RKC
- 5m,6m,7m Signoff.

2.1 The auction after 1♣-1♦

- 1M Unlimited, 4⁺card suit. Usually a type (c) or (d) hand.
- 1NT 15-17 HCPs, does not deny ♦ support, may have a 4 card major, a type (a) hand.
- 2♣ A type (b) hand.
- 2♦ 15-17 points, not fit for a 1NT response. Could have a 4 card major (*rare.*)
- 2M *Forcing and natural.* 56 or better. Lebensohl responses.
- 2NT 18-19 HCPs, balanced, could have majors.
- 3♣ *Not forcing* - 7-7.5 playing tricks, good 6⁺card suit.
- 3♦ Forcing, 18⁺points, 4⁺card support.
- 3M Void in M, diamond fit.
- 3NT Long solid or semi-solid clubs with reasonable stoppers.

2.2 The auction after 1♣-1♦-1NT

- 2♣ Signoff. Opener should rebid 2♦ with weak clubs and 3⁺diamonds.
- 2♦ Signoff.
- 2M A 4⁺card suit, game forcing.
- 2NT Good 8 or 9 points, balanced.
- 3♣ Game forcing, possibly with three clubs.
- 3♦ Game forcing.
- 3M Forcing, 5⁺cards in M, 6⁺diamonds.
- 4♣ Gerber.

2.3 The auction after 1m-1M

- 1♠(M=♥) 4⁺card suit, forcing, unlimited, usually unbalanced.
- 1NT A type (a) hand, no 4 card support.
- 2m A type (b) hand, no 4 card support. Continuations:
 - 2♦(m=♣),3♣(m=♦) General game try.
 - 2M Sign off.
 - 2♥(M=♠) Constructive, 8-12 HCP's, 4⁺hearts, 5⁺spades.

2♠ (M=♥)	Game forcing, natural.
2NT	Invitational.
3m	Game forcing.
3♦ (m=♣)	Game forcing, natural 55 or better.
3M	Game forcing, 6 ⁺ card suit.
3NT	Signoff.
3♠ (M=♥), 4♥ (M=♠), 4om	Splinters.
4m	RKC.
2♦ (m=♣)	<i>Forcing, natural.</i> Lebensohl responses.
2♣ (m=♦)	Forcing. Strong hand, 4 ⁺ diamonds. It denies 4 card support in M, and shows an inability to rebid 1NT or 2NT as with ♠Qxx ♥xx ♦AKxx ♣AKxx. It can also show a strong two-suiter in the minors.
2M	Usually 4 ⁺ card support, 15-17 points in support of M.
2♥ (M=♠)	<i>Forcing and natural.</i> Lebensohl responses.
2NT	18-19 HCPs, balanced, usually no 4 card support.
3m	<i>Not forcing</i> - 7-7.5 playing tricks, good 6 ⁺ card suit.
3♣ (m=♦)	Minimum two suiter in the minors.
3M	4 ⁺ card support, 18-19 points in support of M, usually no singleton or void.
3NT	Solid 7 ⁺ card minor suit.
4m	(6421), no first round controls in short suits.
4M	4 card support, 20-21 points in support of M, no singleton or void.
4♥ (M=♠), 3♠ (M=♥), 4om	Splinter.
4NT	RKC.
5M	GSF.

2.4 The auction after 1♦-1M-2♣

Unlike KS, opener is showing a 15⁺ point hand, unsuitable for a 1NT rebid, not necessarily a 18⁺ monster. *Opener may have 4 cards in M with a void in ♣ or OM*

2♦	Four cards in M, <i>not forcing</i> , no stopper in OM unless minimum. A waiting bid- this is the rebid for all minimum hands, including all balanced hands with 6-9 HCPs. Any other response is invitational or better. Responses:
2OM	Game forcing, likely [2254] with no stopper in OM.
2M	2M, non forcing, 3 card support.
2NT	Semibalanced, 15-17 HCPs, no 3 card support in M.
3♣	Strong two suiter, not forcing.
3♦	Game forcing, monster two suiter.

- 3M** Forcing, 3 card support.
- 3OM** Forcing, 4 card support in M, void in OM.
- 3NT** Semi-balanced, 18-19 HCPs.
- 4♣** Forcing, 4 card support in M, void in ♣.
- 2OM** Natural and forcing.
- 2M** 5⁺card suit, forcing.
- 2NT** Natural, 4 cards in M, 10-11 or 15⁺HCPs, forcing.
- 3♣** Natural, 4 cards in M, forcing.
- 3♦,3M** Natural, game forcing, good trumps.
- 3NT** Balanced 12-14 HCP's.

2.5 The auction after 1m-1♥-1♠

Opener is unlimited and may well have a very strong hand. Shows an unbalanced hand with 4⁺spades. Responder should jump or bid the 4th suit to show a 10⁺point hand. All other bids are limited. Opener should usually bid again with a strong hand.

- 1NT** Limited, balanced, no spade support, no stoppers promised.
- 2m** Limited, 4⁺card support, unbalanced. Does not deny a 5 card heart suit.
- 2om** Artificial, forcing for one round. Responder has at least an invitational hand, and could have a very very strong hand. Responder show give belated support with three hearts.
- 2♥** Non-forcing, 5⁺card suit.
- 2♠** Non-forcing, could have only 3 card support.
- 2NT** Forcing, balanced 12-15 points, no 4 card spade support.
- 3m** Natural, forcing.
- 3om** Natural, forcing, two suiter hand.
- 3♥** Game forcing, 6⁺hearts.
- 3♠** Game forcing, 4⁺spades.
- 4m,4om** Splinters.
- 4M** Signoff, distributional hand, no slam interest.
- 3NT** Balanced, 16-18 points.

2.6 The auction after 1m-1♥-1♠-2om

Responder is showing at least an invitational hand and promises a rebid over any bid other than 2NT or 3m. Opener tries to describe his hand further: shows 3 heart support or rebids his minor showing a 5⁺card suit or rebids spades showing a (56xx) hand or better, or bids NT with a balanced hand. A raise of om is natural, showing a [4144], [4054] or [4045] hand.

2.7 The auction after 1m-1M-1NT

- 2m** Signoff, but opener may opt to bid on.
- 2M** Signoff, 5⁺ card suit.
- 2om** New minor forcing. Responder either has 5 cards in M and is asking for 3 card support, or he has 4 cards in OM, or both. Opener bids the 2M with 3 cards in M, 2OM with 4 cards in OM, or the cheapest major at the two level with both. 2m (when possible) shows a 5 card suit with neither. NMF shows an invitational hand or better. Declarer jumps with maximum.
- 2NT** Good 8 or 9 points, denies 5⁺ cards in M.
- 3m** Forcing, 4⁺ card support.
- 3om** Forcing, 55 or better.
- 3M** Forcing, 6⁺ card suit.
- 4M** Signoff.
- 4♣** Gerber
- 4NT** Quantitative.
- 5NT** Forcing, choice of slams.

2.8 Game tries after 1m-1M-2M

Since opener has limited his hand to a relatively narrow range (15-17 points), game tries are based mostly on shape, not strength.

- 2♠(M=♥), 2NT(M=♠)** Opener relays to next available bid, and responder then shows a side suit, or bids 3M if his suit cannot be shown below 3M (spades when M=♥, clubs when M=♠). The side suit should be at least QJxx.
- 3X, X≠M** Singleton or void in X.
- 2NT(M=♥)** Singleton or void in spades.
- 3M** Usually a 8-9 point (5332) hand. Opener should bid game with 17 or good 16 points.
- 4X, X<M** Asking bid- see chapter 7.

When responder declines a side suit or splinter game try, a 3NT bid by opener is forcing, and shows he is actually exploring slam possibilities. Responder should cuebid first or second round controls if he has any, or bid 4M if he has none.

2.9 The auction after 1m-1NT

- 2m** 5⁺ card suit, non-forcing.
- 2♣(m=♦)** Natural, non-forcing, limited.
- 2♦(m=♣)** Natural, forcing.
- 2M** Forcing, 4⁺ card suit, strong hand, long m. Seldom passed.

- 2NT** 18-19 balanced.
- 3m** Non forcing, 7-7.5 tricks, long m.
- 3M** Strong two suiter, 6⁺ cards in m, 5 cards in M. Non-forcing in theory but seldom passed.
- 3NT** Solid or semi-solid m. Responder should bid 4m with a very bad hand.

2.10 The auction after 1m-2m

Responder has 9⁺ points and usually 4⁺ card support, and no 4 card major. Notice that unlike in KS, a new suit by either opener or responder below 3m does not establish a game force.

new suit Could be a stopper.

- 2NT** Forcing, 15-17 balanced.
- 3m** Non-forcing, minimal type (b) or (c) hand.
- 3NT** 18-19 balanced, 3 cards in m unless responder is a passed hand (with a strong fitting hand declarer should explore slam possibilities.)
- 3M** Game forcing, 5⁺ cards in M, 6⁺ cards in m.

2.11 The auction after 1m-1X-2NT

- 3om** NMF
- 3m** Signoff, 5⁺ card support, rarely 4 card support with shortness. Opener may try 3NT with a suitable hand.
- 3X** Signoff.
- 3♠(X=♥)** Forcing- at least 4⁺ spades and 5⁺ hearts.
- 3NT** Signoff.
- 4♣** Gerber.
- 4M** Signoff.
- 4NT,5NT** Quantitative. Opener should show belated support to X en-route to slam.
- 5m,6m** Signoff.
- 5M** GSF.

2.12 Lebensohl responses to a natural reverse.

Responses are graded by the use of an artificial 2NT response: The strongest response is bidding the fourth suit, which is game forcing, an immediate raise or preference on the three-level is invitational, a rebid on the three-level is invitational when a two-level rebid is not available, game forcing when it is, and all other signoff bids are introduced through an artificial 2NT response, which relays to 3♣.

- An immediate preference in the 3 level or a raise to the 3 level is invitational.
- A rebid of responder's suit on the two-level is signoff.

- A non-jump rebid of responder's suit on the three-level is invitational.
- A bid of the fourth suit is *game forcing*.
- A **2NT** response is an artificial relay to **3♣**. Responder will either pass or give preference with a weak hand or rebid his suit with a weak hand.

Chapter 3

1♥ and 1♠ opening bids

A 1♥ or 1♠ opening bid usually shows a five card suit, and unlike KS, it is fairly sound in first and second seats. Since 2♥, 2♠, 2♣ and even 2♦ are available to describe powerful hands with a major suit, a 1M opening bid is limited to about 19 HCPs or 7 1/2 tricks, hence responder does not strain to keep auction open.

3.1 The auction after 1M

1♠	A 4 ⁺ card suit, unlimited.
1NT	(Semi-)Forcing, 6-11 HCPs. When M=♥ usually denies 4 ⁺ spades.
2m	Game forcing, usually a 5 ⁺ card suit.
2♥(M=♠)	A 5 ⁺ card suit, 10 ⁺ points (<i>not game forcing</i>), does not even promise a rebid over 2NT and 2♠.
2M	Constructive raise: 3 ⁺ card support, 8-10 points in support of M.
2NT	Forcing raise, 4 ⁺ support.
Jump shift	Strong.
3M	Limit raise: 4 ⁺ card support 11-12 points in support of M. Opener bids 3NT to ask responder to show a singleton or void.
3♠(M=♥)	Unknown splinter, 10-12 or 16 ⁺ HCPs, four trumps. 3NTasks, step responses.
3NT(M=♥)	Spade void, 9-15 HCPs, four trumps.
3NT(M=♠)	Unknown splinter, 10-12 or 16 ⁺ HCPs, four trumps. 3NTasks, step responses.
4m	Void, 9-15 HCPs, four trumps.
4♥(M=♠)	♥void, 9-15 HCPs, four trumps.
3NT	(4333) hand, 13-15 HCPs, stoppers in unbid suits.
4M	Preemptive. At most one quick trick outside M.
4NT	RKC.

3.2 The auction after 1♥-1♠

1NT A (5332) hand, 12-14 HCPs. Responses:

- 2m** Natural, non-forcing.
- 2♥** 3 card support, too weak for a direct 2♥.
- 2♠** Signoff.
- 2NT** Invitational to 3NT, 11-12 points.
- 3m** Forcing, natural.
- 3♥** 3⁺ card support, 17⁺ points, unable to splinter.
- 3♠** Game forcing, good 6⁺ card suit, slam interest.

2♥ 6⁺ hearts, 12-14 points. Responses:

- 2♠** Signoff.
- 2NT** Invitational, 11-12 points.
- 3m** Forcing, possibly artificial. Opener should give belated support to spades if he can.
- 3♥** Natural, invitational.
- 3♠** Forcing, usually a 6⁺ card suit. With a 5 card spade suit, 3m is available.

2m Good hand, may be 3 cards in m. *Forcing*. Responses:

- 2♥** Signoff. Too weak for a direct 2♥ or 2 card support.
- 2♠** Signoff.
- 2NT** Balanced, 10-11 points, forcing.
- 3m** Forcing, natural.
- 3♥** Game forcing.
- 3♠** Forcing. Could be a 5 card suit.
- 4th suit** Artificial, one round forcing.

2NT (5332) 18-19 HCPs. The only non-forcing response is 3♣, which is a transfer to 3♦, after which responder signs off.

- 3m** *Minimum* two-suiter, not forcing.
- 3♥** Good 6⁺ card suit, 7-7.5 tricks, not forcing.
- 3♠** 16-17 points, 4⁺ trump support, non-forcing.
- 3NT** Solid 7⁺♥ suit.
- 4m** Game forcing splinter.
- 4♥** Natural, very long ♥ suit.
- 4♠** 18⁺ points, 4⁺ card support.

3.3 The auction after 1M-1NT

Opener is asked to bid a second suit, which may force him to bid a very short suit. A suit response in the two level denies a strong (18^+ points) hand, except for $1\heartsuit-1NT-2\spadesuit$. Responder with a weak hand and 2 cards in M should usually give preference to M. Opener may (should!) pass with a weak (5332) hand.

- 2m** Usually 3^+ card suit, although it can be 2 with a weak [4522] hand. With equal minors opener bids $2\clubsuit$. At most 16 HCPs. A new suit by responder is signoff and so is belated support of M. A jump raise of M, shows a limit raise motivated by a good m holding, or a 3 card support limit raise.
- $2\heartsuit(M=\spadesuit)$** 4^+ card suit, at most 16 HCPs. With a [64xx] hand opener should rebid $2\heartsuit$. $2NT$ is invitational. A new suit by responder is signoff and so is belated support of M. A jump raise of M, shows a limit raise motivated by a good \heartsuit holding, and so is $3\heartsuit$.
- 2M** 6^+ card suit. If $M=\spadesuit$, denies 4 hearts. A $3M$ or $2NT$ response is invitational, a new suit if signoff.
- $2\spadesuit(M=\heartsuit)$** Strong [45xx] or [56xx] hand. A new suit or $3\heartsuit$ by responder are signoff bids, $3\spadesuit$ is invitational with good 3 card support (at least Kxx), $2NT$ is invitational.
- 2NT** 18-19 HCPs, balanced. A new suit by responder is signoff, and so is belated M support.
- 3m** Game forcing, 18^+ points, good 4^+ card m suit.
- 3M** Good 6^+ card suit, 7-7.5 tricks. Not forcing. Responder passes or raises to $4M$ or cue bids first or second round controls.
- 3NT** Long solid or semi-solid M suit.

3.4 The auction after 1M-1NT-2m

- pass** Usually 5^+ cards in m, could be 4. Usually singleton or void in M, at most 7 points in support of m.
- $2\diamond(m=\clubsuit)$** Signoff. Usually singleton or void in M.
- 2M** 6-9 points, 2^+ card support.
- $2\heartsuit(M=\spadesuit)$** Signoff. Could be a 5^+ card suit with doubleton in spades.
- 2NT** Balanced 10-11 HCPs, no 3 card support in M.
- 3M** Limit raise- either 11-12 points in support of M with 3 card support or a hand which became more valuable in view of opener's 2m response.
- $3\heartsuit(M=\spadesuit), 2\spadesuit(M=\heartsuit)$** Artificial, 5^+ cards in m, 11-12 points in support of m.
- $3\clubsuit(m=\diamond)$** Signoff. Usually singleton or void in M.
- 3m** 8-10 points in support of m, 5^+ card suit.

3.5 The auction after 1M-1NT-2m-2M

Responder has a weak hand with usually 2 card support in M. Opener should be reluctant to make game tries unless he has a very good hand.

- 2NT Balanced, 16-17 HCPs.
- 3m A two suiter, possible game only opposite the right key cards,
- 3M Usually 6⁺card suit with good 4⁺m suit, 16-17 points.

3.6 The auction after 1M-1NT-2M

As opener has shown 6⁺cards in M, responder usually does not look for a fit elsewhere. Therefore:

- 2NT Balanced 10-11 HCPs, could have M support.
- 3m Side suit game try.
- 3M Limit raise with 3 card support, *and no side suit*.
- 2♠(M=♥) Artificial relay: Opener bids 2NT with preference for ♦ over ♣, 3♣ with preference for ♣ over ♦, 3♥ is signoff. Responder bids:
 - pass, 3♣, 3♦ Signoff.
 - 3♥ Limit raise with three card support, no shortness.
 - 3♠ Forcing raise with three card support, singleton or void. 3NT asks for short suit, 4♥ with ♠ shortness.

3.7 The auction after 1M-2m

Responder usually shows a 5⁺card suit and 12⁺points, but can also be based on a good 4 card suit such as in ♠Axx ♥Axx ♦xxx ♣AKxx when no other response is attractive. It may contain 4⁺card M support with a useful 5⁺card m.

Basically, 100% game forcing: The only non-forcing sequence after 1M-2m is 1M-2m-2M-3m. Opener should strain to rebid his major with a bad opener. The auction may be always dropped at the four level. Once a NT bid is made or a major suit fit is established, the auction is absolutely game forcing. A reverse by opener or responder does not show extra values, a jump rebid shows a decent hand *with a solid suit*, not necessarily considerable extra values. A double jump rebid shows a long non-solid suit, with few values outside it. In the absence of an established fit, a jump to a new suit by either opener or responder confirms a fit and shows shortness.

After a trump suit is found, a failure to sign off immediately in a game shows extra values. A bid of the fourth suit is a general force, asking for further description of hand. Here is a description of some specific auctions:

- 1M-2m-2NT Balanced 12-14 OR 18-19 HCPs.
- 1M-2m-3NT Balanced 15-17 HCPs.
- 1M-2♣-3♦ Splinter.
- 1M-2♣-3M Splinter.
- 1M-2♣-4♦ Voidwood.
- 1M-2♣-4M Voidwood.

1M-2m-4m RKC.

1M-2m-4NT Quantitative. Responder may signoff in 5M or 5m, any other bid is a cue-bid en-route to a possible grand-slam.

3.8 The auction after 1♠-2♥

Responder is showing 10⁺ points and 5⁺ hearts. *Not game forcing, does not even guarantee a rebid over 2♠ and 2NT* Opener rebids:

- 2♠** 12-14 points, fair spade suit, can be only a 5 card suit.
- 2NT** 12-14 points, could be very short in hearts, some values outside spades.
- 3m** 15⁺ points, game forcing. Can be a 3 card suit.
- 3♥** 12-14 points, 3⁺ card support.
- 3♠** 15⁺ points, good 6⁺ card suit.
- 3NT** 15-17 points, balanced. Usually doubleton heart.
- 4m** Splinter, heart fit.
- 4♥** 15-17 points, 3⁺ hearts.

3.9 The auction after 1M-2M

Since responder has limited his hand to a relatively narrow range (8-10 points), game tries are based mostly on shape, not strength.

2♠(M=♥), 2NT(M=♠) Responder relays to next available bid, and opener then shows a side suit, or bids 3M if his suit cannot be shown below 3M (spades when M=♥, clubs when M=♠). The side suit should be at least QJxx.

- 3X, X≠M** Singleton or void in X.
- 2NT(M=♥)** Singleton or void in spades.
- 3M** Usually a 15-16 point (5332) hand. Responder should bid game with 10 or good 9 points.
- 4X, X<M** Asking bid (see chapter 7).

When responder declines a side suit or splinter game try, a 3NT bid by opener is forcing, and shows he is actually exploring slam possibilities. Responder should cuebid first round controls if he has any, or bid 4M if he has none.

3.10 The auction after 1M-2NT (revised Jacoby raise)

The following scheme was originated by Marty Bergen, and a complete description may be found in [MB].

Responder shows 13⁺ points in support of M and usually 4 card support. May be only 3 card support when no other response is attractive as in ♠Axx ♥Axx ♦xxxx ♣AKx. Opener rebids:

- 3♣** Non-minimum with an unspecified singleton OR strong balanced/semi-balanced hand. Responder relays to 3♦ and opener rebids:

- 3♥ ♣ singleton.
 - 3♠ ♦ singleton.
 - 3NT Singleton in OM.
 - 4♣ Strong balanced/semi-balanced hand with ♣ control.
 - 4♦ Strong balanced/semi-balanced hand with ♦ control and no ♣ control.
 - 4♥ Strong balanced/semi-balanced hand with no minor suit control.

 - 3♦ Non-minimum two suiter. Responder is asked to describe his hand further as follows:
 - 3♥ ♣ doubleton.
 - 3♠ ♦ doubleton.
 - 3NT Doubleton in OM.
 - 4♣ Singleton ♣, 13-16 HCPs.
 - 4♦ Singleton ♦, 13-16 HCPs.
 - 4♥ Singleton OM, 13-16 HCPs.
 - 4♠ (4333), 16⁺HCPs.

 - 3♥ An unspecified void. Responder relays to 3♠ and opener rebids:
 - 3NT Void in ♣.
 - 4♣ Void in ♦.
 - 4♦ Void in OM.

 - 3♠ Minimum hand with unspecified singleton. Responder *may* relay to 3NT after which opener rebids:
 - 4♣ Singleton ♣.
 - 4♦ Singleton ♦.
 - 4♥ Singleton OM.

 - 3NT Good hand with 6⁺card suit.
 - 4♣ Decent minimum, ♣A or ♣K.
 - 4♦ Decent minimum, ♦A or ♦K.
 - 4♥(M=♠) Decent minimum, no control in minors.
 - 4M Signoff.
 - 4NT RKC.
- After 1M-2NT-3♣ and 1M-2NT-3♦ responder may refuse to relay and issue an asking bid instead (see chapter 7).

3.11 When responder is a passed hand

A 1NT response over 1M is still semi-forcing. A single raise is still constructive, and a double raise is preemptive.

3.11.1 Reverse Drury

On after a takeout double. Double of a $2\clubsuit$ overcall is also Reverse Drury. After p-1M:

- $2\clubsuit$ Limit raise, 3^+ trump support. Opener rebids:
 - $2\diamond$ Sound opener, balanced or semi-balanced - forcing to 3M.
 - $2M$ Signoff.
 - $2NT$ Semi-solid suit, choice of 3NT or 4M.
 - $3\clubsuit$ Unspecified singleton. Responder relays to $3\diamond$ and responder reveals his singleton by step responses.
 - $3\diamond$ Unspecified two-suiter. Responder relays to $3\heartsuit$ and responder reveals his second suit by step responses.
 - $2OM$ Unspecified void, same responses as above.
- $2\diamond$ Limit raise, fair diamond suit.
- jump shift** Fit showing, good 5^+ card suit, invitational.

Chapter 4

When opponents open the auction

4.1 Overcalls

Overcalls serve three purposes:

- (a) A constructive move to suggest a contract.
- (b) A preemptive measure.
- (c) To indicate a lead.

The requirement for an overcall is to serve at least one of those three purposes. With $\spadesuit Qxxxx \heartsuit Axx \diamond Qxx \clubsuit xxx$, after a $1\clubsuit$ or $1\diamond$ opening bid, a $1\spadesuit$ overcall makes sense as a preemptive measure, although it is neither constructive nor does it indicate a good lead. Over a $1\heartsuit$ opening bid, a $1\spadesuit$ overcall serves no purpose. Similarly, with $\spadesuit xxx \heartsuit AKQx \diamond xxx \clubsuit xxx$ a $1\heartsuit$ overcall over $1\clubsuit$ or $1\diamond$ is a good lead directing bid, although it does not have any preemptive value, and it is hardly constructive. With $\spadesuit Axx \heartsuit Kxx \diamond x \clubsuit AKxxxx$, a $2\clubsuit$ overcall may be the beginning of an auction culminating in a game or even in a slam.

In general, an overcall on the one level can be done with quite weak hands (for example, a $1\spadesuit$ overcall over a minor opening bid should be done with as much as $QTxxx$ in spades and $1/2$ a trick elsewhere), while higher level overcalls, require a strength equivalent to an opening hand or close to it, a reasonably good suit and usually two defensive tricks. An vulnerable overcall at the two level shows at least a sound opening hand.

Overcaller's partner should make a constructive move with a 9-10 point hand or better. Any bid other than a raise is constructive. A new suit is forcing for one round (unless by a passed hand) and shows a decent 5 card suit. Jump shifts are fit showing, double jump shifts are splinters. A single raise or jump raise is preemptive, usually based only on good trump support. A **1NT** response is mildly constructive, showing 8-11 points a good stopper in opponents suit and usually a doubleton in overcaller's suit. A **2NT** response is invitational.

A cuebid or jump cuebid in opponents' suit is a limit raise or better; the level of the cuebid determined by LTT.

After any constructive move initiated by his partner, *overcaller must rebid his suit or make a single raise of his partner's suit with a weak hand.* Here, weakness is measured with respect of the strength already promised by the overcall. For example, holding $\spadesuit KQxxx \heartsuit xx \diamond KQx \clubsuit Qxx$, after the auction $1\clubsuit=1\spadesuit=p=2\diamond=p=?$, since the $1\spadesuit$ overcall did not promise much, a **2NT** response is in order. But holding $\spadesuit Qxx \heartsuit Jx \diamond KQx \clubsuit KQxxx$, after $1\spadesuit=2\clubsuit=p=2\heartsuit=p=?$ overcaller should bid $3\clubsuit$. Any response other than a rebid of his suit or a raise of his partner's suit will be an invitation to game. A new suit bid by overcaller may be showing a feature rather than a real suit.

4.1.1 When an overcall is doubled

If the double is for penalties, redouble is *always* a SOS, showing a singleton or void in overcaller's suit and good holdings in the unbid suits; a new suit is non-forcing. If the double is for takeout, redouble shows a good hand.

4.1.2 When opponents raise their suit after we overcall

Double is responsive, showing a decent hand and length in the unbid suits. The weaker the hand, the better the distribution and tolerance for overcaller's suit.

Good Bad 2NT is on (see chapter 8): 2NT relays to 3♣, and responder makes a competitive bid, weaker than a direct three-level bid.

4.1.3 1NT overcalls

A 1NT overcall shows a 15-18 HCP hand, with opponents suit well stopped. Responses to a 1NT overcall are the same as to an opening bid of 1NT, except that a transfer to opponents suit shows a (4441) or (5440) invitational hand.

4.1.4 Jump overcalls

Jump overcalls are highly undisciplined preemptive bids. A new suit by an unpassed hand is forcing for one round, showing a very good hand.

4.1.5 Interfering with opponents strong 1NT

When opponents open 1NT, our purpose is twofold:

- To deprive them of Stayman and Jacoby transfers.
- To find a fit at the two-level.

Bidding over opponents 1NT is primarily obstructive. We will rarely have a game in such a situation.

After the opponents open a strong 1NT, in both direct and balance seats:

double A one suited hand. Partner relays to 2♣.

2♣ ♣ and a higher ranking suit.

2♦ ♦ and a higher ranking suit.

2♥ ♥ and ♠.

2♠ ♠. Weaker than double followed by 2♠.

If the overcall is doubled, regardless of the meaning of the double, responder redoubles with a one suited hand. Overcaller is asked to relay to the next available bid if the redouble is passed around to him.

The probability of finding a 8⁺ card fit *in one of the overcaller's suits* having a 44xx hand is 59%, having a 54xx hand it is 69%, and having a 55xx hand it is 80%. The probabilities are even higher when balancing, as partner is more likely to have a balanced hand.

4.1.6 Overcalling opponents weak 1NT

Here we bid constructively- our purpose is to overcome the preemptive effect of 1NT.

After the opponents open a weak 1NT, in both direct and balance seats:

double Balanced 12-16 hand. A suit at the 2-level is signoff, 2NT is game forcing- opener relays to 3♣ (or 3♦ with two clubs).

2♣ Strong takeout- 17⁺ points. A 2♦ response is artificial showing a weak hand (5 points or less) and any other response is positive. If 2♣ is doubled, redouble is a positive response, pass shows 4⁺ clubs.

2♦,2♥,2♠ 5⁺ card suit, 11-16 points. A new suit is forcing, a raise is competitive/preemptive.

4.1.7 Interfering with opponents strong 1♣ (Suction)

Here again we try to obstruct opponents' auction and to find a fit in a low level. Over a strong 1♣ opening:

double ♦'s or ♥'s and ♠'s.

1♦ ♥'s or ♠'s and ♣'s.

1♥ ♠'s or ♣'s and ♦'s.

1♠ ♣'s or ♦'s and ♥'s.

1NT (4441) or (5440).

2♣ ♣'s and ♥'s.

2♦ ♦'s and ♠'s.

2NT Two suited monster.

Responder is required to relay to next bid, or bid a suit of his own with no tolerance.

After 1♣=p=1♦:

double ♥'s or ♠'s and ♣'s.

1♥ ♠'s or ♣'s and ♦'s.

1♠ ♣'s or ♦'s and ♥'s.

1NT ♦'s or ♥'s and ♠'s.

2♣ ♣'s and ♥'s.

2♦ ♦'s and ♠'s.

2NT Two suited monster.

All other suit overcalls show one suited hands. If opponents double for penalties, redouble is an SOS. Responder has no forcing response other than 2NT: all jumps are preemptive and so are all raises.

4.1.8 Unusual NT

A direct 2NT overcall or any NT overcall by a passed hand shows a weak hand with the two lower unbid suits. The only forcing response is a cuebid.

4.1.9 Unusual 1NT

When opponents have bid two suits at the one-level, a direct 1NT overcall is a weak takeout for the unbid suits. The only forcing response is a cuebid.

4.1.10 Michaels cue-bids

A direct cue-bid of a minor shows both majors, a direct cue-bid of a major shows the other major and an unknown minor. In the latter case, the cheapest NT response asks for the minor. The only other forcing bid is a cue bid.

4.2 Take-out doubles

Since the reader is probably acquainted with these, we discuss here certain auctions resulting from them.

4.2.1 Responsive doubles

When opponents open the bidding, we double, and next opponent raises the suit below 4♦ (with the exception of 1m=X=3m discussed below), a double by next player is a take-out double: it is showing a desire to compete and uncertainty about the trump suit.

If we originally doubled a major suit, the takeout double usually shows four cards in the OM—therefore the responsive double denies four cards support in the OM, and it usually shows 3 cards there and 4 cards in the each of the unbid suits.

If we originally doubled a minor suit, the takeout double usually shows at least 43 in the majors, therefore the responsive double usually shows four cards support in either major.

4.2.2 The auction after 1m=X=3m

The following scheme was created by Jeff Goldsmith:

double	Relay to 3♥. Either signoff or slammish hand. Responder bids:
pass, 3♠	Signoff.
3NT	One stopper, essentially signoff.
4m	Forcing to the 5-level.
4♣(m=♦)	Signoff.
4M	Slammish.
3♦(m=♣)	Signoff.
3M	Constructive.
3NT	Signoff.
4m	Pick a major.
4♣(m=♦)	Natural, forcing.
4M	No slam interest.

4.2.3 Good/Bad 2NT

After a takeout double, and partner's response, if next hand intervenes, Good/Bad 2NT is on (see chapter 8). For example, RHO deals and opens 1♥: the auction 1♥=X=p=2♦=2♥=2NT=p=3♣=p=3♦ shows a minimal opener with diamonds while 1♥=X=p=2♦=2♥=3♦ shows a strong opener with diamonds.

4.2.4 Scrambling 2NT

When opponents establish a major suit fit at the two-level and partner doubles (for take-out), a 2NT response is artificial initiating a sequence to find a trump suit

The following are examples of scrambling 2NT:

1♠=p=2♠=X=p=2NT

1♥=2♦=2♥=p=p=X=p=2NT

1♠=X=2♠=X=p=2NT

Chapter 5

Multi-2♦

An opening bid of 2♦ shows one of the following hands:

- (a) A weak hand with a 6 card major suit. Disciplined on first or second seats: no side 4 card major, at most one quick trick outside the suit. The suit requirements are QTxxxx at favourable vulnerability, KTxxxx at equal vulnerability and KQxxxx at unfavourable vulnerability. In third seat, this bid is completely undisciplined, except that at unfavourable vulnerability a good suit is required.
- (b) A balanced hand with 20-22 HCPs. May have a 5 card major suit.
- (c) A strong, 8-8.5 playing trick hand with good 6⁺ minor suit, not strong enough to open with 2♣.
- (d) A hand with (4441) shape, 20-24 HCPs (not counting singleton king, queen or jack). With singleton ace, opener subtracts one or two points from his HCP count.

The auction after 2♦:

- pass** Rare, but not impossible! Horrible hand with 6⁺ bad diamonds.
- 2♥** This is the normal response. Opener shows a type (a) hand by passing or bidding 2♠, a type (b) hand by bidding 2NT, a type (c) hand by bidding 3♣ or 3♦ or a type (d) hand by bidding 3♥ with a singleton in a black suit and 3♠ with a singleton in a red suit.
- 2♠, 3♠** Responder has a weak hand, with preference to hearts over spades. Opener is required to bid hearts if that is his suit or to pass.
- 3♥** Responder is willing to play in either 3♥ or 3♠.
- 2NT** Forcing. Responder has at least a sound opening hand. Opener responds:
 - 3♣** Good hearts preempt.
 - 3♦** Good spades preempt.
 - 3♥** Bad hearts preempt.
 - 3♠** Bad spades preempt.
 - 3NT** Type (d) hand. Responder may bid 4♣, and opener bids suit below singleton (4NT shows a singleton in clubs)
 - 4m** Type (c) hand.
 - 4NT** Type (b) hand.

- 3m** Forcing. Either lead directing with 3^+-3^+ in the majors, or slammish hand with long minor. Opener is required to show his suit with types (a) and (c), bid **3NT** with types (b) and (d). Responder passes with a lead directing bid, or bids on with a slammish.
- 4m** Forcing, lead directing, 4^+-4^+ in the majors.
- 4♥** Responder is willing to play in either $4♥$ or $4♠$.
- 4♠** Signoff.

5.1 The auction after $2♦-2♥-2NT$

- 3♣** Puppet Stayman. Notice that responder can not signoff in **3NT** directly, hence **3♣** may show no interest whatsoever in a major.
- 3♦** No five card major, a four card major. Responder bids **3NT** with no four card major, and he bids *the major he does not have* with a four card major.
- 3M** Five card M suit.
- 3NT** No major suit.
- 3♦,3♥** Jacoby transfers. **4NT** after transfer is quantitative. To use RKC, responder must transfer on the four level.
- 3♠** Responder has a slam going hand with a long minor. Opener is asked to relay to **3NT** after which responder will bid **4m**, RKC in m.
- 3NT** Beginning of minor suit signoff. Opener is asked to bid **4♣** and responder will pass or bid **4♦**.
- 4♣** Gerber.
- 4♦,4♥** Transfers to $♥,♠$. New suit by responder is exclusion blackwood, **4NT** is RKC.
- 4♠** Freak hand with minors. Opener usually bids his best minor or **4NT** with good supporting hand, after which responder may show a void with grand slam interest.
- 4NT,5NT** Quantitative.
- 5m** Signoff.
- 5M** Grand Slam Force.

5.2 The auction after $2♦-2♥-3M$

Opener is showing a (4441) hand with 20-24 HCPs. Responder may choose to pass with a horrible hand or bid a new suit asking opener to pass unless that is *NOT* his short suit. However, responder normally bids **3NT** and opener reveals his hand as follows:

M=♥

- 4♣** Singleton spade, 20-22 HCPs.
- 4♦** Singleton spade, 23-24 HCPs.
- 4♥** Singleton club, 20-22 HCPs.
- 4♠** Singleton club, 23-24 HCPs.

M=♠

- 4♣ Singleton heart, 20-22 HCPs.
- 4♦ Singleton heart, 23-24 HCPs.
- 4♥ Singleton diamond, 20-22 HCPs.
- 4♠ Singleton diamond, 23-24 HCPs.

Responder may bid 4NT to inquire about missing key cards in opener's suits (ace of short suit and aces and kings of other suits) (there may be at most four missing key cards). Responses:

- 5♣ Four missing key cards.
- 5♦ Three missing key cards.
- 5♥ Two missing key cards.
- 5♠ One missing key card.
- 5NT No missing key cards.

A new suit by responder is non-forcing. A bid in partner's shortness asks to specify strength further (1 step- no extra, 2 steps, 1 extra HCP etc.)

Lets see some examples:

♠AK53	♠74	2♦	2♠	With good fit and 26-27 HCPs in opener's suits, responder bids slam.
♥A753	♥KQ84	3♠(R)	3NT?	
♦9	♦J84	4♥(d-)	6♥	
♣AKQ5	♣J864	p		

♠AK53	♠QJ82	2♦	2♠
♥A753	♥2	3♠(R)	3NT?
♦9	♦K732	4♥(d-)	4♠
♣AKQ5	♣T972	p	

♠A864	♠QT	2♦	2♥	Reponder signs off cheaply with bad fitting hand.
♥Q	♥K632	3♠(R)	3NT?	
♦AKJ9	♦T742	4♣(h-)	4♦	
♣AKQ5	♣964	p		

♠A864	♠KJ52	2♦	2♥	Reponder signs off in 5♠ with two possible losers.
♥Q	♥87	3♠(R)	3NT?	
♦AKJ9	♦Q853	4♣(h-)	4NT?	
♣AKQ5	♣872	5♦(3)	5♠	
		p		

♠AK96	♠QJ	2♦	2♥	Opener has 21 HCPs with stiff ace, but still decides to open this with 2♦. Responder signs off safely in 4♣.
♥A942	♥K5	3♥(B)	4♣	
♦AQJ2	♦73			
♣A	♣QT98652	p		

♠AK96	♠JT8	2♦	2♥
♥A942	♥QJ73	3♥(B)	3NT?
♦AQJ2	♦K854	4♥(c-)	5♣?
♣A	♣J4	5♦(+0)	5♥
		P	

Opener has been dealt the same again, and still decides to open this with 2♦. Luckily, his partner was not dealt the same hand, and when he counts 26 HCPs in opener's suits, he decides to signoff in 5♥.

5.3 The auction after 2♦-2♥-3m

Opener is showing a 8-8.5 trick hand with good suit. Responder may pass or signoff in 3NT, 5m, 6m or (once in a blue moon) 7m; 4m is invitational. Any other bid is a cheapest cue bid, starting a slam investigation. Opener bids next bid to ask for further key cards, hence 3♠ may be used to signoff in 3NT.

Some relevant statistics

The probability of being dealt a 2♦ opening hand is approximately 3.5%.

The following table gives the probabilities of the different types of hands given a 2♦ opening bid, and also the probability of finding partner with a good hand (13 HCPs or more) having each type of hand

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
71.6%	17.6%	9.6%	1.1%	31.5%	3.2%	5.5%	2.1%

5.4 Dealing with interference over 2♦

After 2♦ is doubled, responder may choose to ignore the double with a weak hand. With a good hand he should redouble. Any other bid is non-forcing.

After interference opener should usually pass with a weak hand. A type (b) hand is introduced with 2NT, if possible, or double, and responder continues as if there was no interference, if possible. A type (c) hand is introduced with 3m. A type (d) hand is introduced with double if opponents bid one of opener's suits, or with a cuebid otherwise. In either case the double is optional.

5.5 Defense against multi-2♦

Action by second hand:

- **double** Balanced 16⁺HCP's.
- **2OM** Takeout of OM, equivalent to a takeout double of a weak 2OM bid.
- **2NT** Both minors, decent hand.
- **3m** Natural, unbalanced decent hand, 5⁺card suit.

Action by fourth hand after 2♦-2♥:

- **double** Takeout for ♥.
- **2♠** Takeout of ♠.
- **2NT** Balanced, 16⁺HCPs.

- **3m** Natural, unbalanced decent hand, 5^+ card suit.

Action by sixth and eight hands are as after a weak 2M opening, limited by inability to take action in second or fourth hands.

Chapter 6

The 2NT opening bid

An opening bid of 2NT shows a weak two suited hand, 55 or better, not with both majors. *Never with 54*. In first or second seat the 2NT opener should have fair suits, say close to $\spadesuit x \heartsuit xx \diamondsuit KJxxx \clubsuit KJxxx$, while in third seat quality may vary more. In first or second seats it denies an outside ace.

6.1 Responses to 2NT

pass Responder either has a weak hand and suspects opponents have a game or he simply thinks he can make 2NT or he has a hand with both majors and 22 or worse in the minors not strong enough to have a game opposite a hand with both minors. In the the third case he will attempt to describe his hand if opponents balance the auction.

3♣ Tolerance for clubs, non-forcing.

3♦ Tolerance for diamonds, usually denies 3⁺clubs, non-forcing.

3♥ Forcing, 3⁺hearts, *no spade tolerance*. Opener responds:

3♠ [0355] exactly.

3NT Both minors.

4♣ Spades and clubs.

4♦ Spades and diamonds.

4♥ Heart suit.

3♠ Forcing, 3⁺spades. Opener responds:

3NT Both minors.

4♣ Hearts and clubs.

4♦ Hearts and diamonds.

4♠ Spade suit.

3NT Signoff.

4♣ Tolerance for clubs and the majors. Opener passes only with both minors.

4♦ Tolerance for diamonds and the majors. Opener passes only with both minors.

4♥ 6⁺good hearts, tolerance for spades.

4♠ 6⁺good spades, tolerance for both minors.

4NT	Opener is asked to show his minor, clubs first with both.
5m,6m,7m	Responder shows tolerance in m and the majors.
5M	Responder shows tolerance for M and both minors, forcing.

When responder bids a second suit, which is not forcing, say after **2NT-3♦-3♥-3♠**, opener should realize that a misfit is highly probable, and should give preference to responder's suit with 2 or 3 card support. By bidding the 4th suit or rebidding his first suit, opener shows a good 6⁺ card suit with at most a singleton in partner's suits.

6.2 The auction after **2NT=double**

pass	Opener is required to bid his lowest ranking suit if the double is passed to him.
redouble	Ambiguous strength. Opener is required to bid his major or 3♣ with none.

All other bids are unchanged, except that opener should not make any free bids.

6.3 The auction after **2NT=p=p=double=p=p**

Opener must always pass any balancing bid by the opponents! Responder bids:

redouble	Pick a major, bid 3♣ with none.
3♣	Tolerance for clubs.
3♦	Tolerance for diamonds.
3♥	Intermediate hand with both majors and some tolerance in at least one minor.

6.4 Some examples

The auction goes **2NT=p** and you hold:

- ♠Axx ♥Axxx ♦Axx ♣Axx Bid **3♠**. If partner has a major 4♥ or 4♠ will probably be cold, and if he doesn't, 5♣ or 5♦ will not be very difficult.
- ♠Ax ♥xxxx ♦Qxx ♣Kxxx Bid **3♣**. A major suit may be lost, but prospects of making 4 in any suit are not very good, so it does not matter much in which suit we will be down.
- ♠x ♥xxxx ♦xxxx ♣xxxx Wonderful hand to have! Bid **4NT** and pass any response
- ♠Axx ♥Ax ♦Qxxxx ♣Axx Bid **3♦**. Partner is unlikely to pass, and if he happens to have spades (and clubs), 4♠ will be cold. If partner bids 3♥, we can either play there, gamble a 4♥, or play a safe 4♣.
- ♠KJxx ♥Kxxxx ♦Kx ♣Kx Pass. Partner is likely to have both minors. We are likely to get another chance to bid.
- ♠KQJxxx ♥xxx ♦xx ♣xx Bid **3♦** and hope your partner does not have diamonds.
- ♠AKxx ♥AKxx ♦AKxx ♣x Bid **3♠**.

The auction goes **2NT=X** and you hold:

- ♠Axxx ♥Kxx ♦Axx ♣xxx Pass. You are indifferent to partners shape.

♠Axxx ♥Qxx ♦xxxx ♣xx Bid 3♦ just as you would without the double.

♠Axxxx ♥Qxxx ♦xx ♣xx Redouble. If partner has a major suit, you are in great shape, otherwise you really don't mind in which minor you will go down.

♠QJxxxxx ♥xx ♦Axx ♣x Bid 3♦. Partner is likely to correct to 3♥ which you will pass.

Is this sound?

Lets look at the worst case: you open **2NT** with five spades and five diamonds. From the point of view of LTT you will be safe unless there are 15 trumps or less (with probability 17.6%) or there are 16 trumps with fit in spades but no double/double fit (with probability of 7.9%). So you are safe about 75% of the time. With better distribution or with [x5(5x)] or [xx55] hands, **2NT** will be even safer. Not to mention that with any (55xx) here will be 17 trumps 21% of the time and 18⁺trumps 40% of the time.

While it is true that if opponents end up playing the hand they will play it almost double dummy, they had to get to their contract after we preempted them to the three level!

Chapter 7

Strong opening bids and slam bidding

7.1 The 2♣ opening bid

A 2♣ opening bid shows a *very* strong, 9⁺trick hand or any hand with 23⁺HCPs. Forcing to the 3 level over a 2♦ response, and game forcing over any other response. Responses are control-showing (A=two controls, K=one control):

2♦ 0 or 1 controls, only response which does not establish a game forcing situation.

2♥ 2 controls.

2♠ 3 controls.

2NT 4 controls in two suits.

3♣ 4 controls in three suits.

3♦ 5⁺controls.

3♥,3♠,4♣,4♦ Solid 7⁺card suits, no outside controls.

After responder shows his controls, opener makes a minimal NT rebid showing a 23-24 HCPs balanced hand, or he bids a good 5⁺card suit, *jumps* to 3NT showing a huge balanced hand, or starts a TAB sequence (see below).

When opponents interfere over 2♣, *double is for penalties*, otherwise control showing step responses as above starting with pass showing 0 or 1 controls.

7.1.1 The auction after 2♣-2X-2NT

3♣ Puppet Stayman as after 2♦-2♥-2NT.

3♦,3♥,3♠,3NT Transfers to 3♥,3♠,4♣,4♦. Opener relays to next bid. Responder will rebid 3NT with a five card suit, or with a 6⁺card suit shows trump quality in step responses (excluding 3NT) as follows:

1 step No top honour.

2 steps One top honours.

3 steps Two top honours.

4 steps Three top honours, could be 5⁺cards.

A transfer to a major, followed by 4M shows a 6-7 topless card suit with no extras.

4♣,4♦,4♥,4♠ Semi-solid 7⁺ card suits.

5♣,5♦,5♥,5♠ Solid 7⁺ card suits, some outside control(s).

A new suit immediately after suit agreement, or a natural bid by responder followed by jump into a new suit by opener starts an asking bid process. A raise by opener is an automatic asking bid, unless responder has shown zero or one controls or opener raises to game exactly.

A bid of 3NT immediately after trump agreement asks responder to show cheapest extra feature (queen, or after 2♦ response, possibly a king).

7.1.2 Trump asking bids (TAB)

A jump to a new suit by the 2♣ opener asks about the number of cards there- responder uses a step response scheme:

first step 0 or 1 cards.

second step 2 cards.

third step 3 cards.

fourth step 4 cards.

fifth step Singleton honour.

A NT bid by opener following the first TAB asks about top honors. Responses are:

first step No top honour.

second step One top honour.

third step Two top honours.

fourth step Three top honours.

If the response to the first TAB is negative, ie. one or two steps, a new suit bid starts a new TAB sequence in that suit. If the response is positive, a bid of a new suit is an asking bid.

7.1.3 Asking bids

These asks for control and length in the named suit:

first step No third round control.

second step Third round control.

third step Second round control.

fourth step First round control.

fifth step AK.

A second asking bid in a suit (either immediately following first asking bid or later in the auction) asks for further clarification. If the response to the first asking bid was positive, the responses to the second are:

first step Control by shortage.

- second step** Control by honour.
- third step** A, Ax, K or Kx.
- fourth step** AQ(x . . . x) or KQ(x . . . x)

If the response to the first asking bid was negative, the responses to the second are:

- first step** xxx.
- second step** xxxx.
- third step** xxxxx or longer.

A raise of responder's suit is an automatic trump quality asking bid if below game. If on game level, responder shows trump quality if he has two or more controls or one control and considerable extras (queens). A jump raise is always a trump quality asking bid.

7.1.4 4NT and 5NT

Unless part of a TAB process, 4NT asks for queens. Responses:

- 5♣** No queen.
- 5♦** Minor suit queen.
- 5♥** Major suit queen.
- 5♠** Two queens of same colour or rank.
- 5NT** Two queens of different colour and rank.
- 6♣** Three queens.

A *jump* to 5NT is checking trump quality, see section (7.5). A non-jump to 5NT asks for extra length in the agreed trump suit. Minimum trump length is defined as follows:

- When responder supported: 3 cards.
- When responder has bid the suit: 5 cards.
- When responder jumped in the suit: 6 cards.

In response to 5NT responder bids 6♣ with no extra length, 6♦ with one extra trump etc.

Examples

♠A5 ♥AK ♦K93 ♣AKQJT4	♠J963 ♥QJT543 ♦A8 ♣3	2♣ 3♣ 3NT 5♥? 7NT	2♥(2) 3♥ 4♥ 5NT(Q) p	When responder discovers the 6 ⁺ card heart suit, he deems 5♥ to be safe and when responder shows a top honour, he can count 13 tricks
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♠KQ ♥KQJ97 ♦AJ9 ♣AK9	♠AT9542 ♥4 ♦K742 ♣QT	2♣ 2NT 3♠ 4NT? 6NT	2♠(3) 3♥ 4♦(1) 5♦(mQ) p
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♠AKQ	♠T95	2♣	2♠
♥-	♥AKJT9874	4♣?	4♦(0-1)
♦AKQT942	♦J6	5♦?	5♠(2)
♣AQ4	♣-	7♦	p

Notice West's TAB in clubs: he is intending to play in diamonds, but when he learns partner has AK somewhere, he realizes that he needs partner to hold ♣K unless... partner has at most 1 club and 2⁺diamonds!

♠AK	♠Q7	2♣	2♥
♥K96	♥2	3♦	4♦
♦AKQJ64	♦T872	4♥?	5♣(2nd)
♣K8	♣AJ9632	6♦	p

When the diamond fit is established, West realizes that he may have three losers- nevertheless 5♦ seems reasonable and it doesn't hurt to see if hearts can be ruffed- East's 5♣ break the good news: ♣A and singleton heart. An asking bid in clubs wouldn't be a great success, though.

♠AQ5	♠43	2♣	2♥(2)
♥AKQT	♥J86542	2NT	3♦
♦A98	♦K6	3♥	3♠(0)
♣A75	♣KJT	3NT?	4♥(no)
		6♥	p

When East shows a topless 6⁺heart suit- West needs a minor suit queen or a seventh heart or ♠K for a cold slam or a minor suit jack for a 75% slam; Both ♠K and a minor suit queen make a grand! How is he going to find out? 3NT! Hmmm...no minor suit queens. Lets gamble the slam anyway...

♠AKQ	♠JT75	2♣	2♥(2)
♥KQ64	♥A2	3♣	4♣
♦A	♦92	5NT ?	6♦(Q)
♣AK864	♣QT732	7♣	p

Simple, isn't it?

♠AKQJ75	♠4	2♣	2♠(3)
♥AQT	♥K96	3♠	4♣
♦7	♦A432	5NT(?)	6♦(Q)
♣AKJ	♣QT973	7♣	p

The startled East shows his ♣Q and West can count ... 14-15 tricks?

♠AK	♠Q863	2♣	2♥(2)
♥AKJ852	♥T6	3♥	3NT
♦J7	♦A52	4♥	5♥!
♣AK5	♣Q874	6♥	p

In all the examples up to this one, responder sits quietly and answers questions politely, but no more! When east realizes they have some sort of a fit, he discovers his extra 2 queens and decides opener should be told the good news. Making 7. Notice that west cannot investigate the hand without risking his plus score- he must assume east will not fall asleep with considerable extras.

♠AKT2	♠863	2♣	2♦(0,1)
♥KJ2	♥-	2NT	3NT
♦AQ	♦K985432	4♣	4♥(1)
♣KQJ5	♣943	5♦	p

Missing two aces, opener signs off in 5♦.

♠AK7	♠6543	2♣	2♦(0-1)
♥AKJ5	♥QT832	3♣	3♥
♦A	♦K87	4♥	5♣
♣KJ743	♣Q	6♥	p

In the old days East wouldnt have to bid a humiliating 2♦ over 2♣ (I had 7 good points partner!) but this new control thing ... Anyway, east has his way again: ♣Q must be worth something opposite partner's good 5⁺card suit, no? and a king and another queen. Lets show partner our cheapest feature ...

♠2	♠AK743	2♣	2♠(3)	A perfect hand for TAB- when East shows ♠AK, West quickly discovers his heart holding, bidding the cold grand slam.
♥AKJ943	♥Q2	4♥?	4NT(2)	
♦AK	♦J9	5NT?	6♦(Q)	
♣AKQ5	♣T742	7NT	p	

♠AK	♠Q98632			Here is a deal on which our methods fail miserably: 6♠ by east is the right spot, but there is no way to get there. (Is there?) This slam is biddable using standard methods though.
♥AKQJT7	♥-	2♣	2♦(0-1)	
♦JT2	♦K9	???		
♣AK	♣Q9843			

7.2 The 2M opening bid

A 2M opening bid shows a strong 8 or 8 1/2 trick hand with either good 6⁺M suit playable opposite a small singleton. Unlike Acol's 2M opening bid, it is not used to introduce two-suited hands. Opener may pass with a bad hand. *The bid establishes M as the trump suit*, therefore, all further bids tend to show features (high cards) rather than real suits. A 2NT response is negative, denying possession of an ace or of two kings. A raise shows some trump support with no outside controls, while a jump raise shows some shape with no outside controls. Any other non-jump response is showing the cheapest feature, and is game forcing. A jump shift shows a good non-solid 5⁺ card suit, at least KQxxx with no additional outside controls.

Opener bids next available bid to ask for further features; any other bid in a suit is an asking bid. When opener makes an asking bid in a suit which responder has already shown a feature, responses are:

One step King.

Two steps Ace.

After a negative response:

- 2M-2NT-3♣-3M Some trumps, maybe a queen here and there.
- 2M-2NT-3♣-4M Signoff- not bust but nothing worth mentioning.

After a positive response, when responder runs out of features to show, he may jump to 4M showing no extras or bids the cheapest between 3M or 3NT showing something extra. Over 3M opener may bid 3NT to ask for a feature: responder bids 4M with a top honour in M or shows other cheapest feature.

Responder may not RKC; opener may RKC only by jumping to 4NT, otherwise 4NT asks for further description.

Some examples

♠K4	♠A3	2♥	2♠	After showing ♣A and ♠A responder bids 3♥ to indicate extras (♥Q). When opener discovers the third round control in ♦, and first round control in ♣, he inquires about trump quality, finding the cold grand slam.
♥AKT9863	♥QJ52	2NT	3♣	
♦AK6	♦T8	3♦	3♥(extra)	
♣2	♣AQ974	4♦?	4♠(3rd)	
		5♣?	5♥(A)	
		5NT?	6♦(Q)	
		7♥	p	

♠K4	♠QJ75	2♥	2NT	Responder now shows his almost bust hand. Without one of his queens he would have passed 2♥.
♥AKT9863	♥74	3♣	3♥	
♦AK6	♦Q942	4♥	p	
♣2	♣T83			

♠AJT	♠K93	2♥	2♠
♥AQJ764	♥K5	2NT	3♥(extra)
♦2	♦J85	3NT	4♥(♥honour)
♣AK8	♣JT532	p	

♠AJT	♠KQ3	2♥	2♠	Notice opener's 4NT bid- it shows interest in slam if responder has any extras, and in this sequence the only extra responder can have is a heart honour.
♥AQJ764	♥K5	2NT	3♥(extra)	
♦2	♦985	3NT	4♣(♥honour)	
♣AK8	♣QT532	4♦	4♠	
		4NT?	6♥	
		p		

♠AJT	♠Q762	2♥	3♦	Responder shows his ♦AKQ and the slam is bid. Notice opener's 4♥ bid: partner is supposed to pass it with no additional features or bid on with more features. If opener wanted to keep auction open, he would have to start an asking bid process.
♥AQJ764	♥T3	3♥	4♦	
♦2	♦AKQ76	4♥	5♦	
♣AK8	♣Q7	6♥	p	

♠AKQ7653	♠92	2♠	3♣
♥-	♥K95	3♦	3♥
♦A742	♦983	3♠	4♠(no extras)
♣KJ	♣A5432	p	

♠AKQ7653	♠-	2♠	2NT	Finally a nightmare hand! As said before 2♠ sets the trump suit, so if responder is thinking of suggesting some other trump suit- he'd better forget about it- there is simply no way to do so. Opener is supposed to have a <i>good</i> suit, playable opposite a small singleton, so responder should not panic, and just bid his hand, being careful not to make encouraging noises.
♥-	♥QT7632	3♣	3♦	
♦A742	♦KJT5	3♥	4♠(no extras)	
♣KJ	♣T86	p	(phew!)	

7.3 4NT

4NT is RKC After suit agreement. If no suit has been agreed upon, and NT was mentioned in the auction, 4NT is quantitative.

7.3.1 Roman Key Card Blackwood

Responses show number of controls, where a control is either an ace or the king of trumps.

- 5♣ 0 or 3 controls.
- 5♦ 1 or 4 controls.

5♥ 2 controls without the queen of trumps.

5♠ 2 controls with the queen of trumps.

5NT Two controls with a void. If partner bids 6X, X not the trump suit, he is asking to go to 7 if X is the void. If you cannot possibly be void in X, partner would like you to be void in a suit above the trump suit. If you are known to be void in X (say, after you splintered), 6X is asking you to bid a grand slam with full values.

6X Either three controls and a void in X, or if X is known to be your side suit, you are showing three controls with a void.

After a 5♣ or 5♦ response, the next non-trump suit bid asks for the queen of trumps. Responses: trump suit=no queen; other suit=queen and king of that suit; 5NT= queen, cannot show king below 6-level.

If asker skips a suit when asking, he shows all key cards and is asking for the king of that suit.

5NT after a RKC response, confirms possession of the queen of trumps and asks for lowest ranking king. Responded bids the grand slam with 3 kings, shows a king if he holds one or signs off with no king to show.

A 4NT response to an opening bid is old-fashioned Blackwood.

Some examples:

♠J	♠AKxxx	1♣	1♠
♥AQx	♥x	2♦	2♥(game forcing)
♦AKJx	♦xxxx	3♥	4NT
♣KQTxx	♣Axx	5♣	5♥(Q?)
		6♦(no)	p

♠J	♠AKxxx	1♣	1♠
♥AQx	♥x	2♦	2♥(game forcing)
♦AKQx	♦xxxx	3♥	4NT
♣KQTxx	♣Axx	5♣	5♥(Q?)
		6♣(yes, ♣K)	7♦
		p	

♠AQxxx	♠Kxx	1♠	2♦
♥Kxx	♥-	2NT	3♠
♦KQx	♦AJxxxx	4NT	5NT
♣Ax	♣Kxxx	5♥(♥void?)	7♠(yes)
		p	

DOPI is used over interference. When a RKC response is doubled, redouble shows second round control in that suit.

7.3.2 Voidwood (or Exclusion Blackwood)

This convention is used to show a void and to inquire about key-cards outside it. Jumps above splinter level, and new suits after a Texas transfer show a void in the named suit. Step responses as in RKC.

7.3.3 Extra values 4NT

The 4NT bidder is not worried about controls, he needs extra strength. Responder replies:

- 5 in trump suit** Nothing extra.
- 5 in another suit** A feature: a control, or if partner bid that suit, possibly a queen. Extra values.
- 6 in trump suit** No interest in a grand slam.
- 5NT** Wonderful hand- interest in a grand slam.

7.4 Jump shifts

A (strong) jump shift shows a hand capable of producing a slam opposite a sound opener. Responder has either:

- (a) A long solid/semi-solid suit. Responder will rebid his suit if not raised.
- (b) Good fit with opener and good 5⁺card side suit. Responder will raise opener's suit.
- (c) Strong 6⁺card suit, semibalanced. Responder will rebid **NT**.
- (d) Extravagant support in opener's suit. Responder will jump raise opener's suit.
- (e) A solid 8⁺card suit. Responder will jump in his suit.

In any case, the final contract will be in opener's suit, responder's suit or **NT**. A new suit by responder is a cue-bid showing a type (a) or (b) hand, with extra values.

Opener responds in this order of priorities:

- Rebid his suit with a 5⁺card suit with 2 out of the 3 top honours.
- Jump rebid his suit with a solid 6⁺card suit.
- Raise responder with at least Qxx.
- Jump raise responder with at least QJxx.
- Bid a new suit (a cue-bid).
- Bid **NT** with a balanced hand.

7.5 Asking bids

After suit agreement, when a new suit would be a cue-bid:

- A jump in a new suit is asking for control in that suit. Responder bids:
 - 1 step** No first or second round control.
 - 2 steps** Second round control.
 - 3 steps** First round control.
 - 4 steps** AK, singleton ace, or void with extra trump support.
- A jump to 5 of the trump suit is asking for trump quality- responder should go to slam with good trumps.

- A jump to 5NT is checking trump quality for a grand slam. Responder bids:

6♣	No top honour.
6♦	The queen.
6♥	The king or ace.
6♠	Two top honours.

Responder may be unable to respond in the six-level with a not-so-exciting hand, holding a low ranking trump suit. In that case he will simply signoff in the six-level.

- A jump to a new suit on the six-level asks to bid grand slam with third round control in named suit.

Chapter 8

When opponents interfere

This chapter will attempt to assign meaning to most competitive auctions arising after we open the bidding. Since it is impossible to describe all possible competitive auctions, most of the principles described in this chapter will be introduced through specific examples. The reader will have to generalise those to the new real-life situations he will no doubt face.

8.1 Responding after an overcall

- A 1NT response is natural, 5-9 HCPs with a stopper in opponents' suit.
- A raise of partner's minor is still strong.
- A raise of partner's major shows 0-8 points, 3 card support.
- A jump raise of opener's suit is preemptive, 4⁺ card support, 0-7 points.
- A jump shift is preemptive.
- A double jump shift is fit showing, with side suit.
- A 2/1 response shows a fair 5⁺ card suit with 10⁺ HCPs.
- A 3/1 response is almost game forcing.
- Double is negative.
- A NT bid is natural.
- A cue-bid is a limit raise or better.
- A jump cuebid is a game forcing splinter.

8.2 Responding after 1m=double

- A jump shift is preemptive.
- A new suit on the one-level is forcing, 6⁺ points, 4⁺ card suit.
- A new suit on the two-level shows a fair 5⁺ card suit, 5-9 points, non-forcing.
- 2NT is a preempt in m, 5⁺ card support, 0-6 points.
- 3m is a limit raise.

- A double jump shift is a splinter.
- Redouble shows a 10⁺point hand. May have 4⁺card support, in which case this will be the beginning of a game forcing raise. Usually denies a major suit.

8.3 Responding after 1M=double

- A jump shift is preemptive.
- A new suit on the one-level is forcing, 6⁺points, 4⁺card suit.
- A new suit on the two-level shows a fair 5⁺card suit, 5-9 points, non-forcing.
- 2NT is a limit raise or better, 4⁺card support.
- 3M is preemptive, 4⁺card support, 0-7 points.
- A double jump shift is a splinter.
- Redouble shows a 10⁺point hand. Responder may be beginning a limit or game forcing raise with 3 card support or he may be too strong for a 2/1 response, or he has a good defensive hand, inappropriate for any other response.

8.4 Negative doubles

When we open a suit at the one-level and next person overcalls a suit, a double by partner usually shows 4⁺cards in each unbid major, or, when both majors have been bid, 4⁺cards in both minors, and a desire to compete. *But not always.* The upper limit level for negative doubles is a matter of taste- I suggest 4♦. High-level negative doubles are highly optional.

After 1♣=1♦=?, a negative double is the correct action holding both ♠Qxxx ♥Kxxx ♦xx ♣Qxx and ♠AKxx ♥AKxx ♦xx ♣Kxx. *A negative double is unlimited.*

After 1♥=2♣=? the following hands qualify for a negative double:

♠Kxxx ♥Jx ♦Kxxx ♣xxx 4 spades and some values. We are prepared for a possible 2♥ rebid. This is about the minimum we can have.

♠KQxx ♥xx ♦AKxx ♣Axx Again, no upper limit.

♠KJxx ♥x ♦AQJxx ♣Qxx A good 5-card minor can be concealed.

♠Kxxxx ♥xx ♦Kxx ♣Qxx This hand is too weak for a 2♠ bid, therefore the only way to show our spade suit is to double.

♠AKQ ♥xx ♦Kxxx ♣Jxxx Tough hand. A negative double is probably the most descriptive bid

The following hands *do not* qualify for a negative double:

♠Kxxx ♥xx ♦Jxxx ♣Qxx Too weak.

♠Kxxx ♥xxx ♦Kxx ♣Qxx We bid 2♥.

♠AQx ♥xx ♦Kxxxx ♣Qxx We bid 2♦.

♠AKx ♥Qx ♦xxxx ♣QJxx We bid 3NT.

After $1\heartsuit=1\spadesuit=?$ the following hands qualify for a negative double:

- ♠Kxx ♡xx ♦Kxxx ♣Qxxx Playing matchpoints, we may choose to give false preference to ♡ later, while retaining the option to compete to the 3 level in a minor suit.
- ♠Kxx ♡xx ♦Kxxxx ♣Qxx Too weak for a $2\diamond$ bid. If partner bids $2\clubsuit$, we will give preference to $2\heartsuit$.
- ♠xxx ♡x ♦KQxxxx ♣Qxx Again, too weak for $2\diamond$. If partner bids $2\clubsuit$, we will bid $2\diamond$
- ♠KJx ♡xx ♦AQxx ♣Axxx We can start by showing our minors followed by 3NT. Partner will be able to make an informed decision.

The auction after opener responds to a negative double should follow this (incomplete) general scheme:

- When responder has shown one suit and opener supported it:
 - A single raise in either suit is invitational.
 - A jump raise is forcing and so is a new suit.
 - A cuebid in opponents suit is game forcing, either asking for a stopper or showing a control with a slammish hand.
 - A jump cuebid is a splinter.
 - A NT bid is natural. May be showing a good 3 card suit.
- When responder has shown one suit and opener rebids his suit:
 - Pass.
 - A raise of opener's suit is invitational.
 - A bid in responder's suit is signoff, 5^+ card suit.
 - A jump raise in opener's suit is game forcing.
 - A jump in responders suit is game forcing, showing a good 5^+ card suit, *and support for opener's suit*.
 - A new suit is forcing.
 - A cue bid is forcing for one round, often seeking a stopper in opponent's suit or 3 card support.
 - A jump cuebid is a splinter, showing support for opener's suit.
 - A NT bid is natural.
- When responder has shown two suits and opener supported one of them:
 - A bid of the other suit is non-forcing, showing a 5^+ card suit.
 - A raise is invitational.
 - A cuebid shows a singleton, game forcing.
 - A jump cuebid shows a void, game forcing.
 - A NT bid is natural.
- When responder has shown two suits and opener rebids his suit:
 - A raise is invitational.
 - A bid in one of responders suits is signoff.

- A cue-bid is game forcing.
 - A jump cue-bid is a splinter.
 - A **NT** bid is natural.
- When responder has shown two suits and opponents raise their suit, double shows a desire to compete, and asks responder to either pick one of his suits, or to support opener's suit, if opponents bid below the upper limit level for the negative double.
 - When responder makes a negative double, opponents interfere in a suit and opener passes, a second double by responder is still a negative double, if opponents bid below the upper limit level for the negative double.

8.5 Weak jump shifts in competition

Those should be used with extreme care! A Jump shift to the two-level shows a 6 (rarely 7) card suit with good spots, and nothing much else.

A jump shift to the three level shows a 7⁺ card suit with good spots, and nothing much else. *Three-level WJSC are off at unfavourable vulnerability.*

Responder should bear in mind that after a 1m opening, opener is likely to have a strong balanced hand, therefore a WJSC implies that there is no game opposite such a hand.

The only forcing bid available to opener after a WJSC is a cue bid.

8.6 When opponents interfere after 1m=p=1M

The system does not include support doubles or redoubles.

When opponents overcall:

Pass Trap pass or bad hand. May include a 15-19 balanced hand with length in opponents suit. Responder must reopen with shortness in opponents suit.

Double Take out. Good hand, including 15-17 balanced and 18-19 with no stopper, no four card support and no natural rebid.

2M,3M Unchanged.

2NT 18-19 balanced, opponents suit stopped. Responder may NMF or cue bid with shortness in opponents suit. A rebid of 3M is forcing. **Notice** This is an exception to Good/Bad 2NT.

3m Good hand, natural.

cue bid Asking for stopper.

3NT Running suit, stopper.

4m Good hand 4⁺ cards in M, 6⁺ cards in m.

4om Splinter.

Jump cue bid Splinter.

When 1NT,2m,2om are available, their meaning is unchanged, except that 1NT shows exactly two card support.

When opponents double:

Pass Minimum, no four card support.

Redouble Take out. Good hand, including 15-19 balanced willing to defend. Denies four card support. If 18-19, no three card support.

1NT 15-17 balanced, three card support.

2m Unchanged.

2M,3M Unchanged.

2NT 18-19 balanced, exactly two card support. Responder may NMF or cue bid with shortness in opponents suit. A rebid of 3M is forcing, showing a 6⁺ card suit.

3m Good hand, natural.

cue bid Asking for stopper.

3NT Running suit.

4m Good hand 4⁺ cards in M, 6⁺ cards in m.

Double jump shift Splinter.

8.7 Game tries and competitive raises

When responder supports opener's suit, and opponents establish a fit, a non-jump raise to 3 of our suit is competitive. If there is an unbid suit below 3 of our suit, a bid of that suit is a game try. If there are more than one such suit, a choice of a particular one tends to show values there. Double is for penalty.

If opponents' suit is exactly below our suit, the game tries described above are no longer available, therefore, double is a game try while 3 of our suit remains competitive (Maximal Double.)

All of the following auctions describe game tries:

1♠=2♣=2♠=3♣=3♥ Opener invites with something in hearts.

1♠=2♦=2♠=3♦=3♥ Opener does not say anything about hearts here.

1♠=X=2♠=3♣=3♥ Note that opponents have an established fit.

1♥=2♦=2♥=3♦=X

None of the following auctions describe game tries:

1♠=2♣=2♠=3♣=X Penalty as 3♦ and 3♥ are available for a game try.

1♠=2♣=2♠=3♣=3♠ Strictly competitive.

8.8 Good/Bad 2NT

This device is used to differentiate competitive rebids by opener from strong ones.

When opponents overcall at the two-level and we have no established fit, a 2NT bid is artificial, asking responder to relay to 3♣, after which opener will make a non-reversing competitive bid. A direct non-raise bid at the three-level shows a stronger hand. Responder may choose to by-pass 3♣ and either raise opener's suit or bid his own 6⁺ card suit.

Good/Bad 2NT is *off* in the following cases:

- When in a game forcing situation.
- When opponents make a penalty double.

- When it is obvious we own the hand.
- After $1m=p=1M=2X$.

In all the following auctions, **2NT** is Good/Bad:

$1\heartsuit=2\clubsuit=p=2\spadesuit=2NT$

$1\diamond=1\spadesuit=X=2\spadesuit=2NT$

$1\diamond=X=1\spadesuit=2\heartsuit=2NT$ Opener is denying spade support here.

$1\heartsuit=1\spadesuit=1NT=2\spadesuit=2NT$

$1\heartsuit=p=1NT=2\spadesuit=2NT$

In all the following auctions, opener is showing a good hand:

$1\heartsuit=2\clubsuit=p=2\spadesuit=3\heartsuit$

$1\diamond=1\spadesuit=X=2\spadesuit=3\heartsuit$

$1\diamond=1\spadesuit=X=2\spadesuit=3\diamond$

$1\diamond=X=1\spadesuit=2\heartsuit=3\clubsuit$ Opener is denying spade support here.

$1\heartsuit=1\spadesuit=1NT=2\spadesuit=3\clubsuit$

$1\heartsuit=p=1NT=2\spadesuit=3\clubsuit$

In none of the following auctions, **2NT** is Good/Bad:

$1\clubsuit=1\spadesuit=2\clubsuit=2\spadesuit=2NT$ We have a fit!

$1\spadesuit=x=2\spadesuit=p=2NT$ There is no interference at the two-level.

$1\heartsuit=p=2\clubsuit=2\spadesuit=2NT$ We are in a game forcing situation.

8.9 When the opponents show a two-suited hand

There are basically two cases: either both suits are known or only one suit is known.

When both suits are known:

- A raise is competitive.
- A cue-bid in the lower suit shows a limit raise or better in opener's suit.
- A cue-bid in the upper suit shows length in the unbid suit and 10^+ points.
- A bid in the unbid suit is non-forcing.
- A **NT** bid is natural, showing some sort of stoppers.
- Jump cuebids are game forcing splinters, showing support for partners suit.
- Double is for penalties, suggesting some stopper(s).

When only one suit is known:

- A direct raise shows a constructive raise.
- A cuebid is a limit raise or better.
- A jump cuebid is an unknown splinter.

- **2NT** is natural.
- **3NT** shows a game forcing raise.
- 4 of opener's suit is preemptive.
- 4 of the suit below partner's suit is semi-preemptive (good support, good shape, about one quick trick outside trumps.)

8.10 Balancing

[Unfinished]

Chapter 9

Preempting and bidding over opponents' preempts

9.1 Preemptive bidding

The following table, which will be used to justify some of the assertions made later in this section, gives the probabilities for certain total number of trumps (rows) given you hold a certain length in a suit (columns). For example, holding a seven card suit, the probability for 20 total trumps is 10.2%.

The total number of trumps here is the fit in your long suit plus oponent's longest fit, *not necessarily your longest fit*.

	5	6	7	8	9	10
12	1.2%	–	–	–	–	–
13	6.2%	1.6%	–	–	–	–
14	12.3%	6.0%	1.6%	–	–	–
15	18.4%	12.4%	5.4%	0.8%	–	–
16	21.8%	20.4%	13.9%	5.4%	–	–
17	18.7%	22.9%	22.8%	16.7%	5.9%	–
18	11.9%	17.9%	22.6%	23.5%	17.9%	7.9%
19	6.1%	11.0%	17.6%	23.2%	23.8%	25.0%
20	2.4%	5.2%	10.2%	17.6%	26.0%	31.6%
21	0.7%	1.8%	4.3%	8.7%	16.5%	17.1%
22	0.2%	0.5%	1.3%	3.1%	7.1%	9.2%
23	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.9%	2.4%	6.6%
24	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%	2.6%
25	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	–
26	–	–	–	–	–	–

9.1.1 Minor suit preempts

Many players will open 3m with both a six or seven card suit. This is quite sound if you are left to play there but the ambiguous length makes life harder for responder. I propose to bid six card minors on the three level and unflawed seven card minors on the four level (unless red/white). A flaw in a hand with a seven card minor is either a (7222) distribution or bad spots in the long suit, or both.

Is this sound? It is, at least from the point of view of LTT. Holding a six card minor, there will be 16⁺trumps 80% of the time, and holding a seven card suit there will be 18⁺trumps 56% and 17 trumps 22.8% of the time.

The 3m preempt

Usually six card suit or seven card suit with bad spots or (7222) distribution. Red/white 3m shows either a seven card solid suit or a seven card semi-solid suit with side entry.

A new suit by responder is forcing, either natural lead directing with support or psyching with support. Opener raises with 3 cards, and responder corrects with a lead director or psyche. A new suit by passed hand is always lead directing.

When fourth hand doubles and the double is passed around to responder, he may run out with a one or two-suited hand: 3X is to play, redouble shows a two suiter asking opener to show cheapest suit with tolerance.

The 3NT preempt

Eight or good seven card minor (say, three of top five honours, not (7222)). Red/white shows a solid eight card suit. Responses:

- pass To play or two suited runout.
- 4♣, 5♣ Pass with clubs or bid your diamonds.
- 4♦ Pass with diamonds, bid 5♣ with clubs.
- 4M To play.
- 4NT RKC.

Responder usually relays to 4♣ and opener passes or bids 4♦.

After 3NT=X:

- pass To play if suit runs opposite Kx or better.
- 4♣, 5♣ Pass with clubs or bid your diamonds.
- 4♦ Pass with diamonds, bid 5♣ with clubs.
- 4M To play.
- XX Two suited runout. Opener bids his minor and responder may bid his lowest suit.

After 3NT=p=p=X opener redoubles with solid suit or passes otherwise. If double is passed around to responder, he bids:

- XX To play if suit runs opposite Kx or better.
- 4♣, 5♣ Unaffected.
- 4♦, 4♥ Lowest of two suits

Suggested defense against 3NT

The hand in second seat will usually have two chances to bid, hence a direct bid over 3NT shows a strong opening hand:

- X Balanced, good 15 up.
- 4m Takeout, shortness in om.
- 4M Natural.

Hand in fourth and sixth seats bids with a sound opener or better:

- X Balanced, good 13 up.
- 4♦ Takeout with both majors.
- 4M Natural.

9.1.2 Major suit preempts

It is becoming fashionable to preempt to 2M with five card suits. Again, this is quite sound from the point of view of LTT, but ambiguous suit length makes life hard for responder. Our two-level major suit preempts have almost always six card suits, and a 3M preempt has almost always a seven card suit. (3M preempts with six card suits are very unsound).

The 4X preempt

4♣,4♦ have 8⁺♥ or ♠ suits, either preempts with some defense or monster hands with 11⁺tricks and a void. Responder may cue bid with a very good hand, but normally transfers to opener's suit.

After the transfer, a new suit by opener asks for key cards outside the next suit (4NT with spades and void in clubs). Responses:

- One step** No aces or kings.
- Two steps** One king.
- Three steps** Ace or two kings or KQ.
- Four steps** One ace and one king.
- Five steps** Two aces.

4M shows a preemptive hand with 8⁺card suit and not much defense.

9.2 Bidding over opponents' preempts

9.2.1 After a preemptive two bid

An overcall shows a sound opening hand with a fair 5⁺card suit, and a new suit response is forcing. A jump overcall shows a long solid/semisolid suit. A cue-bid shows a strong hand with shortness in opponents' suit. A NT bid is natural. Over 2M, a jump to 4m shows a very good hand with four cards in OM and 6⁺cards in m. Double is for takeout, and after 2X=Double responder uses this scheme of responses (Rumpelsohl):

- 2Y** Signoff.
- 2NT** Opener must bid 3♣. Responder bids:
 - pass** A weak hand with 5⁺clubs.
 - New suit** Invitational.
 - 3X** A four card major and no stopper in X.
 - 3NT** Signoff. Shows a stopper in X.
- 3♣,3♦,3♥** Transfers to ♦,♥,♠ respectably. Either signoff or game forcing. Responder will bid over openers response with a game forcing hand. A transfer into X is Stayman with a stopper in X.
- 3NT** Signoff if opener has opponents' suit stopped. Denies a stopper.

9.2.2 After a preemptive three bid

Bidding is similar to the previous situation only that it requires slightly more values. Also, after a double, Rumpelsohl is not available, of course.

9.2.3 After 4m preempt

4NT is natural, double is for penalty, a new suit is not forcing.

9.2.4 After 4M preempt

4NT is a takeout for the minors. If $M=\heartsuit$, double shows spade tolerance and is primarily for penalty. A new suit is not forcing.

Chapter 10

The system in action

Dlr: East
 Vul: N-S
 Imps

<p>♠Q5 ♥T632 ♦KJ2 ♣KJ92</p>	<p>♠AJT987 ♥97 ♦A76 ♣Q8</p> <p>♠K643 ♥Q ♦T8543 ♣T64</p> <p>♠2 ♥AKJ854 ♦Q9 ♣A753</p>
--	--

North	East	South	West
1♠	-	1♥	-
2♦	-	2♣	-
4♥	-	3♥	-
	-	-	-

There are two interesting points in this auction: South is not strong enough to jump to 3♥ over the 1♠ response, and is certainly too strong for a 2♥ bid. He therefore bids an artificial 2♣ showing 15⁺ point hand. The other interesting bid here is 2♦, a general purpose forcing bid (4SF), asking South to describe his hand further. When south jumps to 3♥, he describes his hand completely: a hand with a good 6⁺ card heart suit, 15⁺ points but too weak for an immediate 3♥ rebid and something in clubs. Now North can place the final contract.

Dlr: East
 Vul: None
 Imps

♠AT6
 ♥AJ
 ♦JT9762
 ♣Q8

♠KQ5
 ♥964
 ♦854
 ♣J654

♠97432
 ♥QT8532
 ♦K
 ♣9

♠J8
 ♥K7
 ♦AQ3
 ♣AKT732

North	East	South	West
	-	1♣	-
1♦	-	3♣	-
3♠	-	4♦	-
5♣	-	5♦	-
6♣	-	-	-

(These hands are bid in the ACBL version of the system.) South's jump to 3♣ should show a 8-8.5 playing tricks hand with a very good 6⁺ card club suit. Here, South's hand is not that strong, but his bid may be justified by his very attractive diamond holding. North's 3♠ is the key bid in this auction: it must be showing a hand with slam interest. If he has a real spade suit, the fact that he bid his diamonds first shows he has a strong hand, strong enough to force to game opposite the 1♣ opening bid. If 2♠ is not a real suit, it must be a cue-bid, again, with slam interest! In either case, South also knows that North is very likely to hold a 5⁺ card diamond suit, hence the 4♦ raise. When North raises to 5♣, south is still worried he may have given partner a wrong impression about the club suit, but North places the final contract at 6♣.

By the way, this is not how these hands were bid in real life (okbridge). Frank Roberts and I ended up playing 3NT redoubled making 7 after a spade/club squeeze against West!

Dlr: East
 Vul: E-W
 Matchpoints

♠853
 ♥A75
 ♦76
 ♣KQT93

♠KQ9
 ♥J9
 ♦QT543
 ♣AJ4

♠A7642
 ♥QT8
 ♦82
 ♣865

♠JT
 ♥K6432
 ♦AKJ9
 ♣72

North	East	South	West
	-	1♥	X
XX	2♠	-	-
3♥	-	-	-

North is showing a limit raise in hearts with three card support. Notice that North's hand is too strong for a 2♣ bid and that a Jordan 2NT raise is reserved for hands with 4⁺ card support.

Dlr: East
 Vul: Both
 IMPs

♠AQ53
 ♥94
 ♦AK
 ♣QJ743

♠97
 ♥QJT75
 ♦Q85
 ♣AK6

♠8
 ♥8632
 ♦JT64
 ♣9852

North	East	South	West
	-	1♠	-
2NT	-	3♣	-
3♦	-	3♥	-
4♦	-	4♥	-
5♦	-	5♥	-
6♠	-	-	-

♠KJT642
 ♥AK
 ♦9732
 ♣T

South gets a bit over-excited by the ten-card spade fit and shows a non-minimum(!?) hand with a club singleton. North, having only 3 wasted HCPs shows his ♦AK, South shows his ♥AK and a good slam is found.

Dlr: North
 Vul: Both
 IMPs

♠A6
 ♥83
 ♦AQ542
 ♣AJT7

♠KQ543
 ♥AQJ2
 ♦T7
 ♣K4

♠2
 ♥T976
 ♦9863
 ♣9652

North	East	South	West
1♦	-	1♠	X(!)
2♣	-	2NT	-
3NT	-	-	-

♠JT987
 ♥K54
 ♦KJ
 ♣Q83

(Notice west's double, a fine example of typical okbridge noise.) The main point of this example is the opener's rebid: 2♣ must deny three spades or more, otherwise he will raise or redouble to show exactly 3 spades. Also, 2♣ shows a good hand, not suitable for a NT rebid, just as if west had not doubled: with a weak two-suiter north would have opened 2NT or rebid 3♣, while with a weak hand with 54 in the minors, he would pass west's double. Responder, aware of the lack of spade fit, then shows his values with 2NT and game is bid. An interesting question: would a 2♥ rebid by responder be artificial? Asking for heart stopper? Asking for good two-card spade support?

Dlr: South
 Vul: E-W
 IMPs

♠42
 ♥AK63
 ♦Q83
 ♣T983

♠KT98
 ♥8542
 ♦742
 ♣742

♠AQJ7653
 ♥T9
 ♦KT95
 ♣-

♠-
 ♥QJ7
 ♦AJ6
 ♣AKQJ652

North	East	South	West
		2♦	-
2♠	3♠	4♣	-
4♥	-	4♠	-
5♣	-	6♣	-
-	-		

North shows preference for hearts over spades, and when West interferes with 3♠, North shows his type of hand with 4♣.

Dlr: South
 Vul: N-S
 IMPs

♠QJ876
 ♥T2
 ♦T752
 ♣KJ

♠AKT52
 ♥K75
 ♦K86
 ♣32

♠943
 ♥A83
 ♦AJ3
 ♣AT86

♠-
 ♥QJ964
 ♦Q94
 ♣Q9754

North	East	South	West
		-	1♠
-	2♣	2♥	-
-	X	-	-
-			

The key bid in this auction is West's pass of 2♥: it does not deny a good opener, only suggests defending. West would probably double with four hearts, and decent defense, say ♠AKxxx ♥KTxx ♦Kx ♣xx. On the other hand, West should bid with a bad hand, say, with ♠KQTxxx ♥Kxx ♦x ♣Qxx West would probably rebid his spades.

Dlr: West
 Vul: None
 IMPs

♠A86
 ♥AKQJ73
 ♦6
 ♣KQ7

♠QT9753
 ♥T54
 ♦A7
 ♣94

♠J2
 ♥82
 ♦KJ432
 ♣6532

♠K4
 ♥96
 ♦QT985
 ♣AJT8

North	East	South	West
2♥	-	2♠	-
2NT	-	3♣	-
3♦	-	3♥	-
6♥	-	-	-

North shows his controls, and south, hoping to find the 12th trick somewhere bids the good slam. Notice that south has denied holding ♦K

Dlr: North
 Vul: N-S
 IMPs

♠AKJTxx
 ♥x
 ♦KJxx
 ♣xx

♠x
 ♥KQJxx
 ♦xxx
 ♣Kxxx

♠xx
 ♥xxxx
 ♦AQxx
 ♣xxx

♠Qxxx
 ♥Axx
 ♦xx
 ♣AQJx

North	East	South	West
1♠	-	2NT	-
4♦	-	4♥	-
4♠	-	-	-

After south's forcing raise, north shows a decent minimum with ♦K, and responder, knowing he is missing the ♣K, signs off in 4♠ immediately. Notice that opener may not show a good two suited hand with 3♦, even though slam is cold opposite the minimum ♠Qxxx ♥xx ♦AQxx ♣Axx, but with this hand responder is likely to bid over 4♠

10.1 Slam bidding

The following hands are taken from the chapter on Byzantine 4NT in "Slam Bidding" by H.W. Kelsey. They are tailored to demonstrate the use of that convention and its efficacy, hence many of them are much harder to bid in this system, which does not include Byzantine 4NT.

♠AQJ94	♠K3	1♠	2♦
♥A6	♥KQT8	3♦	3♥
♦A8743	♦QT652	3♠	4♣
♣7	♣A9	4♥	4♠
		4NT	5♦
		6♦	

♠74	♠AKQJ5	1♦	1♠
♥AK94	♥QJT42	2♦	3♥
♦AJT64	♦8	4♥	4NT
♣J3	♣A5	5♣	5♥
		6♥	7♥

Notice responder's 5♥: as partner may hold ♠x ♥xxx ♦KQJxx ♣KQJx, the 5♣ response is ambiguous. Opener, with three key cards, removes the ambiguity by bidding 6♥.

♠AK984	♠Q5		
♥KQ6	♥2	1♠	2♣
♦6	♦KQJ8	3♦	5♣
♣AQ83	♣KJ9762		

Playing MPs, responder would probably sign off in 3NT.

♠-	♠AKQJT843	1♦	1♠
♥AJ93	♥6	2♣	3♠
♦AQT64	♦7	4♣	4NT
♣AK62	♣Q75	5♦	7♠

Notice that after 1♦-2♠, which is a perfectly legitimate bid, the grand slam is unreachable.

♠76	♠AKQ843	1♥	1♠
♥A9653	♥K7	2♦	3♠
♦AK52	♦QJ94	4♠	4NT
♣AT	♣6	5♣	6♦
		7♠	7NT

Reponder inquires about ♦K with 6♦, opener bids the grand slam as requested, and repoder places the contract in the slightly safer 7NT. Notice that 2♦ may show a 3 card suit.

♠AKQ72	♠65	1♠	2♦
♥5	♥A93	3♣	3♦
♦A43	♦KQT875	4♦(RKC)	5♣
♣KQT8	♣74	6♦	

♠K4	♠AQJ63	1NT	2♥
♥AJ84	♥7	2♠	3♦
♦K762	♦AQ954	3♥	3♠
♣Q95	♣A3	4♥	5♣
		5♠	7♦

Opener agrees to ♦ with 3♥, and signals some slam interest by cue bidding 4♥, which places him with an ace and allows responder to investigate the hand safely.

♠A8753	♠QJ64	1♠	3♥
♥4	♥AKQT8	4♣(cue bid)	4♠
♦KQ	♦54	4NT	5♠
♣KQ963	♣A7		

♠K	♠AT4		
♥83	♥AT7		
♦A9863	♦KQ2	1♦	3NT
♣AKQ72	♣JT85		

This is a horrible hand for the system! Opener cannot even show his club suit, as 4♣ would be Gerber. In KS the auction would be 1♦-2NT-3♣...

♠T3	♠A7	1♦	2♦
♥AK	♥984	2♥	4♦(RKC)
♦KT87643	♦AJ52	5♣(2+Q!)	5♥?
♣Q4	♣AK87	5NT(♥K)	6♦

Notice opener's 5♣ bid- he is showing no third round loser in ♦ based on his length. Responder, ignorant of openers distribution and ♣ Q, cannot find the cold 6♦.

♠AK764	♠QJ3	1♠	2♦
♥T83	♥A62	3♦	3♥
♦K96	♦AQ8752	3♠	4♣
♣A5	♣3	4♠	4NT
		5♣	7♦

♠K9	♠A63	1♦	1♥
♥KQJ5	♥AT84	2♥	2♠
♦A865	♦4	2NT	3♣
♣K83	♣AQJ92	4♥	4NT
		5♠	5NT
		6♣	7♥

Responder shows his ♣ suit, and when opener shows a good supporting hand with ♣K, ???

♠AKT85	♠Q4	1♠	2♥
♥T765	♥AKQ982	3♥	4NT
♦A7	♦3	5♥	6♥
♣95	♣KQ62		

Even opposite a horrible opening hand as ♠AJxxx ♥xxx ♦AJx ♣Jx the slam is 50%.

♠AKT3	♠QJ92	2♦	2♥
♥AJ84	♥3	2NT	3♣
♦A83	♦KQJ92	3♦	3♥
♣A4	♣872	3♠	4NT
		6♠	7♠

Responder's 4NT is somewhat unsafe, as opener may have ♣xxx, but that is not very likely. Notice opener's jump to slam with all key-cards.

♠A43	♠KQ872	1♦	1♠
♥K853	♥A	2♦	4♦(RKC)
♦AQ764	♦KJ75	5♣	7♦
♣6	♣A94		

♠A964	♠KQJ752	1♦	1♠
♥AJ2	♥K7	2♣	3♠
♦AKJ763	♦5	5NT?	6♠(2)
♣-	♣Q863	7♠	

Opener was intending to show his four trumps and void in clubs, but over 3♠ he realizes that the grand slam depends only on trump solidity. 5NT asks for trump honours and the 6♠ reply shows two top honours.

♠A964	♠KQJ752	1♦	1♠
♥AJ2	♥K7	4♣	4NT
♦KQJ76	♦5	5♣	6♠
♣A	♣Q863		

♠QJT87	♠AK653	1♠	5♥
♥A42	♥-	5♣(1)	6♠
♦QT	♦KJ87		
♣A75	♣KQ32		

Opener wants to be in 7♠ if opener holds both, ♣A and ♦A, and settles for 6♠ missing one ace. Opposite the worst possible hand, say ♠QJxxx ♥KQ ♦xxx ♣Axx the slam would not be a great success, but there is no way to check on controls *and* ♦Q or stiff.

♠7	♠A98643	1♦	1♠
♥K4	♥-	2♣	3♠
♦KQJ97	♦A52	4♣	4♥
♣AKQ95	♣JT76	5♣	5♦
		5♥	5♠
		6♣	

The trump suit is set with 4♥, which must be a cue bid in support of clubs, and when responder shows DA, HA or void and a control in spades, opener who has virtually denied having two or more spades, can be quite confident responder holds the ♠A

♠K94	♠-	1♥	2♣
♥AJ762	♥KQ84	3♦	5♠
♦AK64	♦9873	5NT(3)	7♥
♣3	♣AKQJ5		

Responder cannot voidwood immediately after 1♥ as diamonds may be wide open, but after opener's 2♦ responder quickly finds out about ♥A and ♦AK.

♠A9764	♠K8532		
♥J3	♥-	1♠	4♠
♦AKQ84	♦7653	?	
♣A	♣9862		

Not a great success here.

♠65	♠AK7	1♥	2♣
♥KQT86	♥A732	2♦	2♥
♦AK54	♦QJ	3♣	3♠
♣K5	♣AQT6	4♦	4NT
		5♠	5NT
		6♦	7♥

After 1♥-2NT it is hard to find 7♥. Moral: with huge hands bid slowly!

♠AQ5	♠KJT93	1♥	1♠
♥AJT84	♥K	1NT	3♣
♦J63	♦A8	3♠	4NT
♣74	♣AKQ95	5♠	7♠

♠AKJ6	♠QT8	2♦	2♥
♥AJ65	♥2	3♥	3NT?
♦AKJ4	♦T87652	4♥(♣-)	4NT?
♣3	♣AQ2	5♥(2)	6♦

♠AKQT7
♥6
♦KJ53
♣973

♠3
♥AKQJ9864
♦A
♣KQJ

1♠ 4NT
5♦ 6♥

Notice that 4NT here is plain Blackwood, not RKC.

Appendix A

Adapting the system for ACBL events

As long as the ACBL continues to cater to LOLs, the multi-2♦ and the two-suited 2NT opening bids will not be allowed in their events. The following is a description of changes to the system to meet those restrictions:

- The requirements for a 2♣ opening bid with long major suits are shaded to 8⁺ playing tricks.
- 2♦, 2♥ and 2♠ are weak-two bids with an Ogust 2NT forcing response. Opener rebids:
 - 3♣ Bad hand, bad suit.
 - 3♦ Good hand, bad suit.
 - 3♥ Bad hand, good suit.
 - 3♠ Good hand, good suit.
- 2NT Shows a balanced 20-22 HCP, with Puppet Stayman and Jacoby transfers:
 - 3♣ Opener bids 3♦ with one four card major, 3M with a five card major, 3NT with no major suits. After a 3♦ response, if responder has a four card major, he bids *the major suit he doesnt have*.
 - 3♦,3♥ Transfers to ♥ and ♠.
 - 3♠ Beginning of signoff in 4m- opener bids 3NT with maximum, 3♣ with less.
 - 4♣ Gerber.
 - 4♦,4♥ Texas transfers- no slam interest.
 - 4♠ Freak hand with minors.
- 1m-1X-3m is *game forcing*.
- *Roth-Stone reverses after a 1m opening bid*: Artificial, long strong minor, feature in suit of reverse.

Appendix B

Competitive bidding and the Law of Total Tricks

Competitive bidding is completely determined by LTT. When opponents have entered the auction, bidding is aimed to find the optimal *part score* unless we take unusual action to indicate the possibility of a game or slam.

- All raises are preemptive with the following two exceptions:
 - 1m=(overall)=2m Still strong.
 - 1m=X=3m Limit raise, 1m=X=NT is preemptive.
- When a non-conventional cue-bid is available, all other bids are limited by the failure to cue-bid.
- When our side owns the hand and opponents overcall, a direct pass does not limit the hand, it merely suggests the possibility of defending.

The following table gives the approximate probability of a certain fit length by one side (columns), given a given fit length of the other side (rows):

	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
7	66.6%	33.4%	–	–	–	–	–
8	11.4%	58.9%	25.0%	4.3%	0.3%	–	–
9	–	40.8%	41.8%	14.5%	2.7%	0.2%	–
10	–	22.7%	47.2%	23.4%	5.9%	0.7%	–
11	–	8.6%	48.0%	31.5%	10.2%	1.6%	0.1%
12	–	–	41.3%	41.6%	14.4%	2.4%	0.2%
13	–	–	19.7%	47.5%	27.9%	4.9%	–

The following table gives the approximate probability of a certain fit length by one side (columns), given a given fit length of the other side (rows) and holding a singleton:

	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
7	63.7%	36.3%	–	–	–	–	–
8	9.3%	54.4%	29.0%	6.7%	0.5%	–	–
9	–	34.0%	42.7%	18.7%	4.2%	0.4%	–
10	–	18.6%	45.2%	27.4%	7.9%	0.9%	–
11	–	7.5%	44.6%	33.4%	12.6%	1.9%	–
12	–	–	39.8%	43.1%	14.9%	2.1%	–
13	–	–	18.2%	54.5%	27.3%	–	–

The following table gives the approximate probability of a certain fit length by one side (columns), given a given fit length of the other side (rows) and holding a void:

	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
7	59.4%	40.6%	–	–	–	–	–
8	6.5%	46.2%	33.7%	11.8%	1.8%	–	–
9	–	22.8%	39.2%	26.0%	10.1%	1.9%	0.1%
10	–	11.6%	35.4%	32.5%	15.8%	4.3%	0.5%
11	–	3.9%	32.9%	34.3%	22.0%	6.4%	0.5%
12	–	–	18.4%	44.5%	26.9%	9.0%	1.2%
13	–	–	9.1%	18.2%	45.5%	27.3%	–

Appendix C

How to submit material for this document?

If you have any interesting remarks regarding the system presented here- please let me know! To submit hands and auctions to illustrate your remarks, please use the format described below:

```
\example
{\ss K\ \hs AQ\ \ds KQJT85\ \cs AK96}
{\ss T2\ \hs JT83\ \ds A73\ \cs Q854}
{\ss J974\ \hs 976542\ \ds 96\ \cs T}
{\ss AQ8653\ \hs K\ \ds 42\ \cs J732}
{&&pass&pass\2\cs&pass&2\ds&2\ss\3\ds&pass&3\hs&pass\3\ss&pass&4\hs&pass\
pass&pass&pass&}{South}{E-W}{Match Points}
{This is a silly example used to illustrate the usage of the macro
"example."}
```

This will produce the following output:

Dlr: South
 Vul: E-W
 Match Points

♠K
 ♥AQ
 ♦KQJT85
 ♣AK96

♠AQ8653
 ♥K
 ♦42
 ♣J732

♠T2
 ♥JT83
 ♦A73
 ♣Q854

♠J974
 ♥976542
 ♦96
 ♣T

North	East	South	West
		pass	pass
2♣	pass	2♦	2♠
3♦	pass	3♥	pass
3♠	pass	4♥	pass
pass	pass	pass	

This is a silly example used to illustrate the usage of the macro "example."

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