



We-Bad

a scientific 5-card-major system
played by
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We-Bad

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Introduction

(click for BWS)

We-Bad is a scientific 5-card major system very distantly descended from [Bridge World Standard](#). The main sections of this document are titled the same as their counterparts in the Bridge World Standard document (but re-ordered slightly), and each section of this document has a link to the counterpart section of the Bridge World Standard document. Where the present document is silent or unclear, the Bridge World Standard document is operative. *The Bridge World's* monthly [“Master Solver's Club”](#) and the *District 8 Advocate's* bi-monthly [“District 8 Solver's Forum”](#) are excellent as exercises in expert handling of real-world situations in Bridge World Standard and, therefore, to a great extent in We-Bad.

We-Bad is fully encompassed within the [ACBL General Convention Chart](#).

This document is designed to be read on the Internet by means of a (Unicode-capable) browser because of its use of links both within the document and to other resources on the Internet. The document renders correctly under the current versions of the following browsers running under Windows XP:

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Links within the document are in **red**, and their targets are orange-underlined (for convenience in spotting them in the print version of the document). Links to illustrative or other material on the Internet are in dash-underlined blue. Sidebars on non-white backgrounds relate to nearby text with the same background color, and present clarifying or background information. Pop-up windows and JavaScript must be enabled in your browser to have full functionality.

Page numbers can be useful, but printing this document from the Internet **is problematical**, and therefore a PDF file of the document is also available (with the Bridge World Standard specification appended). *The PDF file is meant for hard-copy use only, as the earlier-mentioned links are not operational in that file in electronic form.* The URLs of this document as a Web page and the aforementioned PDF file are, respectively:

- Web page:
<http://home.comcast.net/~davidbabcock/bridge/We-Bad.htm>
- PDF file:
<http://home.comcast.net/~davidbabcock/bridge/We-Bad.pdf>

because pagination may change between browsers, sidenotes may be broken across pages, and browsers do not always print background colors without user intervention. However, there may be a need to print the system's defense to the Multi 2♦ for use at tournaments, and this is provided for in the section that discusses that opening.

random musings

If you don't want to bid, stay home.
—Russ Arnold

I was talking about bridge, not matchpoints.
—David Stern (private communication)

[A] team randomly selected from today's *Bridge World* subscribers would hold its own against the top players from before the mid-fifties...[Y]esteryear's stars would be unable to make up for today's technological superiority.
—Jeff Rubens (editorial, *The Bridge World*, October 2009)

Our thematic “We-Bad” mascots appear on the front in Peter Paul Rubens' *The Fall of the Damned*. (c. 1620). You can't get much badder than that.

I. Definitions

(click for BWS)

R in an auction means a red suit: for example, 2**R** means a bid of 2♦ or 2♥.

A distribution shown with hyphens refers to any pattern including those suit lengths (for example, 5-4-3-1 means any hand with one five-card suit, one four-card suit, one tripleton and one singleton). A distribution shown with equal signs refers to specific suit lengths (for example, 5=4=3=1 means a hand with five spades, four hearts, three diamonds and one club), though within that, numbers inside brackets can refer to the relative suits in any order: for example, [5-4]=3=1 means 5-4 majors either way, three diamonds, and one club; 7=[3-2-1] means any 7-3-2-1 with seven spades. **Balanced** means 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2 or 5-3-3-2.

A **competitive** action is one taken over an opponent's bid, double or redouble. An action taken in **direct position** immediately follows an opponent's action; one taken in **reopening position** follows an opponent's action and two passes.

Quasi-game means game, or four of a minor after a 3NT search has failed when that bid can be reasonably interpreted as offering to play.

N/F means non-forcing. **F/1** means forcing for one round. **F/G** means forcing to quasi-game. **P/C** means pass-or-correct.

Points refer to Alex Martelli's refinement of the traditional (4-3-2-1) point count: *points in the deck still total the familiar 40*: the ten joins the system and the values for A-K-Q-J-10 are $4\frac{1}{2}$ -3- $1\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$. *Like its ancestor, the Martelli count is nothing more than a starting point in evaluating a hand.*

Defensive tricks (DTs) are as follows:

holding	DTs
A	1
A-K	2
A-Q	$1\frac{1}{2}$
K	$\frac{1}{2}$
K-Q	1

The 4-3-2-1 point count dates from *auction bridge*: it was introduced by Bryant McCampbell in 1915.

Counting points à la Martelli is easily learned. Start with the familiar (4-3-2-1) count; add $\frac{1}{2}$ of the excess of aces over queens; add $\frac{1}{4}$ of the excess of tens over jacks (either "excess" may be negative, of course); round $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ to the nearest integer, or round $\frac{1}{2}$ in the direction of the (4-3-2-1) count. Voilà. Further details on Martelli's work—including possible simplifications—are [here](#).

Richard Pavlicek has discussed [how to improve the 4-3-2-1 point count without using fractions](#).

Mathematician Richard Cowan has published [a remarkably divergent view](#).

Loser count is the total of a hand's highest cards in each suit, up to a maximum of three, that are Jack or lower. Partnerships may choose to incorporate loser count for the purpose of refining their hand valuation; We-Bad does not base any systemic branches on loser count.

The **corresponding major/minor** to any suit is the other suit of the same "pointedness": ♥ ⇔ ♣ and ♠ ⇔ ♦.

Our use of this concept is due to Bobby Goldman.

A **freely-bid** or -shown suit is one bid or shown for the first time by our side in a situation *other than*:

- responding to a takeout double or other request/demand to bid (a Michaels cue bid for example) when next hand has passed;
- bidding in direct position over a business redouble.

II. General Understandings and Defaults [\(click for BWS\)](#)

“Judgement allowed in any situation”

—Meckwell's 2007 and 2009 BB convention cards

- *Form of scoring:*

We-Bad makes no adjustments in its agreements to match changes in the form of scoring (as in matchpoints vs. IMPs).

- *Interpretation priorities:*

When a call is subject to different possible interpretations and there is no explicit system agreement, it should be considered:

- natural rather than artificial;
- if a double: non-penalty if in front of the first bidder/shower of the suit, penalty if behind; except that a double when we have previously made a card-showing double or redouble, and have not shown a fit, is penalty in all cases;

- *Forcing vs. nonforcing:*

When a call could logically be interpreted as either forcing or nonforcing and there is no explicit agreement:

- In general:
 - in a competitive situation, treat as nonforcing; in a noncompetitive situation, treat as forcing;
- Specific cases:

- **Forcing pass.** If we have forced to game:

- the opponents must not play a contract undoubled;
 - if the opponents have bid above our game contract (or above our mostly likely game contract—in a major if agreed, else 3NT), we employ a Meckwell-style pass/double inversion in the direct position when we have not set a trump suit, while we use standard methods otherwise with the exception that we play that **pass-and-pull is weaker than immediate action** (contrary to current fashion). The two structures are:

The reason for this design choice is to avoid partner's possible bid stepping on passer's intended strong continuation in the usual method.

A trump suit is set if it is agreed or if it is systemically certain (as for example after 1NT:(pass):4♦).

- *Pass/double inversion:*

- double is cooperative/takeout: partner is encouraged to bid, though he may pass with no useful distribution beyond what was already indicated;
 - pass “transfers to double”, though partner may bid if he would not have stood a penalty double. Now, passer will convert the double or bid, the latter *showing at least two places to play*;
 - a new-suit bid is natural and suggesting a place to play (or a second choice if he has already bid a suit);
 - a cue bid is slam-suggestive in the suit most recently bid by the partnership.

Gaining this capability is the reason for our adoption of the pass/double inversion.

- *No pass/double inversion:*

- in “immediate” position:
 - a cue-bid of the opponents' suit shows first-round control and slam interest;
 - a bid that might reasonably be interpreted as RKC is to be so interpreted;
 - any other bid shows at least second-round control of the

- opponents' suit and slam interest, and shows control of the named suit if not the agreed suit;
 - pass carries no message other than a disinclination to any of the preceding actions. Passer either lacks control of the opponents' suit or is not interested in slam.
 - in "pass-and-pull" position:
 - a bid of the agreed suit is to play and not forward-going;
 - any other bid is lead-directing.
 - If we have invited game and the invitation has not been declined, competitive situations thereafter are forcing only as high as where the force would have expired noncompetitively.
 - A two-notrump opening does not create a force if the opponents bid.
 - If a two-club opening is overcalled, responder's pass is forcing at every level.
 - No force is created after
 - our penalty double or penalty pass of a takeout double when the partnership is not otherwise committed to further bidding;
 - an opponent raises over our takeout double, simple overcall, or jump-overcall of a preemptive opening;
 - an opponent's preemptive bid over our one-over-one response;
 - a strength-showing redouble by an already-limited hand.
- *Doubles subject to no explicit agreement:*
 - a double of an opponent's free raise to the two- or three-level of a suit bid or shown by his partner is offense-oriented in all situations unless otherwise defined
 - when a pass would be nonforcing and both partners are unlimited, a double indicates undescribed high-card values, with sufficient length in the suit doubled to sustain a penalty pass on ordinary distribution
 - when a pass would be nonforcing, the doubler is unlimited but his partner is limited, a double is for penalty
 - when a pass would be nonforcing, either the doubler is limited and his partner is unlimited or both partners are limited, a double is for penalty.
- *Splinters vs. Fragments:*

When two bids are to be used systemically to show distribution, and either each will show shortness in the suit bid ("splinter") or each will show shortness in the suit left unbid ("fragment"), the splinter interpretation applies in all cases.
- *Splinters and other shortness-showing bids:*
 - A singleton ace or king is not shown as shortness.
 - A splinter bid may initiate a cue-bidding sequence.
 - A bid in a suit in which either partner has previously shown shortness is Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood if by the shortness hand and above game, a **general slam try** otherwise (likely reasons for this action would be no cue bid available, or none *safely* available).
- *Passed-hand situations:*

When it is logically possible and there is no explicit understanding to the contrary, an action taken by a passed hand has the same general meaning as the corresponding action taken by an unpassed hand, subject to whatever constraints are imposed by the failure to open the bidding.
- *NT bids*
 - *NT Bypass rule:*

If a player bypasses a natural notrump bid to make a nonforcing bid, then later bids notrump uninvited over an opposing bid, that notrump bid is unusual (showing additional distribution, not offering to play in notrump).
 - *Two notrump:*

Competitive two-notrump bids that might be used artificially to help distinguish actions

see Ulf Nilsson, "The Shortness Slam-Try", *The Bridge World*, December 2010

designed to contest the auction from those of a constructive nature are natural.

○ *Four notrump:*

- If an undiscussed but clearly forcing noncompetitive four-notrump bid might logically be interpreted as more than one of these alternatives, the priority order of interpretation is
 1. ace- or key-card-asking convention,
 2. offer of general slam encouragement,
 3. control-showing bid.
- There is no agreement about an undiscussed competitive four-notrump bid that might logically be interpreted as ace-asking, key-card-asking, or something else. However, if an undiscussed forcing competitive four-notrump bid cannot logically be ace- or key-card-asking, it is for general takeout.

○ *Five notrump:*

If an undiscussed but clearly forcing noncompetitive five-notrump bid might logically be interpreted as more than one of these alternatives, the priority order of interpretation is

1. Grand-Slam Force ("Josephine") *if and only if RKC and/or Voidwood with any plausible void are not available,*
2. pick-a-slam,
3. control-showing bid.

because those two devices being available makes the Grand Slam Force redundant—concerning which, remember that Voidwood does *not* always have to be a jump in We-Bad, so the "if any only if" is not likely to be operational very often

● *Jumps:*

- *There are no weak jump shifts in this system*, either with or without competition. Where a jump shift into an unbid suit has not already been defined, the default interpretation is:
 - if by an unpassed hand: strong;
 - if by a passed hand: fit-jump.
- The default interpretation of a new-suit bid one level above a force (e.g., one spade — four diamonds) is a splinter, with the exception that such a bid by opener
 - at the five-level, or
 - after opener's strength-showing jump shift, or
 - after opener's strength-showing reverse followed by responder's second-round suit agreement at the three-level, or
 - after opener's 2♣ opening

is instead Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood.

This idea is due to Eddie Kantar.

- The default interpretation of a bid one level above a splinter (e.g., one spade — five diamonds) is Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood. (There are explicit exceptions to this principle.)

● *Lead-directing doubles:*

- A double in an auction that is ostensibly "dead" for our side (bidder and partner both passed on their last turn, and we had not previously created a force) tells partner *not* to lead the suit the auction to that point would have suggested;
- A double of a suitless auction to three notrump or four notrump requests the lead of leader's shorter major.
- No special lead is suggested by a double
 - of a suitless auction to six notrump or seven notrump;
 - when some combination of dummy's suit, leader's suit, and doubler's suit is available;
 - when there are expected and unexpected leads; or
 - after the opponents' previously uncontested Stayman auction.
- A double for an unusual lead against a suit contract cancels an earlier lead-directional message.

● *Redoubles:*

A redouble is natural (to play) except the following, which are for takeout: opener's redouble of the direct double of a suit one-bid passed for penalty; advancer's redouble of either the penalty double

of a simple overcall of a one-bid or the double of a two-notrump overcall of a weak two-bid.

- **Opposing doubles of forcing bids:**

Where not otherwise specified, calls by the hand over the doubler are as follows:

- The weakest action is pass;
- Any bid has the most sensible meaning in context and shows something extra, whether in shape or strength;
- Redouble shows a maximum hand for previous bidding (but redouble is not necessarily the only, nor even the best, action with such a hand: for example, if the double was of partner's cue-bid showing a limit-or-better raise, simply bidding game is likely to be the better action).

- **Passes over redoubles:**

A pass over a redouble is

- for penalty when a preemptive opening is doubled in either position, a suit one-bid is doubled in reopening position, a bid at the two level or higher is doubled after the opponents have bid three or more times;
- for takeout when a suit one-bid is doubled in direct position or a new-suit response is doubled;
- subject to no special agreement when a raise of a one-bid, or a one-notrump response, or a one-level bid after the opponents have bid three or more times is doubled.

JUMPDOCs (Jumps Denying Outside Controls)

The system defines certain jump bids as denying any controls in unbid suits; we title these JUMPDOCs. It is important to understand that the failure to have made a systemically defined JUMPDOc when it is clear to both parties that it was possible *guarantees at least one control in an/the unbid suit*, and further that if there is only one such suit, *control in that suit is to be inferred if a cue-bidding sequence takes place in that auction* (see under "Slam-Bidding Methods").

Acceptance Of An Opponent's Insufficient Bid

When we **accept an insufficient bid**, the acceptor may:

- **make a bid that would have been sufficient** if the insufficient bidder had passed, to be interpreted **as though the insufficient bidder had passed**: for example, if we deal and open 1♠ and next hand "undercalls" 1♦, 1NT would be the forcing 1NT, just as though the "undercaller" had passed, and 2♦ would, similarly, be a natural two-over-one;
- **make a bid that would *not* have been sufficient** if the insufficient bidder had passed, to be interpreted as sensibly as possible in context: for example, if we open 1♠ and next hand "undercalls" 1♦, we can bid 1♥ to show 6 or more HCP and four or more hearts. It is not hard to envision landing in uncharted waters, however, so this option should be used with care;
- **double**, which will be interpreted as though the insufficient bid had been the minimum sufficient bid in the same strain but with doubler promising no more strength than appropriate for the actual level;
- **pass**.

It is certainly conceivable that use could be made of the information in the insufficient bid in some situations, but we are leery of experimentation in the realm of *our* familiar bids suddenly having unfamiliar meanings.

The Laws do allow a Regulating Authority to "disallow prior agreement by a partnership to vary its understandings during the auction or play following...any irregularity" (Law 40B3), and ACBL has exercised that option; however, our first bulleted item does not (we think) "vary"; regarding the first three bulleted items, the Laws say that if an insufficient bid is accepted, it is "treated as legal" (Law 27A1), and our reading of that language is that, by rule, an insufficient bid ceases to be an irregularity once it is accepted (as the text would hardly have any meaning otherwise). Whether we would get a favorable ruling or prevail on appeal on either of these points is, perhaps, to be discovered. We are heartened somewhat, however, by a [thread on rec.games.bridge](#) that finds nothing to prohibit what we have come up with.

III. Partnership-Bidding Methods

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

This section describes agreements about auctions in which our side makes the first bid and the opponents do nothing but pass.

A. Opening-Bid Requirements

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

We-Bad is a mostly natural system based on an artificial strong two-club opening, weak two-bids in the other suits, strong notrump (with Stayman and transfers), and five-card majors (with a forcing one-notrump response). Opening requirements are neither extremely sound nor light. The minimum requirement to open with a long minor is about half a point higher than with a long major.

♠ A Q x x x
 ♥ A x x
 ♦ J x x x
 ♣ x

is a minimum one-spade opening bid as dealer or second position with neither side vulnerable.

We-Bad follows Marty Bergen's "4-by-4" rule for opening 2♣—a minimum of four defensive tricks and a maximum of four losers—with the addition that any balanced hand of a good 22 HCP or more is opened with 2♣ regardless.

A third-position one-of-a-major opening may be about a queen weaker than a first- or second-hand opener, but no weaker than that. *A one-of-a-minor opening is never shaded*, except that an 11-HCP hand with four spades must be opened, whether in a minor or spades, in fourth seat, per the "Pearson-point" rule below. If it is desired to open with less than the prescribed values for tactical reasons, a weak-two may be an option (except of course with clubs), especially with a side 4-card or longer minor.

Any hand that would be opened with one of a suit in first or second position is also opened in fourth position; in addition, fourth position opens any hand with a point count plus spade length of fifteen or more (sometimes called "Pearson points").

This scheme is used for opening the bidding with a balanced hand:

- suit, then minimum notrump: 12 to 14
- one notrump: 15 to 17
- suit, then strong action in notrump: 18 to 19
- two notrump: 20 to weak 22
- two clubs, then minimum notrump: strong 22 to 24
- two clubs, then two hearts (Kokish) over a two-diamond response, then two notrump over a two-spade relay: 25 to 27
- two clubs, then jump in notrump: 28 to 30

It is optional to open one notrump with any of these distributions: 5-3-3-2 with a long major and a doubleton minor, 2=4=2=5, 2=4=5=2, 6-3-2-2 with a long minor.

It is acceptable to open two notrump (or two clubs, intending to rebid in notrump) with an unstopped doubleton, a five-card major, a six-card minor, or five-four distribution including a five-card minor (or, rarely, a five-card major and a four-card minor).

On the understanding that requirements within an overall style vary with form of scoring, table position and vulnerability, the We-Bad requirements for initial preemptive openings are not extreme in any direction.

A three-notrump opening is gambling (solid seven-card minor) with little side strength.

An opening of four of a minor is natural.

A first- or second-position weak two-bid that includes three of this list of characteristics is unacceptable: seven cards in the bid suit; flimsy (definition adjusted to suit the vulnerability) six cards in the bid suit; side void; side four-card or longer suit. Otherwise, opener may use his judgment.

B. Choice of Suit

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

When opening a one-bid in a minor suit: with three-three in the minors, always bid one club; with either four-four in the minors or four diamonds, five clubs and a minimum-range hand, use judgment to decide which minor to open (but with 1=4=4=4, 1♦ is mandatory).

With a minimum-range five-six hand, open in the higher and shorter suit only when the long suits are adjacent.

On a hand calling for an opening one-bid with five-five in the black suits, opener should always bid one spade.

In third or fourth position, it is acceptable to open in a strong four-card major if the auction rates to be manageable thereafter.

C. After Our Preempt

(click for BWS)

Responding to 3-level or higher preemptive openings in a suit when responder is an unpassed hand:

- a raise of 4M to five is a trump-ask; a raise of 2M or 3M to five is an advance sacrifice;
- a below-game new-suit response is a one-round force; then after opener's rebid, a new suit is an **Orange Danish** control asking bid;
- a new-suit response to partner's game-level preemptive opening is an **Orange Danish** control ask;
- A 4♦ response to a club preempt, or a 4♣ response to any other preempt, is RKC in opener's suit;
- a double-jump shift above game is Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood.

Responding to weak two-bids in addition to or instead of the above:

- a new suit at the two-level is **constructive but non-forcing**: now:
 - pass shows a misfit, or a doubleton up to J-x in support but a minimum;
 - 2NT shows doubleton support (no better than J-x) and more than a minimum;
 - raise shows doubleton Q-x or better, or any three;
 - a new suit is natural with at least four, and not a misfit.
- 2NT is **modified** Ogust. Rebids are:
 - 3♣ shows a **good hand** but not with a suit as good as A-K-Q (would bid 3NT):
 - 3♦ asks suit quality (F/G): 3NT shows a **good suit**; anything else denies a good suit and shows something in the named suit (but constrained by not being allowed to pass 3NT);
 - [2M...:]3M is a **sign-off**;
 - a new major at the 3-level is forcing for one round, with **five cards**;
 - a new suit at the 4-level is a cue bid agreeing opener's suit.
 - 3♦ shows a bad hand; it also shows a good suit if a major:
 - three of opener's major is a sign-off;
 - other responses are as to 3♣.
 - 3 of opener's major shows a bad hand and bad suit **[without three hearts if 2♠ opened]**;
 - [if 2♠ opened] 3♥ shows a bad hand and bad suit **with three hearts**;
 - 3 notrump shows A-K-Q of the suit.
- a new suit at the three-level is F/G with at least six cards.

We are persuaded to the non-forcing treatment by [Richard Pavlicek](#), among others, and we follow Pavlicek's rebid structure almost exactly.

Richard Pavlicek has influenced our rebids after the 2NT response to make it easier than in vanilla Ogust for responder to introduce a new major. (Matt Granovetter made the same point about Ogust in *Bridge Today*, April 2008.)

"good" hand = either 9+ HCP, or K-Q in the suit and an outside K

"good" suit = 2 of the top 3 honors

To create a game force, use 3♦.

2♦:2NT: any: 3♥:3♠ shows three spades without three hearts, in case responder has 5-5 majors.

These combine to find or rule out 5-3 heart fits after a 2♠ opening.

A, K, and Q are already known, of course: asker is void and is looking for the jack because the chances of running a suit even as good as A-K-Q-10-9-x-x opposite a void (54%) are not good enough to bid 7 at any form of scoring, but the jack ups the chances to no worse than a highly adequate 84%. An eighth card may substitute for the J on responder's judgment, as it will improve chances also, if not as much.

Responses to a three-notrump opening:

- club bids are "pass or correct";
- four diamonds asks for side shortness (opener bids four of a major with shortness there, four notrump with no shortness, or five of a minor with shortness in the other minor);
- four notrump asks minor length (5♣ = 7, 5♦ = 8);
- 5♦/5♥/5♠ are **Orange Danish** asking bids (5♦ asks in the other minor from opener's), with opener's minor assumed to be trumps;
- 5NT is a specialized Grand Slam Force: opener is instructed to bid 7 of his suit **with the jack**, else 6;
- any other bid is natural.

D. After Our Two Clubs

(click for BWS)

A two-diamond response to two clubs denies the values for a positive response in a hand with a suit of at least six-card length or five cards headed by at least two of the top three honors. *Having made this response, responder may not then bid and rebid a suit*: his “rebid” of a suit will necessarily be a cue bid or something more exotic, but it will not be a simple natural rebid. Opener has the following continuations:

- 2♥ is modified Kokish: a heart one- or two-suiter or 25-27 HCP balanced. Responder bids an artificial 2♠ unless he holds six spades in a hand that did not qualify for a 2♥ response, in which case he bids an artificial 2NT (this device avoids the “un-transfer” of some spade contracts). Now opener has:
 - 2NT shows the 25-27 HCP balanced hand (but bid 4♠, to play, if responder bid 2NT: continuations, if any, are as after Texas), F/G: continuations are as to the 2NT opening, but of course may not stop below game;
 - 3♣ says nothing about clubs; it merely shows that the 2♥ rebid was natural, and more specifically one of:
 - a heart one-suiter, 9+ tricks;
 - a heart-spade two-suiter with less than F/G values;
 - a heart-any two-suiter, F/G (if hearts-spades, heart length is exactly five).
- Now responder has:
- 3♦ is an artificial negative without three hearts, or temporizing for whatever reason: now 3♥ by opener may be passed, while anything else is natural and F/G;
 - 3♥ is negative with 3 hearts or 3=4=3=3;
 - 3♠ is forcing with five spades;
 - 4♣ or 4♦ is a splinter (the club suit is lost here, but the splinter usage “wins”);
 - 4♥ is 4-card+ support and no outside A or K, nor any minor-suit singleton or void: a new suit by opener now is an **Orange Danish** control asking bid.
 - 3♦ shows hearts and secondary diamonds, N/F;
 - 3♥ shows hearts and secondary clubs, N/F;
 - 3♠ shows hearts and secondary spades, F/G, with at least six hearts;
 - 3NT shows a specific game-strength hand that is difficult to convey otherwise: 6-3-2-2 with six good hearts and stoppers everywhere.
- 4♣ by responder at any point after opener has shown hearts is Kickback.
- 2♠ is natural and F/1. Responder's continuations are:
 - 2NT is an artificial negative, denying 4-card support.
 - 3♠ is positive with 3+card support, F/G.
 - any jump shift is a splinter.
 - 4♣ is 4-card+ support and no outside A, K, singleton or void: a new suit by opener now is an **Orange Danish** control asking bid;
 - all others are natural and F/G.
 - 2NT shows a good 22 to 24 HCP balanced: continuations are as after the 2NT opening.
 - 3♣ or 3♦ is natural and F/1. If the bid is 3♦, there is no 4-card major in the hand (that kind of hand is shown conventionally via 3♥ or 3♠: see below). Responses to the two bids are similar but not quite identical:
 - to 3♣: a 3♦ response may be negative or temporizing, in search of a 4-4 major fit; 3 of a major shows 5 or more cards.
 - to 3♦: a 3♥ response may be negative or temporizing; a 3♠ response shows five or more spades; a 3NT response shows five or more hearts.
 - 3♥ or 3♠ shows diamonds and four cards in the bid major and is F/1: now responder's 4♣ artificially asks opener to sign off in ♦ unless he has game in hand; anything else by responder is to be understood as naturally as possible and is F/G. The idea is that 2♣:2♦:3♦ can now deny a 4-card

We-Bad swaps the vanilla Kokish meanings of the 3♣ and 3♥ bids; Jim Sternberg suggested this in “Bidding Lab / Fine tuning 2NT” in *The Bridge Bulletin* (ACBL), March 2007. Robert Lipsitz endorsed the idea in *The Bridge World*, December 2009 (letter, p. 73).

3♣ is more commonly used for this purpose, but that bid will almost certainly lose a club suit in either hand. We accept the occasional wrong-siding of a NT contract as the price for getting the club suit back.

major, relieving some pressure on responder.

- 3NT shows 28-30 balanced: continuations are as after the 2NT opening, but 1 level higher.
- 4NT takes the same responses as the 4NT opening.

2♥/2♠/3♣/3♦ shows at least five cards to two of the top three honors in the next higher suit. 2NT shows a very weak hand with a 7-card suit: 3♣ asks: 3♦/3♥/3♠/3NT = ♥/♠/♣/♦ respectively.

E. After Our Two-Notrump Family Opening

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

These methods apply after 2NT, 2♣:2♦:2NT, 2♣:2♦:2♥:2♠:2NT, and 2♣:2♥:2NT.

We-Bad has the effective capabilities of trash Stayman, puppet Stayman, transfers, Smolen, and **Bobby Goldman's minor-suit slam tries** ("Goldman"); with the ever-broadening notion of what is adequate for a 2NT opening, this range of options is useful.

See Bobby Goldman, *Aces Scientific*, pp. 27-28.

We will begin by setting out "Goldman". It operates after (our version of) Stayman, and it consists of:

- Goldman 4♦: this asks partner to show his four- or five-card minor(s), if any, in the following conventional manner: 4NT shows both minors if he has denied any major, or neither minor if he has shown a major; to show exactly one minor, partner bids four of the corresponding major. From this description, it may be deduced that the Goldman 4♦ operates *only after it is known that opener has no four-card or longer major or it is known that he has exactly one such major*.
- Goldman 4♥ or 4♠: this shows at least five cards in the corresponding minor, and a major (inferentially, the other one from the one partner showed if he showed one). Opener may put on the brakes with 4NT based on his assessment of his hand opposite what partner has indicated, or he may *respond as to RKC in the minor*.

because the meaning of a 4NT response would be indecipherable otherwise

We acknowledge here that the way Goldman works is very different from our desideratum, discussed elsewhere, of responder describing and opener evaluating, but we have been unable to get anything of that kind to work as well as what we have in the available space.

The battle array is:

- 3♣ is an adaptation of **Romex Stayman**:
 - 3♦ denies five spades and denies four or more hearts:
 - 3♥ is either a Smolen hand with five or six spades or a Stayman hand with four spades (that hand is managed here because, unlike normal Stayman, opener has not denied four spades): partner assumes Smolen, but treating a hand with four spades the same as a hand with three for the moment:
 - 3♠ shows three or four spades: *now, responder bids 3NT (or 4NT quantitative – cue-bid to set spades first if you want to use RKC) if and only if having four and not five spades, telling partner what he needs to know to choose between 3NT and 4♠;*
 - 3NT denies as many as three spades.
 - After any of these, 4♦, 4♥, and 4♠ are Goldman.
 - 3♠ forces 3NT, either to play or continuing with:
 - 4♣ to show 4=5=?=, slammish, to which opener's 4M sets the suit (responder may continue) while 4NT is *to play*;
 - 4♥ or 4♠ is Goldman.

For Romex Stayman proper, see George Rosenkranz, *Bridge: the Bidder's Game* (1985), p. 335. For the historically inclined, the same definition of 2NT:3♣:3♦ was proposed some years earlier in the Acol community (!): see Eric Crowhurst, *Precision Bidding in Acol* (1974), p. 44.

- 3NT shows 4=5=? (would be a 3♠ bid in vanilla Smolen), non-slamish;
 - 4♣ or 4♦ shows a 6-4 major hand, with six in the corresponding major. Opener will transfer to the six-card suit, except that in the case of 4♦, opener with four (undisclosed) spades is free to bid 4♠ opposite the known 4=6 majors.
 - 4♥ or 4♠ is Goldman.
 - 3♥ shows four or five hearts and denies four or five spades: now:
 - 3♠ asks opener's heart length (3NT shows four and 4♣ shows five, after either of which 4♦ is Goldman);
 - 4♣ forces 4♦, after which 4♥ or 4♠ is Goldman;
 - 4♦ is Goldman.
 - 3♠ shows five spades: now:
 - 4♣ or 4♦ is per the preceding item;
 - 3NT shows 4-4 majors: now:
 - 4♣ is per the preceding item;
 - 4R transfers to the next suit.
- 3R is a Jacoby transfer, after which 4♦ is equivalent to a quantitative 4NT and a self-raise to the four level is a slam-try, to which any bid is a reply to Inferential RKC. Opener also has the option of super-accepting with 4M, in which case continuations by partner are as after Texas. Otherwise, the methods diverge in the two cases:
 - 2NT:3♦:3♥:
 - 3♠ is the same as 3NT would be in "vanilla" Jacoby: offering (albeit artificially) a choice between 3NT and 4M, with the refinement that if choosing the major, opener's 4m indicates a 4- or 5-card minor on the way.
 - 3NT shows 5-5 majors, non-slamish; N/F;
 - 4♣ shows 5-5 majors, slamish.
 - 2NT:3♥:3♠:
 - 3NT is standard;
 - 4♣ shows a minor: 4♦ asks which, to which responder bids the corresponding major.
- 3♠ is a puppet to 3NT, either to play or to introduce a minor two-suiter of at least ten cards. Continuations are:
 - 4♣ or 4♦ shows the *shorter* minor in 6-4 minors. Now the next step asks the shortness, with responder naming the short suit; but where the ask is 4♥, 4NT (passable) or 5♣ is a surrogate for heart shortness;
 - 4♥ or 4♠ shows shortness in 5-5 minors;
- 3NT and 4♣ are puppets to the next step, showing a one-suiter in the destination suit. Responder's continuation of four of a new suit shows shortness, while 4NT (N/F) denies (showable) shortness. Any bid by opener other than 4NT (trying to sign off) shows key cards per Inferential RKC.
- 4R is Texas, after which one step is Kickback and a new-suit bid (or 4NT over 4♥) is Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood;
- 4♠ shows 2=2=4=5: opener's 4NT implies wasted major-suit values and may be passed;
- 4NT shows 2=2=5=4, non-slamish (N/F);
- 5♣ shows 2=2=5=4, slamish, N/F; opener's 5NT is to play;
- 5♥ or 5♠: Exclusion RKC6 with both minors;
- 5NT or 6♣: pick-a-slam (NT or minor if 5NT, minor if 6♣).

This does compromise trash Stayman, but with the double major fit, the result need not be bad.

All major-suit 5-5's are initiated by 3♦.

with the very useful difference of allowing a stop at 4M

This is how to "raise" to 3NT, since the direct 3NT response is artificial and forcing.

Five-four minor-suit hands with shortness are handled via Romex Stayman because of the three-card major holding: the Goldman 4♦ is available in those sequences to check back for a minor.

There is a significant "forget" potential in 3NT being anything but to play, but bidding space after a 2NT opening is just too valuable to spend on two ways to get to 3NT—3♠ does puppet to 3NT and is therefore how the raise is done.

F. After Our One-Notrump Opening

(click for BWS)

We-Bad's response structure is distinguished by three different flavors of Stayman (2♣, 2NT, and 3♦) with Goldman/Meckwell-style minor-suit slam searches, and secondary transfers after Jacoby. With an invitational balanced hand without a four-card major, we do not invite: we "pass or blast". Responses to one-notrump are:

- 2♣ is Stayman with extended "crawling" continuations available. **Puppet** is to be preferred with game-strength hands with 4-3 majors; **Flat-hand** is the choice with most game-strength hands with a four-card major but no likely ruffing value. Opener bids 2♥ with both majors, the traditional 2♦ with neither. Now responder has:
 - 2♥ is "Crawling". Opener must pass with three hearts or remove to 2♣ with two, after which responder may pass or continue with:
 - 2NT, showing 4-4 or better minors: opener will choose the minor;
 - 3♣/3♦ with nominal 3=4 majors and 5+ in the minor in a hand that had hoped to find at least a 4-3 fit in a major but didn't. Responder may also be 3=5=[5-0] and have judged to try for a 5-3 heart fit, planning to bail to his minor at the three-level (with a near-certain 8- or 9-card fit) if opener does not pass 2♥ rather than pick a spot at the 2-level that, while a level lower, might be only a 5-2 fit.
 - [2♦:]2♠ is invitational with five spades (and responder also has four hearts, or he would have transferred originally): *now opener's 2NT is strong, asking for clarification;*
 - [2♥:]2♠ is "Crawling" with four spades and either a longer minor or 4-4 or better minors. Opener will pass with three spades, or will show his better minor if holding only two spades (2NT = diamonds), and responder will place the contract;
 - 3♣/3♦ respectively show/deny shortness in the major shown by opener (having bid 2M) or shortness anywhere in the hand (having bid 2♦). **Opener must relay**, with one exception: with four spades, having bid 2♥, he now bids 3♠, setting the trump suit. **Continuations after the relay follow one of two paths** depending on whether opener had bid 2♦ or 2M:
 - [2♦...]:
 - When responder has shown shortness, identification of the location of this shortness takes precedence over anything else at this point, especially as, if the shortness is in a major, the defense is known to have at least nine cards there. Therefore responder simply names the shortness (3NT = diamonds): if the shortness is in a major suit, the auction then is similar to 1NT:3M (with four of a major still being possible on a 4-3 fit, though with the four being in responder's hand rather than opener's).
 - When responder has not shown shortness, his minor suits total seven cards in length and his continuations are the same as in the next item.
 - [2M...]:

Responder has seven or eight minor-suit cards, depending on how the auction got here.

This is fully justified by [research](#), and the liberated 2NT bid is useful.

The 3♣ path has gotten an [especially lively discussion](#) on-line.

The form of scoring may figure considerably in this judgment.

Michael Rosenberg demonstrates the usefulness of this treatment in "D. C. Spingold, III", *The Bridge World*, April 2010, p. 12. A minimum hand with a doubleton spade has no reason to disturb 2♣. The desirability of the major rather than NT on a 5-2 fit at a low level is a cornerstone of the 5-card major concept—the fact that Jacoby transfer sequences can end at 2NT on a 5-2 fit is a **flaw brought about by the transfers**, not a feature.

We hasten to add that we agree that the trade-off is worth it, but a flaw is a flaw.

For the "why" of this structure, see the discussion of the "balanced-hand principle" in the slam-bidding section.

Now, the *number of diamond cards* is shown by steps: 4, 3, 5, 2, 6, 1, 7, 0, 8 diamonds.

The steps are in order of frequency of occurrence

- [2♦:] 3♥ or 3♠ is extended Smolen (F/G with five or six in the *other* major): we vary in having opener bid 3♠ rather than 4♠ with three: if opener continues 3♠ or 3NT, now responder has:
 - 3NT denies a hand suitable for 4m (there are two: minor-suit shortness but non-slammish, or 5=4=2=2 any strength), setting spades as trump; opener assumes 5=4=2=2 slammish unless responder's next call is 4♠;
 - 4♣ or 4♦ shows that shortness and 6-4 majors (but may be 5=4 after 3♠), slammish;
 - 4♥ or 4♠ shows a three-card fragment in the corresponding minor in a [5-4]=[3-1]: responder is interested in game or possibly slam in that suit in view of opener's known eight or nine minor-suit cards: now opener's 4NT (N/F) declines;
 - [2M:] 3oM agrees M and shows shortness somewhere: now the cheapest bid asks, with Response Compression applying;
 - 4♣ is RKC in opener's major if any, otherwise it is RKC in clubs;
 - 4♦ agrees the shown major (if any) and is slammish, but denies shortness (with any shortness, the bid would be 3oM); if opener denied a major, 4♦ is Texas (with 4=6=?-?);
 - [2♦:] 4♥ is Texas (with 6=4=?-?);
 - 2R is a Jacoby transfer, which has two branches:
 - Opener simply accepts with two or three cards in the target suit, after which:
 - (1NT:2♦:2♥:) 2♠ shows at least four spades, at least five hearts, and *invitational* strength (with this shape and game values, use Smolen); this is the systemic way to invite game with four spades and five hearts;
 - 2NT is invitational with 5 cards;
 - 3♣ is either an autosplinter in an unknown suit or a secondary transfer to diamonds. Opener must bid 3♦. Now responder clarifies:
 - 3M = secondary transfer: now continuations are as in the next section;
 - 3OM/3NT/4♣ = autosplinter (3NT = diamonds): shortness with a 6-card major;
 - any other suit bid no higher than three of responder's major is a *secondary transfer*, showing at least four in the target suit (but as a transfer to the other major is *impossible*, a bid that sounds like one is actually a transfer to *clubs*) and is F/G if the target suit is not responder's major.
 - If the target suit is responder's major, responder has either *a game-strength hand with five cards in the major and a singleton* or the usual invitational hand with 6+ cards.

The reason for this is that experienced players may opt for 3NT rather than 4 of the major in spite of holding three-card support *if they have a flat hand*. This can work well when responder *is also relatively flat*, but when responder has shortness, he needs a way to ensure reaching 4M on a 5-3 fit. RM Precision makes this distinction, and we thank Jeff Meckstroth for discussing this with us.

This is because a game-strength hand with 5-4 majors would have been bid via Smolen, and a 5-5 would have been bid via ... 2♦:2♥:3NT (below).
- Opener will proceed as follows:
- bid three of responder's major to decline the presumed invitation (responder will proceed to 3NT with the game-strength hand, which opener will convert to four of the major with three or more cards);
 - bid 3NT to accept the presumed invitation holding two cards in responder's major (responder will convert to four of the major with the invitational hand);
 - bid four of responder's major or cue-bid (following Italian principles: mixed, and not promising extra values; all negative inferences from skipping a control are operational) to accept the presumed invitation holding three or more cards in responder's major.

- If the target suit *is not* responder's major, opener may:
 - bid the cheaper of the shown suits to set that suit as trumps;
 - cue-bid below the more expensive shown suit, in an unbid suit, to set the more expensive shown suit as trumps;
 - bid the more expensive shown suit to set that suit as trumps and deny the ability to make a cue bid on the way (note that a cue-biddable value in the other shown suit is possible);
 - bid 3NT to play: *this absolutely denies three in responder's major.*
- ...2♥:3♠ or ...2♠:3NT offers a choice of games with a 5-card major, probably 5-3-3-2 or 5-4-2-2;
- ...2♥:3NT shows 5-5 majors;
- a self-raise to the four level is a slam try without shortness (to which any bid is a reply to **Inferential RKC**);
- 4♣ is RKC in the announced major;
- 4♦ shows a quantitative-4NT hand, allowing the auction to stop at 4M. Opener has:
 - 4M or 4NT is a signoff;
 - 4OM is a cue bid with three in the major, setting the major as trumps;
 - anything else is the same as to a quantitative 4NT.
- Opener super-accepts with four in the target suit by bidding one step above the simple acceptance. Responder now has:
 - A repeat of the transfer bid at either the three- or the four-level forces completion of the transfer. Transfer to three and raise to four is stronger than transfer to four.
 - A bid one step below three of either minor is effectively a bid of that minor, **either as a game try in the major or as a game- or slam-oriented bid with the suit.** With four-card support of the minor, opener bids the minor (responder will correct to the major, **N/F**, with the game-try hand and therefore will do something else with the two-suiter); without this, he will bid the major.
 - The sequence 1NT:2♥:2NT:3♦ shows clubs, as above. As opener cannot show support with three of the minor here, instead he shows support by cue-bidding or by bidding a **Non-Serious 3NT**.
 - Other calls are as after a simple acceptance.

The inversion of these two sequences is to avoid wrong-siding a possible spade contract when responder has the 5-5 hand.

We thank Baxter Clifford for the two-way idea. The "suit-below" emendation is ours.

Spades-clubs is the only one of the four major-minor combinations that cannot be shown below three of the minor.

With the Stayman and Jacoby structures having now been set out, here we will note points of similarity between (a) Stayman when opener has shown a major and (b) simple-acceptance Jacoby, with the intention of helping with the memory load. In both:

- 4♣ is RKC in the shown major;
- 4♦ is a slammish raise of the shown major without shortness.

- 2♠ handles weak hands with clubs or both minors, or **a game-strength hand with clubs.** Opener will show his better minor (2NT = diamonds better than clubs, 3♣ = clubs at least as good as diamonds). Now responder has:
 - 3♣ is to play (as is pass of 3♣ perforce);
 - [2NT:]3♦ is to play;
 - [3♣:]3♦ or ↱
 - 3M is game-forcing in clubs with shortness in the named suit;
 - 3NT shows clubs without a showable shortness and with at least mild slam interest.

There is no sequence for an invitational club hand, for lack of room.

- **2NT is Meckwell Puppet Stayman.** Responder has a three-card major and weakness (shortness or a worthless doubleton) where five cards opposite that three-card major would be a very welcome discovery; he may also have a four-card major of his own: any eight-card major fit will be found and right-sided. Now:

Actually Meckwell's method is documented only very lightly: most of what is here is ours. But Meckwell's key idea of opener's not disclosing a four-card major willy-nilly justifies the attribution, we think.

but not five: with 5-3 majors, a Jacoby transfer does the job – if opener passes [2R:one-step]:3NT, he cannot have five in the other major in this system.

- 3♣ denies a five-card major: now responder has:

- 3♦ asks for a four-card major (3NT denies): now 4♣ or 4♦ (3♠ is a surrogate for 4♦ if it is available) shows shortness, *necessarily with five cards in the other minor*; opener may show wasted values opposite the shortness with the cheapest NT bid, otherwise respond as to RKC in partner's five-card minor;

The bidder must have 4-3 majors for this sequence to make sense. A useful inference from this will be seen momentarily.

- 3♥ or 3♠ shows shortness (but not a singleton A or K) in a hand with minors 5-4, F/G. Opener's first priority is to bid 3NT with substantial wasted values in responder's short suit as an offer to play, affording the inference if he bids anything else that he does not have such wasted values; following this logic, a consequence of the failure to bid 3NT is that 4NT or 5NT later in the auction by either player is **not** to play even if Minorwood is operating, the rules given elsewhere for Minorwood notwithstanding. Opener's options are:

- 3♠ asks whether responder's three spades are at least as good as Q-x-x. 3NT denies and is passable; 4♣ denies and is slamish (now opener's 4♥ is a surrogate to show clubs); anything else shows Q-x-x or better in spades, sets spades as trumps, and follows Italian cue-bidding rules (with 4♥ as a surrogate for a club cue-bid).
- 3NT is to play, per the earlier discussion. Responder may continue with 4 of his longer minor as RKC6 in both minors – the trump suit is not yet set.
- 4m sets the trump suit, and suggests very little in the other minor: now the cheapest bid by partner is Redwood (Kickback);
- 4♥ and higher are responses to Inferential RKC6 in both minors, suggesting at least Q-x-x in both minors – the trump suit is not yet set.

- 3NT is to play.

- 3♦/3♥ shows five *spades*/hearts respectively. Continuations now are:

- after 3♦:
 - 3♥ or 4♣ agrees spades and shows shortness in the named suit;
 - 3♠ transfers to 3NT, to play;
 - 3NT agrees spades and shows shortness in diamonds;
 - 4♥ transfers to 4♠, to play;
- after 3♥:
 - 3♠, 4♣, or 4♦ agrees hearts and shows shortness;
 - 3NT or 4♥ is to play.

If opener cue bids, he is showing little or no waste opposite partner's shortage.

- 3♣ intends to either **sign off or force to game in diamonds**. Opener's 3♦ is mandatory, following which responder has the same 3M and 3NT continuations as above but with a diamond suit.
- **3♦ = Flat-hand Stayman**: opener will show a four-card major only if he has a likely ruffing value.

There is no sequence for an invitational diamond hand, for lack of room.

- 3♥ or 3♠ shows shortness (but not a singleton A or K) in a hand with minors at least 5-5, F/G. With 1=1=[6-5], 3♥ is systemic. Opener's first priority is to bid 3NT with substantial wasted values in responder's short suit as an offer to play, affording the inference if he bids anything else that he does

not have such wasted values; following this logic, a consequence of the failure to bid 3NT is that 4NT or 5NT later in the auction by either player is **not** to play even if Minorwood is operating, the rules given elsewhere for Minorwood notwithstanding. Opener's options are:

- 3♠ shows five spades (or, exceptionally, four excellent ones) and offers to play in spades. Anything except 3NT accepts spades (and is a slam-try cue-bid if in a side suit); 3NT declines and cycles back to this same structure starting with 4♣;
- everything else is the same as after a Meckwell Puppet 2NT:3♣.
- 4♣ shows 2=2=5=4: opener's 4NT implies wasted major-suit values and may be passed;
- 4R is Texas, after which one step is Kickback and a new-suit bid (or 4NT over 4♥) is Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood;
- 4♠ shows 2=2=4=5: opener's 4NT implies wasted major-suit values and may be passed.

G. After Our Major-Suit Opening

(click for BWS)

Major-suit raises

The system of major-suit raises is as follows:

- by an unpassed hand: raises are by steps starting with 2M, in order to keep the structures for either 1M as nearly the the same as possible. *Responder may not pass with 3+ cards in support even with a square yarborough.*
 - 2M is a normal raise with three- or four-card support (if four cards, it denies shortness anywhere), or it is the systemically-required raise on 3+ cards and squat. Responder to 1♥ holding 3+ hearts will suppress a spade suit. Classical long-suit game tries are in effect; where 4+ cards are held in the other major, **any long-suit try must be in that major**, and partner *must* raise if also holding 4+; this is game-forcing.
 - 2M-plus-1-step is a constructive raise with at least four-card support and shortness somewhere: the next step asks: responder names the short suit (1♥:2♠:2NT:3♥ = spades) with 4 cards, or jumps in the short suit with 5+; if opener does not ask, responder with 5+ cards may proceed to game on his judgment.
 - 2M-plus-2-steps is Jacoby, but with opener **deferring the naming of his shortness (if any) until his third bid**. 3NT and 3 or 4 of his suit are just as in Jacoby; however, 1♥:2NT:3♣/3♦/3♠ shows ≥18/15-17/≤14 HCP respectively and shortness *somewhere* while 1♠:3♣:3♦/3♥ shows ≥16/≤15 respectively and shortness *somewhere*: 3M (or 3NT in the case of 1♥:2NT:3♠) asks where, and Response Compression applies;
 - 2M-plus-3-steps shows a 3-card limit raise with no shortness (with shortness, use 1NT Forcing with the continuations discussed there). 1♥:3♣ denies 4 spades. Opener may accept via 3NT (which is *an offer to play* with a nominal 15-17 HCP balanced), or a cue bid above 3M, or 4M to deny a cue below 4M. 1♠:3♦:3♥ shows four hearts and does not promise any extra strength (but is F/G because of the double fit);
 - 2M-plus-4-steps is a limit raise with four-card support and no shortness;
 - 2M-plus-5-steps (that is, a jump raise) is preemptive.

This is to ensure that we do not miss a 4-4 fit at the game level. On occasion, a bid of a minor would be a more accurate game-suit try, but looking for the 4-4 fit takes precedence.

The point is to conceal the shortness when showing (lack of) strength instead will quash responder's interest in slam anyway, as happens more often than not. For the super-scientists, Marty Bergen has offered [a much more detailed Jacoby alternative than ours](#).

- The four steps above the jump raise handle splinters in all suits in two HCP ranges (10-12 and 13-15, ignoring the possible Q or J of the splinter suit). A splinter promises 1st- or 2nd-round control of the other two side suits.
 - 3M-plus-1-step is a splinter raise in an unknown suit with 10-12 HCP: the cheapest step asks, and Response Compression is in effect (there are two cases: 1♥:3♠:3NT:4♥ shows a spade splinter; 1♠:3NT:4♣:4♠ shows a club splinter).
 - 3M-plus-2, -3, or -4 steps is a splinter raise in the named suit (1♥:3NT is a splinter in spades) with 13-15 HCP.
- by a passed hand:
 - 1♠ is natural:
 - pass/1NT shows a sub-minimum opening with/without four spades respectively; these are the only choices available to a sub-minimum opener;
 - 2♠ shows a full opening, but without the values to jump, with four spades or 3=4 majors;
 - anything else is the same as if opener were not a passed hand.
 - 2♦ is “Drury”: a limit raise with three-card support, or with four-card support with no singleton or void (pass:1♥:2♦ denies four or more spades):
 - 2 of the original major denies a full opening;
 - 2 of the other major shows a full opening and four cards in that major, F/1;
 - 2NT shows a full opening and denies four in the other major, F/1: it also denies suitability for a 3NT rebid (below); the hand need not be notrump-oriented;
 - 3 of a new suit is natural and slam-oriented;
 - 3NT shows a 15-17 HCP 5-3-3-2 hand and offers a choice of 3NT or 4M.
 - 2M is a simple raise, but with one possible sequence re-defined here: if opener's RHO now doubles, opener's (re)double shows a full opening bid while his failure to (re)double denies the same.
 - [1♥:(pass):]2♠ is four-card Drury with spade shortness;
 - 2NT is four-card Drury with shortness in any suit below opener's: 3♣ now asks: responder shows the shortness (opener's major = ♣);
 - a jump shift at the 3-level is a fit-jump with 4-card support;
 - 3M or 4M is preemptive.

A splinter with a singleton A or K is prohibited, as discussed earlier.

We got this excellent idea from Krzysztof Jassem (*WJ05—a modern version of Polish Club*, p. 13).

The reason for this is to allow partner to ask for key cards even when looking at an uncontrolled suit; splinters take up a lot of space.

This hand will have only four hearts or will almost certainly be 5-3-3-2, since it would have passed 1♠ with four spades and would very likely have opened 2♥ rather than 1♥ in third seat with five hearts and a four-card or longer minor on the side.

2♣ is more commonly used for this, but in the context of our weak 2♦ opening, we are more likely to have a club suit than a diamond suit to show here.

The loss of the “standard” redouble here is accepted on the bases of both importance and frequency. Responder often needs to know whether opener has full values in order to judge whether to compete further; the strong hand showed by the traditional redouble is less frequent and can be shown in some other way.

There is no need for a fit-jump into spades: 1♠ here is forcing.

1NT Forcing

1NT by an unpassed hand is a forcing response to either major (as a passed hand, opener with sub-minimum opening values *must*, and with bare minimum values that effectively rule out game *probably will*, pass; while if game is possible, he will rebid as to 1NT-Forcing). Without extra values, opener rebids in his major with six (but not in spades if holding four or more hearts), otherwise in hearts with a secondary heart suit of at least four cards, otherwise in his longer minor (clubs if the minors are of equal length)—but 2♦ promises four cards if the opening was 1♠ (bid 2♣ with 5=3=3=2).

- If opener rebids his major, now three of a lower-ranking suit is a game-try in opener's major. Responder's holding in opener's suit is almost certainly a doubleton, with a 6-2 fit now established.

- After 1♠:1NT:2♦, responder may introduce a 5-card heart suit if he wishes. Opener without extras must pass with two or three hearts, and remove to 2♣ otherwise (note that opener will always have at least four diamonds on the latter sequence).
- Responder's *jump to three of opener's first suit* on the second round shows a three-card limit raise with a singleton in opener's second suit. Responder's *jump to four of opener's first suit* on the second round shows a three-card limit raise with a singleton in an unbid suit.

Without this shortness, the original response would have been 2M-plus-3-steps.

In effect, the system is forcing an upgrade of the hand because of a shortness that now appears to be useful. This may not be iron-clad but it should work decently over the long run, and the sequences are clear.

Modified Gitelman relays

After 1M:1-any:non-reverse-new-suit:2NT (N/F of course), *regardless of any opponents' actions prior to the 2NT*: when opener does not pass or raise to 3NT—his clear-cut choices with a minimum 5-4 or a non-minimum no-shortness hand respectively—he shows, or offers to show, his shape by use of the continuation structure discussed here. *The key is that opener with game values will always show, or offer to show, a three- or (where not impossible) four-card holding in a third suit (a "fragment" as that term is used below) when he has shortness somewhere, to help partner in identifying the best game.* The structure (which also manages certain shapely non-F/G hands) is:

or, of course, 5-3-3-2

This was inspired by an [article by Fred Gitelman](#) in *Canadian Master Point* magazine (June 1994). We vary from Gitelman in extending the method to 1♥:1♠ auctions and in omitting the minimum 6-4 major-minor hand, because our systemic rebid with that hand is the major. (Even if we did rebid in the minor with that hand, we would be dubious about the soundness of automatically forcing the auction to three of the major on a possible 6-1 or 6-0 fit, as Gitelman's published structure does; fortunately, that is a moot issue for us. Opener *may* proceed with a minimum 6-4=?? at his discretion.)

- 3NT shows game values and any 5-4-2-2 or 5-3-3-2;
- 3 of opener's first suit shows 6-4, F/G;
- 3 of opener's second suit shows 5-5, non-forcing;
- 3 of the higher-ranking unbid suit (or 3♠ if the response was 1♠) shows a fragment in that suit, F/G;
- 3 of the lower-ranking unbid suit *may* show a fragment in that suit, but it may also show certain other holdings: responder may relay to inquire or may simply bid 3NT (but he *must* relay if the auction started 1♠:1NT:2♥ because there is a non-game hand that opener might hold for that sequence, as will be noted). If responder does complete the relay, opener has the following continuations:
 - 3NT shows 5-5, F/G;
 - 3♠ shows a fragment *in the relay minor*, F/G;
 - 3♥ has a meaning that depends on the original major:
 - 1♥:1NT:2♦:2NT:3♣:3♦:3♥ shows a 4-card *spade* fragment and precisely three cards in opener's minor, F/G;
 - 1♠:1NT:2♥:2NT:3♣:3♦:3♥ shows 6=4 majors, *non-forcing*.

but there is a sequence (below) that shows precisely 4=5=3=1 after 1♥:1NT and which is therefore to be preferred with that specific hand

that is, diamonds; there is no room for an analogous sequence if opener has rebid 2♣, since 3♣ now would be a minimum 5-5.

A fragment may be four cards unless that would imply a prior systemic misbid.

The “Impossible” 2♠

1♥:1NT:2m:2♠ (F/1) is an artificial raise in opener's minor with at least four, stronger than three of the minor. Opener may try 2NT as an offer to play, N/F, if he wishes.

1♥:1NT:2♥:2♠ (F/1) shows either a minor two-suiter where it is expected that three of opener's better minor will play better than 2♥, or the values for a natural 2NT but *lacking* a spade stopper and with minors at least 5-4. With non-game values, opener bids 2NT to set the contract in the latter case (now responder's 3♣ is P/C), otherwise three of his better minor.

“Bart”

1♠:1NT:2♣:2♦/2♥ is Bart:

- 1♠:1NT:2♣:2♥/3♥ is similar to its usage in ordinary 1NT-forcing methods, but here 2♥ shows at least six hearts;
- 1♠:1NT:2♣:2♦ is artificial and forcing, and shows one of the following *non-game-forcing* hands:
 - five hearts, 6-12 HCP (nominal);
 - six+ hearts, 10-12 HCP (nominal);
 - a club raise too good for an immediate 3♣ raise.

Opener now has:

- Without extra values, opener will rebid:
 - 2♥ with 2 or 3 hearts:
 - 2♠ artificially shows the strong club raise with exactly five cards;
 - 2NT shows the expected values (11-ish) and exactly five hearts;
 - 3♣ is the strong club raise with 6+;
 - 2♠ without:
 - 2NT shows the expected values (11-ish) and either hand type;
 - 3♣ is to play;
 - 3♦ artificially shows the strong club raise with 6+;
- With extra values, opener bids 2NT without three hearts, an artificial 3♣ with three hearts.

In a different conception of Bart, responder guarantees two spades and opener will show three hearts but not two, ensuring that the partnership will not encounter the untidy situation of two 5-1 major fits. We prefer to risk this (and, as will be seen, there is a bail that will often rescue that situation) rather than have to pass 2♣—which may have been bid on a doubleton, remember—on something like 1=5=4=3 or, worse, 1=5=5=2. Also, we have a much easier time with the 11-ish-HCP hand with six hearts.

There is reasonable safety here because opener must have four+ clubs after 1♠:1NT:2♣:2♦:2♠.

so responder with the good-club-raise hand can look for 3NT

2NT rebid

This shows 17-19 HCP balanced. Responder's suit bids are now transfers, with opener having the option in the case of a transfer to clubs of suggesting 3NT rather than completing the transfer; also, opener may super-accept the 3♦ transfer to hearts: this is safe because after 1♥:1NT:2NT, 3♥ cannot logically be a transfer to spades and therefore can be, and is, re-defined as the heart sign-off. Opener is required to complete any other transfer. Continuations are as normal for transfer-based systems opposite balanced hands.

Eisenberg 3♣ (with a 3NT extension)

- 1M:1NT:3♣ is game-forcing if responder had a standard 1NT response and is either:
 - natural; or
 - showing exactly four hearts (if the opening was 1♠); or
 - showing game values but uncertain between 3NT and 4M, with no other bid available that would not be a gross distortion.

Now, responder has:

- if his 1NT concealed support for opener's suit with either of the two hand types suitable for this, he now clarifies:
 - 3M shows that the 1NT response was a sub-minimum 3-card raise: *this is the only sequence that can stop short of game*;
 - 4♣/4♦/4♥ shows shortness in a 3-card limit raise (1♥:1NT:3♣:4♥ shows ♠ shortness);
- after 1♠:1NT:3♣, responder is free to introduce a 5-card or longer heart suit via 3♥;
- responder's 3♦ is automatic with anything else (that is, any hand that did not conceal a spade raise and has no previously unshowable heart suit to show now). Opener now clarifies:
 - 3M shows a six-card suit with uncertainty as to strain.
 - (1♠:1NT:3♣:3♦:) 3♥ shows four hearts;
 - (1♥:1NT:3♣:3♦:) 3♠ shows four clubs;
 - 3NT shows a major that *cannot* play opposite poor support (singleton or void), and clubs (five or more if opener's major is hearts, but may just be four if opener's major is spades);
 - 4♣ shows a major that *can* play opposite poor support (singleton or void), and clubs (five or more if opener's major is hearts, but may just be four if opener's major is spades).

opener would have rebid 3♠ with four clubs

Two-over-one

Two-over-one generally follows the Mike Lawrence style and is discussed in the [Two-Over-One](#) section. However, there is one refinement that applies only to one-of-a-major openings. After 1M:2♦:3♦, responder has no straightforward way to look for 3NT if he has a club stopper but lacks a stopper in the other major. We-Bad adopts a [conventional device](#) to handle this problem. The idea is to piggy-back this hand onto the bid of 3M, so that 3M either is what it sounds like or indicates the problem hand. *The 3M bid must not be used for a hand whose primary focus is a minor-suit slam; such a hand must be managed another way.* Opener assumes the problem hand for the moment and:

from the German "[Forum D+](#)" [system](#) (little-known outside Germany, but derived from the solid "Système d'enchères français").

- bids 3NT with the other major stopped; if responder removes this, he confirms the natural meaning of the 3M bid, and the bid is F/G, of course;
- bids something else without the other major stopped; now responder bids 4♦ (N/F, as this bid meets the "quasi-game" criteria) with the hand that was trying for NT, or anything else, confirming the natural meaning of the 3M bid, and the bid is F/G, of course. Notrump is not a possible strain.

H. After Our Minor-Suit Opening

(click for BWS)

Responses do *not* change based on opener's being 3rd or 4th hand, as a minor is shaded only because of 15 Pearson points in 4th seat, and that is not enough to justify a change in methods.

All raises deny a 4-card major. They are:

- 2m is standard, nominally 6-9 support points. If opener rebids in NT, now a new suit by responder is shortness. (If opener's suit is clubs and the hand is somewhat balanced, responder may prefer to temporize with 1♦ in order to allow partner to rebid 1NT with a suitable hand.)
- 2♠ is an artificial limit raise in the minor: opener has:
 - 2NT is virtually automatic with a minimum balanced hand even with a doubtful or missing stopper: now a new suit by responder is shortness;
 - a new suit is natural and F/G: if a major, it shows five cards or a very good four-card suit.
- 3m is mixed: mainly preemptive in intent (almost certainly with at least 5 cards) but willing to be converted to 3NT when opener has the 18-19 HCP balanced hand;
- a jump shift into the other minor (1♣:2♦, 1♦:3♣) is an artificial game-forcing raise;
- a double jump shift into any suit is a splinter.

One-over-one responses are normal (but see 2♥ below for a hand that is excluded); a diamond suit is bypassed to bid a 4-card major only if the hand is nominally 9 HCP max. 1m:1M:1NT absolutely denies a singleton. 1m:1M:2M is fine on Qxx or better where there is a ruffing value. A 1M response may be shaded but not 1♦.

1♣:1NT shows 8-10 HCP (responder will temporize with 1♦ with 6-7); 1♦:1NT shows 6-9 HCP. *After 1♣:1NT, the 18-19 HCP hand is shown via 2NT, just as though responder might have fewer than 8 HCP even though he cannot: now responder's 3NT is automatic.* 2NT is 10-12 HCP balanced (1♦:2NT:3♣ is F/1); 3NT is 13-15. All the NT responses deny a 4-card major.

The reason for this is to have consistency in 1m:2NT sequences and also in 1m:3NT sequences.

After 1m:1♥:

- opener may not bypass a four-card spade suit to rebid 1NT or 2NT;
- having opened 1♦, opener may **rebid 1♠ on a 3-card suit** rather than 2♣ if he has a singleton or void in hearts. Responder with four spades should not concern himself overly about this possibility because ruffing values in the opposite hand are known.

Holding only four diamonds and therefore not wanting a false preference on a doubleton would be one motivation.

Other responses are:

- 1♦:2♣ is discussed in the **Two-Over-One** section;
- 2♥ is "Reverse Flannery", N/F, showing 5 spades and 4 or 5 hearts, and a nominal maximum of 9 HCP. We will refer to this 2♥ bid hereafter as "RF2H". The following rebids are available to opener:
 - 2♠ is to play;
 - 2NT is F/G and asks clarification:
 - 3♣ is minimum with exactly 4 hearts;
 - 3♦ is maximum with exactly 4 hearts and unbalanced;
 - 3♥/3♠ is minimum/maximum respectively with 5 hearts;
 - 3NT is maximum, 5=4=2=2.
 - 3 of the original minor is natural and N/F;
 - 3 of the other minor is natural and F/1 (if ♣) or F/G (if ♦);
 - 3♥/3♠ are natural and invitational;
 - 3NT is to play.

French junior (and 2010 Vanderbilt winner) Thomas Bessis is the first we know of to discuss the use of this bid without its same-shape but stronger 2♠ cousin, which shows invitational values; he does so in an article in the February 2008 *Le Bridgeur*. We employ his continuation structure. As Bessis notes, the invitational hand is usually manageable by other means, and, following him, we do not use the "Reverse Flannery" 2♠, so that bid is available for other duties.

I. After Any Suit One-Bid

(click for BWS)

One-Over-One

If, on the second round, opener having not raised responder's suit, responder bids three of any previously-bid suit *whether a jump or not*, he is *forcing to game* with values tending to be concentrated in the suit(s) he has bid: if he is supporting one of partner's suits, he is showing quality primary support there. Other hands are bid in other ways.

the auction goes 1♣:1♦:1♥:1♠: FSF (Fourth-suit-forcing and artificial)

This shows invitational-or-better values and may or may not have four spades. Opener has:

- 1NT is a minimum hand with a spade stopper: *inferentially, the hand has diamond shortness and at least five clubs:* the auction now follows XYZ, below;
- Any spade raise shows four spades, with the level *as though the auction had gone 1♣:1♠:* of course responder has at least invitational values, but this treatment ensures that responder *without* four spades can correct to notrump safely;
- 2♣ denies four spades or a spade stopper, and shows five clubs, NF;
- 2♦ or 2♥ shows extras and (if 2♦) probable three-card support, F/1;
- 2♠ shows 6-5 diamonds-spades, F/G;
- 2NT is a non-minimum hand (nominally 15-17 HCP) with a spade stopper: *inferentially, the hand has diamond shortness and at least five clubs,* F/G;
- Any non-spade jump is game-forcing and ostensibly natural.

There is no need for a bid to show a minimum and four spades, as responder cannot have that hand and have responded 1♦.

because of the failure to have rebid a Walsh 1NT earlier or to have raised spades just now

because of the failure to have opened 1NT or to have raised spades just now

opener rebids at the one-level and responder bids 2♣, 2♦, or 2NT on the second round: XYZ

This mechanism handles game-forcing hands not covered by the “fundamental” discussion above; invitational hands; and signing off in diamonds (signing off in clubs is handled another way: see the 2NT bid in the next section).

- 2♣ requires opener to rebid 2♦, with the intention of passing that or continuing with:
 - an invitational bid:
 - a rebid of responder's suit is natural and invitational with five or more cards (six if the rebid was not 1NT), but not as good as six to two of the top three honors;
 - 1m:1♥:1NT:2♣:2♦:2♠ is invitational with 5=6 majors (responder has no need to show four spades here, as opener's second bid denied four);
 - 1m:1♠:1NT:2♣:2♦:2♥ is F/1 and game-invitational with four or more hearts: with a minimum, opener's options are:
 - with four hearts, raise;
 - with spades at least as long as hearts, convert to 2♠;
 - with neither of the above, bid 2NT—*notice that this must be exactly 2=3 majors, allowing responder to remove to 3♥ on 5-5.*
 - 2NT is invitational;

XYZ was invented by Joe Kivel and a number of variants are in circulation. Our structure closely follows one we found [on a BBO blog](#) which has a clever feature that we like. Our modifications from that are mostly a consequence of two factors: first, the fact that We-Bad has a conventional response to 1m to show a sub-invitational hand with 5+ spades and 4+ hearts, removing that hand from the job that XYZ has to do; second, the fact that in We-Bad, the sequence 1m:1♥:1NT absolutely denies four spades, with useful side effects here and there in our XYZ structure, as will be seen.

the use of 2NT on the second round as a puppet to 3♣, which gives up less than more common methods do to provide the club sign-off and also provides a new branch of sequences

- 3 of opener's minor shows five cards, or four with a side singleton if opener is known to have four;
 - 3 of responder's original suit is invitational with at least six to two of the top three honors;
 - 3 of the unbid minor (or either one if the auction started 1♥:1♠) is invitational with 5-5 (rebid was 1NT) or 6-5 (rebid was in a suit) in responder's major and that minor.
- a jump higher than 3 of responder's suit, which is an *auto-splinter*, with 3NT being an auto-splinter in the most expensive suit.
- 2♦ by an unpassed hand is an artificial game force, probably with values more diffuse than would be suitable for a natural one- or two-suit-showing jump (below); continuations are natural.
- 2NT is a puppet to 3♣, with one of the following plans:
 - pass, to play in 3♣;
 - 3NT (F/1), to show the same kind of hand as 3♣ would have shown without the 2NT:3♣ intermezzo, but with greater slam interest;
 - anything else, to show a hand of the same kind as if the bid had been made without the 2NT:3♣ intermezzo, but with (greater) slam interest.

Opener is known to have at least four of his minor after 1♣:1♥:1NT or 1♦:1M:1NT.

2♦ by an original passed hand is natural; also, if the original response was in a major, it promises five cards there.

After 1X:1♠:1NT, opener may be 2-2 in responder's suits; responder may therefore judge to suppress the minor if he cannot stand opener's pass/correct to his better doubleton in this scenario, and instead just continue via ...2♣:2♦:2♠.

opener rebids at the one-level and responder then bids something other than 2♣, 2♦, or 2NT

- a rebid of responder's major is natural and a sign-off;
- 2♥, with hearts not previously bid, occurs in two sequences:
 - 1♣:1♦:1♠:2♥. It is F/1 but not F/G. As the bidder has not used XYZ, and has no need to show a four-card heart suit (opener cannot have four), it is very likely that he is looking for a heart stopper. Opener must jump to force to game, as any non-jump may be passed. Opener's NT bids on the third round afford the same inferences as to diamond shortness that NT rebids in the sibling 1♣:1♦:1♥:1♠ do;
 - 1m:1♠:1NT:2♥, which shows 6=5 majors, ≤9 HCP; continuations are as after RF2H.
- 3 of any previously-bid suit, *whether a jump or not*, is game-forcing and suggests that values are concentrated in the suit(s) bid by responder; with more diffuse values, use the XYZ 2♦ instead;
- a jump in a new suit is a splinter in support of opener's 2nd suit.

opener rebids at the two-level: FSF again

Following the “fundamental” idea stated earlier, three of any previously-bid suit is forcing, though the concentration of values is less assured because of the lack of an XYZ 2♦ as an alternative. It follows that any 4th-suit bid (other than 1♠) is looking for delayed support of a major or for a stopper in the 4th suit with strength unclear (a common modern usage) or is *invitational* in a strain not yet known. Rebids by opener at the two-level *are non-forcing*; responder's major shows three cards (with extras, F/G, if a jump), NT shows a stopper (with extras if a jump), two of opener's first suit simply says that there is nothing to show or it is temporizing (it is F/1); a rebid at the three-level is descriptive, *but the possibly-invitational nature of partner's hand requires a bit of extra care if opener wishes to rebid at the three-level*:

- If opener rebids three of his lower suit, he is saying that he would reject responder's invitation in that suit if such an invitation was intended: responder will of course pass if that is the case;
- If opener rebids at the three-level but above three of his lower suit, he is bidding naturally and forcing to game. Continuations are natural.

On not losing the heart suit after 1♦:1♠: “Gawrys’ Gadget”

1♦:1♠:2♣/2♦ is a special case because we don’t want to miss a still-possible four-four heart fit. The problem hand is 5=4=? and a nominal 10-12 HCP because the third- or fourth-suit-forcing 2♥ already has enough work to do in standard methods. We handle this via Gawrys’s device (2♥→2♠) to get more maneuvering room, as follows:

We’ve adapted this 2♥→2♠ idea that we found in WJ2005 to our needs.

- 2♥ (F/1) is a *sign-off in spades*, an invitational hand with four hearts, or an invitational hand in any previously bid/shown suit. Opener assumes the spade hand for the moment: 2♠ accepts the (presumed) sign-off: now responder’s 2NT artificially shows the heart hand (N/F) while three of a minor is invitational in that suit (2♥ having served as TSF/FSF in this case).
- 2♠ (F/1) is invitational or better with 5+ spades or game-forcing with 4. Opener’s first priority is to bid 3♠/3♥ with 3 spades and a minimum/extras respectively; 2NT with a heart stopper and a minimum, 3NT with a heart stopper and no interest in discussion; otherwise, 3♣ (N/F), 3♦ F/G without clear direction. Continuations are natural.
- (1♦:1♠:2♦):3♣ is the “more expensive” TSF; see “Special...” below.

Responder cannot have a weaker hand with this shape, or he would have responded with a “RF2H” 2♥, while a hand stronger than 12 HCP presents no problem as it is worth a game force.

think of it as a splinter

On not losing the heart suit after 1♣:1♠:

After 1♣:1♠:2♣, 2♥ shows 4+ hearts (and of course 5+ spades) and a nominal 10+ HCP, F/1. The “other” 3rd suit (diamonds) operates in the manner of FSF but with the lack of four hearts known.

Third-suit-forcing—or not

Third-suit-forcing (TSF) operates after a one-over-one response when opener rebids two of his suit.

Generally, 3rd-suit-forcing auctions are similar to their 4th-suit-forcing cousins as far as the cheaper 3rd-suit bid is concerned, with the finesse that if opener now bids NT, he is showing *both* suits in question stopped; with only the bid suit stopped, he may continue with the (now) fourth suit very much in the style of 4th-suit-forcing. This leaves the more expensive of the 3rd-suit bids as natural and forcing (with “natural” here subject to the usual suit-or-stopper nuances). Specific sequences may be defined differently.

Special FSF/TSF situations at the three-level after 1R:1♠

The issue here is that 2NT is no longer available to opener. The list of sequences of concern is short:

- 1♥:1♠:2♦:3♣ (FSF);
- 1♥:1♠:2♥:3m (TSF).

Responder is showing a stopper (TSF) or asking for a stopper (FSF), or, if FSF or *the cheaper* TSF, is making an invitation in some suit already bid:

The logic is that opener, having bid hearts and diamonds, could not sensibly accept in diamonds *but decline in hearts*, and so the 3♥ bid can be redeployed here.

- Opener’s bid in an already-bid suit *declines* an invitation in that suit but *accepts* in any lower suit, with one exception to be noted below. Now:
 - Responder’s bid in an already-bid suit below 3NT is invitational in that suit;
 - Responder’s 3NT asks opener to pass with the missing stopper, else to remove descriptively.
- To accept regardless of the invitational suit and *show* the missing stopper, opener bids 3NT;
- To accept regardless of the invitational suit and *deny* the missing stopper, opener bids:
 - the unbid suit in TSF;
 - 3♥ in FSF.

FSF/TSF: What is and what is not forcing by responder on the third round

In FSF/TSF auctions, except as described above or elsewhere: on the third round:

- 2NT is a game force, ostensibly natural;
- three of any of the suits bid or shown in the first three bids is invitational (unless opener just created a game force);
- repeating the third or fourth suit at the three-level is natural and F/G;
- "raising" opener's fourth-suit bid is a general game force.

Opener Rebids 2NT: Wolff and 3♦ Checkback

The structure when opener rebids 2NT after a one-over-one is as follows:

- 3♣ is Wolff-ish; opener must bid:
 - 3 of responder's major with 4-card support in a 4-3-3-3;
 - 3♦ otherwise, after which responder has the following:
 - (after 1m:1M) 3 of responder's major is a signoff;
 - (after 1♥:1♠) 3 of either major is a sign-off;
 - 3NT/4m is artificial, slammish in opener's minor with 4/5-card support respectively and no shortness: 3NT is N/F; now 4m/next-step is RKC/Redwood respectively;
 - the minimum bid in either so-far unshown suit is a splinter in support of opener's suit, slammish.
- 3♦ is Checkback, whatever responder's suit was. The continuations differ slightly depending on whether the response was 1♦ or one of a major, but the effect is the same: to right-side a possible 4-4 major suit fit and/or to find a 5-3 major suit fit. Now:
 - *The response was 1♦:*
Opener bids three of his (better) major, or 3NT with none; responder's conversion of opener's suit bid to 3NT shows four in the other major;
 - *The response was one of a major:*
Opener's first priority is to show four in the other major; his second priority is to show three in responder's shown major. He bids 3NT with neither. Responder's conversion of opener's other-major bid to 3NT confirms five in his shown major, and opener will usually correct to that suit with three pieces.
- 3 of opener's major is natural and forcing;
- [after 1♣:1♦:] 3♥ or 3♠ shows shortness, *non-slamish*;
- 4 of opener's minor is RKC in that suit.

This idea is due to Alan Cokin. Of course the opening was 1♣.

This is available even in hearts—and thus in all possible suits, as there are no other “problem children”—because a hand that would bid 1m:1♣:2NT:3♣:3♦:3♥ in vanilla Wolff (meaning to pass or take a spade preference) would have bid 1m:2♥ (“RF2H”) here, and so the idled sequence is available for use here.

Mini/maxi-splinters after one-over-one

When the one-over-one response skipped at least one step, jump rebids in the suit(s) skipped are idle: a non-jump will do for a reverse, and a double jump is a splinter. We-Bad uses these bids as “mini/maxi-splinters”: that is, four-card raises with shortness in the named suit, but either weaker or stronger than the usual splinter range (that is, the mini/maxi-splinter shows a nominal 16-19 or 24-or-more support points). If responder would decline opposite the weaker hand, he bids 3 of the agreed suit; otherwise he cue-bids or bids 3NT (a close cousin here to the **Non-Serious 3NT**), to which opener will return to 4 of the agreed suit with the weaker hand and cue-bid with the stronger hand. Mini/maxi-splinters are not available in a side suit that is not “between” the two bid suits if fourth-hand passes. However, a mini/maxi-splinter does become available in such a suit if fourth-hand shows that suit. This is discussed later in the section “Competition After Any Suit One-Bid”.

Reverses and two-level jump shifts after one-over-one or a 1NT response

Opener's reverse (e.g. 1♣:1♥:2♦) or two-level jump-shift (e.g. 1♣:1♥:2♠) is F/1 and promises a rebid. A 2NT rebid was not suitable for whatever reason (possession of a four-card major is *not* a sufficient reason if the hand is otherwise suitable). Responder's second-round options are:

- (after one-over-one) Responder's rebid of his suit shows at least five cards and is F/1 (*not* F/G);
- Responder's bid of the cheaper of the (cheaper) unbid suit and 2NT denies the above hand (after one-over-one), is artificial, and warns that opener's next bid may be passed (though responder may be temporizing): opener will make the cheapest bid that he would be willing to see passed;
- (after 1M:1NT) Responder's jump shift to a new suit shows shortness in a three-card limit raise of opener's major;
- 3NT, if a jump by an unpassed hand, shows 12-14 HCP;
- any other bid is natural and F/G.

Three-level jump shifts after one-over-one or a 1NT response (other than mini/maxi-splinter)

Any such bid is natural and F/G; if after 1M:1NT, it promises at least five in the second suit if four could be shown via the Eisenberg 3♣.

Opener's jump rebid in his own suit after one-over-one or a 1NT response

Any such bid is N/F, but any continuation here by responder is F/G.

Two-Over-One

We-Bad's methods derive from certain of Mike Lawrence's 2/1 ideas; the general idea is that a two-over-one response to 1M is forcing to quasi-game unless opener rebids no higher than two of his original suit and responder shows an invitational hand in his suit, and we use a Kokish-style structure after 1♦:2♣; but there is one significant change to the 1M-based sequences occasioned by our Richard-Pavliceck-style FSF/TSF structure that, we think, makes things easier here. The change appears when opener has rebid at or below two of his first suit and responder wants to rebid his suit but needs also to distinguish between the non-forcing hand that is shown simply by rebidding the suit in Lawrence and the forcing hand, which requires a temporizing force of some kind in Lawrence. We-Bad switches these by decreeing that the rebid is forcing to quasi-game while the invitational hand is introduced by a FSF or TSF bid below three of his bid suit, or by 2NT in the *sole* case of 1♠:2♣:2♥/2♠ (because there is no new-suit bid available below 3♣). In any of these cases, the bid in question may introduce

hereby christened "2NTF" in this context

what would be the invitational rebid of responder's suit in Lawrence (with opener's action discussed below), and the force in responder's suit is handled, as already said, by rebidding the suit immediately. This brings our 2/1 handling closer to our 1/1 methods, and it is tidy that, for example, 1♣:1♦:2♣:3♦ and 1♣:2♦:2♠:3♦ show essentially the same game-forcing hand. Where the auction is at one step below three of responder's suit, responder's rebid of his suit retains the Lawrence meaning (non-forcing), with the traditional third- or fourth-suit convolutions required to create a force. The most likely occurrence of this would be 1M:2♦:3♣, which does not promise extras (as discussed below) and which therefore requires that 3♦ be non-forcing.

1♠:2♥ promises 5+, of course, *but so does* 1M:2♦. 1M:2♣ becomes something of a catch-all for other hands (but of course is used for a club suit also).

Responder's rebid of his suit (which may be clubs), when that bid is F/G, shows a six-card or longer suit to least two of the top three honors. Responder will

specifically his *Workbook On The Two Over One System*, including "Method Two" in the section on 1♦:2♣. The methods on his Two-Over-One CDs differ somewhat from those in the book, and the designations of some methods are maddeningly reversed, but the CDs are still very much worth study.

This is justified in part by the considerable flexibility afforded by the availability of a 2♦ rebid.

take this action even in preference to showing support for opener's major (which he will do next round).

After 1M, the auction is forced to quasi-game unless responder bids TSF, FSF, or 2NTF below three of his suit after opener has rebid no higher than two of his first suit, and opener now bids three of responder's suit. Responder passes if his intent was invitational. Responder has denied a doubleton: he would have responded 1NT with a doubleton in an invitational-strength hand featuring a lower suit, to cater to opener possibly rebidding his suit and showing six (as it would opposite a 1NT response), where responder's continuation in a lower-ranking suit would be a long-suit game try. Sequences beginning 1♦:2♣ follow other rules, below.

We got this idea from Russ Arnold and Zeke Jabbour.

Opener's rebids are:

- A jump rebid of his suit shows a one- or no-loser suit and, if a major, sets trumps;
- A jump shift in a new suit is a splinter with four-card support;
- Any hand not suitable for any of the above is handled by 2♦ after 1M:2♣, by 3♣ after 1♠:2♥, or by bidding the fragment in any other sequence.
- If the opening bid was 1♦, rebids are per Kokish, though our continuations differ from his:
 - 2♦ promises at least five diamonds and is the only bid with such a holding; therefore it is undefined as to values; F/1;
 - 2♥ shows 4=4=4=1, any strength; F/1; now responder's 2♠ is temporizing, possibly with the invitational hand (in the style of the TSF/FSF intermezzo discussed earlier), to which opener's 2NT is N/F; 3♣ or 3♦ is F/G; 3♥ or 3♠ expresses the limit of the hand;
 - 2♠ is an artificial F/G raise of clubs, with at least four; F/G;
 - 2NT shows 12-14 HCP balanced; N/F;
 - 3♣ is a non-forcing raise with three or more clubs; N/F;
 - 3NT shows 18-19 HCP balanced: now 4♣ is Minorwood and 4♦ is Stayman.
- If the opening bid was 1M:
 - Two of his suit promises six cards;
 - A reverse shows just a little extra (a queen above a minimum);
 - 2NT promises stoppers with 12-14 or 18-19 HCP;
 - 3NT promises stoppers with 15-17 HCP;
 - Raising responder's suit promises at least Qxx if a minor, xxx if hearts.

Continuations after 1M:2♣:2♦ are:

- 2oM, being FSF, *may* be the invitational hand in clubs, and opener will proceed as already discussed in such situations, with continuations also as discussed;
- 2NT is natural, and *may* indicate that the 2♣ bid was a “convenient fiction” to make it possible to show the F/G balanced hand at the two-level;
- anything else is to be understood consistently with system methods already set out.

Responder's second-round support of opener's first bid suit promises at least three-card support if opener has shown five cards, but may be on a doubleton if opener has shown six:

- Responder's second-round jump to four in a/the opener's major suit is a **JUMPDOC**.
- Responder's second-round *jump* to three of opener's (first) major shows two of the top honors in the suit; a bid of only two denies such a holding. Where the bid of two is not available, there is no inference as to trump quality when responder supports at the three-level.

Responder's second-round jump in a new suit is a splinter in support of opener's first suit, perhaps but not necessarily with only three-card support. The hand differs from an immediate splinter in possessing a suit of its own that was worth showing and in denying a control in the remaining suit if that suit is unbid, otherwise in denying a high-card control (ace or king).

When responder's second bid is FSF or TSF *below 3 of his suit*, or 2NTF, opener bids 3 of responder's suit if

and only if he would have passed that bid if it could have been made invitationaly (as in vanilla Lawrence). A corollary is that if responder then removes that bid, he is forcing to game, but he does *not* have a one-suiter (or he would have rebid his suit rather than go through FSF/TSF/2NTF).

IV. Competitive Bidding Methods

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

This section describes agreements about auctions in which our side makes the first bid and the opponents do something other than pass.

A. Competition After Our Preempt

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

- *When our three-level-or-higher opening is doubled:*
 - Responder's redouble is strength-showing, temporarily suggests playing for a penalty, and creates a force to the next level of opener's suit.
 - Responder's simple new-suit bid below game is forcing, but lead-directional (presumably with a fit).
 - Responder's jump new-suit bid below game is forcing, fit-showing, lead-directional.
- *When our three-level-or-higher opening is overcalled:*
 - Responder's simple new-suit bid below game is forcing, suggesting length (can be raised).
 - Responder's jump new-suit bid below game is forcing and fit-showing.
- *When our weak two-bid is doubled:*
 - responder's redouble requires opener to escape to the cheapest bid after which responder will place the contract, or redouble or bid 2NT to ask opener to pick between the two lowest unbid suits;
 - responder's competitive new-suit bid is lead-directing agreeing opener's suit, and opener must return to his suit if advancer passes;
 - responder's competitive two-notrump response is forcing and similar to the same bid made noncompetitively.
- *When our weak two-bid is overcalled,* responder's competitive two-notrump response is forcing and similar to the same bid made noncompetitively.
- *When responder raises a preempt to game,* whether competitively or not, and an opponent bids, opener may not bid but may double, indicating **extra distribution-based offensive potential**.
- *When responder raises a preempt below game,* whether competitively or not, and an opponent overcalls, opener may not bid and may not double.

B. Competition After Our Two-Club Opening

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

After their overcall or double of our 2♣: regardless of the definition of that action, responder's double or 2♦ shows double-negative strength, while any other bid, or pass, is F/G (if pass, now opener's double shows a balanced hand).

After their overcall of our 2♣:2♦, opener has these options:

- pass is forcing: responder's double on this turn is double-negative while failure to double is F/G;
- double is penalty;
- any bid is forcing to game: responder's minimum NT may be double-negative.

The idea behind this hypermodern method is that responder has bid either to make on strength or with whatever intent on shape, and opener can indicate here that his side should be able to play for a trick more than responder had estimated (and with defensive potential perhaps slightly lower): this may be very useful information for responder on his next turn.

C. Competition After Our One-Notrump Opening

(click for BWS)

After direct-position competition over our one-notrump opening, responder has the following:

- Redouble requires opener to bid 2♣, which responder will pass or correct to 2♦, to play;
- If the overcaller's action did not promise at least one specific suit, systems are on.
- If the opposing action showed at least one specific suit:

In ACBL GCC events, this can apply only to double or 2♣, and so those are the only actions we have considered in our design so far.

our call ↓	Majors in play for us (that is, not shown by the opponent)			
	neither	♥ only	♠ only	both
2♦ [†]		Jacoby	Stayman ¹	Jacoby
2♥ [†]		Stayman ¹	Jacoby	
2♠ [†]		both minors or lebensohl ²		
2NT		inv+ in ♣		inv+ in minor ³
3♣		inv+ in ♦		Romex Stayman ⁴
3♦		inv+ in ♥	inv+ in ♠	inv+ in ♥
3♥	system on	transfer to 3NT	Stayman w/stopper	inv+ in ♠
3♠	system on	Stayman w/stopper	transfer to 3NT	system on
3NT	to play	Stayman without stopper		to play

[†]for double of that bid

¹lacking the major, opener bids 1 step without a stopper in the opponents' suit, NT with a stopper

²opener bids 2NT with longer diamonds than clubs, else 3♣: now responder places the contract at 3 of a suit (any suit), which is not forward-going

³referring to the other minor from the one the opponents have shown (if they have shown both, this bid is undefined)

⁴the structure is the same as after 2NT:3♣

Where double is not defined above, it can have the following meanings:

- If overcaller holds the suit named, it is penalty;
- If overcaller does not hold the suit named, it is cards, and any subsequent double by either player is penalty;
- If second hand overcalls 2NT for minors: double shows the majors and invitational values *but no more*.

If a double is passed around to opener, he must redouble, after which responder will either convert for business or initiate an escape plan consisting of bidding four-card suits up the line (if a hand does not have two four-card suits, consider the lowest-ranking three-card suit to be four cards for the purposes of this device).

After any penalty suggestion: the opening side is forced to two notrump, below-game new-suit bids are forcing, raises and two notrump are not forcing.

one notrump – (overcall) – pass – (pass) – double is for takeout, but one notrump – (pass) – pass – (overcall) – double is for penalty.

Most of the bridge community plays double here as saying “I want to penalize at least one runout”, and we acknowledge some cost in forgoing this. However, if a negative double is not available, invitational major-suit hands have no really satisfactory solution—bidding risks getting too high on no fit, while passing risks getting ripped off. We even get back something on the defensive side: opener will sometimes have a profitable conversion of partner's negative double.

After one notrump – (pass) – pass – (double) – opener's redouble shows a five-card suit somewhere: now partner's 2♣ is p/c.

After one notrump – (pass) – two clubs – (double) :

- Redouble is an offer to play, with four good clubs or five;
- A bid here is à la Stayman *and promises a club stopper*;
- A pass here *denies a club stopper*: now responder has:
 - redouble (or double 3♣) to “re-Stayman” with a constructive Stayman hand (nominally 8+ HCP), but with opener's continuations designed to result in the doubler's being on lead whenever possible:
 - a minimum diamond bid denies a 4-card major: now Smolen is off;
 - a minimum bid in either major shows four in *the other major* and *denies* four in the named major;
 - a minimum NT bid shows *both majors*.
 - All the above are forcing by logic, as the named strain cannot sensibly be the final one.
 - bid 2♦/2♥ with the Trash/Crawling hand respectively.

The intent of this structure is to maintain accuracy in determining the final contract while avoiding an opening lead through a vulnerable club stopper in either hand.

After next hand doubles or bids over our 2R transfer response to one notrump, opener should, in priority order:

- superaccept with an appropriate hand as though intervenor had passed (q. v.), but with the 17-18 dummy-point hand shown by the cheapest available suit bid below three of the promised major if the intervention was a bid of 2NT or higher; this is all if space allows;
- accept the transfer with three-card support for the suit indicated by responder, if space allows: now responder's NT bid shows exactly five cards and denies any shortness, while a raise promises five cards and shortness somewhere, or six cards;
- prefer redouble to pass with significant length and strength in the suit bid. Either action shows exactly two-card support. Now responder's double is penalty, his 2NT bid shows exactly five cards and *denies* a stopper, and his re-transfer at any level shows six cards.

2NT, three of the promised major, or a re-transfer at the three-level each shows invitational values.

D. Competition After Our Major-Suit Opening

(click for BWS)

Section F. below discusses actions common to competitive auctions after any suit opening and defines the Baron 1NT overcall. This section discusses sequences unique to major-suit openings.

In responding to a UPH major-suit opening over a suit overcall:

- jump shifts to the 3-level retain the meanings they would have had over a pass;
- double jump shifts are splinters.

In responding to a UPH major-suit opening over a takeout double or Baron or Raptor 1NT overcall:

- redouble implies no fit, and *may conceal a minor suit*;
- 1NT is natural and non-forcing;
- 2♣ is an artificial limit raise with three-card support and shortness: now 2M asks the shortness;
- [after a 1♠ opening] 2♦ shows hearts; if opener now bids 2♥, responder's 2♠ shows two-card support and is somewhat forward-going;
- 2M-minus-1-step is a “good” raise of the major to two;
- 2M is a “bad” raise of the major to two;

because 2♣ and 2♦ have conventional meanings here

- all bids above 2M retain the meanings they would have had over a pass.

In responding to a PH major-suit opening when next hand does not pass: any bid that would have been part of the Drury structure over a pass retains that meaning. Over double, the 2M/2♣ raises in the previous item apply.

After one of a major – (pass) – one notrump – (overcall) – ?: a double by opener is for takeout, a double by responder (after two passes) is for penalty.

If fourth hand bids after 1M:(pass/double/Baron/Raptor):2M-plus-two-steps (= Jacoby raise), the point-showing rebids are off and opener's possible actions are:

- double suggests a penalty, very likely expecting two tricks in trumps;
- 3M/3NT/4M shows a *singleton in the overcalled suit* with ≥ 18 , 15-17, or ≤ 14 HCP respectively;
- the cheapest bid in any suit not yet bid by either side is *natural*, suggesting a two-suiter with no interest in defending;
- pass denies shortness in overcaller's suit and shows a hand not suitable for any other action: partner may double for penalties, make the cheapest available bid to ask opener's shortness (opener will rebid as closely to the non-interference structure as he can), conclude in game, or make a slam try.

This structure developed from a [rec.games.bridge thread](#) that noted the frequency of unsound lead-directing or sac-suggesting overcalls of artificial game raises that ask for shortness because of a low likelihood of being punished in common "stolen-bid"-double methods.

E. Competition After Our Minor-Suit Opening

(click for BWS)

Section F. below discusses actions common to competitive auctions after any suit opening and defines the Baron 1NT overcall. This section discusses sequences unique to minor-suit openings.

- After a takeout double:
 - 2♥ is RF2H but with the constraint that bidder must have at least two clubs if the opening was 1♣ or three diamonds if the opening was 1♦;
 - raises are as after a pass, with the exception that 2NT replaces 3♣ as the game-forcing diamond raise.
- After a suit overcall:
 - 1♣:(1♦):2♥ is RF2H with the constraint that bidder has at least two clubs;
 - double-jump-shifts are splinters.
- After a Baron or Raptor 1NT overcall: 2NT is a limit-or-better raise in the minor.

The reason for these constraints is to provide some safety because of an opponent's having entered the auction. The given constraints guarantee that if we do not have a 7-card or better major fit, we have an 8-card fit in opener's minor.

After a 1♦ response, opener's double of a sandwich 1♠ shows four hearts, and of a sandwich 1♥ shows *four diamonds*: continuations after the latter are as after a support double, but with responder's suit-length references reduced by one (as opener has shown one more card as compared with a support double).

as 2♠ is no longer a jump

1m:(1♠):double:(pass):2NT:(pass):3oM is New-Minor-Forcing suggesting five hearts.

Gawryś is on regardless of opposing action as long as 2♥ is available to responder on the second round.

"Extended Michaels": if we have bid exactly one minor but neither major and the opponents have done likewise, a cue of the opponents' minor at the 4-level or below as a player's first non-pass action shows at least 5-5 majors.

F. Competition After Any Suit One-Bid

(click for BWS)

A simple *new-suit response over an overcall, takeout double, or Baron or Raptor 1NT overcall* is natural and forcing by an unpassed hand. If at the two- or three-level, it shows a nominal 10+ HCP, still F/1, but it does not create a later force unless the opponents bid above our most likely game.

a 1NT overcall as a light quasi-takeout double ("quasi" because advancer systematically passes with a stopper and suitable values).

A redouble (or double of a Baron or Raptor 1NT overcall) shows a hand with 10-plus HCP that is not suitable for any other bid and therefore the prospect of defending is appealing. A subsequent double by either player is penalty. The opponents may not play an undoubled contract of **2♦ or below**; other than that, no force is created.

A jump shift that would have had a certain meaning if second hand had passed retains the same meaning here unless otherwise defined.

Other actions after a suit overcall are:

- a double is negative through two spades;
- two or three notrump is natural and nonforcing (jump or not);
- over a simple overcall, a cue-bid shows a raise with game-invitational or greater strength (opener's acceptance is via a new-suit or opposing-suit cue bid or, if the agreed suit is major, 3NT [a close cousin to the **Non-Serious 3NT**]), and a jump cue bid is a splinter (jump-raises are preemptive);
- four-notrump is Key-Card Blackwood (jump or not).

The reason for this quirky-looking view – which we were gratified to find later to be held also by Eric Kokish, in his methods after the opponents' 1NT overcall – is that a forcing pass here can result in defending a doubled two-level contract willy-nilly, and at IMPs, 2♦ doubled making is not a disaster but 2♥ doubled making is – as we do not vary methods based on form of scoring, we carry this over to matchpoints, where the math is admittedly much less one-sided.

After a natural 1NT overcall, our structure through 2♠ is taken almost exactly from Kokish-Kraft, and the rest is fairly classical:

our call ↓	Our opening bid	
	1m	1M
double	penalty; forcing only through 2♦ ;	
2♣	majors	♣ and the other major, usually at least 5-5, N/F
2♦	5+ hearts: now opener bids the extent of his hand	♦ and the other major, usually at least 5-5, N/F
2♥	5+ spades: now opener bids the extent of his hand	weak raise if M, natural and N/F if OM
2♠	both minors, with an emphasis on the unbid minor	weak raise if M, natural and N/F if OM
2NT	a game-strength two-suiter, not including opener's suit, judged more suitable for offense than defense; opener's new-suit bid at any level is pass-correct	
3+ of any suit	preemptive	
3NT	minors, shape and strength appropriate to vulnerability	

Mini/maxi-splinters created by competitive action: After a one-over-one response, if the next hand shows one or both of the remaining suits without jumping, a bid that would have been a mini/maxi-splinter still is such; but in addition, a bid in a just-bid or -shown suit that would have been a jump shift had bidder passed is now also a mini/maxi-splinter. For continuations, see under “After Any Suit One-Bid”.

by bidding it or by making a bid that shows two suits—this does *not* include a *natural* NT bid nor a double

XYZ: XYZ is on in competition as long as responder has 2♣ (and of course therefore also 2♦) available. A 1♦ overcall is ignored. If either opponent bids a major-suit bid before our “Z” bid, a bid of that suit by our side after the “Z” bid is a cue bid with a meaning appropriate to the context; our structure is otherwise unaffected.

TSF/FSF: The usual Pavliceck-style treatment of these compared with jumps—invitational vs. game-forcing respectively—is reversed if the opponents bid (opponents' doubles are ignored). Suit jumps now are invitational, while TSF/FSF or a cue bid may introduce a game-forcing sequence.

Negative doubles: A negative double of 1m:(1♥) shows exactly four spades (a bid of 1♠ instead would show at least five). In other situations where there is no descriptive free bid available, the test for whether a negative double is appropriate is whether responder will be able to manage any continuation. A subsequent double by the negative doubler is a repeat negative double if only one level higher, advancer having raised; it is penalty otherwise. Opener's rebids in a previously unbid suit function as would raises in the corresponding noncompetitive auction; for example, after 1♣ – (one of a major) – double – (pass) – ?, opener's 2♦ rebid does not show extras. Opener's double of a raise by advancer to any level is responsive.

Support doubles and redoubles: After a major-suit one-level response (regardless of second-hand's action) and a sandwich-position double with any meaning, artificial one notrump, or any suit bid regardless of meaning at or below two of responder's suit, opener's redouble or double shows a three-card fit for responder's suit, with the exception that after 1m:(1♥):1♠ it shows two (opener would raise with three, knowing of at least five opposite). Opener is not required to act as above with such a hand, however; also, he is free to bid 1NT even with three-card support if he thinks that would give a more effective description in context. Follow-ups include:

- Responder's pass of a support redouble shows 10+ HCP and is similar in intent and treatment to a redouble over a takeout double;
- Responder's bids are as follows:
 - Two of the major is not forward-going; this bid may be made on four cards if over a pass, but otherwise shows five;
 - Two of opener's minor or of the unbid minor (if any) is an offer to play, with only four in the major; opener may return to the major;
 - Two of the unbid major, if any, shows four cards and is a one-round force;
 - Three of opener's minor is invitational (with only four in the major);
 - A cue bid below 3NT is to be understood as stopper-showing if there were two unbid suits until it is shown to have been something else, as a general force otherwise.

This is a practical treatment. Passing a support redouble on weakness is pointless since the opponents are not about to defend 1M-redoubled.

2♥ inferentially shows five spades.

Maximal doubles: After a single raise by responder (regardless of second hand's action) and advancer's bid one step below three of our suit, double is an artificial game-try [e.g., 1♠ -- (any) -- 2♠ -- (3♥) -- double].

In responding to a one-of-a-suit opening over an artificial action:

- Over a bid showing two fixed suits:
 - double indicates an interest in penalizing the opponents somewhere;
 - a bid in the remaining suit is nonforcing;
 - the (more expensive) cue-bid, actual or virtual, that is below three of opener's suit is a game-invitational or better raise;
 - the other cue-bid is a one-round force in the remaining suit.
- Over a bid showing an anchor suit and another, unknown suit:
 - If the bid is in the anchor suit, treat as a one-suited bid;
 - otherwise:
 - double indicates an interest in penalizing the opponents somewhere;
 - a virtual cue bid of the anchor suit is a limit-or-better raise of the opener's suit;
 - a bid in another suit is non-forcing.

Alan Bell introduced this variant of "unusual-over-unusual" in "Bidding Lab / Unusual vs. two-suiters", *The Bridge Bulletin* (ACBL), June 2005. The idea is to leave the most space when strain is uncertain, regardless of the particular suits in play.

Opener's action when responder has bid in a new suit and 4th hand has shown the remaining two suits by an artificial bid: A mini-splinter or splinter interpretation takes precedence, as discussed earlier; but a bid in an opponent-shown suit *below the mini-splinter level* is to be interpreted as though the intervenor had passed, with continuations interpreted similarly.

for example, when a 1NT "sandwich" shows two suits either by agreement or by the bidder's being a passed hand

V. Defensive-Bidding Methods

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

A. Initial Defensive-Action Requirements

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

Generally, the We-Bad requirements for initial constructive defensive actions (takeout doubles and overcalls) are moderate, but two-level overcalls are sound except for **some latitude in bidding 2♣ over 1♦**. The vulnerability somewhat affects the minimum strength required.

The requirements for initial preemptive defensive actions are possibly light.

Actions when the opponents have opened with one of a suit

Overcall

♠ A Q x x x
♥ x x x
♦ Q x x x
♣ x

is a minimum one-spade overcall of one club with neither side vulnerable.

The normal simple overcall maximum is 18 HCP with 5-3-3-2 distribution or the equivalent after trading off high cards for shape.

♠ A K Q 10 x
♥ A K x
♦ Q x x x
♣ x

is slightly too strong for a one-spade overcall of one club with neither side vulnerable.

A direct-position one-notrump overcall shows a strong 15 to 18 points, regardless of the suit opened.

In reopening-position, a one-notrump overcall shows 10-14 (by a passed hand, 10 to a maximum non-opening), a two-notrump overcall 18-19, regardless of the suit opened.

Takeout double

♠ A x x x
♥ A x x x
♦ Q x x x
♣ x

is a minimum takeout double of one club with neither side vulnerable. A doubleton in an unbid minor is not a fatal flaw for a takeout double if the hand is otherwise suitable.

We-Bad uses minimum equal-level conversions (minELC) only when doubler of a major-suit opening converts a club advance to the same number of diamonds, advancer having bid at the two level or competitively at the three level.

This latitude is due to the fact that this particular overcall can be especially difficult for the opponents to handle because both majors are in play but unbid. Advancer's possible cue bid of 2♦ provides some safety.

Cue-bid or 2NT

An unpassed-hand's cue-bid in opener's suit, in either direct or reopening position, shows

- both majors if the cue-bid is in a minor, or
- the unbid major **and clubs** if the cue-bid is in a major.

The same bid by a passed hand shows a strength range consistent with security and the initial pass.

A direct two-notrump overcall of a suit one-bid shows length in the two lowest unbid suits. By a passed hand, the strength is limited by failure to open; a one-notrump overcall by a passed hand shows a similar hand-type but less playing strength.

Jump cue-bid

A jump cue-bid is:

- natural in direct position in opener's minor;
- asking for a stopper for three notrump (suggesting a solid suit elsewhere) in direct position in opener's major and in reopening position.

Jump overcall

A single jump-overcall of a suit opening in direct position is preemptive, in reopening position shows at least a king more than an opening bid with at least a strong six-card suit (by a passed hand, shows a similar hand limited by context). If two-of-a-suit, the response structure is the same as to a weak-two opening.

Against a natural 1NT

- **Against weak 1NT (= could be 13 or less), by our UPH:** Reverse Cappelletti (2♣ = unspecified major-minor 2-suiter or minor one-suiter; 2♦ = majors; 2M = that major) in both direct and reopening positions. Double, for penalty, shows at least as strong a hand in direct position, may be as light as opener's minimum in reopening position (except against a mini notrump).
- **Otherwise:** "Meckwell" (double = clubs or diamonds or both majors or any very strong hand; 2m = that minor and a major (2♣:2♦ asks; 2♦:2♥ is p/c); 2M is natural, with the same response structure as to an opening weak-two bid.

Advancer's double through 2♥ asks clarification

Vs. a natural, non-forcing but non-preemptive two-bid, e.g. Precision 2♣, Flannery 2♥, "Fantunes" 2-any:

as against a weak two-bid in the same suit.

whether a secondary suit is required, possible, or forbidden is irrelevant

Vs. a natural preempt or a preempt with the named suit and an unknown second suit

A double of an opening through four spades is for takeout. 2NT by advancer is Lebensohl. 4NT by advancer is RKC with no suit agreed; 4NT on doubler's next turn is RKC in the suit bid by responder. Except where specified, no distinction is made between initial direct vs. balancing actions.

Advancer's methods after a direct-position 2NT overcall and a pass by responder are:

- New-suit bids at the three-level are to play; overcaller may raise directly with an exceptional hand, or may bid competitively;

- A cue-bid of opener's suit is ostensibly reverse Stayman, F/G, but may be used to introduce any F/G hand where strain is unclear.

A cue bid:

- at the three-level, asks for a stopper for notrump;
- at the four-level, shows the majors over a minor, the minors over a major;
- at the five-level, is RKC Voidwood with no suit agreed.

A four-notrump overcall:

- of four of a major, shows some two-suiter;
- of four of a minor, is natural;
- of anything else, is Blackwood.

Four of a minor, whether a jump or not, is *never* the one-suiter it sounds like:

- over a major, it shows the named minor and the other major;
- over a minor, it shows the named minor and an unknown major: partner's heart bid at any level is pass-or-correct.

Jeff Meckstroth described a natural four-of-a-minor overcall vs. a preempt as "neither fish nor fowl" in a magazine bidding panel; see also pp. 75-76 in his book *Win the Bermuda Bowl With Me*.

With the exception of four of a minor (above), a suit overcall is natural, and a jump overcall is natural but stronger, in keeping with the adage "never preempt over a preempt".

Against conventional openings: ACBL General Convention Chart

Against two clubs or two diamonds showing any three suits: double shows the named suit.

Against two diamonds showing three suits including diamonds: double is takeout of diamonds.

Against two diamonds Flannery: double shows high cards, two hearts is takeout of hearts.

Against Namyats: double of opening (or of the next-bid relay response) for takeout of opener's real suit; delayed double for penalty.

Against Gambling 3NT: double is penalty; 4m is takeout of the other minor (4♦ advance is "pick-a-major").

Against transfer and unspecified preempts: double shows strength but does not create a force.

Against two-suited preempts: double, a bid in the other suit shown, and a delayed double are all for takeout.

Against conventional openings: ACBL Mid-Chart

Defenses to all conventions in this category are those described in the [ACBL Defense Database](#), with the exception of the following:

Against “Multi” 2♦ (any variant):

- *Our options in direct position (other than pass) are as follows:*
 - **Double** is one of:
 - a sound opening bid in hearts;
 - a sound opening bid in spades;
 - any 20+ HCP balanced hand or three-suiter;
 clarification of which partner can pursue via:
 - double through 3♦ or of any pass-or-correct or artificial forcing bid (double of anything else is penalty),
 - pass over redouble, or
 - 2♥ over pass
 to any of which doubler has:
 - bid/pass-or-correct with the major-opening hand;
 - 2NT or 3NT if balanced, if space allows (if 2NT, responses are per **modified Romex Stayman**);
 - 3♣ with a three-suiter including clubs, if space allows;
 - 3♦ with a three-suiter short in clubs, if space allows.*If responder passes the double, advancer is free to pass also on his judgment.*
 - **2M** shows a hand that would takeout-double a presumed weak-two opening in the **other** major, but limited in strength to at most 19 HCP by the failure to double (above): it is non-forcing; 2NT by advancer over either pass or double is lebensohl, with the same continuations as if lebensohl had been bid vs. a weak-two opening in opener's presumed suit;
 - **2NT or 3NT, three of a suit, or four of a major** is natural (if 2NT, responses are per **modified Romex Stayman**);
 - **Four of a minor** is a big major-minor two-suiter with the named minor: to 4♣, partner's 4♦ asks; to 4♦, his 4♥ is pass-or-correct.
- *If we pass in direct position:*
 - if third hand also passes, fourth hand defends as though his RHO had just opened a weak 2♦;
 - if third hand makes a pass-correct or artificial forcing bid, fourth-hand's double shows appropriate convertible values.

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Notes on our Multi defense

- Our treatment of the double was proposed by Jeff Rubens in *The Bridge World*, and the same idea was played at the Cambridge University Bridge Club in the 1980s and developed into the “Multi-vs.-Multi” defense. The idea is that the other side, being doubled, will shortly tell us what we need to know—while we have assigned only one call to *either* possible moderate major-suit hand because *only one of those can occur and be usefully showable on any particular deal*.
- Our treatment of the two-of-a-major overcall idea is from [the Dixon defense](#) that is widely used in England.
- Regarding the may-be-strong Multi: see [the Multi 2♦ sequences played by Buratti and Lanza](#) when they were partners to get an idea of the complications that this variety of Multi causes *for the opening side* when responder has the majors.

We admire the thinking behind [this defense](#), but its deferral of action on takeout-double hands is just too deep a position for us, especially against the weak-only Multi, because of the pass/correct jumps available to responder that would make entering later very dangerous. Therefore we adopt the double and—with some regret—leave the rest.

An undiscussed auction-entry double of an artificial suit bid:

shows that suit (and whichever interpretation makes the most sense among penalty, value-showing and lead-directional).

Actions in sandwich position:

Over an opposing opening bid and one-over-one response:

- one notrump, two or more of opener’s suit, or two of responder’s suit is natural;
- two notrump shows the unbid suits;
- three of responder’s suit asks for a stopper in that suit for 3NT (likely a solid suit elsewhere).

Over an opposing opening and one-notrump response:

- double is takeout of opener’s suit;
- a two-level cue-bid is similar to that bid directly over the opening bid;
- two notrump shows the two lowest unbid suits.

Over an opposing opening and two-over-one response:

- a cue-bid in opener’s suit or two notrump is takeout;
- a cue-bid in responder’s suit is natural.

An opposing one-bid and strong jump-shift should be treated similarly to a one-bid and a two-over-one response. However, when the jump-shift is weak, double is takeout, and, if the auction is at the two-level, Lebensohl operates just as though the two-bid had been a weak-two opening (opener’s bid is ignored).

When the opponents raise a one-bid to two, there are no special system agreements other than:

- a cue-bid shows majors over a minor, unbid major plus unspecified minor over a major;
- a jump overcall is preemptive or sacrifice-suggestive.

In these situations, actions by the sandwich-position intervenor have the same fundamental meanings as if

made in direct position over responder's call as an opening bid:

- preemptive opening plus raise;
- one-bid plus constructive jump-raise;
- one-bid plus preemptive jump-raise.

Doubles when opponents have made an **artificial raise**:

- If the bid is game-forcing and is in their suit or a neutral suit: if the bid shows shortness in the named suit, double is constructive/sacrifice-suggestive in that suit as appropriate for the level and vulnerability, else lead-directional;
- otherwise: double is a takeout double of the raised suit.

"Raise" here means that the expected length is at least three cards; therefore something like C/1MX is excluded.

Examples are:

- (1♥):pass:(4♦[Swiss]):double is lead-directional;
- (1♥):pass:(4♦[splinter]):double is constructive/sacrifice-suggestive in diamonds;
- (1♥):pass:(3NT [balanced three-card game raise]):double is takeout;
- (1♥):pass:(3♦[Bergen]):double is takeout

After an opposing weak two-bid and (forcing) two-notrump response, an action by the sandwiched intervenor is analogous to the same action taken directly over the opening bid.

After an opposing preempt and a natural new-suit response (jump or not), double shows the unbid suits.

After (1NT; strong) — pass — (two clubs; Stayman) — ?, a double shows clubs, strength unspecified.

After (1NT; weak) — pass — (two clubs) — ?, a double shows general strength.

After an opposing transfer or relay bid in any situation:

- double shows the suit doubled;
- a bid of the indicated suit is for takeout of that suit

unless context makes this unreasonable.

CRASH: an aggressive defense to artificial-and-forcing openings and their (possible) bust responses

CRASH operates over artificial-and-forcing openings, and over any replies to those that may or must be a bust. This general rule lets us determine on the fly whether CRASH applies, even if we encounter unfamiliar methods.

The following table lists known situations (there may be others) where CRASH would operate for the bidder who is next to call after the given bids by the opponents. The table is for illustration and need not, and probably should not, be memorized; if the principle is understood, the situations can all be worked out at the table based on the opponents' convention card and/or explanations.

sequence	example systems
1♣	Precision, Schenken, Neapolitan Club, Blue Team Club, Miles' "Unbalanced Diamond"
1♣:1♦	Polish Club, Standard American 1♣ <i>if it is alerted as forcing</i>
1♦	Big Diamond, Livorno (Leghorn) Diamond, Burgay Diamond
1♦:1♥	
2♣	Standard American, Kennedy, Miles' "Unbalanced Diamond", Acol, CAB, Système d'enchères français
2♣:2♦	
2♣:2♥	Standard American with "double-negative" 2♥ agreement
2♦:2♥	Benjaminized Acol, Schenken
1NT	Vienna and derivative systems such as Romex
1NT:2♣	

Vs. a bid of the above type, CRASH defines

- a double of any of the above,
- a non-jump bid of the cheaper minor vs. any suit bid,
- or a non-jump bid of either minor vs. any NT bid

If this bid is merely *announced* ("could be short"), CRASH does not apply.

each as showing one of two possible two suiters. The CRASH mnemonic refers to the bids made or doubled in ascending order of rank:

- A bid or double of *clubs* shows two suits of the same color;
- A bid or double of *any other suit* shows two suits of the same rank;
- A bid or double of *NT* shows two suits of the same shape.

Responses to any of the above are as follows:

- Any suit response shows the limit of the hand opposite the less favorable two-suiter and is pass/correct;
- the cheapest notrump response is a (refusable) puppet to clubs with a one-suited hand, planning to pass or correct (to the extent of the hand).

A2. All-Context Actions

"Extended Michaels": if we have bid exactly one minor but neither major and the opponents have done likewise, a cue of the opponents' minor at the 4-level or below as a player's first non-pass action shows at least 5-5 majors.

B. After Our Double of a One-Bid

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

A one-notrump advance of a takeout double shows 7-10 points and a stopper in opener's suit, regardless of vulnerability and suit opened.

Over advancer's free 1NT bid:

- if opener passes: doubler's new suit is to play, *not* showing extras, if below 2 of opener's suit; doubler's new suit or cue bid below 2♠ is a transfer; 2♠ shows at least 3=4=5 in the unbid suits with suitable values, whether it is an overcall or a cue bid.
- if opener doubles: redouble transfers to clubs and all suit bids through 2♥ are transfers; the transfer to opener's suit is artificial and the same as 2♠ above (advancer's completion of the transfer indicates no preference).

We got this idea from
Karen and Jade Barrett
via Baxter Clifford

Over advancer's competitive 1NT bid, the same methods as above apply, except that opener's suit is in play and it is responder's suit that is cue-biddable.

A cue-bid advance of a takeout double shows:

- *by an unpassed hand*: at least game interest; a force is in effect until either a suit is bid twice or game is reached;
- *by a passed hand*: 10+ HCP with four cards in any unbid major(s).

Doubler's new-suit bid after advancer's free or competitive non-jump suit bid is strength-showing (nominally 17 HCP minimum or the playing-strength equivalent) but non-forcing.

A noncompetitive raise of a noncompetitive one-level advance of a takeout double indicates four-card support and approximately a four-HCP range beginning one ace above a minimum double. When (only) the advance is competitive, the minimum strength for the raise is one ace above minimum. When (only) the raise is competitive, the minimum strength required is one queen above a minimum. When both the advance and the raise are competitive, the minimum strength required is the takeout-double minimum.

After a noncompetitive advance, doubler's strength-showing cue-bid does not promise another bid if advancer bids no higher than two of his original suit, but the cue-bid promises another bid if advancer bids higher than that (but below game). That cue-bid may be used with four-card support for advancer's major suit in a hand too strong for a direct single raise.

After doubler's strength-showing new-suit bid, advancer may correct without showing any high-card values, but only to the next level of his own suit or to an unbid suit that underranks it, and advancer's simple notrump bid guarantees a stopper in opener's suit.

Among advancer's actions over responder's redouble:

- a new-suit jump is preemptive;
- when the suit opened is a major, 1NT is for escape, and a cue-bid is constructive (F/1).

Among advancer's actions over responder's new-suit bid:

- a double is for penalty;
- a non-jump cue-bid in opener's suit is natural;
- a cue-bid in responder's suit is artificial and forcing.

Among advancer's actions over responder's raise (conventional or natural) or natural 1NT: a double is responsive (for takeout or showing general values, depending on level).

Doubler's next-round double or redouble is a support (re)double where the context would support that; also, it promises opening values in support of partner's suit if partner's bid was voluntary, significantly more if partner's bid was forced.

If a takeout double begets a redouble and two passes, doubler's 1NT (F/1) asks for 4-card suits up the line. A bid of opener's minor by doubler is temporizing (F/1), by advancer shows 5+ in the suit.

C. After Our Suit Overcall of a One-Bid

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

After our simple overcall of a one-bid, a new-suit bid by an unpassed advancer is natural and forcing at the one-level, nonforcing but constructive in all other cases.

When new-suit advances are forcing, a cue-bid guarantees a fit, a jump cue-bid is a mixed (i.e., semi-preemptive) raise that shows at least one defensive trick, a new-suit bid followed by a same-suit rebid is invitational, and a new-suit jump is stronger than a non-jump.

When new-suit advances are nonforcing, a cue-bid is a strong raise, a jump cue-bid is a mixed (i.e., semi-preemptive) raise that shows at least one defensive trick, a new-suit bid followed by a same-suit rebid is weakish, and a new-suit jump is forcing.

When a new-suit advance would have been forcing over responder's pass, if that opponent should bid, the new-suit advance remains forcing.

Over a bid by responder, a jump below-game new-suit advance of an overcall is natural and forcing.

A single raise is similar to a single raise of a major-suit one-bid; direct jump-raises are preemptive.

A one-notrump advance of an overcall shows 8-11 points and a stopper in opener's suit, regardless of vulnerability and suit opened; two notrump is similar, 12-13 points (less after a two-level overcall except for 2♣ over 1♦).

Among advancer's actions when responder bids a new suit:

- a double shows length in the unbid suit plus a tolerance for overcaller's suit;
- a cue-bid in opener's suit is similar to one had responder passed;
- a cue-bid in responder's suit is a strong raise of overcaller's suit;
- a simple bid in the unbid suit is nonforcing unless it is 1♠.

Among advancer's actions when responder raises opener:

- A double is not for penalty (for takeout or showing general values, depending on level).
- After (suit opening) - simple overcall - (single raise) - single raise - (same-suit rebid) - ?, a double is a game-try when (and only when) there is no new-suit bid available below three of the overcalled suit.

Among advancer's actions after responder's negative double: a redouble shows strength.

Overcaller's next-round double or redouble is a support (re)double where the context would support that; also, it promises opening values in support of partner's suit.

Overcaller's next-round double is a maximal double when partner has raised overcaller's major and opener makes the bid just below three of our suit.

D. After Our One-Notrump Overcall

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

After a direct-position one-notrump overcall and a pass by responder, we want *advancer* to declare if possible (in order to put the opening bidder on lead), and so we dredge up a relic from the pre-transfer past, Gladiator, and tailor it to our requirements:

- 2♣ announces advancer's intent to sign off in either minor or to invite in a major: overcaller must bid 2♦, which advancer will:
 - pass, or
 - correct to a major, which is invitational (overcaller's 2NT now is **strong**, asking for clarification), or
 - correct to 3♣ to play;
- 2♦ is Stayman, with at least invitational values: overcaller now has:
 - 2♥/2♠ shows only the *other* major, and the auction proceeds naturally;
 - 3♣ shows both majors, and the auction proceeds naturally;
 - 2NT/3♦ denies a major and shows a minimum/maximum respectively: now opener's new suit is F/G;
- 2 of a major is a sign-off if it is not opener's suit, otherwise it shows the values for 3NT but with a singleton or void in opener's suit and therefore concern that another game contract might be better (F/G);
- 2NT is **invitational with no 4-card or longer major**;
- New-suit bids at the three-level are natural and forcing.

borrowing liberally from the CAB system's implementation of Gladiator: see Ewart Kempson's and Norman de V. Hart's *The Quintessence of CAB*, pp. 45 ff. —our most notable deviation is switching the immediate and the delayed 2M responses: "reverse Gladiator" is probably a descriptive name (if only to the historically inclined).

The logic is the same as for
1NT:2♣:2♦:2♠:2NT.

Advancer's methods after a direct-position 1NT overcall and a bid or a double by responder, or after a reopening-position 1NT, are the same as responder's methods after a 1NT opening and the same call by next hand.

If we open 1NT, we don't use 2NT this way—we "pass or blast"—but here, the 1NT bid is less narrowly defined in practice, and therefore we restore the invitational bid.

E. After We Reopen a One-Bid

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

When we re-open with a simple overcall and opener passes: all raises are natural, as there is no need for a preemptive raise; partner will bid the limit of his hand with 4-card support, and the same or cue-bid opener's suit with 3-card support. If partner was trapped on the previous round because of a significant holding in opener's suit, he may now bid the extent of his hand in NT or, with a NT flaw, he may show values in another suit (plus opener's suit well-stopped) by **a new-suit bid above two of opener's suit**, whether that bid is a jump or not.

After a reopening simple suit overcall and a double or a new-suit bid by opener, a cue-bid in opener's first suit is forcing and artificial; a jump raise is preemptive.

In advancing a reopening single-jump overcall, two notrump and a new-suit bid are forcing for one round.

This treatment is sensible because opener cannot intend such a bid naturally; he would have bid on the previous round with such a hand. Mike Lawrence pointed this out in *The Complete Book on Balancing in Contract Bridge*, although he did not go on to suggest the usage for this bid that is given here.

F. When the Opener has Preempted

(click for BWS)

In advancing a takeout double of a weak two-bid (or the equivalent), lebensohl applies (two notrump is a marionette to three clubs [opener bids above three clubs only with significant extra strength], after which advancer can pass or bid lower than three of opener's suit to show a weak hand; direct non-jump three-level new-suit advances show moderate values). A direct natural three-notrump advance strongly suggests that strain (bidding two notrump first is more tentative about notrump). A direct unbid-major-suit inquiry cue-bid suggests that doubler, if not replying in a major, not bid notrump without a full stopper in opener's suit (bidding two notrump first suggests that doubler can return to notrump with no help in opener's suit). A jump to three spades over a double of two hearts is invitational and shows at least five spades (bidding two notrump first makes a three-spade rebid forcing). A cue-bid advance of a takeout double is the same as at the one-level.

In advancing a *direct-position* two-notrump overcall (showing strong-notrump values) of a weak two-bid or of an opening defined equivalently: we use a **Gladiator**-derived structure vaguely similar to the one we use opposite a direct 1NT overcall, and for the same reason: to put the opening bidder on lead when possible:

- 3♣ is a puppet to 3♦, which advancer may pass or follow by:
 - bidding an/the unshown major, which is invitational, or
 - bidding opener's major or 3NT, which shows the values for 3NT with/without four in the other major respectively (in the former case, continuations include those after the Staymanic cue bid discussed below) but with **concern that 3NT may have no chance**, because of shortness in the opener's suit;
 - bidding 4♣ to play;
- Cue-bidding opener's suit is **Staymanic**; overcaller has:
 - Texas with four in the only unbid major, or 4♦ with four in both where both are in play;
 - *the other major* to show four in that major but not the named major when both are in play;
 - 3NT to deny a relevant four-card major;
- 3 of an unshown major is to play.

The exemplar hand where overcaller would pay careful attention to this would have Kxx as a stopper, because holding up twice against the likely layouts would not be possible.

Note that the system also offers a way to Stayman and at the same time show worrisome shortness in the opponent's suit (perhaps important if there is no major fit).

In advancing a *reopening-position* two-notrump overcall (showing strong-notrump values) of a weak two-bid or of an opening defined equivalently:

- if the opening was in diamonds, three clubs is **modified Romex Stayman**, 3R transfers to the next higher suit, three spades shows the other minor.
- if the opening was in a major, all three-level suit bids are transfers to the next higher-ranking suit (three spades shows clubs), except that a transfer into the opening suit is Stayman.

G. After Our Sandwich-Position Action

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

After a sandwich-position double of a new-suit response:

- advancer's cue-bid in opener's suit is natural;
- advancer's cue-bid in responder's suit is forcing and promises another bid below game.

After a sandwich-position 1NT overcall, advancer uses the same methods as does responder to a 1NT opening.

H. Delayed Auction entry

[\(click for BWS\)](#)

Direct-position action when the opponents' auction is at 1NT after a opening suit bid:

- double is for takeout;
- two of a previously bid minor is to play.

Reopening-position action when the opponents' auction is at 1NT after a opening suit bid:

- double is penalty, and requests the lead of dummy's (first-)bid suit;
 - 2♣ is takeout of the opening bid (may be passed unless the opening bid was 1♣);
 - any other suit bid is natural.
-

VI. Slam-Bidding Methods

(click for BWS)

- When a bid may be interpreted as related to a game investigation or to a slam investigation, the game interpretation is to be assumed until evidence shows otherwise (“game before slam”). An example of this principle is that a bid of four of a previously-bid but unsupported major is an offer to play if that interpretation is reasonable.
- *Ace- and Key-Card-Asking:*
 - We-Bad does *not* support Gerber, defined as a 4♣ bid asking aces. 4♣ may be a *key-card* ask in some situations, as in some sequences where clubs have been agreed or another suit has been agreed or is agreed by inference (these are each discussed in the text), but 4♣ is *never* Gerber.
 - We-Bad supports:
 - 1430 Roman Key-Card (“RKC”), except when the ask is
 - at the step immediately below game or five of the (lower-ranking) agreed suit or
 - (if any only if a minor) 4♣
 in which case 3014 is in operation;
 - a 6-key-card extension of this (“RKC6”), which occurs in these situations:
 - If two suits have been bid and supported naturally or conventionally, RKC becomes RKC6 and:
 - *Non-jump support of a minor at the four- or five-level*, another suit having been previously supported, is RKC6 in the two suits. Examples: 1♦:1♠:3♠:4♦; 1♦:1♠:4♠:5♦; 1♣:1♠:3♦:4♣; otherwise
 - *if at least one supported suit is a major with a known 8-card or better fit and the auction is below 3NT*: 3NT is “Baby RKC6”; otherwise
 - *if at least one suit is a minor and the auction is below 4 of that minor*: 4 of that minor is RKC6; otherwise
 - 4NT is RKC6.
 - Certain *Inferential RKC* situations are RKC6.
 - Asker must hold at least two key cards for RKC6 or at least one key card for RKC, unless a 0/3 reply, should it occur, would happen to land on a playable strain.
 - *Bids that ask:*
 - in addition to situations discussed elsewhere, in our non-preemptive auction over a non-bidding RHO, RKC in a minor (“Minorwood”) can be bid by means of:
 - four of the minor as the third or fourth bid (or showing) of the suit by the partnership, all bids/showings not having been by the same player; or
 - four of the minor as the second bid (or showing) of the suit by the partnership, partner having just bid 1NT, 2NT, or 3NT; or
 - when a minor has been agreed at the four-level and the agreement did not constitute Minorwood, now 4♦ (if the suit is clubs) or a non-jump in the cheapest unbid suit (if the suit is diamonds) is RKC in the agreed minor. The bid may also agree a suit by inference where clear. *This RKC usage of this bid takes precedence over any other possible interpretation of the bid.* In any of these situations,

The survival of Gerber in the modern age as an ace-ask opposite a NT bid is a tribute to either inertia or nostalgia. If both hands are balanced, asking for aces as the first slammish move is the hallmark of the novice; while if the Gerber bidder intends a contract in a not-yet-bid suit, the contract will be wrong-sided more than half the time. (“Roman” Gerber helps with neither of these.) The wrong-siding was not an issue when Gerber was invented in 1938 because transfers didn't exist yet, except perhaps in some theoretical corners.

Gerber originally proposed 4♣ as ace-asking in all situations. That didn't last long.

This is because a sign-off by asker after 0/3 (or 1/4) must not be passed with the higher number, and we do not want to be in slam willy-nilly missing two key cards.

It is necessary to allow four of a previously-bid major to be an offer to play (“game before slam”, as discussed elsewhere.

- 4NT is natural: whether it is to play or quantitative depends on context; or
 - when partner has just responded to a Goldman 4♦: when he has shown one minor by means of the corresponding major, the cheapest suit bid other than that minor is RKC in that minor; when he has shown both minors, 5♥ is RKC6 in the minors.
- 4♠ is RKC in hearts when hearts have been agreed, unless
 - spades have also been agreed (not just bid) at the three-level or lower; or
 - the bidder has not bid any suit other than spades, has not bid notrump, and has not taken any action that could sensibly have allowed the auction to end below game.
- **Inferential RKC**: Inferential RKC is a response to a (passable) quantitative 4NT, or a response other than 4NT (when 4NT is defined as a sign-off) to a shape-showing bid, which shows key cards as though partner had specifically asked for them. The idea is to make effective use of sometimes very limited bidding space, and in particular to sidestep the pitfall of the less appropriate asking hand having to ask merely because of tight bidding space. There are a few principles to keep in mind:
 - Where partner has bid a (passable) quantitative 4NT, any bid (rather than pass) is RKC with no suit (that is, Roman Blackwood). Follow-ups are attempts to find a suit, not king asks.
 - Where partner has shown a one-suited hand and 4NT at this point would be a sign-off by definition, any bid other than 4NT is as though replying to RKC in that suit.
 - Where partner has shown a two-suited hand and 4NT at this point would be a sign-off by definition, any bid other than 4NT is as though replying to RKC6 in the two suits.
- **Agreed Suit(s)**.
 - When there has been no explicitly agreed suit and nothing else in the system resolves the matter:
 - **After a two-club opening** and a later Blackwood four-notrump bid by opener: if opener has shown length in only one suit, four notrump is RKC with that suit agreed; otherwise, it is RKC and the usual rules apply.
 - **otherwise**, the priority order for determining the agreed suit is:
 - the only supported suit;
 - the only shown suit;
 - the most recently shown suit for which asker did not have a forcing agreement available on that turn.
- **Replies**:
 - Replies to RKC are by steps:
 - 1 step = 1 or 4 key cards;
 - 2 steps = 0 or 3 key cards;
 - 3 steps = 2 or 5 key cards without the trump queen;
 - 4 steps = 2 or 5 key cards with the trump queen.
 - When a bid is Six-Key-Card Blackwood (RKC6), the replies are similar but with steps starting with the third being two or five key-cards plus:
 - 3 steps = neither key queen;
 - 4 steps = only the lower-ranking key queen;
 - 5 steps = only the higher-ranking key queen;
 - 6 steps = both key queens.
 - **Asking for aces only**. When a four-notrump bid is Blackwood, or in any other situation in which key cards are asked but there is no trump suit, the replies are in steps similar to

In the most important instance: when a balanced hand faces an unbalanced hand and there is an agreed/decreed suit and slam possibilities, the unbalanced hand (if either) should be the one that asks for key cards. This principle was set out by David Morgan in "The Balanced Hand Principle" in *The Bridge World*, December 1989. The idea is that the unbalanced hand describes itself to the balanced hand; the balanced hand assesses fit and/or wastage and makes encouraging noises or not; the unbalanced hand is now well-placed to be captain.

An example: after 1♠:2♥:2♠, 4NT is key-card in *hearts*, not spades, because the asker could have agreed spades (without risk of partner passing) by continuing 3♣ and then using RKC.

those in 3014 RKC: one step = zero or three aces, two steps = one or four aces, three steps = two aces.

○ *RKC follow-ups:*

- a bid in the agreed suit (or, in RKC6, in the lower-ranking of the two relevant suits if both are in play as possible trump suits) is a sign-off, as is a minimum NT bid by the Minorwood or Redwood bidder; except that **if partner has three or four key cards, he must treat the bid as a queen-ask**, as in the next item;
 - After a 0|3 or 1|4 reply to RKC, the cheapest forcing bid by the RKC bidder is a trump-queen-ask:
 - without the trump Q, bid *the cheaper* of the minimum bid in NT or the minimum bid in the agreed suit;
 - with the trump Q but no side K, bid *the more expensive* of the minimum bid in NT or the minimum bid in the agreed suit;
 - with the trump Q and at least one side K, STARS/USP (below) is used, with the eventual “Exit” being the cheaper of the minimum bid in NT or the minimum bid in the agreed suit, and the eventual “Advance” being the most descriptive of the possible “Advance” bids that does not raise the partnership’s level of commitment (unless the cheapest possible “Advance” would do so);
 - After a 0|3 or 1|4 reply to RKC6, the cheapest forcing bid by the RKC bidder is a queen-ask relating to both raised suits, with the cheaper of 4NT or a return to the cheaper agreed suit showing neither queen, and the three cheapest remaining bids showing, in order:
 - only the lower-ranking key queen;
 - only the higher-ranking key queen;
 - both key queens.
 - The cheapest forcing bid (above the bid that would be a queen-ask where applicable) confirms partnership possession of all the aces (or of all key cards and the trump queen or key queens or equivalent), invites a grand slam, and asks for specific kings outside the agreed suit (in RKC) or outside the raised suits (in RKC6). Response Compression applies (for example, if responder’s bid would show the king of a splinter suit, a card that he cannot have).
 - A forcing bid not accounted for so far is a third-round control ask in that suit: USP applies, and responses are the same as “**Third-Round Ask Responses**” in “Orange Danish” control asking bids.
- *Voids:* A reply to an ace- or key-card-ask above the usual range shows a void:
- the cheapest void-showing reply (5 steps) shows two aces/key cards plus a void;
 - a higher action indicates an odd number of ace[s]/key card[s] plus a void, and, if the bid is below six of the agreed suit, the suit of the void (but if shortness has already been shown, **the 6-step bid** clarifies that the known shortness is a void).

The reasons for this are to allow resolution of a 0/3 or 1/4 ambiguity and, in some sequences, to save a potentially valuable step in finding out about the trump queen when responder has the higher number of key cards. The key-card asker must be planning to be in slam if partner has at least three key cards, but we find the price for this well worth paying. Even the best bridge theoreticians have found this a challenging topic.

There have been disasters from these ambiguities in experienced partnerships in international play.

to save space

After either of these, the cheapest forcing bid is a trump-queen ask, and any other forcing bid is a third-round control ask. Where the trump-queen ask “loses” a third-round control ask, a bid in partner’s void suit substitutes for that ask. *If asker signs off after a response showing more than one possible number of key cards, responder does not continue with more than the minimum number of key cards* as he would in normal RKC; here, the sign-off is final.

The former editor of bridgevaria.com, Peter van der Linden, has convinced us on this point.

- *Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood:* When a call is defined as Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood (EKB), the usual RKC responses change in two ways:

- the replier omits the ace of the excluded suit;
- the replies are 3014 rather than 1430.

The EKB interpretation applies to certain jumps (and even non-jumps) that name an excluded suit; these situations are defined in the text. The Useful-Space principle operates to make use of "impossible" bids, but Exclusion in a suit bid by partner *is possible* unless the logic of the auction to that point says otherwise. The follow-up trump-queen/side-king asking structure is maintained, except that the king of the previously excluded suit is ignored—it is considered "impossible" for purposes of Response Compression—thus there are only two kings in play here.

- **Quantitative four notrump:**

The Quantitative four notrump uses Goldman continuations for responder's acceptance, viz.: responder shows his key-cards, counting only aces; or, where one or more suits have been bid, responder may bid a pick-a-slam 5NT at his discretion. Asker's five-notrump now is a sign-off (presumably two aces are missing); anything else begins a suit search, forcing to slam.

- **Quantitative four spades:**

(F/1) This operates where 4NT would be quantitative and 4♥ would be a transfer to spades: for example, 2NT:4♠. It is the same as a Quantitative 4NT but promises at least 4-4 minors. Partner bids 4NT with no interest and otherwise replies as to the Quantitative 4NT but, here, using RKC6 steps with the minors being the key suits (with the 5NT pick-a-slam option therefore unavailable to responder).

- **Quantitative five spades and five notrump:**

These have the same preconditions and the same mechanics (albeit a level higher) as their four-level counterparts, except that slam is forced and the investigation is with a view to seven.

- **Suit Agreement by Implication:**

After either partner shows a suit for the second or third time, that bid occurring at the three-level or higher, without receiving explicit support, partner's new suit is a slam-try cue bid implicitly agreeing the twice- or thrice-bid suit.

- **"Italian" slam-try cue bidding:** When there is an agreed suit:

- After (a) a slam-try or (b) a neutral bid by an unlimited hand, below four of the agreed suit,
 - a non-signoff bid or redouble by the other partner indicates a control in the bid or redoubled suit (first- and second-round controls are bid equivalently below game); shortness controls in partner's suit(s) are suppressed;
 - **bypassing a possible control denies that control;**
 - after one bidder has bypassed a possible control (denying that control), partner's cue-bid of that suit shows first-round control, while any action other than signing off inferentially shows control of the suit that partner bypassed;
 - a control may be inferred by certain sequences defined elsewhere in the system; where such an inference is allowed, it is discussed under that sequence;
 - even if cue-bidding has started, a 3NT bid that can be interpreted as **"Non-Serious"** is still to be so interpreted: it is, in effect, a time-marking bid showing some but not much interest in cooperating;
 - where one is known inferentially to have control in a suit, one's explicit cue bid in that suit shows first-round control.

and no such action implies or denies overall extra values;

- After a slam-try by one partner above four of an agreed minor (if an initial cue bid, it shows first-round control), the other must show any biddable control below five of the agreed suit, and doing so carries no implication of overall extra values.
- If a major has been agreed, a bid above game (other than RKC), even if not a jump, is

Garozzo-Forquet allowed a space-saving exception when two cue bids were planned^{1,2}, but that idea had disappeared when Garozzo later played with Belladonna³, nor does it appear in a later treatise by Belladonna⁴ et al., nor does it appear in Kex Rexford's book on Italian cue-bidding⁵.

¹ Benito Garozzo & Leon Yallouze, *The Blue Club*, 1969, p. 144;

² Benito Garozzo & Pietro Forquet, *The Italian Blue Team Bridge Book*, 1969, p. 228;

³ Giorgio Belladonna & Benito Garozzo, *Precision and Super-Precision Bidding*, 1975, p. 166;

⁴ Claudio Petroncini and Giorgio Belladonna (tr. Daniel Neill), *Cue Bidding to Slam*, 1990, p. 13;

⁵ Ken Rexford, *Cuebidding at bridge: a modern approach*, 2006.

Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood, and the Useful-Space Principle applies: note that this means that if hearts are agreed and spades are not, *4NT is Exclusion Key-Card* with a void in whatever suit the USP rules determine.

- *Last Train*: Any time there is only one call that indicates slam interest or further slam interest without raising the partnership's level of commitment, and there is a suit other than the Last-Train suit in which control is not known, the call is a "Last Train" slam-try, unrelated to the strain named (unless followed by an uninvited further action), but guaranteeing control of any other suit in which control was not yet certain.
- *Lackwood*. A bid of five of an agreed major opposite a Last Train bid is slam-oriented but denying control of the Last Train suit. Partner will pass if he also does not have control of the Last Train suit, will bid six of the agreed suit with second-round control, and will respond as to RKC with first-round control.
- *"Baby RKC6" 3NT*. In certain circumstances defined elsewhere, 3NT may be a space-saving invocation of RKC6.
- *Non-Serious 3NT*. Where an eight-card major-suit fit is known, but "Baby RKC6" is not applicable, 3NT is "Non-Serious": showing slam interest but without extra values. When a bidder has the Non-Serious 3NT available but cue-bids instead, he is showing extra values.
- *Open suit (other than Lackwood)*: When one partner has requested that the other ("replier") bid slam with at least second-round control of a particular suit (the "open" suit) regardless of the rest of his hand, this scheme is used for replier's actions:
 - with no control in the open suit, pass or return to (usually five of) the agreed suit;
 - with second-round control, bid six of the agreed suit (or five notrump with the guarded king);
 - with first-round control, control-bid in the open suit (or, with, additionally, first-round or maximum-possible and an as-yet-unshown control in another suit, control-bid in that suit).
- *Grand-Slam Force*: When a five-notrump bid is the Grand-Slam Force (GSF):
 - The scheme for determining the agreed suit is the same as it is for Key-Card Blackwood.
 - Replier bids above the agreed suit with two (or three) of the top three trump honors. With a lesser trump holding, he bids cheapest-weakest (the higher the bid, the stronger the holding).
- *Interference*:
 - When there is interference after an ace- or key-card-ask, the replies are:
 - through five of our trump suit or double, DRIPO (double or redouble = 1 or 4, pass = 0 or 3, cheapest bid = 2 without the trump queen, etc.);
 - at higher levels, DEPO (double = even, pass = odd).
 - When there is interference after a Grand-Slam Force, the replies are:
 - at low enough levels or if double, DROPI (double or redouble substitutes for what would have been the cheapest bid, pass substitutes for what would have been the second-cheapest bid, the cheapest bid substitutes for what would have been the third-cheapest bid, etc., subject to the logic of the auction);
 - at high enough levels, DEPO (double = even, pass = odd).
 - When an artificial slam-try (such as a control-bid or a splinter) is doubled, the weakest action by the next player to speak is a return to the agreed suit (or whatever would have been the weakest action without the double).
- *Fast arrival*: Except where there is a specific agreement to the contrary, when there is a choice between two game-forcing bids in a particular strain, We-Bad uses "fast arrival" (the less space-consuming bid is the more forward-going).

“Orange Danish” control asking bids

We-Bad employs control asking bids in certain defined situations that would be cue-bid situations in most mainstream methods. These situations are characterized by partner having shown a hand **weak enough** that he would have little to say in a cue-bidding dialog, whence the present bidder taking control makes sense. Three such situations are defined:

The systemic maximum is two RKC-type key cards or two side kings outside the asked suit, though that limit is not likely to be reached often in practice.

This is a method from Denmark[‡] with modifications made in Florida, whence the name.

—
[‡Trelde asking bids](#)

- Partner has preempted;
- Partner has given a negative response after having responded 2♦ to present bidder's 2♣ opening;
- Partner has taken the weakest action after interference over present bidder's 2♣ opening.

The first order of business for responder, if he has control in the asked suit, is to determine how many “outside controls” he has. If his possible number of RKC key cards *outside the asked suit* is not zero, any such card is an “outside control”. If that number is zero, but his possible number of kings outside of the asked suit and trumps is not zero, any outside king is an “outside control”. If he can have no aces or kings outside the asked suit, he has no “outside controls”.

If the responder cannot have any aces or kings and also cannot have a singleton or void, the response is per the Third-Round Ask schedule.

First- and Second-Round Ask Responses

The schedule of responses is:

Steps	Control in asked suit	Outside controls
1	none	—
2	2nd-round	0 without trump Q
3		0 with trump Q
4		1 without trump Q
5		1 with trump Q
6		2 without trump Q
7		2 with trump Q
8	1st-round	0 without trump Q
9		0 with trump Q
10		1 without trump Q
11		1 with trump Q
12		2 without trump Q
13		2 with trump Q

A repeat-ask in the same suit, if a control was shown, asks whether the control is shortness or high-card:

- One step = shortness;
- Two steps = high-card;
- Three steps = high-card with the next card in the suit as well.

A repeat-ask in the same suit, if a cue was denied, asks for third-round control.

Third-Round Ask Responses

- One step = no third-round control;
- Two steps = doubleton;
- Three steps = Q without the J, any length;
- Four steps = QJ, any length.

The Useful-Space Principle (“USP”)

Sometimes it is useful, or even necessary, to compact possible actions into some number of available steps, paying some price in terms of the loss of the intuitive meanings of some or most of the bids. This occurs most often in high-level ask/answer settings.

When steps refer to specific suits, whether in asking or in answering, it is easiest on the memory if the steps refer to the suits they name. But if one (or more) of those steps happens to be NT or a suit that is excluded by logic as a possible ask/answer, a bit of gimmickry is needed in order to be sure that the suit references all fit in the minimum range of steps. This is resolved by going up the list of candidate bids and where one is encountered that is impossible, moving the least expensive (remaining) possible suit that is lacking a natural bid down into that slot. For example: we have agreed diamonds and it happens that 5♣ is the King ask. Candidate suits are clubs, hearts, and spades, and available bids are 5NT, 6♣, and 6♥ (6♦ is out because of being the Exit Bid). Of these, 6♣ and 6♥ name possible suits and therefore refer to those suits; 5NT is not a suit, and therefore it gets the lowest (in this case only) suit that cannot be bid naturally, spades. So, to summarize this case, we have:

- 5NT refers to spades by the operation of USP;
- 6♣ is not impossible and therefore still refers to clubs;
- 6♦ is excluded, being the denial bid;
- 6♥ is not impossible and therefore still refers to hearts.

Jeff Rubens discussed this in some depth in a series of articles in *The Bridge World* that were collected in a booklet, *The Useful-Space Principle and Transfer Advances of Overcalls*.

After we had decided on this mechanism, we were pleased to learn that Bobby Goldman had advocated it some time earlier. However, we note that Meckwell use a different USP mechanism throughout their system: the first step is the lowest suit (♣:♦:♥:♠) that is possible in context, the second step is the second possible suit, and so on; there is little to choose between the two methods, and some may opt for the latter.

The system's rule that a shortness-showing bid cannot be made on a singleton king nor ace provides an example of USP on both the asking and answering sides. When a player has shown a singleton, partner cannot sensibly be asking for anything in that suit once aces are accounted for; nor can there be any point in the singleton-shower later showing a 2nd- or 3rd-round control in the same suit; the situation is already known.

The term “Response Compression” elsewhere in this document means: USP in some responding context.

Step-wise Ask Responses (STAR)

There are some situations in which one bidder (“Asker”) makes a bid asking which, if any, of two or three (which number we will call “N”) non-mutually-exclusive suits partner (“Responder”) has a certain holding in. Responder has designated bids available for each of the holdings: Candidate A, B, and (if N=3) C, at successive steps from the point of the Ask, skipping the bid that would deny any of the holdings if it appears within the first N steps (such a bid is the Exit Bid if the auction has not gone beyond it, otherwise the next bid above the Candidates is the Exit Bid). Any bids above the Exit and the Candidates are Advances, whose meanings are defined by the particular Ask. We cannot resist christening the bid that initializes the step-wise responses as Step-In-It.

A King-ask within the RKC process is an example with N=3; a King-ask within RKC6 or Voidwood is N=2 again.

USP, discussed above, may operate.

Responder's replies to Step-In-It

- If he has both Candidates (when there are two) or all three (when there are three), he Advances, else
- if he has no Candidates, he Exits; else
- he bids his Candidate if there are two or cheaper Candidate if there are three.

Asker's next bid (operational only if there are three Candidates)

- If he is interested in a specific remaining Candidate, he bids that candidate, else
- he Exits or Advances as he sees fit.

Responder's second reply

- If he has the candidate just named, he Advances, else
- if he has neither that Candidate nor any higher, he Exits, else
- he bids **his cheapest remaining Candidate**

In practice there is only one possible sequence like this: Responder shows A, Asker asks about B, and Responder has C but not B, but we put this in the form of a rule for consistency.

and asker knows what he needs to know.

The three-way structure is most easily illustrated by a table, depicting (for simplicity) a situation in which USP is not required. Consider the case of 5NT being a specific-King ask when spades have been agreed as trumps. Candidates A, B, and C are 6♣, 6♦, and 6♥; 6♠ is the Exit Bid.

first response	second asking bid	second response	asker's resolution
6♣ (I have the club king)	6♦ (I am interested in the diamond king)	6♥ (I don't have it but I have the heart king)	Asker Exits or Advances
		6♠ (I don't have it, nor the heart king)	Asker passes or Advances
		Responder Advances (I have it) <i>(having denied having all three kings by not Advancing at his first turn, he has now fully described his holding)</i>	—
6♦ (I have the diamond king but not the club king)	6♥ (I am interested in the heart king)	6♠ (I don't have it)	Asker passes or Advances
		Responder Advances (I have it)	—
6♥ (I have the heart king but neither the diamond king nor the club king)	—	—	Asker Exits or Advances
6♠ (I have no kings)	—	—	Asker passes or Advances
Responder Advances (I have all three kings)	—	—	—

It happens that in the above table, all three Candidate bids are in suits that happen to be valid responses. However, where this is not so, USP comes into operation, as discussed earlier.

VII. Defensive Carding

(click for BWS)

On tricks led to by the defense, We-Bad tends toward attitude signals primarily (enhanced with the "Obvious Shift" concept, which does add a suit-preference flavor). Specific situations requiring count in the first card in following to a suit are discussed later. Count and suit preference signals may be given extensively later in the hand.

We-Bad uses normal count signals but upside-down attitude (UDA) signals.

Henceforth any reference to an attitude signal means: upside-down attitude.

Count signals are based on current count. *It is systemic to use*

"surrogate" count signals when the count in the suit being played is clearly meaningless but count in another suit would be valuable; however, such usage is always secondary to a Smith signal where one would be appropriate and has not yet been given. One specific use of surrogate count signals is discussed below in the context of third-hand play to trick one.

Surrogate count signals are discussed extensively in Judy A. Cohn's and Jerry A. Fink's book, *Cincinnati / Power Defensive Carding*.

The systemic card to show count from four small, when a length of either two or four is possible, is 2nd-highest.

For why, see Dan Romm, *Things Your Bridge Teacher Won't Tell You*, pp. 100-101.

This combo, played by some at the highest level—Helgemo-Helness and Levin-Weinstein among others—is optimum for conserving possibly useful intermediate cards: the system can show either encouragement or count, as appropriate, by playing low from something like Q-9-2, preserving the potentially useful 9 in either case, which neither standard nor UDCA carding can claim to do. There is a price for this, however. In either standard or UDCA carding, if one wants a ruff with a doubleton, high-low "works" whether it is read as attitude or as count, but in our method, it's not so simple: if one thinks "attitude", one would play the lower card, but if one thinks "count", one would play the higher. We-Bad goes to some effort to codify its attitude-vs.-count rules, as will be seen.

Either defender is free to mis-card whenever he judges that giving correct information would be of more help to declarer than to partner.

Opening leads

A player is deemed to "show" a suit if he makes a call introducing only that suit or a call introducing two (but not three) suits including that suit.

The Smith Echo (or Smith signal) is an integral part of our system. The use of Smith in conjunction with various of these leads is discussed *under Smith*.

vs. NT

- We-Bad's honor leads are based on a K power lead and Journalist's "strong 10":
 - A asks attitude ("A = Attitude"), from something like A-K-x-x-x, with the exception that against a Gambling 3NT or similar, partner will give suit preference if the K of the led suit is visible in dummy;
 - K is from a very strong suit, something like A-K-J-10..., K-Q-J... or K-Q-10-9..., and asks unblock of the Q or J, otherwise count ("K = Unblock or Kount");
 - Q is from K-Q-10... *without the 9* or Q-J-10/9...; partner gives positive attitude if he ducks with the A (third or longer) or if he has the J or 10 and cannot safely unblock;
 - J is from J-10-9/8... with no higher card, and asks positive attitude with Q or higher if dummy cannot/does not cover and it is unsafe to unblock;
 - 10 is from any interior sequence: that is, from a holding of A/K-J-10... or A/K/Q-10-9...: if partner does not play an honor, he gives count if dummy either has no honor or plays the K, Q, or J; otherwise he gives attitude;
 - 9 is from honor-9-8... (if the honor is J or higher, the holding is one from which fourth-best

the "real" Journalist system of Rubens and Rosler, that is—not 9-or-10-promises-0-or-2 higher, which is sometimes incorrectly referred to as Journalist

might have been led, but the 9 lead avoids blowing a trick in many layouts) or from 10-9-7...

- Fourth-best is led if attacking a suit with at least one honor ("honors" being 10 and up) and the 9-lead just discussed is not applicable;
- Second-highest is led from all-small any length, except for low from any three or fourth from four or more if leading a suit freely bid or shown by partner.

Matt Granovetter has convinced us in *Bridge Additions* 96, and Tobias Stone did regularly make this lead at the table. It was certainly an easy switch for us from the **Journalist 9** that we had been playing. from 10-9...

vs. suits

- Q from A-K-Q any length, planning to continue with A or K per *current* even/odd count respectively; however, partner, looking at the J, will show positive attitude (knowing of K-Q at least), in which case opening leader may choose to underlead the remaining A-K on the second round.
- Second from a holding headed by touching honors (but not A-K-Q: see above), down through 9 from 10-9+ except that the higher honor is led in the following situations:

- The touching honors are doubleton;
- The touching honors are A-K, the contract is not a slam, and the suit length is any even number (the K is always led from A-K against a slam).
Note: the A does not guarantee the K: there are times when it is reasonable to lead an unsupported ace.
- Partner bid or showed the suit voluntarily or requested it to be led by a double (this applies also if only one suit is left because of a lead-discouraging double of another suit).

This idea is due to Helge Vinje. Third hand may be able to determine whether, if declarer holds the Q, it was doubleton and will drop, or to consider or to exclude some possible lines of defense based on how many rounds of the suit now being played figure to cash.

The system of second from touching honors but high from interior touching honors is known as Roman leads (generally but, alas, not universally) after its best-known practitioners, Belladonna-Avarelli. As compared with Rusinow, which leads second from interior touching honors, third hand can work out any ambiguity more often once he sees dummy, and, where he cannot, Roman leads still come out slightly better according to a study.

Flint-Pender also played this way; see Flint's *Tiger Bridge*, pp. 184-5 for why.

- High from touching honors in the interior sequences K-J-10+ and K/Q-10-9+.
- With one or more honors ("honors" being 10 and up) with no sequence or interior sequence (as defined above): low is led from odd, third from even—but underleading an ace at trick one is strictly forbidden unless the contract is a slam or the declaring side is *virtually certain* to have at least two possible fast losers in the suit;
- Top is led from a doubleton;
- From spot cards:
 - from a doubleton: high;
 - from three: second, planning to play high next (**Middle-Up-Down**), unless:

- partner has freely bid or shown this suit and we have not supported it, or he has requested this suit lead by a double (including a double that excluded another suit or suits, leaving only this one), in which case low;
- we have supported the once-bid suit, in which case top;

- from fourth or longer: second-high (but low from five if partner has requested the lead as above).

Next card from any original odd length will be higher if it can be

The reason for this is to distinguish more easily between the likes of Q-4-3 and 4-3-2 when the auction rules out a doubleton.

The reason for this is that if partner has enough in the suit to have requested its lead, he is more likely to be interested in leader's count than in his attitude in the suit.

The system strongly discourages leading from a side suit doubleton of Q-x, J-x, 10-x, or 9-x—such a lead often backfires regardless of system, and J and 10 leads from a doubleton can be especially hard for partner to read in this system.

Tony Sowter says in *Opening Leads in Bridge* that it is a mistake to play this in conjunction with low-from-odd/third-from-even because the result is "total confusion". However, Garozzo-Forquet played that combination and they did OK; and nowadays, a Smith signal by the leader will often suffice to resolve any difficulty. MUD itself isn't much in vogue any more, but Sowter's accomplished countryman Jeremy Flint liked it as much as we do; see Flint's *Tiger Bridge*, p. 185.

spared (MUD where applicable, as already discussed), else the next lower; next card from top-of-three will be the remaining highest; from even, next play is lowest. *In a particular situation, suit-preference or deception considerations may override these continuation rules.*

third-hand play at trick one

If opening leader has led from A-K, partner's Q shows the J or a singleton, as in standard practice; however, in We-Bad, the J does *not* show the 10 or a singleton: there is no need to show the 10 since opening leader cannot have A-K-Q and so the underlead is not a possibility. The J is free for other work, such as "obvious shift" (to be discussed). However, the J *does* show the 10 or a singleton if partner has led the Q (which must be from K-Q or A-K-Q), allowing the underlead; in this situation, the 10 is available for other work (we think this more useful than showing 10-9).

If the above is not applicable, third-hand plays come under four headings: high or finesse against dummy; attitude; count; suit preference.

third-hand high or finesse against dummy

This refers to third hand playing a higher card than either one already played to the trick.

It is systemic to **finesse against dummy** in normal circumstances if dummy plays low from an honor:

The rules given here are per [Richard Pavlicek](#).

- by playing the eight or better if you have the honor directly above dummy's;
- by playing the nine or better if you have the honor second above dummy's;

whether the contract is a suit contract or notrump.

Vs. NT, third hand may win a trick with the A and then play the K (the reverse of the normal order) to ask opener to unblock the Q if he has it (just as if third-hand had opened the suit). Probably he holds A-K-J-x... and is not sure whether the opening lead was from the Q or 10. There is no possible confusion with the doubleton A-K because vs. NT, there is no reason for third hand to reverse his order of play with that holding: cashing K-A and switching can only mean that holding.

third-hand count

Against a suit contract, if opening leader leads from A-K in a side suit, leader's partner will show count instead of attitude in either of two situations:

- The Q plus two or more others have appeared in dummy;
- The lead was the K and the contract is a slam.

If opening leader has made an attacking spot lead and third hand is not beating dummy's card nor finessing against dummy, and dummy's holding is headed by no better than the J or QJ, third hand will show count.

third-hand "surrogate" count

Sometimes, third hand shows count *in another suit* at trick 1. This happens when there is a long suit in dummy with no (remaining) outside entry where partner may need to know, right away, declarer's count—in order to know whether to try to kill that suit if he holds the lead, or whether to duck on the first play of the suit. It is necessary that both defenders know that declarer or dummy can win this or the next round of the suit led, in order that both know that attitude signals can be set aside. (Suit preference is certainly moot if dummy has no side entry, as dummy then has no possible source of tricks for declarer outside the long suit).

third-hand attitude, incorporating “Obvious Shift”

If none of the material so far is operative, third hand shows attitude. Attitude signals follow a slightly modified version of the “Obvious Shift” (OS) concept developed by Matthew and Pamela Granovetter.

Third hand gives an attitude signal (from the spots 2-9) based not only on the suit led but on whether he can **stand** a shift to dummy's “weakest” suit, otherwise known as the “Obvious Shift”: a discouraging attitude signal implies that he can stand this shift.

“stand” means that if dummy's obvious-shift holding is Q-x-x or better, signaller has A, K, or Q; if dummy has less, signaller has A or K (or Q if vs. NT). How to determine the obvious-shift suit will be discussed momentarily.

A discouraging card necessarily suggests some switch, but how to decide *to what* to switch was not analyzed in detail until Pamela and Matthew Granovetter published their book *A Switch In Time*; this book later became available as an e-book.

There is an important exception, however. It has long been standard practice that if dummy started with a singleton in the suit in which the opening leader cashes a card against a suit contract, partner's card is suit preference. We-Bad partly retains this and even enhances it in one way: partner's card is suit preference in a suit contract when dummy has shown up with a singleton *or declarer is known to have started with a singleton*, and dummy has two suits to *either* of which a switch **might be desirable**: in this situation, **partner's card is suit preference**. If only one suit offers a possibly desirable switch, then OS operates here instead.

Some situations will arise where OS would have worked better even here, but suit preference will matter more often, we think.

“might be desirable” means that the suit would not be rejected as a switch suit based on the first set of rules below.

“known” here does not extend to inferences based on neither partner having taken a marginal action. For example: we overcall in a suit, partner raises, righty declares in a suit, and dummy hits with four of our suit. Declarer very likely started with at most a singleton, but this is not *known* because the overcall *might* have been on four or the raise *might* have been on two. “Known” can be subject to uncertainty only to the extent that partner or declarer would have clearly violated his system.

Fundamental to the system is that the signaller requests the “non-obvious” shift with an unusual signal, and We-Bad defines two of those:

- an honor;
- a high spot when signaller has a known length that allows 3-level signals (*always* with known length of 6+, *if the spots cooperate* with shorter length): in this setting a low spot encourages and a middle spot discourages per “obvious shift”.

The Obvious Shift at trick one is, alas, not always obvious, and rules were therefore devised so that the partnership could pinpoint the Obvious Shift and be on the same wavelength. First, eliminate suits, applying the “is not” rules below; if that does not suffice, work through the “is” rules until the Obvious Shift is identified. Note a fine point: if dummy was void in the opening-lead suit and discarded from a candidate OS suit, the length after the discard is what is considered.

First, eliminate the following suits:

- the suit led;
- trumps;
- any suit headed by three touching honors or by A-K-J-10;
- any void;
- any singleton unless the contract is a slam;
- any suit in which declarer has shown 3+ cards, except in notrump when the defenders are likely to hold a combined 7+ in the suit.

Then, if this has not resolved the issue, go down the following list until a “winner” is found (excluding the suit already led of course):

This is different from the more common implementation of 3-level signals in which low shows low preference, high shows high preference, and middle is encouraging; We-Bad's implementation transmits the same information but will minimize problems when it is not clear to partner whether a signal is We-Bad-normal or 3-level.

- Third hand's bid suit;
- Opening leader's bid suit;
 - Against a suit contract:
 - a three-card suit headed by at most one honor is the Obvious Shift. When there are two equal-length suits, either of which might be the Obvious Shift, look at the number of honors. The suit with fewer honors is the Obvious Shift. If the suits have an equal number of honors, count the points; the suit with the fewer points is the Obvious Shift. If two suits have an equal number of cards, honors and points, the lower-ranking suit is arbitrarily deemed to be the Obvious Shift.
 - When there is no weak three-card suit, the shortest suit is the Obvious Shift (but omitting a singleton or void except for a singleton vs. a slam).
 - Against NT, dummy's shortest suit is the Obvious Shift (even a strong holding such as ace-king doubleton).

third-hand suit preference

A trump opening lead is part of, and immediately invokes, the suit-preference system described later in "Following to declarer's first suit".

Suit preference is also incorporated in Obvious Shift, discussed earlier.

After trick one

Leads

New-suit leads after trick one differ from opening leads as follows:

- No distinction is made between leads vs. NT and leads vs. suits;
- Sequence leads are: K from AK-third or longer, top from any other sequence third or longer;
- Interior sequence leads are governed by "J denies, 10 or 9 promises 0 or 2 higher"; but the possible lead of such a card either **to start a surround play** or for suit preference as discussed in the second paragraph below takes precedence;
- Spot-card leads are attitude: lowest from an honor, highest (up to 8, or the 9 if the 10 is in dummy) from any all-small holding.

Billy Miller raised this point in his column in *The Bridge Bulletin* (ACBL), October 2010

If leader has just held the trick with an honor, continuing with the card just below it asks partner *not* to unblock.

Where a defender on lead wants to give partner a suit-preference signal with his lead but cannot do so by normal means because the situation requires a lead from touching honors or 10-9: Q or 10 asks for the higher remaining suit, J or 9 for the lower.

Following suit and discarding

Following to our suit(s)

- Showing attitude is the first priority if partner led to the trick. Attitude after trick one includes any honor as encouraging (9 and below remain as showing upside-down attitude). When attitude is known and suit preference is not clearly required, current count is given unless the spots might matter in the play.
- Since the lead from A-K against a suit indicates length, opening leader's subsequent non-winning plays in that suit are immediately available for suit preference.

Following to declarer's first suit

Priorities are:

- to give a count signal when partner needs to hold up to shut out dummy's suit;
- to give a Smith signal with respect to the suit of the opening lead where it might help. We try to do this as early as possible, regardless of the reason for declarer's play and regardless of whether the suit is trumps or not; if declarer plays a different suit on the next trick, we start over if the size of the first Smith-intended card was unclear. The attitude shown toward the suit of the opening lead parallels attitude as used elsewhere in our carding: upside-down. Smith comes into play when there is a clear-cut possibility of a problem. A list (definitely *not* exhaustive) of some situations where Smith might be useful would include:
 - By opening leader:
 - Leader has led a low spot and wants to tell partner whether his honor holding is better than it might be—perhaps the highest unseen card (excluding A vs. suits of course);
 - Leader has led, or may have led, from an interior sequence (either a Roman honor lead vs. a suit or a Journalist 10 vs. notrump) and wants to tell partner whether he has the highest unseen card (excluding A vs. suits of course);
 - Leader wishes to clarify whether his original holding was three to an honor or three small when he has led a low-looking spot followed by a higher spot, and at least one spot lower than the opening lead has not been seen.
 - By opening leader's partner:
 - Leader's partner has played a card third-hand-high and wants to tell leader whether he has the card above that card or the second card below, either of which (depending on the situation) may allow leader to continue the suit from his side productively;
 - Leader's partner won the first trick against NT and has returned a card that leaves it unclear whether he possesses another;
 - Lead was 9 or higher, or an attacking spot, against NT and partner wants to show an important higher card than the one that he played that he chose not to release.
- to give suit preference when there is clearly no future in the suit of the opening lead;
- anything else, based on context.

Up-the-line plays may indicate no message.

Following to declarer's later leads

Once any Smith or other early suit-preference needs have been taken care of, signals are primarily count.

First discard

- *if 10 or higher*: it is positive in the suit discarded from;
- *if 9 or lower*: it is negative in the suit discarded from, and carries a suit-preference message (Lavinthal) where the context supports that.

This applies regardless of suit preference already given per "Following to declarer's first suit", because the two partners may not always see the earlier carding the same way.

Second discard

If the discard following a Lavinthal signal is in the Lavinthal-positive suit and is clearly a high spot, then it is negative attitude in that suit and cancels the Lavinthal signal; otherwise, it begins a count signal in that suit. The signaler must be careful not to begin showing even count in the Lavinthal-positive suit if the first spot would be high, of course, as such a card would be misunderstood.

VIII. Related Tournament-Ready Systems

- [Eric Kokish and Beverly Kraft's system](#)[†]
- [Richard Pavlicek's system](#)
- [Steve Robinson's system](#)
- [Robert Todd's system](#)

[†]uses the weak NT

IX. Other Resources

bibliography

Certain publications, including some that are in electronic form, are especially pertinent to We-Bad and may repay reading:

- Gitelman, Fred: [Improving 2/1 Game Force](#), 1993-94.
- Goldman, Bobby: *Aces Scientific*, 1978.
- Granovetter, Pamela and Matthew: [A Switch in Time](#), 2003. This sets out the “Obvious Shift” signalling system.
- Kantar, Eddie: *Roman Keycard Blackwood*, 5th edition, 2008. An earlier edition of this book is available [on-line](#).
- Lawrence, Mike: *Mike Lawrence's Workbook On the Two Over One System*, 1987.
- Petroncini, Claudio and Giorgio Belladonna: [Cue-Bidding to Slam](#), 1990 (English translation by Daniel Neill). This is a detailed treatise on “Italian” (mixed first- and second-round controls) cue bidding.
- Rexford, Ken: *Cuebidding at Bridge: A Modern Approach*, 2006.
- Rubens, Jeff: *The Useful-Space Principle and Transfer Advances of Overcalls*, 1995.

discussion forums

`rec.games.bridge` is a Usenet newsgroup (discussion group) that is accessible through [Google Groups](#).

The [BridgeBase Forums](#) are a set of on-line discussion groups. BridgeBase Online membership (free) may be required.

other resources

[BridgeBase Online](#) is one of several facilities that offer on-line partnership bidding practice on random or constrained hands free or at little cost.

(end of We-Bad documentation)



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VII. Bridge World Standard Defense

Introduction

Bridge World Standard (BWS) encapsulates common American expert practices, determined by polls, as a set of partnership agreements (and, where there is no consensus, non-agreements). It is used as a framework for problems in the Master Solvers' Club, by impromptu partnerships, and as a basis for discussion by those who wish to formulate their own system.

Where the experts are in substantial agreement (with close cases decided, when possible, by the votes of Bridge World readers at large), those methods become part of the system. Where there are competing popular approaches, alternative methods, called leaves, are listed. Where one treatment is marked [default] and another (or others) [leaf], the one marked [default] is the most popular in the voting and the one that is assumed if partners have agreed simply to play BWS. Anything marked [leaf] is an alternative that received sufficient support in the polls to be worthy of listing; partners can agree explicitly to adopt any particular leaf and still be using BWS.

I. Definitions

A distribution shown with hyphens refers to any pattern including those suit lengths (for example, 5-4-3-1 means any hand with one five-card suit, one four-card suit, one tripleton and one singleton). A distribution shown with equal signs refers to specific suit lengths (for example, 5=4=3=1 means a hand with five spades, four hearts, three diamonds and one club). **Balanced** means 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2 or 5-3-3-2.

A **competitive** action is one taken over an opponent's bid, double or redouble. An action taken in **direct position** immediately follows an opponent's action; one taken in **reopening position** follows an opponent's action and two passes.

Points refer to 4-3-2-1 high-card points (HCP).

II. General Understandings and Defaults

Bypass rule: If a player bypasses a natural notrump bid to make a nonforcing bid, then later bids notrump uninvited over an opposing bid, that notrump bid is unusual (showing additional distribution, not offering to play in notrump).

Doubles subject to no explicit agreement:

(a) [default]

when a pass would be forcing, a double discourages further offensive bidding

[leaf]

is for penalty when partner is limited; discourages further offensive bidding when partner is unlimited;

(b) [default]

when a pass would be nonforcing and both partners are unlimited, a double indicates undescribed high-card values, with sufficient length in the suit doubled to sustain a penalty pass on ordinary distribution

[leaf]

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any other agreement;

(c) [default]

when a pass would be nonforcing, the doubler is unlimited but his partner is limited, a double is for penalty

[leaf]

any other agreement;

(d) when a pass would be nonforcing, either the doubler is limited and his partner is unlimited or both partners are limited, a double is for penalty.

Five notrump: If an undiscussed but clearly forcing noncompetitive five-notrump bid might logically be interpreted as more than one of these alternatives, the priority order of interpretation is

- (1) Grand-Slam Force,
- (2) choice of slam,
- (3) control-showing bid.

Forcing vs. nonforcing: When a call could logically be interpreted as either forcing or nonforcing and there is no explicit agreement:

In general:

[default]

In a competitive situation, treat as nonforcing; in a noncompetitive situation, treat as forcing or nonforcing by which seems more sensible to the observer

[leaf]

forcing rather than nonforcing.

Specific cases:

(a) Vulnerability exerts influence solely in that some situations are forcing only when our side is vulnerable against not. Those situations include at least when the opponents bid at or above game and our side has shown strength or itself bid game nonpreemptively (but there is no agreement on other cases).

(b) If we have been forced to game but have not bid game, competitive situations thereafter above the game level are forcing.

(c) If we have bid game nonpreemptively, the default applies.

(d) If we have invited game and the invitation has not been declined, competitive situations thereafter are forcing only as high as where the force would have expired noncompetitively.

(e) A two-notrump opening does not create a force if the opponents bid.

(f) If a two-club opening is overcalled, responder's pass is forcing at every level.

(g) No force is created after

(1) our penalty double or penalty pass of a takeout double when the partnership is not otherwise committed to further bidding;

(2) an opponent raises over our takeout double, simple overcall, or jump-overcall of a preemptive opening;

(3) an opponent's preemptive bid over our one-over-one response;

(4) a strength-showing redouble by an already-limited hand.

(h) A strength-showing redouble by an unlimited hand creates a force to at least a level dictated by the logic of the auction.

Form of scoring: BWS makes no adjustments in its agreements to match changes in the form of scoring (as in matchpoints vs. IMPs).

Four notrump:

(a) If an undiscussed but clearly forcing noncompetitive four-notrump bid might logically be interpreted as more than one of these alternatives, the priority order of interpretation is

- (1) ace- or key-card-asking convention,
- (2) offer of general slam encouragement,
- (3) control-showing bid.

(b) There is no agreement about an undiscussed competitive four-notrump bid that might logically be interpreted as ace-asking, key-card-asking, or something else. However, if an undiscussed forcing competitive four-notrump bid cannot logically be ace- or key-card-asking, it is for general takeout.

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Interpretation priorities: When a call is subject to different possible interpretations and there is no explicit system agreement, it should be considered:

- (a) natural rather than artificial;
- (b) [default]
 - if a double, non-penalty or penalty by which seems more sensible to the observer
- [leaf]
 - non-penalty rather than penalty;
- (c) lead-directing or not by which seems more sensible to the observer;
- (d) if a redouble, business or escape by which seems more sensible to the observer;
- (e) if a pass over an opponent's redouble, penalty or escape by which seems more sensible to the observer.

Jumps:

- (a) The default interpretation of a bid one level above a strength-showing force (e.g., one spade — four diamonds) is a splinter.
- (b) The default interpretation of a bid one level above a splinter (e.g., one spade — five diamonds) is Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood. (There are explicit exceptions to this principle.)

Lead-directing doubles:

- (a) A double of a suitless auction to three notrump or four notrump requests the lead of leader's shorter major.
- (b) No special lead is suggested by a double
 - (1) of a suitless auction to six notrump or seven notrump;
 - (2) when some combination of dummy's suit, leader's suit, and doubler's suit is available;
 - (3) when there are expected and unexpected leads; or
 - (4) after the opponents' previously uncontested Stayman auction.
- (c) A double for an unusual lead against a suit contract cancels an earlier lead-directional message.

Opposing doubles:

- [default]
 - When a forcing bid is doubled and there is no contrary explicit system agreement or logic from the auction, a pass is forcing and a redouble is to play (suggests a contract).
- [leaf]
 - pass and redouble are both nonforcing (suggest a contract).

Passed-hand situations: When it is logically possible and there is no explicit understanding to the contrary, an action taken by a passed hand has the same general meaning as the corresponding action taken by an unpassed hand, subject to whatever constraints are imposed by the failure to open the bidding.

Passes over redoubles: A pass over a redouble is

- (a) for penalty when a preemptive opening is doubled in either position, a suit one-bid is doubled in reopening position, a bid at the two level or higher is doubled after the opponents have bid three or more times;
- (b) for takeout when a suit one-bid is doubled in direct position or a new-suit response is doubled;
- (c) subject to no special agreement when a raise of a one-bid, or a one-notrump response, or a one-level bid after the opponents have bid three or more times is doubled.

Redoubles: A redouble is natural (to play) except the following, which are for takeout: opener's redouble of the direct double of a suit one-bid passed for penalty; advancer's redouble of either the penalty double of a simple overcall of a one-bid or the double of a two-notrump overcall of a weak two-bid.

Splinters vs. Fragments: When two bids are to be used systemically to show distribution, and either each will show shortness in the suit bid ("splinter") or each will show shortness in the suit left unbid ("fragment"), the splinter interpretation applies in all cases.

Suit jumps:

[default]

If an undiscussed competitive suit jump might logically be interpreted in more than one way, it is natural

[leaf]

a fit-jump.

Two notrump: Competitive two-notrump bids that might be used artificially to help distinguish actions designed to contest the auction from those of a constructive nature are natural.

III. Slam-Bidding Methods

Ace- and Key-Card-Asking:

(a) When a four-notrump bid is Key-Card Blackwood (KCB), the replies are: 0|3-1|4

[default] five clubs = 0 or 3 key cards; five diamonds = 1 or 4; five hearts (spades) = 2 without (with) the trump queen

[leaf] 1|4-3|0 (five clubs = 1 or 4 key cards; five diamonds = 0 or 3; five hearts (spades) = 2 without (with) the trump queen)

(b) When a four-notrump bid is Six-Key-Card Blackwood (6KCB), the replies are similar with "trump queen" replaced by "key queen."

(c) When a four-notrump bid is Blackwood but is neither KCB nor 6KCB, or when a bid other than four notrump asks for aces, the replies are 0|3-1|4 [one step = 0 or 3 aces; two steps = 1 or 4; three steps = 2].

(d) When Gerber (four clubs asking for aces) is used, the replies are in steps: one step = 0 aces, two steps = 1 ace, and so forth.

Agreed Suit and Number of Keys: When four-notrump is a key-card ask, it is 6KCB when and only when two suits have been supported.

In KCB, absent an explicit agreement, the priority order for determining the agreed suit is: the only supported suit; the only shown suit; the most recently shown suit.

Specific cases:

(a) [default]

After a two-club opening and a later Blackwood four-notrump bid by opener when there is no explicitly agreed suit: If opener has shown length in only one suit, four notrump is KCB with that suit agreed; otherwise, it is KCB and the usual rules apply.

[leaf]

four notrump is KCB and the usual agreed-suit rules apply.;

(b) [default]

When responder to a suit one-bid jump-shifts and then bids four notrump, that is Key-Card Blackwood in responder's suit.

[leaf]

Key-Card Blackwood in opener's suit.

[leaf]

not Key-Card Blackwood.

Approaches to slam decisions:

Kaplan Control Principles: When there is an agreed suit:

(a) After a slam-try by one partner below four of the agreed suit,

(1) a non-signoff bid or redouble by the other is slam-positive and indicates a specific control;

(2) failure to show a control is slam-negative, but does not deny that control.

(b) After a slam-try by one partner above four of the agreed suit, the other must show any biddable control below five of the agreed suit (and doing so carries no implication of overall extra values).

Last Train: Any time there is only one call that indicates slam interest or further slam interest without raising the partnership's level of commitment, it is a "Last Train" slam-try, unrelated to the strain named (unless followed by an uninvited further action).

Open suit: When one partner has requested that the other ("replier") bid

slam with at least second-round control of a particular suit (the "open" suit) regardless of the rest of his hand, this scheme is used for replier's actions: with no control in the open suit, pass or return to (usually five of) the agreed suit; with second-round control, bid six of the agreed suit (or five notrump with the guarded king); with first-round control, control-bid in the open suit (or, with, additionally, first-round or maximum-possible and an as-yet-unshown control in another suit, control-bid in that suit).

Blackwood follow-ups:

- (a) a later bid in the agreed suit (or, in 6KCB, in one of the raised suits) is nonforcing.
- (b) After a 0|3 or 1|4 reply to KCB, the cheapest forcing bid by the Blackwood bidder is a trump-queen-ask if it is below five of the agreed suit, and the negative reply is a return to the agreed suit. After a 0|3 or 1|4 reply to 6KCB, the cheapest bid by the Blackwood bidder below five of a raised suit is a queen-ask relating to both raised suits, with replies in steps: one step, no queen; two steps, one queen; three or more steps, two queens.
- (c) A five-notrump bid by the Blackwood (or KCB or 6KCB) bidder confirms partnership possession of all the aces (or of all key cards and the trump queen or key queens or equivalent), invites a grand slam, and asks for specific kings outside the agreed suit (in KCB) or outside the raised suits (in 6KCB).

Exclusion Blackwood: When a call is defined as Exclusion Blackwood (EB), the replies are in steps similar to Key-Card Blackwood, but the replier does not count the ace of an excluded suit. The EB interpretation applies to certain jumps that name an excluded suit, and also when a player makes a slam-try, indicates a short suit, receives no encouragement, and then bids four notrump (in which case the short suit is an excluded suit).

Grand-Slam Force: When a five-notrump bid is the Grand-Slam Force (GSF):

- (a) The scheme for determining the agreed suit is the same as it is for Key-Card Blackwood.
- (b) Replier bids above the agreed suit with two (or three) of the top three trump honors. With a lesser trump holding, he bids cheapest-weakest (the higher the bid, the stronger the holding).

Interference:

- (a) When there is interference after an ace- or key-card-ask, the replies are:
 - (1) at low enough levels, DOPI (double or redouble = 0 or 0|3, pass = 1 or 1|4, cheapest bid = 2 or 2 without the trump queen, etc.);
 - (2) at high enough levels, DEPO (double = even, pass = odd).
- (b) When there is interference after a Grand-Slam Force, the replies are:
 - (1) at low enough levels, DOPI (double or redouble substitutes for what would have been the cheapest bid, pass substitutes for what would have been the second-cheapest bid, the cheapest bid substitutes for what would have been the third-cheapest bid, etc., subject to the logic of the auction);
 - (2) at high enough levels, DEPO (double = even, pass = odd).
- (c) When an artificial slam-try (such as a control-bid or a splinter) is doubled, the weakest action by the next player to speak is a return to the agreed suit (or whatever would have been the weakest action without the double).

Slow arrival: Except where there is a specific agreement to the contrary, when there is a choice between two game-forcing bids in a particular strain, BWS uses "slow arrival" (a jump is either stronger than a simple bid or it is a "picture bid" with a specific descriptive meaning).

Voids: A reply to an ace- or key-card-ask above the usual range shows a void:

- (a) the cheapest void-showing reply shows two [or an even number of] aces/key cards plus a void;
- (b) a higher action indicates one [or an odd number of] ace[s]/key card[s] plus a void and, when possible, indicates the suit of the void.

IV. Partnership-Bidding Methods

This section describes agreements about auctions in which our side makes the first bid and the opponents do nothing but pass.

A. Opening-Bid Requirements

BWS-2001 is a mostly natural system based on an artificial strong two-club opening, weak two-bids in the other suits, strong notrump (with Stayman and transfers), and five-card majors (with a semi-forcing one-notrump response). Opening requirements are neither extremely sound nor light. The minimum

requirement to open with a long minor is about half a point higher than with a long major.

♠ A Q x x x ♥ A x x ♦ J x x x ♣ x

is a minimum one-spade opening bid as dealer with neither side vulnerable.

♠ A K Q J 10 ♥ A K Q ♦ K 10 9 x ♣ x

or

♠ A K Q J 10 ♥ A K Q ♦ Q 10 9 x ♣ x

is a minimum two-club opening bid as dealer with neither side vulnerable.

This scheme is used for opening the bidding with a balanced hand:

[default] suit, then minimum notrump: 12 to 14

[leaf] suit, then minimum notrump: strong 12 to 14

one notrump: 15 to 17

suit, then strong action in notrump: 18 to 19

two notrump: 20 to weak 22

two clubs, then minimum notrump: strong 22 to 24

[default] two clubs, then two hearts (Kokish) over a two-diamond response, then two notrump over a two-spade relay: 25-plus

[leaf] two clubs, then single jump in notrump: 25 to 27

It is optional to open one notrump with any of these distributions: 5-3-3-2 with a long major, 2=4=2=5, 2=4=5=2, 6-3-2-2 with a long minor.

It is acceptable to open two notrump (or two clubs, intending to rebid in notrump) with an unstopped doubleton, a five-card major, a six-card minor, or five-four distribution including a five-card minor.

On the understanding that requirements within an overall style vary with form of scoring, table position and vulnerability, the BWS requirements for initial preemptive openings are not extreme in any direction.

A three-notrump opening is gambling (solid seven-card minor) with little side strength.

An opening of four of a minor is natural. [default] { Namyats: a strong four-of-a-major opening, clubs = hearts or diamonds = spades. [leaf]}

A first- or second-position weak two-bid that includes three of this list of characteristics is unacceptable: five cards in the bid suit; seven cards in the bid suit; flimsy (definition adjusted to suit the vulnerability) six cards in the bid suit; side void; side four-card or longer suit. Otherwise, opener may use his judgment.

B. Choice of Suit

When opening a one-bid in a minor suit: with three-three in the minors, always bid one club; with either four-four in the minors or four diamonds, five clubs and a minimum-range hand, use judgment to decide which minor to open.

With a minimum-range five-six hand, open in the higher and shorter suit only when the long suits are adjacent.

On a hand calling for an opening one-bid with five-five in the black suits, opener should always bid one spade. [default] { bid one spade unless the hand is strong. [leaf] } { use some other criterion to decide which suit to open. [leaf] }

In third or fourth position, it is acceptable to open in a strong four-card major if the auction rates to be manageable thereafter.

C. After Our Preempt

Responding to preemptive openings in a suit: When responder is an unpassed hand:

(a) a four-notrump response or a jump-response of four clubs is a key-card-ask [in opener's implied major when Namyats is used];

(b) a raise of a major-suit preempt to five is a trump-ask after a four-bid, otherwise preemptive (a bar);

(c) a simple new-suit response to partner's game-level preemptive opening is an asking-bid about the suit named (replies: one step, neither first- nor second-round control; two steps, second-round control; three steps, first-round control; higher, first- and second-round controls);

(d) a simple below-game new-suit response is a one-round force;

(e) a below-game, jump new-suit response other than four clubs is

[default:] an asking-bid about the bid suit

[leaf] preemptive.;

(f) when Namyats is used, a one-step response to a four-of-a-minor opening is a slam-try;

(g) a two-notrump response to a weak two-bid invites game and suggests a fit for opener's suit.

Responses to a three-notrump opening:

- (a) club bids are "pass or correct";
- (b) four notrump is invitational;
- (c) four diamonds asks for side shortness (opener bids four of a major with shortness there, four notrump with no shortness, or five of a minor with shortness in the other minor;
- (d) any other bid is natural.

Weak two-bidder's continuations: After a two-notrump response to a weak two-bid, opener's rebids are:

[default]

Feature-showing with a maximum.

[leaf]

Ogust (three clubs = minimum, weak suit; three diamonds = minimum, strong suit; three hearts = maximum, weak suit; three spades = maximum, strong suit).

D. After Our Two Clubs

A two-diamond response to two clubs . . .

[default]

denies the values for a positive response in a hand with either a strong suit (at least six-card length or five cards headed by at least two honors) or acceptable orientation to bid notrump.

[leaf]

denies the values for a positive response.

[leaf]

denies a hand suitable for a positive response but shows strength beyond a double negative (a two-heart response would show double-negative strength).

A suit-bid response to two clubs from three hearts to four diamonds indicates a one-loser suit.

After a two-diamond response and a natural simple new-suit rebid by opener, responder's cheapest minor-suit bid through three diamonds is a double negative (after which opener's same-suit rebid of three of a major may be passed), new-suit single jump is a splinter raise, and double raise is a picture bid (strong trumps and little else).

When two clubs — two diamonds — three notrump shows 25-27 HCP: four clubs = Stayman; four of a red suit = Texas; four spades = minors; five clubs asks for aces (0, 1, 2, . . . replies)

E. After Our Two-Notrump-Family Opening

These methods apply after a two-notrump opening bid, a two-notrump rebid by a two-club opener following a two-diamond response, and a two-notrump rerebid by a two-club opener in the sequence two clubs — two diamonds — two hearts (Kokish) — two spades (relay) — two notrump:

- (a) Texas (four-level) transfers, after which four notrump is Key-Card Blackwood and a new-suit bid is Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood;
- (b) Gerber;
- (c) three spades showing both minors;
- (d) Jacoby (three-level) transfers, after which a notrump bid or a new-suit bid is natural, a self-raise to the four level is a slam-try, and a new-suit jump is an "auto splinter" (a one-suiter with shortness in the bid suit);
- (e) Stayman, with responder's three-of-a-major rebid over three diamonds Smolen. There is no agreement on the difference between showing the same major-suit shape via transfer and via Smolen.

F. After Our One-Notrump Opening

Response to a one-notrump opening:

- (a) Texas (four-level) transfers, after which four notrump is Key-Card Blackwood, and a new-suit bid is Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood;
- (b) Gerber;
- (c) Jacoby (two-level) transfers, after which a notrump bid or a new-suit bid is natural (Transferring to spades and then bidding hearts shows at least five-five. Transferring to hearts and then bidding two spades shows at least four spades, at least five hearts, and at least game-invitational strength; this is the only

way to invite game with four spades and five hearts. Over two spades, opener with a minimum bids three of a major or two notrump, any of which responder may pass; with a maximum, opener bids something else, which is a game-force.); a self-raise to the three level is invitational, a self-raise to the four level is a slam-try, and a new-suit jump is an "auto splinter" (a one-suiter with shortness in the bid suit);

(d) Stayman (possibly a weak hand; opener bids hearts with both majors), followed by responder's bid of:

(i) two hearts is weak (scrambling for a two-level contract with length in both majors);

(ii) two spades is invitational;

(iii) three of a major is invitational if a direct raise, or Smolen (forcing; ostensibly four of the bid major and five of the other) if over two diamonds, or a slam-try in opener's shown major if in the unbid major;

(e) [default] four-suit transfers with

two spades = clubs (simple new-suit rebid by responder shows shortness),

two notrump = diamonds (simple new-suit rebid by responder shows shortness),

three clubs = both minors weak (nonforcing),

three of another suit = both minors strong (three diamonds = no major-suit shortness; three of a major = at most one card in the suit bid).

[leaf] { two spades to show minors (or a weak hand with diamonds), two notrump as invitational, three of a minor as weak. }

[leaf] { two spades to show minors (or a weak hand with diamonds), two notrump as invitational, three of a minor as invitational. }

G. After Our Major-Suit Opening

(See also section I., below)

Responder is unpassed except where otherwise stated.

Responses: These methods apply to responding to a major-suit opening:

(a) a one-notrump response is "semi-forcing" (limited to at most game-invitational strength);

(b) a two-over-one response is forcing to game except where responder rebids his suit simply after opener has not promised extra values;

(c) a single raise is moderately constructive (when responding with a weaker fitting hand, bid one notrump planning to rebid two of the major, a sequence that could also show 6-9 HCP and a doubleton fit);

(d) a double raise is invitational with four or more trumps (with equivalent values and only three trumps, respond one notrump planning to rebid three of the major after a minimum new-suit rebid);

(e) two notrump (no side shortness) or a new-suit double jump (splinter) shows game-forcing strength with at least a four-card fit;

(f) a jump-shift followed by support indicates a hand stronger than ordinary game-going values [a jump-shift shows more than ordinary game-going strength (the equivalent of 16-plus HCP), a substantial suit (at least five-card length with at least two of the top three honors), and one of three hand-types: balanced, one-suited, support];

(g) three notrump or a triple raise is a weak preemptive raise, the former showing some defensive strength.

Opener's rebids:

After a one-spade response to one heart:

(a) a one-notrump or two-notrump rebid may include a singleton spade;

(b) a three-notrump rebid shows long, strong hearts;

(c) a four-heart rebid is unrestricted as to spade length;

(d) a four-of-a-minor rebid is a splinter raise.

One heart — one notrump — two spades is forcing.

After one spade — one notrump — two clubs — ?, a two-diamond rebid is [default:] Bart, artificially temporarily suggesting five hearts and converting natural rebids by responder to showing stronger hands than if the same action had been taken directly. { natural. [leaf] }

One of a major — one notrump — rebid one level above a forcing reverse or jump-shift is an autosplinter (big one-suiter; shortness bid).

After a two-over-one response, a two-level reverse or a non-jump three-level new-suit bid shows extra strength, but two notrump or a single raise may be based on a minimum hand.

After a single raise:

- (a) a reaise to three is preemptive;
- (b) two notrump is forcing, ostensibly a game-invitation;
- (c) a simple new-suit bid is a game-try showing length (or a suit where honor strength would be helpful).

After a two-notrump forcing raise: a simple new-suit bid shows shortness, a new-suit jump shows a two-suiter, and the three other game-and-below bids (simple same-suit rebid, three notrump, jump same-suit rebid), herein called TOBs, deny the requirements for any new-suit bid. The TOBs are graded from strongest to weakest (cheapest bid is strongest).

After a direct game-invitational raise to three of opener's major: the cheapest bid asks for shortness. One heart — three hearts — three notrump is a control-bid in spades.

Passed-Hand Situations: These methods apply to responding to a major-suit opening by a passed hand:

- (a) one notrump is semi-forcing (6-12 points);
- (b) two clubs is Drury-Fit (a hand too strong for a single raise, but unsuited to a higher bid);
- (c) three clubs is natural, similar to two diamonds but with long clubs;
- (d) a jump-shift other than three clubs is a strong raise with length in the suit bid;
- (e) a double jump-shift is a splinter raise.

H. After Our Minor-Suit Opening

(See also section I., below)

Responder is unpassed except where otherwise stated.

Responses:

After a one-club opening, responder normally bids one diamond with longer diamonds than either major, or with four-four in diamonds and a major in a hand worth at least a game invitation; but the normal response is in a four-card major with a minimum-range response and four-four in a major and diamonds.

A one-notrump response to a minor opening shows 6-10 points.

A two-club response to one diamond is forcing to game except where responder rebids his suit simply after opener has not promised extra values. (Thus, in particular, one diamond — two clubs — *three clubs* and one diamond — two clubs — two diamonds — *three diamonds* are forcing. With three=six in the minors and invitational strength, responder's normal plan is two clubs followed by three clubs.)

A two-notrump response to a minor opening is natural and invitational.

A single minor-suit raise is game-invitational or stronger and denies a four-card or longer major; a double raise is preemptive (but of sufficient strength to support a contract of three notrump or four of the minor opposite a balanced hand with 18-19 HCP); a double jump-shift is a game-forcing splinter.

A jump-shift response shows more than ordinary game-going strength (the equivalent of 16-plus HCP), a substantial suit (at least five-card length with at least two of the top three honors), and one of three hand-types: balanced, one-suited, support.

A three-notrump response to a minor-suit opening shows a balanced hand, 16-17 HCP, and little suit-slam interest.

A triple jump-shift response to a minor-suit opening is natural (an exception to "one level above a splinter is Exclusion Key-Card Blackwood").

Opener's Rebids:

A one-notrump rebid [default] may not { [leaf] may } include a singleton in responder's suit.

In rebidding, after having opened in a minor suit:

- (a) with 4=3=3=3 or 3=4=3=3, rebid in notrump over a one-over-one response that does not hit a four-card fit;
- (b) with 4-4-3-2 too weak to open one notrump and lacking four-card support, rebid in a four-card suit at the one level when possible;
- (c) with 4-4-3-2 too strong to open one notrump and lacking four-card support:
 - (1) with 4=4=2=3 after a one-diamond response, rebid two notrump;
 - (2) otherwise use judgment to decide whether to

rebid two notrump or a four-card suit at the one level.

Opener's reverse after a one-level suit response is forcing and promises a rebid below game.

Opener's rebid one level above either a jump-shift or a forcing reverse is a game-forcing splinter raise.

After a one-of-a-suit response, opener's double-jump rebid in his own suit (e.g., one club -- one spade -- four clubs) shows a game-forcing raise with strong four-card support and a long (typically six-card), strong suit.

Opener's reverse after a one-notrump response is forcing.

Opener's double jump to three notrump shows a long, usually strong suit.

After a strong single minor raise, opener can

- (1) show willingness to play in three of his minor by bidding it,
- (2) bid two notrump nonforcing, or
- (3) bid a new suit (after which the bidding may still stop at three of the agreed minor).

Opener's reverse of the form one diamond — two clubs — two of a major does not promise extra values.

After a natural, nonforcing two-notrump response:

- (a) a simple rebid of opener's suit is nonforcing;
- (b) any new-suit bid at the three level is forcing.

Passed-Hand Situations: When responder to a minor-suit opening is a passed hand:

- (a) A one notrump response shows 6-10; two notrump shows 11-12.
- (b) A single raise is invitational or stronger, but not forcing.
- (c) A preemptive double raise has the same range as by an unpassed hand.
- (d) A jump-shift shows a strong hand, a fit, and length in the bid suit.
- (e) A double jump-shift is a splinter raise.

I. After Any Suit One-Bid

Responder is unpassed except where otherwise stated.

After a new-suit one-level response:

- (a) opener's single raise shows a minimum opening of requisite shape;
- (b) with 4=3=5=1 or 4=3=1=5 distribution, opener should rebid in spades after a one-heart response.

After a one-level new-suit response and opener's simple new-suit rebid:

- (a) two notrump or three of any suit previously bid is invitational;
- (b) a fourth-suit bid that is either a reverse or a three-level bid is forcing to game;
- (c) a fourth-suit non-reverse at the two level is [default:] forcing for one round, and responder may pass if opener bids two of responder's first suit, two notrump, or a non-reverse minimum number in one of his own suits { forcing to game [leaf] };
- (d) a bid one level above a not-game-forcing fourth-suit bid is natural (five-five or more) and game-forcing (to invite with the same shape, responder bids the fourth suit cheaply twice);
- (e) a bid one level above a game-forcing fourth-suit bid is a splinter;
- (f) after one club — one diamond — one heart — ?,
[default] one spade shows spades and is similar to a one-over-one response, two spades is an artificial fourth-suit bid { one spade is a fourth-suit bid but may be weak [leaf] }

After opener's one-notrump rebid:

- (a) responder's rebid of the cheapest two of an unbid minor is artificial, forcing, and promising at least game-invitational strength (opener's priorities over such a bid are: show three-card fit for responder's original suit, show four-card length

in the unbid major, show a minimum with the cheapest other bid, show a maximum descriptively with anything else; responder's next bid is forcing unless it is two of his original suit, two notrump, or a raise to three of the major just bid by opener);

(b) responder's rebid of three of the cheapest unbid minor is weak.

(c) four clubs is Gerber.

After a one-level suit response and opener's simple same-suit rebid:

(a) a third-suit bid that is a reverse or a three-level bid is forcing to game;

(b) a third-suit non-reverse at the two level is forcing for one round, and responder may pass if opener bids two of responder's first suit or three of opener's suit;

(c) a non-reverse jump to three of a third suit is natural (five-five or more) and game-forcing (to invite with the same shape, responder bids two and then three of the third suit);

(d) a bid one level above a game-forcing third-suit bid is a splinter.

After a one-level new-suit response and opener's rebid-promising reverse, any rebid by responder is forcing to game except two of his original suit and the cheaper of a fourth-suit bid and two notrump.

After a one-level new-suit response and opener's (game-forcing) jump-shift, responder bids naturally.

After opener's raise of a one-level major-suit response to two:

(a) a reraise and two notrump are invitational and nonforcing;

(b) three of opener's minor is forcing for one round;

(c) one heart — one spade — two spades — three hearts is forcing to game (similar to after a response of two of a minor; with only invitational strength, responder must either choose a different game-try or bid one notrump originally).

After a one-level new-suit response and opener's two-notrump rebid:

(a) responder's three-club rebid is artificial, and opener bids three diamonds unless he has three-card support for responder's major (responder's next bid up to and including three of his original suit is nonforcing; otherwise, responder's next bid is a signoff if that is possible; otherwise, it is a choice of games if that is possible; otherwise, it is a checkback for an eight-card major-suit fit if possible; otherwise, it converts the three-club rebid into a natural bid in the minor three diamonds over two notrump would not have shown);

(b) [default]

responder's three-diamond rebid shows a fit for opener's minor

[leaf]

shows diamonds.

(c) for clubs is Gerber.

After a one-notrump response and opener's reverse, responder's rebids of two notrump, three of opener's first-bid suit, and three of a suit ranking below opener's original suit are nonforcing.

After a one-level new-suit response, a responder's rebid of four of opener's minor is:

(a) a splinter after opener's simple new-suit rebid;

(b) natural and forcing after opener's simple or jump same-suit rebid.

Passed-Hand Situations: When responder is a passed hand, a third-suit or fourth-suit bid is not forcing unless it is a reverse.

V. Competitive-Bidding Methods

This section describes agreements about auctions in which our side makes the first bid and the opponents do something other than pass.

A. Competition After Our Preempt

When our preemptive opening is doubled:

(a) Responder's redouble is strength-showing, temporarily suggests playing for a penalty, and creates a force to the next level of opener's suit.

(b) [default]

Responder's simple new-suit bid below game is forcing, but lead-directional (presumably with a

- fit).
- [leaf]
- nonforcing.
- (c) [default]
- Responder's jump new-suit bid below game is forcing, fit-showing, lead-directional.
- [leaf]
- forcing, fit-showing, suggesting length.

When our preemptive opening is overcalled:

- (a)[default]
- Responder's simple new-suit bid below game is forcing, suggesting length (can be raised).
- [leaf]
- nonforcing.
- (b) Responder's jump new-suit bid below game is forcing and fit-showing.

When our weak two-bid is overcalled, responder's competitive two-notrump response is forcing and similar to the same bid made noncompetitively.

When responder raises a preempt to game, whether competitively or not, and an opponent bids, opener may not bid but may double (indicating maximum defensive potential).

When responder raises a preempt below game, whether competitively or not, and an opponent overcalls, opener may not bid and there is no special agreement over whether he may double.

B. Competition After Our Two-Club Opening

If two clubs is overcalled, responder's double shows double-negative strength and a pass is forcing. Opener's double of the overcall shows a balanced hand.

There is no agreement about responder's actions after two clubs is doubled.

After a negative response to two clubs and an overcall,

- (a) opener's pass is forcing;
- (b) opener's double is for penalty.

C. Competition After Our One-Notrump Opening

After competition following our one-notrump opening:

- (a) A double of a natural two- or three-level overcall is negative, of a higher bid is for penalty.
- (b) Over a two-level overcall: lebensohl [two notrump is a puppet to three clubs and responder's rebid below three of overcaller's suit is nonforcing; a direct bid of three of an underranking suit is forcing] applies, with "fast denies stopper" for cue-bid and three-notrump direct responses versus responder's rebids following a two-notrump response. An artificial action is treated as though it had been a natural bid in an anchor suit indicated.
- (c) A below-game new-suit jump is forcing.
- (d) A redouble of an artificial double is strength-showing.
- (e) A double of an artificial bid suggests a penalty double of the escape.
- (f) After any penalty suggestion: the opening side is forced to two notrump, below-game new-suit bids are forcing, raises and two notrump are not forcing.
- (g) A bid in a suit shown by an artificial defense indicates at least a game-invitation and is forcing to two notrump.
- (h) Bids in suits not indicated (although possibly bid) by an artificial action have the same meaning as if the interference had been a natural bid in an indicated suit [for example, one notrump — (two hearts, showing spades) — three hearts is equivalent to one notrump — (two spades, natural) — three hearts].
- (i) one notrump — (overcall) — pass — (pass) — *double* is for takeover, but one notrump — (pass) — pass — (overcall) — *double* is for penalty.

After one notrump — (pass) — two clubs — (double) — ?, opener should determine his action by first evaluating his club holding (bid if especially weak, pass if average, redouble if especially strong). [default] { take his normal action had intervenor passed when that action is a major-suit bid (otherwise examine his club holding). [leaf] }

After a two-level transfer response to one notrump is doubled [e.g., one notrump — (pass) — two hearts = spades — (double) — ?], opener should

- (a) superaccept (bid above two of the suit indicated by responder) with any of the same, or roughly the same, set of hands that would have been suitable for superacceptance had intervenor passed;
- (b) accept (or, if appropriate, superaccept) the transfer with at least three-card support for the suit indicated by responder;
- (c) redouble rather than pass with significant length and strength in the suit bid.

D. Competition After Our Major-Suit Opening (See also section F., below)

In responding to a major-suit opening over a takeout double

- (a) a one-spade response is forcing (by an unpassed hand);
- (b) a two-level new-suit response is not forcing;
- (c) two notrump shows a game-invitational or stronger raise of the major (direct jump-raises are preemptive);
- (d) a jump-shift is preemptive;
- (e) a double jump-shift is a splinter raise;
- (f) a redouble shows any other hand-type with 10-plus HCP.

In responding to a major-suit opening over an overcall:

- (a) a double is negative through three spades;
- (b) two notrump is natural (invitational) and nonforcing (jump or not);
- (c) over a simple overcall, a cue-bid shows a raise with game-invitational or greater strength, and a jump cue-bid is a splinter (direct jump-raises are preemptive);
- (d) four-notrump is Key-Card Blackwood (jump or not);
- (e) [default]
a jump-shift is preemptive.
[leaf]
fit-showing.

In responding to a major-suit opening over an artificial action:
Over a Michaels cue-bid (other major plus a minor):

- (a) a bid in a minor is nonforcing;
- (b) a virtual cue-bid in overcaller's anchor major is a game-invitational-plus raise.

Over a bid showing two fixed suits:

- (a) a bid in the remaining suit is nonforcing;
- (b) the cheapest cue-bid (actual or virtual) is a game-invitational or stronger raise;
- (c) the second-cheapest cue-bid is a one-round force with the remaining suit.

After one of a major — (pass) — one notrump — (overcall) — ?: a double by opener is for takeout, a double by responder (after two passes) is for penalty

E. Competition After Our Minor-Suit Opening (See also section F., below)

After our minor-suit opening and a takeout double:

- (a) a one-level new-suit response is forcing (by an unpassed hand);
- (b) one diamond — (double) — two clubs is not forcing;
- (c) two notrump shows a game-invitational or stronger raise of opener's suit (direct jump-raises are preemptive);
- (d) a direct single raise is natural, similar to a single major-suit raise;
- (e) a jump-shift is preemptive;
- (f) a double jump-shift is a splinter raise;
- (g) a redouble shows any hand with 10-plus HCP that is not suitable for a raise or a new-suit bid.

After our minor-suit opening and an overcall:

- (a) a double is negative through three spades;

(b) two notrump is natural (invitational) and nonforcing (jump or not);

(c) over a simple overcall, a cue-bid shows a raise with game-invitational or greater strength, and a jump cue-bid is a splinter (direct jump-raises are preemptive);

(d) a jump-shift is preemptive.

In responding to a minor-suit opening over an artificial action:
Over a Michaels cue-bid (both majors):

(a) a bid in the unbid minor is nonforcing;

(b) [default:]

the cheapest virtual cue-bid shows a game-invitational or stronger action in the unbid minor; the second-cheapest virtual cue-bid shows a game-invitational or stronger raise of opener's minor

[leaf]

any virtual cue-bid is a stopper-showing raise of opener's minor

Over another bid showing two fixed suits:

(a) a response in the remaining suit is nonforcing;

(b) the cheapest cue-bid (actual or virtual) shows at least game-invitational strength and the remaining suit; the second-cheapest cue-bid (actual or virtual) shows a game-invitational or stronger raise of opener's minor.

F. Competition After Any Suit One-Bid

A simple *new-suit response over an overcall* is forcing (by an unpassed hand). If at the two level, it is forcing to the next level of opener's suit.

Negative doubles: A negative double at the one level or when there is exactly one unbid major guarantees at least four cards in any unbid major (opener may rebid in a three-card suit there in a pinch); otherwise, that requirement is only tentative (opener should not rebid in a three-card suit). When responder's negative double guarantees length in an unbid major, opener's bids in that suit function as would raises in the corresponding noncompetitive auction. After one club — (one of a major) — double — (pass) — ?, opener's two-diamond rebid does not show extra values.

Support and related doubles and redoubles: After a major-suit one-level response and a sandwich double or overcall below two of responder's suit, opener's redouble or double (even of a natural or artificial one notrump) shows a three-card fit for responder's suit. After a one-diamond response, opener's double of a sandwich one-spade overcall shows four hearts.

Maximal overcall doubles: After a simple overcall in the suit ranking one below the opened suit, a single raise by responder, and a single raise by advancer, a double is an artificial game-try. [e.g., one spade -- (two hearts) -- two spades -- (three hearts) -- *double*]

After a redouble:

(a) [default]

After one of a suit — (double) — redouble — (bid) — ?, opener's pass is forcing everywhere.

[leaf]

through the two level.

(b) [default]

After one of a suit — (double) — redouble — (pass) — pass — (bid)— ?, responder's pass is forcing everywhere.

[leaf]

through the two level.

VI. Defensive-Bidding Methods

This section describes agreements about auctions in which the opponents makes the first bid.

A. Initial Defensive-Action Requirements

Generally, the BWS requirements for initial constructive defensive actions (takeout doubles and overcalls) are moderate, but two-level overcalls are sound. The vulnerability somewhat affects the minimum strength required.

The requirements for initial preemptive defensive actions (jump overcalls; the weak version of two-suited actions) are possibly light.

♠ A Q x x x ♥ x x x ♦ Q x x x ♣ x

is a minimum one-spade overcall of one club with neither side vulnerable.

♠ A x x x ♥ A x x x ♦ Q x x x ♣ x

is a minimum takeout double of one club with neither side vulnerable.

BWS [default:] does *not* use minimum equal-level conversions (minELC), in which doubler's same-level suit bids over a suit advance may be based on minimum high-card strength (with appropriate shape).

{ [leaf:] minELC is used when doubler of a major-suit opening converts a club advance to the same number of diamonds and

(1) advancer has bid at the two level or competitively at the three level; or

(2) doubler is a passed hand. }

♠ A K Q 10 x ♥ A K x ♦ Q x x x ♣ x

is slightly too strong for a one-spade overcall of one club with neither side vulnerable.

The normal simple overcall maximum is 18 HCP with 5-3-3-2 distribution or the equivalent after trading off high cards for shape.

A direct-position one-notrump overcall shows a strong 15 to 18 points, regardless of the suit opened.

In reopening-position, a one-notrump overcall shows 10-14 (by a passed hand, 10 to a maximum non-opening), a two-notrump overcall 18-19, regardless of the suit opened.

An unpassed-hand's cue-bid in opener's suit, in either direct or reopening position, shows either a weakish or a very strong hand with

(a) both majors if the cue-bid is in a minor, or

(b) the unbid major and an unspecified minor if the cue-bid is in a major. The same bid by a passed hand shows a strength range consistent with security and the initial pass.

A direct two-notrump overcall of a suit one-bid shows either a weakish or a very strong hand with length in the two lowest unbid suits. By a passed hand, the strength is limited by failure to open; a one-notrump overcall by a passed hand shows a similar hand-type but less playing strength.

A jump cue-bid is:

(a) natural in direct position in opener's minor;

(b) asking for a stopper for three notrump (suggesting a solid suit elsewhere) in direct position in opener's major and in reopening position.

A single jump-overcall of a suit opening in direct position is preemptive, in reopening position has a strength range roughly equal to the value of one king and shows at least an opening bid with at least a strong six-card suit (by a passed hand, shows a similar hand limited by context).

Special-situation defenses:

Against a natural preempt:

(a) A double of an opening through four spades is for takeout.

(b) A four-notrump overcall:

(1) of four spades shows a non-spade two-suiter;

(2) of four hearts shows minors;

(3) of four of a minor is natural.

(c) A strength-showing jump in a new suit is natural, except when the jump is to four of a minor, in which case it shows that minor and the unbid major.

(d) A three-level cue-bid asks for a stopper for notrump.

(e) A four-level cue-bid shows majors over a minor, other major plus unspecified minor over a major.

Against two hearts Flannery: defensive meanings as against a weak two hearts.

Against two diamonds Flannery: double shows high cards, two hearts for takeout of hearts.

Against two diamonds used as a weak-two in either major: double shows general strength.

Against strong, artificial one club or two clubs, or a matching weak, artificial one-diamond or two-diamond response: double shows majors, notrump shows minors.

Against Namyats: double of opening (or of the next-bid relay response) for takeout of opener's real suit; delayed double for penalty.

Against transfer and unspecified preempts: double shows strength but does not create a force.

Against two-suited pre-empts: double, a bid in the other suit shown, and a delayed double all for takeout.

Against natural one-notrump openings: Cappelletti (two clubs = unspecified one-suiter; two diamonds = majors; two of a major = that major plus an unspecified minor) in both direct and reopening positions. Double, for penalty, shows at least as strong a hand in direct position, may be as light as opener's minimum in reopening position (except against a mini notrump).

Against a limited, natural two-bid (e.g., a Precision two-club opening showing long clubs and a minimum opening): as against a weak two-bid in the

same suit.

An undiscussed auction-entry double of an artificial suit bid shows that suit (and whichever interpretation makes the most sense among penalty, value-showing and lead-directional).

Actions in sandwich position:

Over an opposing opening bid and one-over-one response:

- (a) one notrump, two or more of opener's suit, or two of responder's suit is natural;
- (b) two notrump shows the unbid suits;
- (c) three of responder's suit asks for a stopper in that suit for three notrump (suggesting a solid suit elsewhere).

Over an opposing opening and one-notrump response:

- (a) double is takeout of opener's suit;
- (b) a two-level cue-bid is similar to that bid directly over the opening bid;
- (c) two notrump shows the two lowest unbid suits.

Over an opposing opening and two-over-one response:

- (a) a cue-bid in opener's suit or two notrump is takeout;
- (b) [default]
 - a cue-bid in responder's suit is natural.
- [leaf]
 - takeout.

As far as basic meanings of defensive actions are concerned, an opposing sequence of a one-bid and a strong jump-shift should be treated similarly to a one-bid and a two-over-one response. However, that approach does not apply when the jump-shift is weak.

When the opponents raise a one-bid to two, there are no special system agreements other than those listed here:

- (a) a cue-bid shows majors over a minor, unbid major plus unspecified minor over a major;
- (b) [default]
 - a jump overcall is preemptive or sacrifice-suggestive.
- [leaf]
 - value-showing.

In these situations, actions by the sandwich-position intervenor have the same fundamental meanings as if made in direct position over responder's call as an opening bid:

- (a) preemptive opening plus raise;
- (b) one-bid plus constructive jump-raise;
- (c) one-bid plus preemptive jump-raise.

A double of one of these opposing artificial raises of a one-bid via a different-suit bid is for takeout of opener's suit if the raise is marked T (with a leaf of lead-directional if it is also marked I), or lead-directional and/or sacrifice-oriented if the raise is marked L (with a leaf of takeout of opener's suit if it is also marked t):

game-forcing splinter L
 non-game-forcing splinter Lt
 range-showing game-force L
 range-showing game-invitational raise TI
 range-showing weak (i.e., single) raise T
 passed-hand fit-showing device T
 other, not individually discussed, artificial raise Lt

After an opposing weak two-bid and (forcing) two-notrump response, an action by the sandwiched intervenor is analogous to the same action taken directly over the opening bid.

After an opposing preempt and a new-suit response (jump or not), a double shows the two unbid suits. [default] { when the response is forcing, double is takeout of opener's suit. [leaf] }

After an artificial semi-positive or positive response to a strong, artificial opening, a double shows the suit doubled.

After (one notrump; strong) — pass — (two clubs; Stayman) — ?, a double shows clubs, strength unspecified.

After (one notrump; weak) — pass — (two clubs) — ?, a double shows general strength.

After an opposing two-level transfer response to one notrump (whether the opening is weak or strong):

- (a) double shows the suit doubled;

(b) a bid of the indicated suit is for takeout of that suit.

B. After Our Double of a One-Bid

A one-notrump advance of a takeout double shows 7-10 points and a stopper in opener's suit, regardless of vulnerability and suit opened.

A cue-bid advance of a takeout double shows at least game interest and creates a force until either a suit is bid twice or game is reached.

A noncompetitive raise of a noncompetitive one-level advance of a takeout double indicates four-card support and approximately a four-HCP range beginning one ace above a minimum double. When (only) the advance is competitive, the minimum strength for the raise is one ace above minimum. [default] { one queen above minimum. [leaf] } When (only) the raise is competitive, the minimum strength requirement is one queen above a minimum. When both the advance and the raise are competitive, the minimum strength requirement is the takeout-double minimum.

After a noncompetitive advance, doubler's strength-showing cue-bid does not promise another bid if advancer bids no higher than two of his original suit, but the cue-bid promises another bid if advancer bids higher than that (but below game). That cue-bid may be used with four-card support for advancer's major suit in a hand too strong for a direct single raise.

After doubler's strength-showing new-suit bid, advancer may correct without showing any high-card values, but only to the next level of his own suit or to an unbid suit that underranks it, and advancer's simple notrump bid guarantees a stopper in opener's suit.

Among advancer's actions over responder's redouble:

- (a) a new-suit jump is preemptive;
- (b) when the suit opened is a major, one notrump is for escape, and a cue-bid is constructive (forcing for one round).

Among advancer's actions over responder's new-suit bid:

- (a) a double is for penalty;
- (b) a non-jump cue-bid in opener's suit is natural;
- (c) a cue-bid in responder's suit is artificial and forcing.

Among advancer's actions over responder's raise: a double is responsive (for takeout or showing general values, depending on level).

C. After Our Suit Overcall of a One-Bid

After our simple overcall of a one-bid:

(a) [default]

A new-suit bid by an unpassed advancer is natural and nonforcing in all cases.

[leaf]

natural and forcing.

[leaf]

always natural, but forcing only after a two-level overcall.

(b1) [default]

When new-suit advances are forcing, a cue-bid guarantees a fit, a jump cue-bid is a mixed (i.e., semi-preemptive) raise that shows at least one defensive trick, a new-suit bid followed by a same-suit rebid is invitational, and a new-suit jump is a fit-jump.

[leaf]

weakish.

(b2) When new-suit advances are nonforcing, a cue-bid may be either a strong raise or a prelude to a forcing bid in a new suit, a jump cue-bid is a mixed (i.e., semi-preemptive) raise that shows at least one defensive trick, a new-suit bid followed by a same-suit rebid is weakish, and a new-suit jump is invitational.

(c1) [default]

When a new-suit advance would have been forcing over responder's pass, if that opponent should bid, the new-suit advance is nonforcing.

[leaf]

forcing.

(d) [default]

Over a bid by responder, a jump below-game new-suit advance of an overcall is a fit-jump.

[leaf]

invitational.

[leaf]

preemptive.

(e) Single raise similar to single raise of major-suitone-bid;
direct jump-raises preemptive.

A one-notrump advance of an overcall shows 8-11 points and a stopper in opener's suit, regardless of vulnerability and suit opened; two notrump is similar, 12-13 points (less after a two-level overcall).

Among advancer's actions when responder bids a new suit:

(a) a double shows length in the unbid suit plus a tolerance for overcaller's suit;

(b) a cue-bid in opener's suit is similar to one had responder passed;

(c) a cue-bid in responder's suit is a strong raise of overcaller's suit;

(d) a simple bid in the unbid suit is nonforcing (default; see c1 above).

Among advancer's actions when responder raises opener: a double is not for penalty (for takeout or showing general values, depending on level).

After (suit opening) - simple overcall - (single raise) - single raise - (same-suit rebid) - ?, a double is a game-try when (and only when) there is no new-suit bid available below three of the overcalled suit.

Among advancer's actions after responder's negative double: a redouble shows strength.

D. After Our One-Notrump Overcall

Advancer's methods after either a direct- or reopening-position one-notrump overcall are the same as responder's after a one-notrump opening.

E. After We Reopen a One-Bid

In advancing a reopening single-jump overcall, two notrump and a new-suit bid are forcing for one round. After a reopening simple suit overcall and a new-suit bid by opener, a cue-bid in opener's first suit is forcing and artificial.

F. When the Opener has Preempted

In advancing a takeout double of a weak two-bid (or the equivalent), lebensohl applies (two notrump is a marionette to three clubs [opener bids above three clubs only with significant extra strength], after which advancer can pass or bid lower than three of opener's suit to show a weak hand; direct non-jump three-level new-suit advances show moderate values). A direct natural three-notrump advance strongly suggests that strain (bidding two notrump first is more tentative about notrump). A direct unbid-major-suit inquiry cue-bid suggests that doubler, if not replying in a major, not bid notrump without a full stopper in opener's suit (bidding two notrump first suggests that doubler can return to notrump with no help in opener's suit. [default] { with only a partial stopper in opener's suit. [leaf] } A jump to three spades over a double of two hearts is invitational and shows at least five spades (bidding two notrump first makes a three-spade rebid forcing).

In advancing either a direct-position or a reopening-position two-notrump overcall (showing strong-notrump values) of either a weak two-bid or an opening treated equivalently:

(a) if the opening was in a major, all three-level suit bids are transfers to the next higher-ranking suit (three spades shows clubs), with a transfer into the suit of the opening functioning as Stayman;

(b) if the opening was in a minor, three clubs is Stayman [by default, Smolen is not used], three diamonds and three hearts are transfers to the next higher suit, three spades shows the other minor.

G. After Our Sandwich-Position Action

After a sandwich-position double of a new-suit response:

(a) advancer's cue-bid in opener's suit is natural;

(b) advancer's cue-bid in responder's suit [default:] is forcing and promises another bid below game. { followus the usual BWS defensive cue-bid rule. [leaf] }

After a sandwich-position one-notrump overcall, advancer uses the same bidding structure as responder to a one-notrump opening.

H. Delayed Auction Entry

If a player who passed over the opening bid next

(a) bids two of opener's minor to overcall a one-notrump

response or rebid, that is natural;

(b) doubles a one-notrump response, one-notrump rebid, or simple rebid in opener's suit, that is for penalty.

VII. Bridge World Standard Defense

1. Opening Leads

(A) Against suit contracts

- (1) Honor leads: ace from ace-king; top from a sequence; highest equal from an interior sequence
- (2) Spot-card leads: third highest from even length; lowest from odd length
- (3) Alarm-clock leads (to suggest an unusual situation, such as a ruff possibility): fourth highest from five or six cards; fifth highest from seven cards

(B) Against notrump contracts

- (1) Honor leads: ace requests unblock or count signal; queen requests jack; highest equal from non-ace sequences and interior sequences
- (2) Spot-card leads: fourth highest; second highest from weak suits

2. Later Leads

(A) Against suit contracts

- (1) Honor leads: king from ace-king; otherwise, highest equal from sequences and interior sequences
- (2) Spot-card leads in opening leader's suit: high from remaining doubleton; low from remaining tripleton
- (3) Spot-card leads in a new suit: third highest from even length; lowest from odd length

(B) Against notrump contracts

- (1) Honor leads: highest equal from sequences and interior sequences
- (2) Spot-card leads in opening leader's suit: original fourth highest
- (3) Spot-card leads in a new suit: attitude

3. Signaling Techniques (How to Send Messages)

- (A) Attitude signals: low discourages; high encourages
- (B) Count signals: high even; low odd [Exception: in the trump suit, upside-down count]
- (C) What a count signal shows: present count
- (D) Suit-preference signals: high prefers higher suit; low prefers lower suit

4. Signal Meanings (When to Send Which Message)

- (A) When following to partner's lead: attitude (discouraging signal suggests the ability to support the obvious shift), but
 - (1) suit-preference when a high honor is led and dummy has a singleton and can trump, and
 - (2) count at trick one when not beating dummy's card or finessing and dummy's highest is the jack or lower or the equivalent
- (B) When following to declarer's or dummy's lead: count
- (C) When playing trumps: count, but suit-preference when there is a clear issue for the defense
- (D) When discarding:
 - (1) from sequences and interior sequences with significant trick-taking ability: highest equal
 - (2) first discard in a particular suit: attitude
 - (3) second discard in a particular suit: count
 - (4) discard relating to a different suit: suit-preference
- (E) When splitting honors as second hand: king from ace-king; otherwise highest equal
- (F) Throughout the defense:
 - (1) Special situations where count takes precedence: at trick one against a suit slam, after a king-lead
 - (2) In general: unusual play shows unusual holding or requests unusual play