5/4/2015 clarification to negative double. 9/7/2015 adding Michael’s cue bid and unusual NT. 9/13/2015 second minor forcing

Every hand we aim to make slam, game (5 of a minor 4 of a major 3 No Trump), or win the bid when there is a 20-20 split. Try not to pass over 3 No Trump when going to 5 of a minor. Sometimes you must because the opponents opened 2 spades. To accomplish these goals we use some conventions.

12 points to **open** including distribution. Never open 2 or 3 (preempt) of a suit with 12 points because you are too strong.

**5 card majors** – Never open or overcall a major without 5 in that suit. Responses – pass with 5 or less points. 2 of the major shows 3 of their suit and 6-9 points. 3 of the major shows 3 in their suit with 10-12 points. Stating a new suit at the 2 level shows at least 10 points

**Convenient minor** - If you do not have a 5 card major, open your best minor. Responses – We are still looking for a 4-4 fit in a major. Tell your partner which majors you have 4 in. If you have both, bid Hearts first and later Spades unless he does (Bid up the line). If there is no 8 card major fit, consider no trump before 5 of a minor. Do we have a double stop in the suits our opponents are bidding? Do we have 26 high card points (needed for 3 NT)?

**Reverse**- If you have 2 suits with the same strength, open the higher value with 12 points and switch to the lower on your next bid. This allows you partner to choose without increasing the level. With 16 points or more, do it backwards, forcing partner to go up a level (Reverse).

**Take out double** – If your partner has not bid, force him to bid by doubling your opponents. You need 12 points and preferably weak in the suits your opponents are bidding. If there is a suit your partner could bid that you would have to change, then you need 16 points for the double. If the opponent on your left passes, then your partner must bid even with 0 points. If your partner has 10 or more points, they should consider naming their best suit one higher than if they had no points. If your opponent on the left does not pass, then your partner is off-the-hook. No bid is required. However, anything said might help your team to get the contract. [might be a 20-20 split in points] 5 spades and 6 points would make a spade bid very competitive.Always try to respond to a take-out double. Always check your vulnerability when competing with a 20-20 split (more risk is acceptable when not vulnerable).

Negative double – I only use it when I do not have enough points to make the proper bid. Pass – 1D - 1S – double. I wanted to bid a heart (the other major) over your diamond to show 4 Hearts and 6-9 points, but I cant change suits at the 2 level. What my partner does with that info is up to him. If both majors have been bid by opponents and or partner, I should not use the negative double unless I have at least 4 in both minors. Pass – 1S – 2H – double shows 6-9 points and both minors. This is also true if both minors have been bid, I should have both majors. We have at least 18 points and we need to be competitive. Again, do not over bid when being competitive, but do check the vulnerability. Down 1 doubled (if not vulnerable 2 \* -50 = -100)is better than letting them make 2 Spades (negative 2\*30 + 50).

**Weak 2’s** Two D, H, or S is a weak bid and should not be used if you have 12 points. You should have 1.5 to 2 quick tricks. This is not an opening hand, but it is also not a trashy hand. If your partner bids this, then consider passing unless you have close to opening points. 6 cards of the same suit are also required.

**Weak 3’s** These hands are trash and at least 7 of a suit. If it is not trash, consider a 1 or 2 bid in the same suit.Consider passing this bid unless you have more than opening. These bids are to make it harder for your opponents, but sometimes it makes it harder on you.

**2 Clubs** This and 2 no trump are our only big bid. This one shows 22 points and an uneven distribution. The only weak response is 2 Diamonds (points < 4). If you don’t bid 2 diamonds, keep the bidding open until a game contract is reached. If your points exceed 4, tell your partner your best suit, if diamonds, that would be 3 diamonds.

**2 No trump** (20-21) Respond with Stayman (only need 5 to bid 3 NT.

**Stayman** Used as a response over 1 or 2 or 3 no trump. When using it over 1 no trump, make sure you have 7 high card points and 4 of one or both majors. If you do, your response is 2 clubs. If the opener has 1 or 2 suits with 4 in a major, you will be notified. If no 4 card major, 2 Diamonds will be bid. Add your points to his minimal 15 and bid 2NT if the combined total is less than 26 and 3 if it is 26 or more. Opener can raise it to 3 if the 26 points are there from his point of vue. For 2 or 3 NT, the search for a 4-4 fit in the majors is the same, but you do not need any points to make the bid.

**Transfers** Used as a response over 1 or 2 or 3 no trump. 2D -> 2H 2H -> 2S 2S -> 3C 2NT means we have 24 points, bid 3 if you can. 3C transfers to 3D. The transferor is in complete control and may pass with a long suit and no points or bid a higher value of the transferred suit. If there is no way to make game, pass 1 NT.

**Jump Shift** – With 18-22 points after your partner has opened or overcalled, jump shift. A jump shift to 2 no trump is asking partner if he has any extra than he has already told you about to bid 3 and does not mean that you are rich with points.

**Blackwood** 4NT asks for aces, while 5NT asks for Kings. If the bidding goes 4NT 5C or 5D and then comes 5 of something that has never been bid, like 5S, then partner bids 5NT as our final contract. 4NT initiator wants to stop at 5NT because of a lack of aces.

**Gerber**If clubs has not been mentioned, 4 Clubs asks for aces, while 5 Clubs asks for kings. Usually when getting to slam in No Trump.