

forcing

One

Club

Usually

Strong

Abstract

There are many strengths to Precision style systems, such as limited opening bids with tighter ranges as well as the ability to be able to open lighter due to these limits. Nothing is perfect of course; there are some weaknesses. One of these weakness is the 2♣ opener. It is often true that responder is in a quandary as to whether to respond and how best to do so. The level being higher puts the constructive side at a disadvantage since responder may wish to respond on 8 counts constructively, seek a better strain with weaker hands as well as invite or game force. Despite advances in the 2♦ relay response, there are still many awkward auctions and situations.

Enter FOCUS: what if we used our 1♣ opener to show the 6 card suit club hand as well as all the strong variants? At first this may seem to put even more burden on the 1♣, which is in part true. However, when combined with a response structure which differentiates between 0-7, 8-11 and 12+ ranges I believe that better auctions might be achieved. The idea is that *in general* opener will bid the cheapest number of clubs whenever they have the weaker hand. This still may allow such bids as the 2♦ relay or bidding new suits in a non-forcing or forcing manner, but now the range of responders hand will be limited and the auction will have less ambiguity.

This also frees up the 2♣ opener to be some other hand type. One of the disadvantages with the current TaJ/TaJ++ system is one of legality - due to the nature of our 0+ ♦ it is classified as Artificial in ACBL/USBF regulations; in short, that means it cannot be opened on 9 HCP (or lower) in most situations. If the one diamond opener is 2+ then it is quasi-natural, which lowers the minimum HCP range to 8 HCP for opening bids. A minor point, but one rule which was inadvertently violated by both Tom and Jenni (holding the same cards) in the recent JLall2. The way Precision traditionally deals with this problem is with the 2♦ opener for short diamonds. That bid often has 5 clubs but cannot play in that suit at the 2 level. If we use the same style opener but use the 2♣ bid, we have a NF call which lets us escape into our likely long suit a level lower.

Summary

Opening Bids	
1 ♣	10-15 6+ ♣ OR strong (16+ unbal, 17+ bal)
1 ♦	2+
2 ♣	4=4=1=5 minus 1 card, 10-15
Other	No change

	OPENER 1 ♣	RESPONDER ?
1 ♦	Negative. Slightly modified rebid structure.	
1 ♥	12+ any (not primary ♥); 2 ♣ rebid is NF but responder may bid obviously. With enough to GF opener should NOT rebid 2 ♣.	
1 ♠	♥ or balanced 8-11. 1NT waiting, 2 ♣ is NF clubs, other NAT GF usually 6+. Opener must jump to 3 ♣ to GF in clubs.	
1NT	♠ 8-11. 2 ♣ is NF, 2 ♦ becomes the TaJ bid. 2 ♠ is GF ♦, other nat GF	
2 ♣	8-11 either minor. With weak ♣, opener may pass or bid 3 ♣. With GF should bid 2 ♦.	
2 ♦/♥	Xfer, 3-6. Accepting was already NF and is ambiguous as to hand type. 3 ♣ NF. 2NT GF with ♣.	
2 ♠	1=4=4=4 8-11. 3 ♣ NF, 2NT GF ♣.	
2NT	?	
3x	4-4-4-1 8-11 bid your singleton (not ♠)	
3 ♠	AKQxxxx any	