Tom & Jenni
System Notes
December 1, 2021

 $\spadesuit \heartsuit \diamondsuit \clubsuit$ 

TaJ Precision

# Tom & Jenni System Notes

# Tom & Jenni Carmichael

# December 1, 2021

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# Introduction

Attempting to write an up-to-date "TaJ" system without the Tom/Ari ++ extensions. This document likely will be used by Jenni and Greg.

The latest version of this file should be available at https://github.com/tomc/jenni/blob/master/tom-jenni.pdf

## 1.1 Notable Changes from Old Version

Most notable changes are:

- TaJ Relay has been updated to have the first step be all 5-4 hands. This alleviates the need for some of the awkward 1♣ resposnes and allows us to revert to playing the semipositives we prefer.
- 2 level responses to  $1 \diamondsuit$  are all changed.  $2 \clubsuit / \diamondsuit$  are now both natural and forcing with  $2 \heartsuit / \spadesuit$  being reverse Flannery responses.  $3 \clubsuit / \diamondsuit$  are both mixed.

#### 1.2 Notation

R	Simple Raise
R+1	One above a simple raise
DR	Double Raise
TR	Triple Raise
LMH	Low-Middle-High
LHB	Low-High-Both (Shortness relay after 10+ known cards.)
+1	Next Bidding Step
M	Major. If one has been shown, it is the same one.
OM	Other Major. After a major is shown.
m,om	Minor, other minor.

**JS** Jump Shift

**DJS** Double Jump Shift

**UTL** Up The Line (♣♦♡♠)

To Do List

Place holder for now.

# Part I Opening Bids

# System Summary

"TaJ Precision" Strong Club system with  $0+1\lozenge$ . No "Precision"  $2\diamondsuit$  opener. Most 10 HCP hands opened NV, allowed to pass a 10 Vul. Lighter openers possible with shape.

## 3.1 Opening Bid Summary

- **1♣** Strong, Forcing, Artificial. Typically 16+ HCP unbal or 17+ bal
- 1  $\Diamond$  0+  $\Diamond$ , 10-15. Denies 5 card major unless 6+  $\Diamond$
- **1**  $\heartsuit$  5+  $\heartsuit$ , 10-15
- **1**♠ 5+ ♠, 10-15
- **1NT** 14-16. 5 card major, 6 card minor, 5-4-2-2 common.
- **2**  $\clubsuit$  6+  $\clubsuit$ , 10-15. 5 card suit possible in  $3^{rd}$  seat for lead direction.
- **2**  $\diamond$  6+  $\diamond$ , (8)9-12. 5 card suit possible in 3<sup>rd</sup> seat for lead direction.
- 2 % → 3-9, 5 card suit common NV, 7 card suit uncommon but possible Vul
- **2NT** 22-23
- **3x** Natural, aggressive
- **3NT** Good Major preempt. (Namyats-like)
- **4x** Natural, aggressive

No special agreements for opening bids 4NT and higher.

# 3.2 General Principles

- Doubles unless otherwise defined are takeout
- All Strange Bids are Forcing (ASBAF). A general guideline to cover the unknown.

- In an auction where we've committed to a certain level and the opps interfere (including double), pass is generally more encouraging than bidding to the forced the level. A common example is a cuebid (raise) being doubled, then rebidding our trump suit.
- We ignore most doubles by the opponent, bidding retains their meaning. This does not apply to 1-level suit opening bids.
- Minimum responses to opening bids: while we pass 1 ◊ freely up to 9 HCP, we follow more standard approaches to responding to 1M: respond with an Ace, a King and a 5 count or any 6 count. Responding to 2m is a little different, passing is quite possible with 8 or so points, especially with no fit. Even 10 or 11 counts are possible over 2 ◊.

## 3.3 Relays

#### TaJ

TaJ relay as it currently exists. Used in both 1♣ auctions and 1M-[raise] auctions.

Special	In auctions where responder is unlimited, first step shows extra values.	Next
	step repeats TaJ and mirrors the limited relay.	

- +1 5-4-x-x Relay for  $2^{nd}$  suit LMH, then shape NLH. Immediately "zooming" past the  $2^{nd}$  suit LMH relay shows LMH void and 5-4-4-0
- +2 5-5-x-x or better. Secondary suit is always equal or shorter. Relay for  $2^{nd}$  suit LMH, then shortness LHB.
- +3 6-4-x-x. Primary suit can be longer, secondary always 4. Relay for  $2^{nd}$  suit LMH, then shortness LHB.
- **+4** 6+ card suit with shortness, denies 4 card side suit. Relay for short suit LMH.
- **+5** 5-3-3-2
- **+6** 6-3-2-2 or 7-2-2-2. This may also explode into further descriptive items, such as cuebids.

#### Preserve all steps

We have decided to **never** drop the 5332 step in TaJ, even when it might make sense. This keeps things clean relay wise and also allows for flexible decisions by responder in some instances.

## 4.1 Description & Response Summary

1♣ is our general forcing opening, showing roughly 17+ HCP balanced or 16+ unbalanced. The new ACBL convention charts allow for as low as 14 HCP for a forcing bid so long as it meets the rule of 24. (i.e., 10 cards in 2 suits). I don't know how much we will take advantage of the new rule, but it is worth noting.

Like all strong club systems, the strength of the system lies not within the 1 \$\infty\$ opening itself but rather allowing for all other openers to be limited. While we have some special sequences which allow for über max in TaJ sequences, most of our simple 1 level openings are going to be lighter than most people open. All of our invitational and competitive decisions revolve around that fact. This can be a factor in deciding between 1 \$\infty\$ and 1M, for example.

	OPENER	RESPONDER
	1 ♣	?
1 ◊	Negative, 0-7(8)	
100	5+ ♠, GF	
1 🌢	Semi-Bal or 5+ ♣	
1NT	5+ ♡, GF	
2 ♣	5+ ◊, GF	
2 ◊	6+ ♥, 3-6	
2♡	6+ <b>♠</b> , 3-6	
2 🌢	(12)13+ Bal	
2NT	(12)13+1=4=4=4	
3♣	(12)13 + 4 = 4 = 4 = 1 (bid sing)	
3 ◊	(12)13 + 4 = 4 = 1 = 4 (bid sing)	
3♡	(12)13 + 4 = 1 = 4 = 4 (bid sing)	
3♠	"Gambling" hand, AKQxxxx or be	tter. Typically no side cards.
3NT-4♡	8+ card transfers, bust hand. No	A or K.

#### **4.2 1♣-1**♦

 $1 \diamondsuit$  is the general negative bid. This is the only bid which does not set up a GF auction.

Meckwell style rebids except 2NT is 20-21.

	OPENER I	RESPONDER	
	1 ♣	1 ♦	
	?		
1 $\heartsuit$ 4+ $\heartsuit$ , can have a longer minor, rebid with 4=4=(4-1)		1RF. Unbalanced or semi-balanced. Systemic	
1 🖍	$4+ \spadesuit$ , can have a longer minor,	1RF. Unbalanced or semi-balanced.	
1NT	17-19 bal, can have 5CM or 6Cm. 5-4-2-2 also possible.		
2♣/2♦	Nat NF. Denies 4CM. Typically	6+ cards and unbalanced.	
2♡	Kokish Relay. Forces 2♠, Eithe	r GF with hearts or GF Bal.	
<b>2 ♦</b> / <b>3 ♣</b> / <b>3</b> ◊	GF Nat, typically 1 suited.		
2NT	20-21 bal		
3♡ & up	Undefined, although game bids	are simply to play.	

OPENER	RESPONDER
1 <b>♦</b> 1 ♡	1 ♦ ?

1 ♠ 4+ ♠, any strength. Typically fewer than 4 ♡. Most rebids are natural NF, minor suits can be canapé. 2NT is an artificial big canapé (6+ m) 1RF. Jumps encouraging but NF with jump shifts being 5-5.

**1NT** 0-5, no 4CM. Rebids as per over  $1 \spadesuit$ , except  $2 \spadesuit$  is a natural reverse and 1RF.

- 2. 0-2  $\heartsuit$ , 5+ to 7. 2  $\diamondsuit$  is waiting and scrambling, 2  $\heartsuit$  is natural and NF. Other GF. 2NT is a non-canapé GF, 3m is canapé.
- **2**  $\Diamond$  Exactly 3  $\heartsuit$  , 5+ to 7. 2  $\heartsuit$  NF, 3  $\heartsuit$  Inv. 2NT GF asking for shortness NLMH. Other 1RF, usually canapé.
- 2  $\heartsuit$  4+  $\heartsuit$ , minimum. New suits are game tries, 2NT asks shortness NLMH.

**2NT** Best raise, nearly GF. 5+ ♥ common, 3♣ asks for shortness NLMH.

**JS** 6+ nat, 5+-7

**DJS** Splinter with exactly 4♡

OPENER	RESPONDER	
1 ♣	1 ♦	
1 ♠	?	
As per over $1 \circ$ , except $2 \circ$ shows $5+ \circ$ , $5+-7$ .		

OPENER 1 ♣ 1NT	RESPONDER 1 \( \dots\) ?
17-19, systems on as per 1NT opening.	

OPENER F 1 ♣ 1 2m ?	RESPONDER
---------------------------	-----------

Natural, NF, in principle it denies 4CM. (Very long minors might surpress the major.) No special follow ups. Jump Shift is a splinter.

	OPENER	RESPONDER
	1♣	1 ♦
	2♡	2 ♠
	?	
	$2  \circ$ is Kokish, forces $2  \spadesuit$ . Either $\circ$ or bal, GF. No agreements about bids other than $2  \spadesuit$ by responder.	
2NT	GF Balanced. Systems on as j	per 2NT opener.
3♣	$\heartsuit$ & minor, $3 \diamondsuit$ for LH.	
3 ◊	One suited $\heartsuit$	
3♡	♡ & ♠	

OPENER RESPONDER 1♣ 1 ◊

?

20-21, as per 2NT opener

2NT

Other ? T: Self Spl?

#### Other Rebids

Other jumps are natural GF. No special agreements other than ... 2 - 2NT is a spade raise, with 3 - 2NT is a spade raise, with 3 - 2NT is a spade raise, and 3 - 2NT is a spade raise, with 3 - 2NT is a spade raise, which 3 - 2NT is a spade raise, whis a spade raise, which 3 - 2NT is a spade raise, which 3 - 2NT

## **4.3 1♣-1**♡

5+  $\spadesuit$ , GF. 1  $\spadesuit$  is TaJ with an extra values step by UPH, other bids are natural with no relays.

	OPENER 1 ♣ ?	RESPONDER 1♡	
1 \land	TaJ; typically 3+ ♠ or 2 ♠ with extras		
1NT	17–19 bal or semi-bal with fewer than 3 ♠		
2x	Natural, no relays		
Other	Undefined		

## **4.4 1 ♣ -1 ♠**

Clubs or balanced, can be semi-balanced. Notably 4x1 hands without extras start with  $1 \spadesuit$ .

Generally a 5-3-3-2 hand with a minor starts with  $1 \spadesuit$  and then bids  $2 \spadesuit$  over the relay, but you are allowed to use judgement and show your suit.

	OPENER RES 1 ♣ 1 ♠ ?	PONDER
1NT	General relay, see below	
Other	Naturally, typically 6+. With only 5 card	suits we usually start with 1NT

		OPENER	RESPONDER
		1♣	1 ♠
		1NT	?
2 ♣	5+ ♣, 2 ♦ is TaJ,	other natural	
2 ◊	Balanced 8-11(1	2) with 4 ♥s	
2♡	Balanced 8-11(12) with 4 $\spadesuit$ s and not 4 $\heartsuit$ s		
2 🌲	Balanced 8-11(12) with no 4 card major		
2NT	8-11(12) 1=4=4=4		
3♣	8-11(12) 4=4=4=1		
3 ◊	8-11(12) 4=4=1=4		
3♡	8-11(12) 4=1=4=4		

Over the balanced hands we have options for control relays with or without a fit.

	OPENER	RESPONDER
	1 ♣	1 ♠
	1NT	2 ◊ / ♡ / ♠
	?	
2♡	(Over 2 $\Diamond$ ) Agrees hearts and ask	s for controls counting down, 43210
2 🏟	Shows spades. If responder has s	shown spades then control countdown, 43210.
	If responder has bid $2 \diamondsuit$ , then $2N$	T agrees spades then 3♣ asks controls 43210.
	3♣ starts the non-fit 43210 coun	tdown.
2NT	No fits, asks 43210	
3♣/◊	Natural	
3♡/♠	Non-slammish, often choice of ga	umes
3NT	NF	

#### 4.5 1♣-1NT

5+  $\heartsuit$ , GF. 2♣ TaJ, 2 $\heartsuit$  is clubs. Other bids are natural.

#### 4.6 1 -2 -

5+  $\Diamond$ , GF. 2  $\Diamond$  TaJ. Other bids are natural.

#### 4.7 Other

#### **2** ♦/♥ **Semi-Positive Transfers**

 $2 \lozenge$  and  $2 \heartsuit$  show 6+ cards in the above major with limited values, about 3-6 HCP. Not enough to game force but enough length/distribution that game might be in the picture.

Accepting the xfer by opener is NF, as is 2NT. Other bids are forcing 1 round.

#### 2 ♠ Big Balanced

 $2 \spadesuit$  shows (12)13+ balanced or 5+ controls. Only 4-3-3-3 or 4-4-3-2 are allowed; with 5 cards suits we show that first then use the extra values step. With 4-4-4-1 hands we have direct bids to show that.

2NT is the normal waiting response, with various follows ups. Anything else is natural and without relay. It is generally assumed that if Opener does not bid 2NT and Responder bids a new suit that it is a cuebid.

	OPENER 1 ♣ 2NT	RESPONDER 2 ♠ ?
3 ♣	Stayman, with extra-extras, 16	5+. Essentially a slam force.

	OPENER 1 ♣ 2NT	RESPONDER 2♠ ?	continued
3♦/♡	Transfers to 4 card majors with 13-15		
3♠	No major, primary slam interest		
3NT	No major, NF. A minimum 2♠ response		

T: PH currently undefined, could be used to show 1=4=4=4 instead of 2NT.

#### 3 suiters

2NT thru  $3\heartsuit$  are 3 suited hands with shortness in the bid suit. 2NT shows short spades. Over these 4x1 bids, every suit can be agreed below game. 3NT to play. No special follow ups to agreeing a suit at this time.

T: Ari and I play CIRKLE here, but this system doesn't use that. Perhaps optional RKC would be a good meaning for the first step? That is, +1 asks, +1 to that says I hate my hand and bids above are RKC responses. If you hate, can bid +1 to ask anyway. This is essentially what we do in  $2NT-3 \spadesuit$  type auctions.

#### **3**♠

"Gambling" type hand, AKQ 7th or better with nothing much on the side. Intended to be a picture bid. No special responses at this time.

**4** ♣ asks for shortness, NLMH. The assumption is that opener knows the suit.

#### 8 card busts

3NT thru  $4\,\%$  are all 1 under transfers to very long (8+) suits with very weak (no A or K) hands. No special responses.

 $1 \diamondsuit$  is our catch-all opening bid for hands with no 5-card major and fewer than 6 clubs. The range is (9)10-15 HCP if unbalanced or 10-13 HCP if balanced.  $1 \diamondsuit$  does not promise any diamonds at all; 4=4=0=5 hands are routinely opened  $1 \diamondsuit$ . The following hand types are included in the  $1 \diamondsuit$  opener.

- 10-13 HCP balanced
- 12-15 HCP, 6+ ◊
- (9)10-15 HCP unbalanced, no 5-card major or 6-card minor

Like most of our system, we try to invite and get out as low as possible. The structure reflects this concept. We may lose some granularity in some auctions to support this style, but such is life.

	OPENER	RESPONDER
	1 ◊	?
P	0-9. It is routine to pass wi	th up to 9 HCP and no 4-card major.
1♡	4+ ♡, F1	
1 \land	4+ ♠, F1	
1NT (UPH)	10-13 HCP, INV. No 4 card	major
1NT (PH)	8-9 HCP, No 4 card major	
2 ♣	10+ HCP, 5+ ♣, F1	
2 ♦	10+ HCP, 5+ ◊, F1	
2♡	Reverse Flannery, Non-invitational. $5+ \spadesuit$ , $4+ \heartsuit$ , typically 0-9 HCP	
2 🏟	Reverse Flannery, INV. 5+ $\spadesuit$ , 4+ $\heartsuit$ , about 10-13 HCP	
2NT	Natural, GF. No 4-card major. 14-16 HCP or 19+	
3*	Natural, 6+ ♣, Mixed (7-9)	. No suit quality requirements.
3 ◊	Natural, $6+ \lozenge$ , Mixed (7-9). No suit quality requirements.	
3♡/♠	"Scambled Splinter". Shortness in bid suit, at least 5-4 either way in the minors, GF.	
3NT	17-18 HCP Balanced	
4♣/◊	South African Texas / Namy	yats

## **5.1** 1 ◊ **-1 M**

1 ♦-1M is a standard response, showing 4+ cards in the suit bid and forcing 1 round. On very rare occasions we have been known to respond in a 3-card suit with a hand like  $J \otimes KTx \otimes KJxx + 98xxx$ . This sort of response is outside expectation and if responder chooses to do so they do at their own risk. Systemically this is a pass.

After  $1 \lozenge -1 \heartsuit$  opener is expected to bid  $1 \spadesuit$  any time they have 4 spades. Again, opener may choose to bid 1NT instead, but this is also non-systemic.

		OPENER	RESPONDER
		1 ♦	1♡
		?	
1 🌢	-	never expected to bely would be seen o	by pass a 4-card spade suit. Judgment allowed of utside $4=3=3=3$ .
1NT	10-13 BAL. 3-1-	x-x is common as w	vell.
2 ♣	5+4+ in the mi	nors, either could l	oe longer.
2 ◊	6+ ♦, 12-15 HC	CP	
2♡	Simple raise, us anced.	ually (always?) 4 🖔	2. 10-13 HCP if balanced or 10-14 HCP if unbal-
2 🌢	Natural, shapely	y. 5-6 or better 13-	15, NF.
2NT	6+ ◊ 3 ♡. Mig	ht rarely be 6-4 wit	th the "standard" 4 \( \rightarrow\) bid
3♣	5+ ⋄ 5+ <b>♣</b> (13)	14-15 HCP, NF	
3 ◊	6+ ⋄, good han strong hand/sui		already more than a minimum, so this is a very
3♡	4  %, unbalanced	d, typically (13)14-2	15 HCP
3♠	Spl		

Opener's rebids after  $1 \lozenge -1 \spadesuit$  are similar:

4♣/◊

Spl

		OPENER	RESPONDER
		1 ♦	1 •
		?	
1NT	10-13 BAL. Sir	ngleton spade is com	nmon as well.
2 ♣	Typically 5+ 4	+ in the minors, altl	nough 1=4=x=x is possible with x ranging from
	3 to 5.		
2 ◊	6+ ⋄, 12-15 H	ICP	
2♡	card raise to a	0 01 0	better, 13-15 NF. T: Many pairs play this as a 3 ape and be explicit. Meckwell have it overloaded nands.
2 🏟	Simple raise, u	ısually 4 ♠. 10-13 H	CP if balanced or 10-14 HCP if unbalanced.
2NT	6+ ◊ 3 ♠. Mig	ght rarely be 6-4 wi	th the "standard" $4 \diamond $ bid

	OPENER 1 ♦ ?	RESPONDER 1 ♠	continued
3♣	5+ ♦ 5+ ♣ 14-15 HCP		
3 ◊	$6+ \diamondsuit$ , good hand. Note tha strong hand/suit.	t 2 ♦ is already more t	han a minimum, so this is a very
3♡	Spl		
3♠	4 ♠, unbalanced, typically (	13)14-15 HCP	
4♣/◊	Spl		
4♡	T: ?		

#### **5.2** 1 ◊ **-1NT**

1NT is game invitational, 10-13. This is an attribute of TaJ that is quite dissimilar from most strong club systems.

Generally speaking most auctions will end up either in 1NT or 3NT, but there options to handle other hand types.

		OPENER	RESPONDER
		1 ♦	1NT
		?	
2 ♣	To play, does not	t imply $\Diamond$	
2 ◊	To play, presuma	ably only $5 \diamondsuit$ (no 2	♦ opener)
2♡	Art GF, unbaland including single	0 1	with 5-4-3-1 or 5-4-4-0. Also includes any 4-4-4-1,
2♠	Art GF, 5+ $\diamond$ ur	nbalanced or semi-l	oal. If 6+ ♦ then no other 4 card suit.
2NT	Re-invite. Typica	ally 12-13 bal.	
3♣	5-5 minors, GF.		
3 ◊	6-4 minors, GF.		
3♡	6-4 natural, GF.		
3♠	6-4 natural, GF.		
3NT	To play.		

Over  $2 \heartsuit$ ,  $2 \spadesuit$  asks. 2NT shows any 4x1 (3 \ asks UTL) otherwise LMH shortness with 5 \ \ asks.

Over 2 •, 2NT asks LMHN shortness. None is rare, so boosted to be the final step.

## **5.3** 1 ◊ **-2m**

A 2 4/2 response are both similar, natural and forcing 1 round, typically 10+. (Inv+)

We play a modified Meckwell structure, using artificial rebids. Other than  $2\,\%$ , all bids promise a non-minimum.

		OPENER	RESPONDER
		1 ♦	2m
		?	
2♡		•	ckwell) Over this 2 \( \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \
2♠	GF, Unspecifie	d splinter raise of re	sponder's minor. 2NT asks LMH.
2NT	Typically 12-1	3 bal. 3m rebid non-	forcing.
om,R	Natural, non-m	nin.	

Generally speaking, rebidding the minor by responder is NF. The exception is over the  $2 \heartsuit$  minimum bid, where  $2 \spadesuit$  starts all weak sequences and 3 of a minor directly (new or old) is forcing.

## **5.4 1 ○ -2** ♥

5+ spades, 4+ hearts, less than invitational.

Generally either passed or corrected to  $2 \spadesuit$ . Extreme hands might invite with 3M. No discussion about other bids, 3m is presumably non-forcing.

#### **5.5** 1 ◊ **-2** ♦

5+ spades, 4+ hearts, invitational. 2NT is "Pref-Lebensohl", responder bids the minor they prefer. Direct 3 level bids are forcing (minor) or forward going but NF (major).

#### **5.6** 1 ◊ **-2NT**

GF balanced. No special methods at this time. 13+ to 16 or 19+. 4♣ is Gerber (1430).

#### 5.7 1 **○** -3m

Mixed strength, 6+ cards.

#### **5.8** 1 ◊ **-3 M**

Splinter with both minors, at least x-x-5-4, GF.

#### 5.9 1 **○** -3NT

17-18 balanced. No special methods. 4♣ is Gerber (1430).

# **5.10** Other

4M natural and to play.

4m is South African Texas / Namyats: 4 - 0, 4 - 0.

# 1 Major

#### 6.1 Intro

Few changes here from old version. General approach is natural with semi-forcing NT and using  $2 \clubsuit$  and  $2 \diamondsuit$  as artificial bids;  $2 \clubsuit$  is a GF minor hand,  $2 \diamondsuit$  is TaJ.

## 6.2 Response Summary (UPH)

		OPENER	RESPONDER
		1 ♡/♠	?
1 🛧	Natural, F1		
1NT	Semi-forcing, do	oes not include limit	traises. Commonly the only invite is balanced.
2 ♣	GF with either o	or both minors, artif	icial
2 ◊	TaJ, Limit + in C	)pener's major	
R	Simple Raise		
JS	Jump shifts (incl	luding 1♡-2♠) are 1	natural and game invitational
DR	Mixed		
DJS	Void Splinter; re	egular splinters star	t with TaJ
2NT	Natural GF		
3NT	17-18 Natural		

## **6.3 2** ♣ **Minor GF**

To make room to use  $2 \diamondsuit$  as TaJ, we use  $2 \clubsuit$  as our GF for either minor. The balanced GFs go through 2NT, so this is only for the "real" minor hands. Responses are fairly natural with the exception of  $2 \diamondsuit$ , which is waiting denying the other hand types.

It is expected that Responder will not have 3 card support for Opener's major.

		PENER ♡/♠	RESPONDER 2♣
2 ◊	Waiting, typically	denies the other li	isted hand types
2M	6+ in the Major		
20M	4 in the other Maj	or	
2NT	Rarely used, but n	atural	
3x	5-5		
3M	Strong suit, settin	g trumps	

Responder has some structured rebids as well. Many of these only apply over the  $2\,\lozenge\,$  waiting bid.

	OPENERRESPONDER $1 \heartsuit / \spadesuit$ $2 \clubsuit$ $2 \diamondsuit$ ?		
2M	Honor doubleto	on	
<b>20M</b>	Natural, long minor still ambiguous		
2NT	Usually 5-4 in the minors		
3m	6+		
3M	Shortness, 5-5 i	in the minors (Only	over 2 $\Diamond$ )

## 6.4 Passed Hand

Things revert to natural by a PH. A raise to 2M is our strongest bid, generally constructive. With a weaker hand we just pass the 1 bid.

Jump shifts are fit.

# 1NT

Our 1NT opening shows 14-16 HCP. 5422 hands and 5332 hands with a 5-card major are routinely opened 1NT. 5422 hands with a 5-card major and balanced hands with a 6-card minor can be opened 1NT as well.

	OPENER	RESPONDER
	1NT	?
2 ♣	Stayman. Promises at least one 4	-card major. Does not promise any values.
2 ◊	5+ ♡	
2♡	5+ ♠	
2 🏚	Range ask. Includes hands with it	nterest in ♣.
2NT	Puppet stayman.	
3♣	6+ ◊	
3 ◊	5+ ◊, 5+ ♣, GF	
3♡/♠	3=1=x=x/1=3=x=x, 5-4 minors,	GF.
3NT	To play	
4♣	Gerber (1430)	
4 ◊	Transfer to $\heartsuit$	
4♡	Transfer to ♠	
<b>4</b> •	Both minors, balanced, Quant or	better

# 7.1 Stayman Sequences

	OPENER 1NT ?	RESPONDER 2♣
2 ◊	No 4-card major	
2♡	4+ ♥, could have $4$ ♠	
2♠	$4+$ ♠, could have $4$ $\heartsuit$ but default is to bid $2$ $\heartsuit$ with $4$ - $4$	

OPENER	RESPONDER
1NT	2♣
2 ♦	?

- 2 Weak hand with both majors. Pass or correct.
- **2**♠ Exactly 5 ♠, invitational. All invites with only 5 ♠s go through this sequence
- **2NT** Invitational. Promises at least one 4-card major.
- **3♣/**♦ 5+ m, GF
- **3**♥/♠ Smolen. 4M, 5+ OM, GF
- **4♣** Gerber(1430)
- **4**♦ Delayed Texas,  $4 \spadesuit$ ,  $6+ \heartsuit$
- **4**♥ Delayed Texas,  $6+ \spadesuit$ , 4 ♥

OPENER       RESPONDER         1NT       2 ♣         2 ⋄       2 ♠         ?
--

- **Pass** Minimum, 2 or 3 ♠. With exactly 2, 2NT is an option as well.
- **2NT** Minimum, 2 ♠. 3m rebids by responder are nat, inv, NF.
- **3♣** Maximum with 2♠, GF. Responder may show 2 suited hands LMH via the next 3 steps. 3NT by responder is NF, typical response.
- Maximum with  $3 \spadesuit$ . Responder can bid 3NT to offer choice preferring NT,  $3 \spadesuit$  to show a spade preference, or  $4 \spadesuit$  to sign off. Other bids are unusual, but possible with 2 suited hands.
- **3**♠ Minimum, 3 ♠. Better than pass, not enough to commit to game.
- **3NT** Probably a 2-card maximum that forgot to bid 3♣.

OPENER RESPONDER 1NT 2♣ 2M ?
------------------------------

- **2**  $\spadesuit$  (Over 2 $\heartsuit$ ). 5  $\spadesuit$ , inv. Same follow ups as over above.
- **2NT** Invitiational. Promises 4 cards in OM.
- 3♣ 5+ either minor, GF, implies 4 cards in OM. 3♦ asks for the minor, LH. Other bids are natural, including bidding the other major to confirm a fit there.
- 3 Artificial, confirms a fit in M, typically no shortness. Opener can bid 3M to suggest playing in M, 3NT to suggest playing there, or 4M to insist on M, denying slam interest. Other suit bids are cuebids with hands well suited for slam.
- **3M** Invitational
- **30M** Unspecified splinter. Next step asks, LMH.
- **3NT** To play

	OPENER 1NT 2M	RESPONDER 2♣ ?	continued
4 &	Delayed Texas; 4 M, 6 OM. Oper LHLH (sing, void)	ner's 40M rebid is an	offer to play. $4 \diamond$ asks shortness
4 ◊	RKC for M		
4NT	Quantitative		
5NT	Forcing, choice of slams.		

## 7.2 Jacoby Sequences

#### **1NT-2** ◊

1NT-2 $\diamondsuit$  shows 5+ $\heartsuit$ , any strength. The only defined super-accept over this bid is 3 $\heartsuit$ , which shows a maximum with 4+ $\heartsuit$ .

Over  $1NT-2 \lozenge -2 \heartsuit$  we play "transfers over transfers", starting at 2NT. Most invitational sequences start with  $2 \spadesuit$ :

$2 \circ $ ?			
--------------	--	--	--

- **2**  $\spadesuit$  Artificial, shows an invitational hand with exactly 5  $\heartsuit$  OR 5+  $\heartsuit$ , 5+  $\spadesuit$  invitational or better.
- **2NT** 5+ ♥, 4+ ♣, GF
- $3 \clubsuit 5 + \heartsuit, 4 + \diamondsuit, GF$
- **3** $\Diamond$  Inv+, "Transfer" to  $\heartsuit$  showing good hearts. 6+  $\heartsuit$  with 2 of top 3 honors
- **3** $\heartsuit$  Inv, 6+  $\heartsuit$ . Denies 2 of top 3 heart honors.
- **3**♠ Unspecified splinter slam try. 3NT relays for LMH. Neither promises nor denies 2 of top 3 heart honors.
- **3NT** Choice of games.
- **4.** Serious slam try,  $6+ \circ$ , no shortness. Denies 2 of top 3 heart honors.
- **4**  $\Diamond$  RKC for  $\heartsuit$ .
- **4**♥ Mild slam try. Opener is expected to pass, but allowed to bid on with a good fitting hand.
- **4NT** Quantitative with exactly  $5 \circ$ .
- **5NT** Choice of slams,  $5 \, \heartsuit$

OPENER RESPONDER

1NT  $2 \diamondsuit$   $2 \heartsuit$   $2 \spadesuit$ ?

Opener's responses over 2 ♠ are similar in nature to 1NT-2 ♣-2X-2 ♠

**2NT** Minimum, 2 ♡

**3♣** Maximum, 2 ♡

**3**  $\Diamond$  Maximum, 3+  $\heartsuit$ 

3♥ Minimum, 3+♥

**3NT** Does not exist. Probably a 2-card maximum that forgot to bid 3♣.

OPEN 1NT 2♡	IER RESPONDER 2 ♦ 2 ♠	
2NT	?	

Over 2NT, responder can show a 5-card minor or 5-5 majors with various strengths.

**3**♣ 5+  $\heartsuit$ , 5+  $\clubsuit$ , invitational

**3**  $\Diamond$  5+  $\heartsuit$ , 5+  $\Diamond$ , invitational

**3** $\heartsuit$  5+  $\heartsuit$ , 5+  $\spadesuit$ , invitational

**3** ♠ 5+  $\heartsuit$ , 5+ ♠, GF without slam interest

**3NT**  $5+ \heartsuit, 5+ \spadesuit$ , Mild slam interest

**4**♣/ $\diamondsuit$  Shortness, serious slam interest (5+  $\heartsuit$ , 5+  $\spadesuit$ )

	OPENER 1NT 2♡	RESPONDER 2 ♦ 2 ♠	
	3♣	?	
3 ◊ / ♡ / ♠	5+ ♥, 5+ second-suit, LMH		
3NT	To play		
4♣/◊	Shortness, serious slam interest $(5+ \heartsuit, 5+ \spadesuit)$		

	OPENER 1NT 2♡ 3◊	RESPONDER 2 ♦ 2 ♠ ?
3♡	COG preferring ♡	
3♠	5+ ♡, 5+ ♠, Mild slam interest	

	OI 1N 2 \ 3 \	2	RESPONDER 2 ♦ 2 ♠ ?	continued
3NT	COG preferring N	Γ		
4♣/◊	Shortness, serious	slam interest (S	5+ ♡, 5+ ♠)	
4♡	To play			

#### **1NT-2** ♡

1NT-2  $\heartsuit$  shows 5+  $\spadesuit$ , any strength with caveats. Note that with exactly 5 spades and exactly invitational values we start with Stayman, not a transfer, and INV+ hands with 5-5 in the majors always start with 2  $\diamondsuit$ .

As per hearts, we generally do not super accept. The only defined super accept is  $3 \spadesuit$ , showing a maximum with  $4+ \spadesuit$ .

OPENER	RESPONDER
1NT	2♥
2♠	?

Over  $1NT-2 \heartsuit -2 \spadesuit$  we play transfers starting at 2NT

**2NT** 5+ ♠, 4+ ♣, GF

 $3 \clubsuit 5 + \spadesuit, 4 + \diamondsuit, GF$ 

- **3**♦ Inv+, "Transfer" to ♠ showing good spades. 6+ ♠ with 2 of top 3 honors
- **3**♥ Unspecified splinter slam try. 3♠ relays for LMH. Neither promises nor denies 2 of top 3 spade honors
- 3♠ Inv, 6+♠. Denies 2 of top 3 spade honors.
- **4♣** Serious Slam try, 6+ ♠, no shortness. Denies 2 of top 3 spade honors.
- **4**♦ RKC for  $\spadesuit$ .
- **4** ♠ Mild slam try. Opener is expected to pass but is allowed to bid with a good fitting hand.
- **4NT** Quantitative with exactly  $5 \spadesuit$ .

#### **Xfer over Xfer continuations**

After a GF secondary xfer, we play this structure:

	OPENER 1NT 2♡/♠	RESPONDER 2 ♦ /♥ 2NT/3♣
+1	Agreeing the minor (4+). Respond	der can bid 3NT/5m to play or bid LH shortness s do <i>not</i> imply slam interest, it may simply be
	Bids above the high step that are	forcing are cuebids, probably 5-4-2-2.
+2	Agreeing the major (3+). Responder can bid 3NT/4M to play or bid LH shortness (3NT not a step) with slam interest.	
	Bids above the high step that are	forcing are cuebids, probably 5-4-2-2.
	T: Note that we don't need to show shortness w/o slam interest with a major fit, can just sign off in 4M.	
+3	Shows 5+ cards in the other majo	r, looking for a fit.
Other	undefined	

## **7.3 2** ♠ **Size Ask**

 $1NT-2 \spadesuit$  is first and foremost a size ask, checking if opener has a minimum or a maximum. It also includes hands that would normally transfer to  $\clubsuit$ .

Opener must bid either 2NT with a minimum or 3♣ with a maximum. With an in-between hand, opener can use their club holding as a tie-breaker of sorts.

Note that you are allowed to bid  $2 \spadesuit$  on a variety of hands, including quantitative slam tries as well as game tries.

		OPENER	RESPONDER
		1NT	2 ♠
		2NT/3♣	?
3♣	To play 3♣		
3 ◊	6+ ♣, either ba		ness. If balanced, should have some slam interest.
3♡	6+ ♣, shortness	s in ♡	
3♠	6+ ♣, shortness	s in 🌢	
3NT	To play. Over 21	NT, it is implied tha	at responder had slam interest.
4 &	Gerber 1430		
4 ◊	RKC for $\clubsuit$ .		

# 7.4 2NT Puppet Stayman

1NT-2NT is GF Puppet Stayman, asking for a 5-card major. We primarily use this bid when we don't have slam interest and want to assess what our best game option is.

		OPENER 1NT ?	RESPONDER 2NT
3 *	No 5 card major	: Says nothing abou	t 4 card majors.
3 ◊	5 ♡		
3♡	5 <b>A</b>		
3♠	4=5=2=2		
3NT	5=4=2=2		

If opener shows a 5 card suit, accepting the transfer on the 3-level shows slam interest.

To play game, Responder typically will raise the transfer to play from opener's side rather than jump to 4M to play from their side. Example:

	OPENER 1NT 3 ◊ <sup>1</sup> 4 ♡	RESPONDER 2NT $4 \diamondsuit^2$ ?	
1. 5 ♡s			
2. →4♡, si	gn off		
Pass	Expected action		
Other	Undefined		

Over a  $3 \spadesuit / 3$ NT response, 3NT is to play and  $4 \lozenge / \lozenge$  is a transfer.



Our  $2 \clubsuit$  opener shows about 10–15 HCP with  $6+ \clubsuit$ . Good 9 HCPs with some extra shape are acceptable as well, especially in 3rd seat. Four-card or even five-card majors are possible as well. In 3rd seat, opening a good five-card club suit is allowed as well for lead direction/preemptive purposes.

	OPENER RES	SPONDER
	2♣ ?	
2 ♦	Artificial asking bid, promising IN	V+
2♡/2♠	NF constructive, usually about 7-	11 HCP, 5+ card suit
2NT	Puppet to 3♣, showing either a weak raise in ♣ (most common) or a GF 5+5+ hand without ♣.	
3♣	Constructive up to a mild invite, usually around 8-11	
3 ◊ /3 ♡ /3 ♠	Nat, 6+ card suit, GF.	
3NT	To play.	
<b>4</b> ♣	Preemptive	
4 ♦	RKC ♣ T: CIRKLE?	
4 ♡ / 4 ♠	To play.	

	OPENER 2♣ ?	RESPONDER 2 ♦
2♡	4 cards in either major. 2 ♠ asks,	♡ min/♠ min/♡ max/♠ max.
2 🏟	Maximum, no 4-card major, unba	lanced or unsuitable for declaring NT.
2NT	Maximum, interest in declaring N	VT. Bal or 6-3-3-1 with stiff K.
3♣	Minimum, no 4-card major.	
3 ◊	Maximum, 4+ ♦	
Other	Undefined.	

♣-2♦-2NT asks for shortness, NLMH.

Our  $2 \diamondsuit$  opener is somewhat similar to our  $2 \clubsuit$  opener, but weaker. The nominal range for  $2 \diamondsuit$  is 9-12, but some 12s are going to be too good and some 8s will likely be upgraded. The structure here is similar in nature to  $2 \clubsuit$ . Most NF bids have been bumped 1 HCP.

	OPENER RESPONDER	
	2 ♦ ?	
2♡	Artificial asking bid, promising INV+	
2 🏟	NF constructive, usually about 8-12 HCP, 5+ ♠	
2NT	NF constructive in $\clubsuit$ or $\heartsuit$ . $3\clubsuit$ is pass or correct, $3\diamondsuit$ suggests no interest in playing in $\clubsuit$ ; says nothing about $\heartsuit$ .	
3*	Puppet to $3  \lozenge$ , showing either a weak raise in $ \lozenge $ (most common) or a GF 5+5+ hand without $ \lozenge $ .	
3 ◊	Constructive up to a mild invite, usually around 9-12	
3♡/3♠/4♣	Nat, 6+ card suit, GF.	
3NT	To play.	
4♣	RKC <i>♦T: CIRKLE?</i>	
4 ♦	Preemptive	
4♡/4♠	To play.	

		OPENER 2 ♦ ?	RESPONDER 2♡
2 🏚	4 cards in either	major. 2NT asks, 🗸	min/♠ min/♡ max/♠ max.
2NT	Maximum, interest in declaring NT. Bal or 6-3-3-1 with stiff K.		
3♣	Maximum, no 4-o	card major, unbalan	ced or unsuitable for declaring NT.
3 ◊	Minimum, no 4-card major.		
	Higher bids are u	undefined.	

 $2 \lozenge - 2 \heartsuit - 3 \clubsuit - 3 \heartsuit$  asks for shortness, NLMH. *T: Awkward but symmetrical*.

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## 2NT and then?

Had a funny sequence come up in the JLall.  $2 \lozenge -2NT-3 -4 \lozenge$ . Ari was 2=1=3=7 and was trying to invite based on the club tolerance. Tom wasn't sure what was going on and with 1=3=6=3 bid  $4 \heartsuit$  to cater to both suit possibilities. Ari corrected to  $5 \diamondsuit$  (probably should have been  $5 \clubsuit$  instead) and we made it with a bit of luck.

# 2 Major

Weak 2s, fairly undisciplined. Non-vul 5 card suits are common, vul they are unexpected. (7 card suit possible.) The range is 3-9 HCP. Note that many 9s with 6 card suits are opened on the 1 level.

New suits are natural and forcing. 2NT is a modified Ogust system I've named "5/7 Ogust".

		OPENER 2M ?	RESPONDER 2NT
3 *	An odd number	of trumps, 5 NV or 7	7 Vul. 3♦ asks strength as per below.
3 ◊	6, bad opener		
3♡	6, medium open	er	
3♠	6, good opener		
3NT	6, 4 in other maj	or. Good enough to	commit to game.

## Preempt RKC:

		OPENER 2M ?	RESPONDER 4♣
<b>4</b> ♦	0 KC		
4♡	1 KC, no trump Q		
<b>4</b> •	1 KC, trump Q		
4NT	2 KC, no trump Q		
5♣	2 with Q in theory, unlikely response		

# 2NT

22-23 balanced or whatever passes for it these days.

#### Responses:

		OPENER	RESPONDER
		2NT	?
3♣	Extended Staym	ian	
3 ◊	Xfer		
3♡	Xfer		
3♠	Puppet to 3NT f	or minor suit hands.	
3NT	To play		
4 &	1430 Gerber		
<b>4</b> $\Diamond$	Xfer		
4♡	Xfer		
<b>4</b> •	Both minors bal	anced (typically 4-4)	, quant or better.
4NT	Quant. New suit	ts are 5+ card suits.	
5NT	Forcing, invites	7. New suits are 5+	card suits.

# 11.1 Stayman Agreements

T: Some of this may be new to you, I don't recall if I've talked about this at all. See  $3 \spadesuit$  and 3NT responses as well as  $3 \heartsuit$  extensions.

		OPENER 2NT ?	RESPONDER 3♣
3 ◊	U		is Smolen. 4m is natural and forcing. There are rectly, go through Smolen.
3♡	only 4, (over w	hich a new suit is a Responder doesn't	and/or is a $\heartsuit$ slam try. Opener bids 3NT with cuebid slam try for $\heartsuit$ ) or bids $4 \heartsuit$ or cuebids a promise a slam try, they can simply be trying to

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	OPENER 2NT ?	RESPONDER 3♣	continued
3♠	$4 \spadesuit$ . $4 \heartsuit$ agrees ♠ with slam interest, $4 \clubsuit / \diamondsuit$ are natural (not cuebids).		
3NT	5 $\spadesuit$ . $4 \heartsuit \rightarrow 4 \spadesuit$ (with or without slam interest), $4 \clubsuit / \diamondsuit$ are natural.		

# 11.2 Transfer Agreements

 $3 \heartsuit$  then  $4 \heartsuit$  shows 5-5 majors without slam interest.  $3 \diamondsuit$  then  $3 \spadesuit$  shows 5-5 majors with slam interest.

4m rebids are natural and forcing.

Jacoby then 4NT: Quant Texas than 4NT: RKC (1430) Texas than new suit: Exclusion (0314)

#### **11.3 3** ♠

Puppet to 3NT for minor suit hands.

	OPENER 2NT 3NT	RESPONDER 3♠ ?
4 ♣	$\Diamond$ . Responder bids next step (4 $\Diamond$ otherwise responds RKC for $\Diamond$ .	) with any hand that doesn't like the idea of slam,
4 ♦	♣. Responder bids next step (4 $\heartsuit$ ) with any hand that doesn't like the idea of slam, otherwise responds RKC for ♣.	
<b>4M</b>	Shortness in bid M, 5-5 minors with slam interest.	
4NT	5-5 minors with no slam interest.	

If opener bids a "don't like" step, +1 is "don't care, RKC." 4NT by responder is NF.

# 3-Level Preempts

Aggressive, does not promise any quality.

I have a joke about my preempts: I strictly follow the rule of 500, so long as the opponents promise not to double.

White/Red there probably isn't a hand which contains a 7 card suit that I would pass.

New suits are forcing,  $4 \clubsuit$  is Preempt RKC (or  $4 \diamondsuit$  over  $3 \clubsuit$ ). 0, 1 w/o Q, 1 w/ Q, 2.

# 3NT

"Namyats", good major preempt. 3NT is a forcing call. Typically responder bids one of  $4 \clubsuit$  or  $4 \diamondsuit$ , but there are meanings for other bids which likely have not been seen by anyone other than Tom before. I'm going to write them out, but they literally have never come up in any partnership I have "agreed" these bids since I came up with them 25 years ago. I don't expect anyone to use bids other than  $4 \clubsuit$  or  $4 \diamondsuit$ .

	OPENER RES	SPONDER
	3NT ?	
4 &	Requesting partner transfer to their major	or. Cuebids and RKC.
<b>4</b> ♦	Requesting partner bid their major. Cuel	oids and RKC.
	Herein lies doom. Everything below is a	specific sort of asking bid/relay.
<b>4</b> ♡	Asking for suit and about control in the c	off major. Passable!
<b>4</b> •	Asking for ♣ control.	
4NT	Asking for ◊ control.	
<b>5</b> ♣	Asking for <b>&amp;</b> high card control only.	
5 ◊	Asking for $\Diamond$ high card control only.	

Over  $4 \, \heartsuit$ , responses are alternating  $\, \heartsuit / \spadesuit \,$  with the first step being *Pass*, the groups being no control, sing/void, High Card control.

Over  $4 \spadesuit /4$ NT, responses are alternating  $\heartsuit / \spadesuit$  with the groups being No control, sing/void, HC control.

Over  $5 \clubsuit / 5 \diamondsuit$ , as above with no sing/void groups.

## Example auctions:

3NT-4  $\heartsuit$ -Pass would show  $\heartsuit$  with no  $\spadesuit$  control. This specific response lets us get out in 4M with no control in the other major. This is the most likely bid to make when responder can't actually tell which major opener has but still has slam interest.

3NT-4 ♠ -5 ♣ would show ♠ with no ♣ control.

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3NT-5 - 5 would show with a high card control. (Note that there is no inversion to try to protect declarership, this just happens to be bidding with hearts due to steps. Indeed, it may sometimes make sense to declarer from the high card showing preempt to protect a King.)

# Other

4 level preempts are natural.

4NT opening is specific Ace Blackwood:

	OPENER 4NT	RESPONDER ?	
5 ♣	No Ace		
5 ◊	A minor suit Ace		
5M	Bidding your Ace		
5NT	2 Aces of the same color		
<b>6</b> ♣	2 Aces of the same rank		
6 ◊	2 Aces of the same shape		

5M openers ask partner to raise 1 level for each high honor in trumps.

# Slam Bidding

## 15.1 RKC

In general, we play a 1430 style of RKC with "Redwood": +1 RKC for minors, 4NT RKC for majors.

Over the Q ask, we play new suits as showing both the Q and the lowest ranking side K. 5NT when there is room to show all the Ks in undefined, although Ari bid it at the table intending it as 2 side Ks. To Tom, 5NT is a substitute for a K when needed but unclear what the meaning is/should be otherwise.

### **Exclusion**

Exclusion is always 0314, the only non-1430 RKC we play.

## **Preempt KC**

Auctions such as weak  $2 - 4 \clubsuit$ , responses are fairly typical: 0, 1 w/o Q, 1 w/, 2. Note we won't have 2 with so no steps beyond this are required.

## **Showing Voids**

I do not believe we have any firm agreements as to how to show a void over 4NT RKC. There are a number of schemes, non of which are all that great. Open to suggestions.

# 15.2 Cuebid Style

Most cuebids are loose as to  $1^{st}$  control strictly vs.  $1^{st}/2^{nd}$ . In situations where a very strong hand is cuebidding it is generally assumed to be first, whereas a weaker hand cuebidding can be anything.

## **15.3** Other

3NT is Non-Serious in many auctions, over which all cuebids are  $1^{st}$  /  $2^{nd}$  style. Note that we never use other bids for Non-S, only 3NT.

# Part II Competitive Bidding

# General Rules

T: Note that these were copied verbatim from the Tom/Ari notes. I'm going to try to go through it and look for discrepancies but I may miss some.

Some rules in no particular order.

- **Relays Off** Most relay auctions bail in competition, we don't tend to try to continue to relay when the opponents are interfering. The only exception is double, which is generally ignored. (Not true for 1 \( \blacktriangle \) opener responses.)
- Late Doubles In most extended auctions doubles are ignored and our responses remain the same. This is notably true over RKC style bids; there is no R0P1 or the like. Initial doubles by the opps can and often does change our response structure.
- **Fast arrival** When we are forced to a certain level (say after a cuebid), bidding that level is the weakest action. This is true even over something like a double, where pass is more encouraging than retreating.
- **Jumps** Most single jump shifts in comp are fit showing. Most jump raises are weak. Double jumps where available are splinters, but are lower precedence than Fit when only 1 jump available. Double jump cuebid is mixed when available.
- **Cuebids** Our direct cuebids in response to partner's call generally show support, although it is possible that some one off cases may exist where you need to force with no good options. Delayed cuebids are probing / generally ask for stoppers. When 2 opponent suits are available, we cuebid what we have not what we are looking for.
- **2x Cuebid** As a psyche protection in 1♣ auctions, if we cuebid the opps suit twice that is *natural*. This has come up in play and has proven useful.

# **16.1 Forcing Passes**

Some special notes about forcing passes, as we on occasion need to deal with high level competition in forcing situations where we have done little to no description of our shape.

In general, if we bid directly in a FP situation that is more encouraging than if we pass and pull the double. This is the opposite of "standard" - so called Inverted Pass and Pull. Simple example:  $1 \heartsuit - (2 \spadesuit) - 3 \spadesuit - (4 \spadesuit)$ ,  $5 \heartsuit$  would be forward going and pass and pulling a double of  $4 \spadesuit$  would be to get out in  $5 \heartsuit$ .

There can on occasion be situations where opener's hand is more or less undefined, and need to sort out what's going on at a high level. Here's an example from play (bidding only, cards aren't relevant) from the JLall with what Tom thinks the bids should mean:

	Opener 1♣	Overcaller 3 ♠	Responder 4x	Advancer 4♠	
4NT	? Fncouraging in	n nartner's suit l	netter than 5v If	x=Maj, this is RKC.	
5x	Mild encourage	-	oction than ox. II	x—Muj, tillo lo ruco.	
<b>5y</b>	New suits are strong and natural but NF				
Dbl	Suggests defense				
Pass	Generally expects a double, then:				
	$\rightarrow$ 4NT = 2 suited; can include a partial fit for partner as 1 of the suits				
	$\rightarrow$ 5x = To play, no slam interest				
	$\rightarrow 5y = My \text{ own}$	suit, suggesting	a contract, no s	am interest	

At the table Tom bid 4NT which was interpreted (I think?) as 2 suited and we got overboard. I think the general approach here is playable and also consistent with the philosophy espoused above. It also matches the style elsewhere. (Such as a free 2NT being good/bad, but a 2NT response over a double is scrambling. Same idea here.)

## 16.2 General defenses

- 2 Suiter, known We play lower cuebid for our lower suit, higher for higher. Double is a good hand, with a second double being penalty.
  - In general the cuebid is the stronger action; the only exception is when the high cuebid is below our low suit, then the bidding the high suit is stronger than the cuebid. In common practice, the only time this is relevant is over  $1 \heartsuit (2NT)$ , where  $3 \diamondsuit$  showing spades but not strong (less than GF) allows for a  $3 \heartsuit$  rebid (NF).  $3 \spadesuit$  in that instance is forcing.
- 2 Suiter, 1 unknown We treat this auction as if they had bid the one known suit. Cuebid is support for opener, new suits forcing, etc.
- **2NT** In competition, 2NT might mean many different things depending on context. When the bidder is "forced" (i.e., responding to a takeout style double) the default meaning is Scrambling. When 2NT is a free bid it is most commonly Good/Bad; one notable exception is when 2NT is the first bid by responder, in which case it is natural except where otherwise defined. (i.e., 1M-Dbl).

One other possibility in "Good/Bad" sequences where Good isn't possible (hand already limited severely): secondary but higher ranked suit. These need to be better defined.

## 16.3 Misc

This section is for items which don't fit elsewhere.

### XX of cuebids

When does XX promise 1<sup>st</sup> round control? Does it matter if last train is in play?

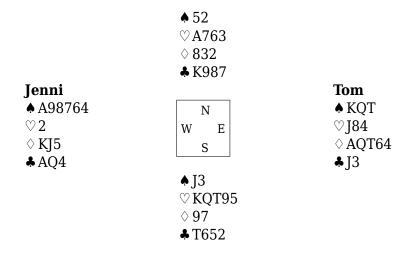
Auction (with Jenni)

West	North	East	South
Jenni		Tom	
_	_	1 ♦	1 ♡
2  %	3♡	3 ♠	Pass
$4  \clubsuit$	Pass	<b>4</b> $\Diamond$	Pass
4 %	Double	Pass	Pass
Rdbl	Pass	$4 \spadesuit$	Pass
4NT	Pass	<b>5</b> ♠	Pass
6 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

First, Jenni was uncertain that  $4 \clubsuit$  was Serious/Non-Serious. I think since we aren't in a GF that NS is off, but it is ambiguous.

Second, my pass over  $4 \circ$ -Dbl was clearly encouraging, i.e. last train. What does that mean, if anything, for the XX?  $1^{st}$ ? Counter last train?

Slam was good today, but hardly the point.



Jenni was concerned about her trumps, I liked my hand but felt I had little I could do with nothing left to cuebid other than pass to encourage. She eventually decided that my pass must mean my trumps are good enough and bid RKC. I suspect her XX is flawed on this particular deal, but it does bring to question whether last train should overrule the general rule about showing  $\mathbf{1}^{st}$ .

# Defensive Bidding (They Open)

## 17.1 General Guidelines

Overcalls can be light and can be 4 cards. The latter happens most often with length in the opening suit and the inability to make a takeout double due to shape (i.e., doubleton in a major). It often has opening strength or close to it.

Takeout doubles can be mildly offshape. Doubletons in unbid minors are common. Doubletons in unbid majors are forbidden except for double-and-bid hands.

Bidding tends to be for lead direction when light.

2 level minor overcalls are often 6, occasionally 5 sound when no other call is reasonable. It is common to double instead of overcalling with 5-3-3-2.

Direct NT overcalls are sound, (15+)16-18. In the sandwich position we bump this up by a point to a nominal range of (16+)17-19. Tom has made simple 1NT overcalls on bad 19 counts as well.

If the opponents make an invitational or better artificial bid, our double is lead directing. (Example: 1M-3♦ Bergen). If the artificial bid can be less than Inv values then our double is takeout. (Example: 1M-3♣ Bergen). Note for Tom: I think we agreed that this principle applies over Drury as well, even though I typically play double of Drury as lead directing. *T: Verify? We could encapsulate the principle by saying this applies if it is our first turn to make a call. If we have previously passed then it is always lead directing.* 

After a jump overcall, NT bids are generally an attempt to show a secondary suit, especially one which would otherwise be awkward. Example from play:

West	North	East	South
	Jenni		Tom
1 ♣	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	2NT		

The 2NT bid here would show 4 \(\circ\)s.

## **Balancing**

While most balancing actions after 1x are still natural, it is worth calling out some differences.

Jumps are good hands and good suits, the higher the jump the better the hand. I recently balanced with 4M and had 8 good and a side Ace. That feels about right to me.

1NT balance is wide ranging if they open a major, about 11–16 or so. Our 2♣ becomes a Size-ask Stayman, with normal responses showing 11–14 and 2NT showing any 15–16. Over the 2NT rebid, 3♣ is re-Stayman.

1NT balance over a minor is 11–14 with little system. Cuebid is Stayman, no transfers. This auction is NF signoff:

West	North	East	South
1 ◊	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

## 17.2 Overcall Methods

Needs to be filled in, I noticed this wasn't here when I went hunting during practice.

Quick summary: 1/1 and 2/2 new suits are forcing, 2/1 is NF constructive. Transfers over 1-level negative doubles starting with 1NT and ending with 1-under being a good raise to 2. Transfer to cuebid suit = Limit+.

# 17.3 Strong Club

Suction at all levels: Every bid is either the next higher (transfer) or the 2 remaining suits (2 lower). Double takes the place of the suit bid in the system; for example, (1  $\clubsuit$ )-Dbl is  $\lozenge$  or ( $\heartsuit$  &  $\spadesuit$ ). In general, the higher you bid the more distribution you have.

We will often start with pass with a decent hand. Immediate bids tend to be destructive.

NT bids show "shape":  $(\lozenge \& \spadesuit)$  or  $(\clubsuit \& \heartsuit)$ .

Responses in general are pass or correct. Raising the suit bid is a "cuebid" showing a good hand for the possible combinations and game interest. NT bids turn off the pass/correct signal; they generally ask overcaller to bid clubs over which all bids by advancer are natural, not pass/correct.

If Overcaller bids NT after a pass/correct bid that shows a secondary 4 card suit with 6+ in the "transfer" suit. In other words, 1 suited by only kinda-sorta. This is 100% optional on the part of overcaller.

Suction is on directly over the 1 \( \blacktriangle \) bid as well as any artificial response which does not indicate

shape, only values.1

## 17.4 Polish Club

Suction on, with double being a major oriented takeout (random minor length) and the non-jump bids are constructive. Jumps are still preemptive.

## 17.5 Balanced Club

No special methods, other than double can have any minor suit distribution.

## 17.6 Precision $1 \diamondsuit$

Regardless of promised length, we play  $2 \diamondsuit$  as natural,  $2 \heartsuit$  as weak (NF) Michaels and  $3 \diamondsuit$  as strong Michaels. 2NT is still  $\heartsuit \& \clubsuit$ . If we bid  $2 \diamondsuit$  naturally,  $\clubsuit$  becomes the "cuebid" suit.

As per balanced 1♣, takeout doubles are random with respect to minor suit distribution.

# 17.7 Transfer response to 1♣

After  $(1 \clubsuit)$ -Pass-(1Red) xfer we play that double is a normal takeout double  $(\diamondsuit \& OM)$  and accepting the transfer is the weird takeout double  $(\clubsuit \& OM)$ . 2 of the transfer suit is natural, just as the standard (1x)-P-(1M)-2M would be.

After  $(1 \clubsuit)$ -Pass- $(1 \spadesuit)$  it may depend on the meaning of  $1 \spadesuit$ . Most play that as diamonds (I think), in which case double is just takeout for the majors. I suspect that's a reasonable agreement for most  $1 \spadesuit$  meanings but it is possible we may run across something which is worth having a separate agreement.

# 17.8 Kaplan Inversion

After  $(1 \, ^{\circ})$ -Pass- $(1 \, ^{\spadesuit})$ , double is a light spade overcall and 1NT is takeout.  $2 \, ^{\spadesuit}$  is natural and sound, a hand that would have bid  $2 \, ^{\spadesuit}$  over standard 1NT response.

After  $(1 \, \circ)$ -Pass- $(1 \, \text{NT})$ , double is takeout for the minors.

## 17.9 1NT

Over their 1NT opener we play Hello:  $2 \clubsuit$  is  $\lozenge$  or M+m,  $2 \lozenge$  is  $\heartsuit$ ,  $2 \heartsuit$  is Majors (not exceptionally strong),  $2 \spadesuit$  is  $\spadesuit$ , 2NT is  $\clubsuit$ ,  $3 \clubsuit$  is minors,  $3 \lozenge$  is Strong Majors.

Over strong NT, double is a 4 card major, longer minor. Over weak NT it is penalty when possible. (Passed Hand = ?)

 $<sup>^1</sup>$ Minor inferences about distribution are allowed. For example, a 1% bid which shows 8-11 without 5 spades would be considered a suction eliqible bid. A 1% bid which is a transfer to spades would not.

# T: It may be worthwhile treating all $3^{rd}$ seat 1NT openers as weak.

(1NT)-2  $\clubsuit$  forces 2  $\lozenge$ ; no specific agreement for 2M there instead other than natural.

	Opener 1NT	Overcaller 2♣	Responder Double	Advancer ?
Pass	Suggests clubs if partner has the M+m hand with clubs			
2 ◊	Suggests diamonds if partner has the M+m hand with diamonds (or 1 suited)			
XX	Show your har	nd		

Opener 1NT Pass		Overcaller 2♣ ?	Responder Double	Advancer Pass	
Pass	Clubs				
XX	M+m with diamonds				
2 ♦	One suited diamonds				
Other	I forgot				

# 17.10 2♣ Strong

Suction, as per Strong Club

## **17.11 2** ♣ **Precision**

 $2 \diamondsuit$  is an artificial limited takeout, something like 9-13 with 2 or 3 suits. (Corrections are simply 2 suited with Responder missing bidding the  $3^{rd}$ . Essentially equal level conversion but without the equal level requirement.) Dbl becomes 14+ takeout.

## 17.12 Multi

I decided that it was silly to have the very long multi notes in here; also ran into some logistical problems that makes it easier in a separate doc.

For now we are playing Option 2. If/when I finish with the USBF Multi notes we may choose that instead.

Having a separate doc also allows for easier printing to have a hard copy at the table in the event that live bridge ever happens again.

# 17.13 Flannery

Vs.  $2 \diamondsuit$  Flannery:

	Opener 2◊	Overcaller ?	Responder	Advancer	
X	Bal 13-15 bal o	or 19+ any			
2♡	3 suited takeout				
2 🏟	Natural				
2NT	16-18 bal				
3m	Natural				

## Vs. $2 \heartsuit$ Flannery:

	Opener 2♡	Overcaller ?	Responder	Advancer	
X	3 suit takeout	or 19+ any			
2 🏟	Natural				
2NT	16-18 bal				
3m	Natural				

For both options here, we don't have a bid to show both minors. Some play the  $2\heartsuit$  takeout bid as either 2 (minors) or 3 suited, which might be worthwhile to explore.

Kit had an interesting comment, he rejects the standard defense style and plays initial double as light takeout and pass-then-double as strong takeout with (I think?) the 2% cuebid as Michaels. I'm not sure I agree with all of that, but having light vs sound takeout seems like a plus.

See https://bridgewinners.com/forums/read/intermediate-forum/defenses-to-flannery/

## 17.14 Weak 2

Mostly normal stuff, but a few slightly different agreements.

### **Preferensohl**

Modified Leb; after 2NT the doubler bids their preferred minor instead of auto-puppeting to 3♣. Other bids are as per Lebensohl with Fast Denies.

Upside: get to a better 3m contract when advancer has no where to go.

Downside: Forces us to 4♣ rarely when advancer only wants to play clubs.

## **Soloway**

Soloway over 2M-2NT (note, not over  $2 \diamondsuit$ ):

	Opener 2M	Overcaller 2NT	Responder Pass	Advancer ?	
3♣	Puppet to 3 $\Diamond$ for sign off anywhere				
3 ◊	Xfer to other major, Inv+. Opener can accept by bidding game or Q.				
3M	Stayman				
<b>30M</b>	Puppet for mir	nor hands as pe	r 2NT opener.		

## **Leaping Michaels & Direct Cuebids**

We do play Leaping Michaels (GF). Over 2M openers, 4m is that minor and OM, 4M Q is both minors and stronger than 4NT.

Over  $2 \diamondsuit$  weak,  $4 \clubsuit$  is  $\clubsuit$  &  $\heartsuit$ ,  $4 \diamondsuit$  is  $\clubsuit$  &  $\spadesuit$ ,  $3 \diamondsuit$  is majors.

2M-3M is a lighter Michaels. We are allowed to play a partscore. We do not play the stopper ask that is commonly played alongside Leaping Michaels.

# **17.15 Gambling 3NT**

There are 2 common defenses to Gambling, I am not certain which we play. Calling this out so that we select an option.

Option 1: Shorter minor takeout.  $4 4/4 \circ$  is your shorter minor (defaulting to clubs with equal, although typically you can tell which is the solid suit). Other bids are natural.

Option 2: Woolsey. 4  $\clubsuit$  both majors, 4  $\lozenge$  1 major, 4M = M+minor.

In both of these treatments, double is balanced strength / penalty and 4NT is undefined.

## 17.16 Other

Currently no special defense to  $2 \lozenge Precision$  (short  $\lozenge$ ) or (Mini)Roman. I know there are some out there, but not worrying about it for now.

For most artificial preempts we follow the provided defense. For multi we use "option 2", where bids are natural and pass then double is takeout.

# Interference Defense (We Open)

## 18.1 1 \*

## 2 ♠ and Below

Over direct interference below 2 ♠ we play transfers, every suit bid showing the next suit with 5+ cards and 5+ HCP (good 4 ok). Over spade bids by the opponents, NT becomes a transfer to ♣. NT bids aren't well defined over non-spade bids by the opponent.

Notably, transfers into suits the opponent have shown are still natural. We take the general approach the opponents are extremely untrustworthy here, where psyches and misbids are so common. Therefore we just bid our hands without worrying about what they are showing.

Doubles show values with no suit to show. We are allowed to have a 5 card suit that we don't wish to show, but generally this is a more balanced hand.

It is worth noting that all of this applies over double as well. We assume that the auction will likely become more competitive and therefore do not try to relay and what not.

## 2NT and higher

When the interence is at 2NT or higher, our bids revert to natural and GF. Double is values, either invitational (6-7) or a GF with no direction. Cuebids are generally 2 suited hands, GF. (Not available below 3NT, so stopper ask doesn't make much sense. Those hands start with double.)

## **18.2 1** ♦

#### General Rules

Since our  $1 \diamondsuit$  opener says nothing much about the diamond suit, there are some awkward situations in competition where we need to sort out what is going on in the minors. Here are some good general guidelines:

• Most doubles of a  $\lozenge$  cuebid is just showing diamond length. This is very different from standard contexts where it often is takeout and showing extra strength. Support doubles do take precedence, but when the level has gotten past a support double than the "diamond double" is on.  $1 \lozenge -(1 \heartsuit)$ -Dbl-? Over  $2 \lozenge$  cue the double would be support, but over

- a  $3 \diamondsuit$  mixed cue, double is diamonds. With a good (===31xx) we can pass and double back in.
- When NT is not a logical choice as natural it can be used to differentiate hands with just clubs from those with both minors. For example, 1 ⋄-(Dbl)-P-1M; here 1NT would be both minors (5-4 either way) and 2 ♣ would just be 5 ♣ with any length in ⋄.

#### Low Level Interference

Over  $1 \diamondsuit - (Dbl \text{ or } 1 \heartsuit)$  we play a similar transfer based system.

$\begin{array}{ccc} \text{Opener} & \text{Overcaller} \\ 1 \diamondsuit & \text{Double} \end{array}$		Responder ?	Advancer	
XX	4+			
1♡	4-5 ♠			
1 \land	Balanced or both minors. Responder pulls 1NT to show minors.			IT to show minors.
1NT	Single mino	r, competitive.	2♣ is pass or corr	ect.
2 ♣/2 ◊	Natural, for	cing 1 round		
2♡	6+ ♠, any strength			
2♠	Both minors, mixed strength			
2NT	Natural GF,	rarely used.		

Bids over  $1 \, \circ$  overcall are the same except for XX & 2NT. There is no redouble to show hearts, but it isn't needed. 2NT is natural and invitational.

#### Other suit overcalls

Fairly standard methods. Negative doubles (no upper limit, high level doubles are about strength more than shape)

### 1NT overcall

T: 15 Apr 2020 - Adding what I typically play, not sure if we have discussed.

"Reverse Capp":

	Opener 1 ◊	Overcaller 1NT	Responder ?	Advancer
Dbl	Penalty			
2 ♣	Single suited minor or Minor+Major 2 suiter			
2 ◊	Both Majors			
2♡	$\Diamond$			
2 🏚	<b>♠</b>			

Open 1 ◊ ?	er Overcaller 1NT	Responder Pass	Advancer Pass	
Dbl	5+ ◊, 4+ other			
New Suit	Nat, denies 5 ♦. 2♣ spe	cifically should be	5 clubs.	

## Misc

 $1 \diamondsuit - (Pass) - 1M - (1NT)$ , Dbl is still support.

1  $\Diamond$  -(Pass)-Pass-(Dbl), pass suggests 4+  $\Diamond$ , otherwise bid or XX.

## **Example From Play**

*T:* For now moved from unsorted.

West	North	East	South
1 ◊	Pass	1NT	2 🏚
?			

Opp interfered RW into our invitational sequence. There are lots of approaches here that are possible, but we decided to play:

Non-forcing. Expectation is the 1NT bidder will not reopen unless they have a **Pass** 5 card suit.

> T: With Jenni recently I had this auction as the 1NT bidder, I balanced double for takeout. She bid 2NT scrambling. That seems like a fine agreement, I don't see the need to force responder to pass.

Dbl Penalty

2NT Mod. Lebensohl: Not a puppet, but instead the 1NT bidder bids their better minor. We may lose out when opener has only clubs, but we will win when they have a 2 suited hand.

Nat GF 3x

After we make a support double, new suits are NF. Jump or Q to force.

#### 18.3 1M

## Takeout Double

Over 1M-Dbl we play:

	Opener 1M	Overcaller Double	Responder ?	Advancer
1 🏚	Natural (over 1	L♡ <b>)</b>		
1NT	Xfer to ♣. All x major as well.	fers promise 5	cards in the suit bi	d, but can be preparing to raise the
2 ♣	Xfer to $\Diamond$			
2 ◊	Xfer to ♡ (over 1♠)			
R-1	UPH: Limit Raise or better with Min/Max TaJ			
	PH: Good Raise of M			
2NT	Mixed Raise			
JS	Fit			
DR	Weak			
DJS	Splinter (doesn	n't promise void	)	

## Other

See General Rules.

2NT by responder is natural at their first turn to call. 2NT by opener after raise is "Good/Bad"; this is true both over our raises and the opponents.

## 18.4 1NT

We have general defenses for most interference. Where specific agreements exist for specific conventions those take precedence.

General NT defense: Ruebensohl over majors, Lebensohl over minors. Double of  $2 \clubsuit$  is Stayman regardless of meaning. Double of other natural 2 level bids is Penalty, double of 3 level bids is Negative.

Over Opps Dbl, XX forces 2♣ to escape to a minor. Direct bids are "Systems On".

Ruebensohl style:

	Opener 1NT	Overcaller 2M	Responder ?	Advancer
2 🌢	NF			
2NT	Forces 3♣, au	ction from here l	ooks like Lebenso	ohl
3♣	xfer to $\Diamond$ , Inv+	Opener can ac	cept game.	
3 ◊	xfer to OM, Inv	v+.		
3M	Stayman, no st	topper.		
<b>30M</b>	GF ♣			
3NT	NF, no stopper			

#### **1NT-2** ♦ Multi

We play "systems on" over  $2 \diamondsuit$  Multi, with double being a transfer to Hearts. 2NT Puppet becomes the only available Stayman bid.

Pass then double is Penalty. Pass then bid is usually a light hand and/or one not suitable for immediate bidding; by inference, this means direction auctions would imply forward going values; this may not be a firm rule for hands which can get out on the 2-level (major suit xfers), but should always be true of actions which force to the 3-level. For example, an auction like

West	North	East	South
1NT	2 ♦	3♣	

would not only be a xfer to  $\Diamond$ , but would also show invitational strength.

Slower auctions being weak can have unusual meanings; for example, an auction like

West	North	East	South
1NT	2 ♦	Pass	2%
Pass	Pass	2 🏚	

is  $4 \spadesuit$  and a longer minor. 2NT would be both minors. T: There was discussion about playing 2NT here as some form of Lebensohl instead of both minors. I'm okay with that too, but we need to decide. Until changed the assumption is 3m would be NF natural and a Q would be stopper ask.

Be cautious about forcing 3NT without stoppers in both majors, often times opener cannot judge when to sit or pull. This includes bids such as  $2 \spadesuit$  Size ask.

## **1NT-2** ♦ Majors and similar

When the opps make a bid showing 2 known suits artificially, we play an Unusual over Unusual style. (Lower for Lower...). Double is general cards and can be the start to a penalty sequence. 2NT isn't Lebensohl, but rather 2 suited for the other suits.

Immediate jumps are stopper showing, denying a stopper in the other suit. To show one of their suits naturally, start with double.

## **1NT-2** $\heartsuit$ Majors and similar

When the opps make a bid showing 2 known suits by bidding one of them (except  $2\clubsuit$ ), we play double is penalty of the bid suit. The other cheap cuebid is the general cards bid. 2NT starts a Lebensohl sequence. (NOT Ruebensohl)

T: Checking that this is correct...

## 1NT-2M M+m and similar

When the opps show a known and unknown suit by bidding the known we treat the auction as natural. Ruebensohl over Majors, Lebensohl over  $\diamondsuit$ , Sys On over  $\clubsuit$ .

## 18.5 2m

The general style over a 2m opener is to treat it much like other openers: negative doubles, new suits forcing after an overcall, etc.

Doubles are ignored; systems on including +1 asking.

## 18.6 2M

After an overcall, doubles are penalty and new suits are forcing 1 round.

Over double, we play "Transfer McCabe": XX through R-2 are transfers (with 2NT still being an asking bid) that are either to get out in the next higher suit or a lead directional raise in that suit. R-1 is a "green light" raise of M, 3M is a "red light" raise. Over a "green light" raise opener is allowed to further compete if they feel it appropriate.

## **18.7** Other

Transfer McCabe over 3 level preempts as well. No other special agreements.

# Part III Carding

# Leads

## 19.1 Opening vs Suits

We generally lead 3rd/Low from length. The only real exception is if we have supported partner's suit, we may lead a more attitude type approach. (High from Xxx, low from Hxx, etc.)

Our default honor leads are A from Ace/King. *T: We do not do this but I wouldn't mind starting.* If we have promised 4+ cards in a suit, we revert to Rusinow honors. Note that transfers such as  $1 \diamondsuit - (1 \heartsuit) - Dbl$  do promise a suit, but negative doubles such as  $1 \diamondsuit - (1 \spadesuit) - Dbl$  do not promise any one suit, even the other major. Takeout doubles are presumed to not claim any suit.

*T: Note:* I don't know if we currently have an agreement if we have *both* shown 4+ cards in a suit. I presume the default rule would echo the standard treatment of having Rusinow be "off" by the secondary bidder, but I think that makes little sense for us. I think it would be better to have both sides which have promised 4+ cards to play Rusinow, whichever one ends up on lead.

Signals to honor leads are generally attitude, but if attitude is known they may revert to suit preference.

Example:  $1 \lozenge - (P) - 1 \heartsuit - (Dbl) - 2 \heartsuit$  ...whichever hand is on lead would lead Rus honors in  $\heartsuit$ .

# 19.2 Opening vs NT

Our spot leads are typically 2nd/4th from 4+ cards, top of xxx or fewer. (American 2nd/4th). As versus suits, we may vary from this in partner's suit. We may lead low from xxx in some situations to show length – a good example would be after a unsupported weak 2. If dummy is winning the trick and 3rd hand gets to signal, signals are count if the winning card is Q or lower, attitude if K or higher. For this purpose, it is presumed dummy plays the lowest of touching cards. (e.g., if dummy has KQx and calls "K", we would still consider dummy to be winning the Q and is therefore count.)

Honor leads are Rusinow from Q to 9, with 8 being a pivot card<sup>1</sup>. "Shortness" from a Rusinow perspective here is anything less than 4 cards, so we would still lead Q from QJx. We would lead Q from KQx to avoid the power lead, but this is a very rare exception.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Pivot card is the break point for Rusinow. 9 promises 10 or shortness, 8 might have the 9 or not.

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Ace from AK is the default honor lead, with K being the "power" lead, asking for count or unblock. (e.g., KQT9). Signals to other honors are generally attitude about the honor below the led card.

# 19.3 Middle of the Hand

Middle of the hand leads are generally attitude. If we feel that count is important, we will continue to play 3rd/Low vs Suits and 4th vs NT.

Against NT, if we win the opening lead and return the suit, we generally play lowest from 3+ remaining and high from 2. It is also possible that a high card might be led to hold the lead which may be done with any number.

Honors revert to standard.

# Signal agreements

General carding rules: upside down count and attitude, regular suit preference. Priority of signals when partner on lead is Attitude/Suit Preference/Count; priority for following suit is Suit Pref/Count. When count is "necessary" we give count signals, but in general most cards following suit are S/P or just following suit.

For a more specific example from play, see

Discards are generally attitude based.

## **20.1 Suit Preference**

Standard S/P means high for high and low for low. Often times this is sufficient when a suit can be eliminated (such as trumps.) Middle cards are sometimes used to encourage the suit led despite a normal S/P situation (singleton on the board) or to encourage a trump shift.

Other suit preference situations, such as following suit, there are often 3 suits in play. Sometimes we can infer a suit not being reasonable, but otherwise we encode in the following manner:

With 2 cards to signal: High-Low indicates a high or middle suit, Low-High indicates a low suit or no preference.

With 3 cards to signal:

**LMH:** Neutral or Mild Low suit

**LHM:** Strong low suit

**MHL:** Mild Middle

**MLH:** Strong Middle

**HLM:** Mild High

**HML:** Strong High

The unifying concept here is we always start with the suit we want to make (LMH). Then the more "active" we are (using higher spots) the more we like the suit we signaled. For example,

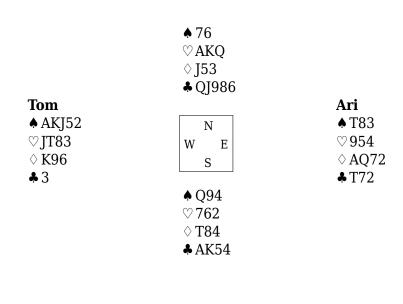
Middle then Low shows that we were actively signaling, so if we don't get a chance to complete the high at least partner will know we are interested in something. If we started MH they may not know this wasn't LH from 2.

# Examples from Play

# 21.1 Lost in Translation

Often times, it is important to signal with the clearest card possible. While subtleties can be nice, there is a danger that partner will not pick up on the message.

NABC+ BAM, SF 2019. 1st Qual. (rotated)



West	North	East	South
Tom		Ari	
_	_	_	Pass
1 ♠	Double	2 ♠	3♣
3♠	4 🐥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

- ♠ K lead, 6, 8, 4.
- ♠ A, 7, 3, 9.

♡3 ...

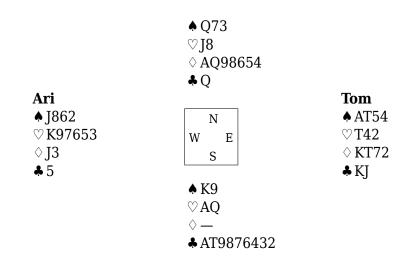
Ari was attempting to be subtle to try to show a diamond s/p. Tom thought at trick 1 that the

8 might be low (since the QT9 were still out). Once it was proven at trick 2 to not be the case, Tom put Ari on Q83, since from T83 he could play the T at trick 1. This led Tom to thinking that there was no need to switch to diamonds as there was no discard in spades. We dropped 1 trick. The board was still won at +100, but should have been +200.

Tom thinks the best sequence is the T at trick 1, then the 4 for low s/p.

# 21.2 Average hand

NABC+ BAM, SF 2019. 1st Qual (rotated)



West	North	East	South
Ari		Tom	
_	_	_	1 ♣
2  %	3 ◊	3♡	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

♥ 6, 8, T, Q

- ♣ A, 5, Q, J
- **♣**T, ♥3, ♦4, **♣**K

**♠** 4 ...

Declarer made a creative 3NT bid. Their play at trick 2 was surprising. Tom played the  $\clubsuit J$  in a hope to indicate a holding like this. Declarer's  $\clubsuit T$  was a mistake, they should lead a lower spot. The 10 was much too revealing, showing the 9 card suit to the defense. Ari didn't process this and discarded a heart in the hopes that it would indicate that he didn't have a spade card. Tom was desperate for a spade signal, as he knew declarer had 2=2=0=9 with the  $\heartsuit$  AQ . The only question was whether declarer had the  $\spadesuit$  K or not. If no, a low spade back might beat the

hand if Ari has both honors and break even otherwise. If yes, Tom must play a heart to wait for the  $\triangle$  A and a heart trick at trick 12. Tom interpreted the heart as encouraging due to an entry (in spades) and therefore played a low spade.

A direct signal in spades would have been more useful, the levels of indirection were ambiguous.

The result didn't matter, teammates were in 6♣ down 1, so making 4 or 6 were both a loss.

# Part IV Post Mortem