Christian & Tom
System Notes
March 9, 2023

♠♡♦♣

TaJ Precision

# Christian & Tom System Notes

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March 9, 2023

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# Introduction by Tom

Since I needed to rebuild the document structure anyway, I'm taking this opportunity to merge the document flow for the Jenni, Ari and Christian partnerships into a single new grand unification of the notes.

LATEX Technical comment: the main meat of the document will be maintained to be compatible with all partnerships, the document will be compiled with the appropriate name-tom.tex file to generate that PDF. The notes will be interspersed with *ifbool* statements to ensure the accuracy for the individual partnership while allowing the common elements to only need a single point of editing to ensure consistency across.

#### 1.1 Versions

#### 23.3.9

- Updated To Do
  - xfers/2 ♣ confirmed and in notes
  - Remove 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> carding
  - xfer McCabe moved to notes
  - 1 ♦ -1NT-2M for inv/GF unbal hands.
- System Summary
  - Remove reference to old 2 ⋄ opener
  - Relay, text clean up for +6 step
- 1 ♣-1 ◊
  - Text clean up
  - Adding "subsection" structure for clarity
  - Adding inv+ xfer/xfer to 1NT rebid
  - Expanding Kokish agreements over 3♡ rebid
- 1 ♦ -2M updates
- 1NT 2nd xfer sequences now Inv+ when Responder is limited. (PH or 1 ♣-1 ◊-1NT) Rebids are natural over these.

#### **Initial Version - 22.11.0**

Canonical version, will include any changes from previous March 2022 version of tom-jenni. Ari version hasn't been touched in a bit so I will try to pull in the notes "as is".

## 1.2 Notation

Notation hasn't changed from previous versions, with one new addition: just as we use "5+suit" to indicate 5 or more cards in a suit, I'm introducing "5=suit" to mean exactly 5 cards, no more no less. Similarly "5-suit" means 5 or fewer cards.

| 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 (♣♦♡♠)                                     |
| COG    | Choice of Games  |
| OKC    | Optional Key Card                                      |
| #+suit | # or more cards in the suit                            |
| #-suit | # or fewer cards in the suit                           |
| #=suit | exactly # cards in the suit                            |

# To Do

There is a lot indeed to do, but for now this will be a placeholder for discussion notes from PVD 2022.

This list is primarily geared towards Christian for the moment.

- Xfers in auctions such as  $1x-(2\clubsuit)$ ,  $1x-(1\spadesuit)$ , etc.
- Woolsey after (1m 1NT) and (1x 1y 1NT), inc doubles confirmed
- Xfer Mccabe w/ Christian agreed
- Supp X after 1♡-1 ♠-(1NT) agreed, check on other 1NT o/c situations confirmed
- 1M-2 2NT = good 6-4
- strict NS 3NT rules. example auction 1c-1s-1n-3h-3s-3n with stiff k
- (kit) mulberry

# Part I Opening Bids

# System Summary

# TaJ Precision

"TaJ" originally just stood for Tom and Jenni, but the name has stuck.

Strong club system with 0+1  $\Diamond$ . All 10 HCP hands opened NV, Vul we can pass 10 when red undertricks are lurking (1NT rebids). All HCP comments are approximate, shapely hands will open lighter. We often open with 9 and 6 card suits or 8 with shape hands.

# 3.1 Opening Bid Summary

| 1 🐥     | Strong, Forcing, Artificial. Typically 16+ HCP unbal or 17+ bal   |
|---------|---|
| 1 ♦     | $0+\diamondsuit$ , 10-15. Denies 5 card major unless $6+\diamondsuit$ . $3^{rd}$ seat is $2+\diamondsuit$ |
| 1♡      | $5+\heartsuit$ , $10$ - $15$ , can be $4\ 3^{rd}/4^{th}$  |
| 1 🏟     | 5+ $\spadesuit$ , 10-15, can be 4 3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup>  |
| 1NT     | 14-16. 5 card major, 6 card minor, 5-4-2-2 common.  |
| 2♣      | $6+\clubsuit$ , 10-15. 5 card suit possible in $3^{rd}$ seat for lead direction.                          |
| 2 ◊ / ♠ | 3-9, 5 card suit common NV, 7 card suit uncommon but possible Vul.  |
| 2♡      | Weak, 5-4 or better in the majors.  |
| 2NT     | 22-23   |
| 3x      | Natural, aggressive   |
| 3NT     | Good Major preempt. (Namyats-like)  |
| 4x      | Natural, aggressive   |

#### Info

2♥ Ekren is considered "Quasi Natural" via definition 3b

No special agreements for 4NT or higher, although I have played 4NT opener as a specific Ace Blackwood before. Highly unnecessary.

# 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 2 ♣ is a little different, passing is quite possible with 8 or so points, especially with no fit.

# 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.<br>Next step repeats TaJ and mirrors the limited relay.   |
|-----------|--|
| +1        | 5-4-x-x Relay for second suit LMH, then shape NLH. Immediately "zooming" past the second 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 second suit LMH, then shortness LHB.                       |
| +3        | 6-4-x-x. Primary suit can be longer, secondary always 4. Relay for second 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 and up | 6-3-2-2 or 7-2-2-2. +6 shows lowest side A/K, +7 denies that but shows the next and so on.   |

If shape relays have completed and the auction is below 3NT, the next step is Optional Key Card (OKC). Over OKC, the OKC responder bids the first step if their hand is poor in context for slam, otherwise responds 1430 starting with the second step. OKC asker may bid +1 over the negative step to ask for RKCs anyway.

This is the same OKC structure we play in 2NT-3  $\spadesuit$ -4m auctions, we are just expanding the idea to new auctions.

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

1 &

#### 4.1 Overview

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  $1 \clubsuit$  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  $1 \clubsuit$  and 1 M, for example.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1 ♣    | ?         |

| 1 ◊    | Negative, 0-7(8)   |
|--------|--|
| 1♡     | 5+♠, GF  |
| 1 🏟    | Semi-Bal or 5+♣  |
| 1NT    | 5+♡, GF  |
| 2♣     | 5+\phi, GF   |
| 2 ♦    | 6+♡, 3-6   |
| 2♡     | <b>6+♠</b> , <b>3-6</b>                                      |
| 2 🏚    | (12)13+ Bal (PH: see below)                                  |
| 2NT    | (12)13+ (PH: 8-10) 1=4=4=4                                   |
| 3♣     | (12)13+ (PH: 8-10) 4=4=4=1 (bid sing)                        |
| 3 ♦    | (12)13+ (PH: 8-10) 4=4=1=4 (bid sing)                        |
| 3♡     | (12)13+ (PH: 8-10) 4=1=4=4 (bid sing)                        |
| 3♠     | "Gambling" hand, AKQxxxx or better. Typically no side cards. |
| 3NT-4♡ | 8+ card transfers, bust hand. No A or K.                     |

# **4.2 1♣-1**♦

 $1\,\lozenge$  is the general negative bid. This is the only non-jump bid which does not set up a GF auction.

Meckwell style rebids except 2NT is 20-21.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |  |
|--------|-----------|--|
| 1 ♣    | 1 ♦       |  |
| ?      |           |  |

| 1♡          | $4+ \circlearrowleft$ , can have a longer minor, 1RF. Unbalanced or semi-balanced. Systemic rebid with $4\!=\!4\!=\!(4\!-\!1)$ |
|-------------|--|
| 1 🏚         | 4+♠, 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♠, Either GF with hearts or GF Bal.  |
| 2 ♠/3 ♣/3 ♦ | GF Nat, typically 1 suited.  |
| 2NT         | 20-21 bal  |
| 3♡ & up     | Undefined, although game bids are simply to play.  |

# 1M rebid

| OPENER | RESPONDER |  |
|--------|-----------|--|
| 1♣     | 1 ♦       |  |
| 1♡     | ?         |  |

| 1 🌲 | 4+♠, 3-♡, any strength. 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 ♠, except 2 ♠ is a natural reverse and 1RF.  |
| 2 ♣ | 2- $\heartsuit$ , (5)6 to 7. 2 $\diamondsuit$ is most minimums (scrambling), 2 $\heartsuit$ is natural and NF opposite 2= $\heartsuit$ . Other GF. 2NT is a non-canapé GF, 3m is canapé. |
| 2 ♦ | 3= %, (5)6 to 7. $2 %$ NF, $3 %$ Inv. 2NT GF asking for shortness NLMH, implies a heart fit. Other 1RF, usually canapé.  |
| 2♡  | $4+\heartsuit$ , 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 $4=$ $\heartsuit$  |

#### Info

Note that over  $2 \clubsuit$ , 2NT is the non-canapé since there can be some natural-ish hands included there, such as 3=5=(4-1). This is the reverse of the 2NT/JS over  $1 \spadesuit / 1$ NT.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |  |
|--------|-----------|--|
| 1 ♣    | 1 ♦       |  |
| 1 ♠    | ?         |  |

All auctions as per over 1%, except 2% shows 5+%, (5)6-7.

#### 1NT rebid

| OPENER | RESPONDER |  |
|--------|-----------|--|
| 1♣     | 1 ♦       |  |
| 1NT    | ?         |  |

17–19, systems on as per 1NT opening except secondary xfers such as ...–2 $\Diamond$ –2 $\heartsuit$ –2NT are invitational or better with natural rebids by Opener. (A GF accept of the minor may fake a new suit to keep 3NT in play.)

#### 2m rebid

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1♣     | 1 ♦       |
| 2m     | ?         |

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

# JS rebids

1♣-1♦-2♥ is Kokish, forces 2♠. Either ♥ or bal, GF. No agreements about bids other than 2♠ by Responder.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1♣     | 1 ♦       |
| 2♡     | 2 🏚       |
| ?      |           |

| 2NT   | GF Balanced. Systems on as per 2NT opener.   |
|-------|--|
| 3♣    | ♡ & minor, 3 ♦ for LH.   |
| 3 ♦   | One suited ♡   |
| 3♡    |  |
|       | hearts, $4 \diamondsuit$ is last train style.                                      |
| Other | Sets $\heartsuit$ as trumps, self splinter, demand Q. (Responder cuebids if able.) |

T: I think we had a  $3 \spadesuit$  rebid in PVD that was intended and interpreted as spades. Memory might be faulty.

Other jumps are natural GF. No special agreements other than ...2  $\spadesuit$ -2NT is a spade raise, with 3  $\spadesuit$  being the more waiting nothing-to-say type bid. Typically bal or near bal, 1-2  $\spadesuit$ .

#### 2NT rebid

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1♣     | 1 ♦       |
| 2NT    | ?         |

20-21, respond as per 2NT opener.

## **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     | RESPONDER |
|------------|-----------|
| 1 <b>.</b> | 1♡        |
| ?          |           |

| 1 🏚   | TaJ; $3+\spadesuit$ or $2=\spadesuit$ with extras (20+) |
|-------|---|
| 1NT   | 17-19 bal or semi-bal with 2-♠                          |
| 2x    | Natural, no relays                                      |
| Other | Undefined   |

# **4.4** 1 **♣-1 ♠**

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

With 5-3-3-2 (minor), you can choose between showing your minor (direct  $2 \clubsuit$  or  $2 \clubsuit$  rebid) or showing a balanced no major ( $2 \spadesuit$  rebid). The distinction was more important when 5-4-2-2 was included in the balanced step, but now that TaJ has been updated to handle that it's probably better to show the 5-3-3-2 rather than rebid  $2 \spadesuit$ .

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1♣     | 1 ♠       |
| ?      |           |

| 1NT | "Waiting"; general relay, see below |  |
|-----|-------------------------------------|--|
|-----|-------------------------------------|--|

OPENER RESPONDER  $1 \clubsuit$  (Continued)

Other Naturally, typically 6+ or the higher ranking suit when 5-5.

#### Warning

 $5=\spadesuit$  can be tricky if Opener starts with 1NT and Responder bids  $2\diamondsuit$ . You may have to either bid  $2\spadesuit$  with no slam interest and hope to rebid  $3\spadesuit$  or bid  $2\spadesuit$  directly instead of 1NT, or give up on 5-3 spades and jump to  $3\spadesuit$  to show 4 and COG.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1♣     | 1 ♠       |
| 1NT    | ?         |

| 2 ♣ | 5+ $\clubsuit$ , 2 $\diamondsuit$ is TaJ, other natural    |
|-----|--|
| 2 ◊ | Balanced 8-11(12) with $4= \circ$                          |
| 2♡  | Balanced 8-11(12) with $4= \spadesuit$ and $3- \heartsuit$ |
| 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   |

3 suited hands (2NT-3  $^{\circlearrowleft}$  ) use the same structure as the direct 3 suiters, where agreeing a suit below game is OKC.

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

| OPENER     | RESPONDER                              |
|------------|--|
| 1 <b>♣</b> | 1 🏟                                    |
| 1NT        | $2 \lozenge / \heartsuit / \spadesuit$ |
| ?          |  |

| 2♡  | (Over 2♦) Agrees hearts and asks for controls counting down, 43210                   |
|-----|--|
| 2 🏚 | Shows spades. If Responder has shown spades then control countdown, 43210.           |
|     | If Responder has bid 2♦, then 2NT over 2♠ agrees spades then 3♣ asks controls 43210. |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |             |
|--------|-----------|-------------|
| 1 ♣    | 1 ♠       | (Continued) |
| 1NT    | 2 ♦/♡/♠   | (Continued) |
| ?      |           |             |

|      | 3♣ starts the non-fit 43210 countdown. |
|------|--|
| 2NT  | No fits, asks 43210                    |
| 3♣/◊ | Natural                                |
| 3♡/♠ | Non-slammish, often choice of games    |
| 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**

 $2 \diamond$  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. Note that 7 HCP not included here since that is generally a GF, but a bad 7 might certainly choose this as an alternative.

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

## 2 ♠ Big Balanced

2♠ 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 | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1 ♣    | 2 🏚       |
| 2NT    | ?         |

3♣ Stayman, with extra-extras, 16+. Essentially a slam force.

|        | T -/-                            | 2 %      | (Continuca)                             |
|--------|----------------------------------|----------|---|
|        | 2NT                              | ?        |   |
| 3 ◊ /♡ | Transfers to 4= majors with OKC. | n 13-15. | Accepting the xfer agrees trumps and is |

RESPONDER

(Continued)

| 3 ◊ /♡ | Transfers to 4= majors with 13-15. Accepting the xfer agrees trumps and is OKC. |
|--------|---|
| 3♠     | No major, 13-15 with positive slam interest.                                    |
| 3NT    | No major, NF, negative slam interest. A minimum 2♠ response                     |

T: Currently undefined for a PH Responder. I recommend we play both  $2 \spadesuit$  and 2NT as short spades for memory reasons.  $2 \spadesuit$  should be the preferred to not pick off NT, but 2NT should be kept as a memory failsafe.

#### 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. Agreeing a suit is OKC.

PH changes the range of the bid, but not the nature.

OPENER

1 🚣

#### **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.

 $4 \clubsuit$  asks for shortness, NLMH. The assumption is that opener knows the suit.

Currently undefined for a PH Responder

#### 8 card busts

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

Note that this bid has never actually come up in practice. Caveat Lector. 1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Let the Reader Beware

 $1 \diamondsuit$  is our catch-all opening bid for hands with no 5-card major and fewer than 6 clubs unless  $6+\diamondsuit$ . The range is (9)10-15 HCP if unbalanced or 10-13 HCP if balanced. In most seats  $1\diamondsuit$  does not promise any diamonds at all; 4=4=0=5 hands are routinely opened  $1\diamondsuit$ . The exception is in  $3^{rd}$  seat,  $1\diamondsuit$  promises 2+. This is for convention chart reasons, to allow for lighter openers. With awkward shapes you may open a 4 card major.

The following hand types are included in the  $1 \diamondsuit$  opener.

- 10-13 HCP balanced
- Natural  $\Diamond$
- (9)10-15 HCP unbalanced, no 5-card major or 6-card minor

**OPENER** 

1 ♦

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.

RESPONDER

| P         | 0-9. It is routine to pass with up to 9 HCP and no 4-card major. |
|-----------|--|
| 1♡        | 4+♡, F1  |
| 1 🌲       | 4+♠, F1  |
| 1NT (UPH) | 10-13 HCP, INV. No 4 card major                                  |
| 1NT (DH)  | 9 0 HCP No 4 card major  |

| INI (UPH) | 10-13 HCP, INV. No 4 card major  |
|-----------|--|
| 1NT (PH)  | 8-9 HCP, No 4 card major   |
| 2♣        | 10+ HCP, 5+♣, F1. PH: Nat NF   |
| 2 ♦       | 10+ HCP, 5+♦, F1. PH: Nat NF   |
| 2♡/♠      | Canapé GF, unknown minor. $+1/+2$ asks for minor with $+2$ agreeing the major. |
| 2NT       | Natural, GF. No 4-card major. 14-16 HCP or 19+                                 |

| OPENER | RESPONDER | (Canting al) |
|--------|-----------|--------------|
| 1 ♦    | ?         | (Continued)  |

| 3 ♣   | Natural, 6+♣, Mixed (7-9). No suit quality requirements.                                |
|-------|---|
| 3 ♦   | Natural, 6+♦, Mixed (7-9). No suit quality requirements.                                |
| 3♡/♠  | "Scrambled Splinter". Shortness in bid suit, at least 5-4 either way in the minors, GF. |
| 3NT   | 17-18 HCP Balanced  |
| 4 ♣/◊ | South African Texas / Namyats   |
| 4♡/♠  | NF  |

## **5.1** 1 **0 -1 M**

 $1 \diamondsuit -1M$  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  $♠J \heartsuit KTx \diamondsuit KJxx ♠98xxx$ . 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 📤  | 4=♠. Opener is never expected to bypass a 4-card spade suit. Judgment allowed of course, but rarely would be seen outside 4=3=3=3. |
|------|--|
| 1NT  | 10-13 BAL. 3-1-x-x is common as well.  |
| 2 ♣  | 54++ in the minors, either could be longer.  |
| 2 ♦  | 6+ \(\display\), (9)10-13  |
| 2♡   | Simple raise, 99% $4=\%$ . 10-13 HCP if balanced.  |
| 2 🏚  | Natural, shapely. 5-6 or better 13-15, NF.   |
| 2NT  | $6+\lozenge\& 3=\lozenge$ . Might rarely be 6-4 with the "standard" $4\lozenge$ bid. (Our $4\diamondsuit$ is a splinter.)          |
| 3♣   | 5+♦ & 5+♣(13)14-15 HCP, NF   |
| 3 ♦  | 6+♦, good hand.  |
| 3♡   | $4=\heartsuit$ , unbalanced, typically (13)14-15 HCP   |
| 3♠   | Spl  |
| 4♣/◊ | Spl  |

Opener's rebids after  $1 \lozenge -1 \spadesuit$  are similar. The key difference is the  $2 \clubsuit$  rebid and

promised length in the minors.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |  |
|--------|-----------|--|
| 1 ♦    | 1 🌲       |  |
| ?      |           |  |

2♣ Typically 54++ in the minors, although 1=4=x=x is possible with x ranging from 3 to 5.

## **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 imply $\Diamond$  |
|-----|---|
| 2 ♦ | To play, presumably only 5 $\Diamond$ (no 2 $\Diamond$ opener)  |
| 2♡  | Unbal invite, will have a $5+$ card minor unless $4x1$ with short major. Treat $4x1$ short minor as balanced.       |
| 2 🏚 | Unbal GF that doesn't match a 3 bid. $5+$ card minor unless $4x1$ short major. Treat $4x1$ short minor as balanced. |
| 2NT | Re-invite. Typically 12–13 bal.   |
| 3♣  | 5+♣, 5+♦, GF  |
| 3 ♦ | 6+♦, 4=♣, GF  |
| 3♡  | 6+♦, 4+♥, GF  |
| 3♠  | 6+♦, 4+♠, GF  |
| 3NT | To play.  |

#### Info

 $2\, \heartsuit$  and  $2\, \spadesuit$  section is untested, open to discussion and changes. Modeled after  $1\, \diamondsuit$  –2m auctions

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1 ♦    | 1NT       |
| 2♡     | ?         |

| 2 🏟  | Lebensohl, any inv decline. Opener can bid any of 2NT/3♣/3♦ to suggest a contract, with 2NT being equal length in the minors.  |
|------|--|
| 2NT  | GF ask. $3 \clubsuit = \clubsuit$ , then +1 asks LMH. +2/+3/+4 = $\lozenge$ + LMH. For (1-4)=4=4 show clubs.   |
| 3♣/◊ | Nat GF, presumably 5-3-3-2. Major rebids by Opener are shortness, $3 \diamondsuit$ if avail is $6+\diamondsuit$ . With $5=\diamondsuit$ and short $\clubsuit$ rebid 3NT. |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1 ♦    | 1NT       |
| 2 ♠    | ?         |

| 2NT  | Asking, $3 \clubsuit = \clubsuit$ , then +1 asks LMH. +2/+3/+4 = $\diamondsuit$ + LMH. For (1-4)=4=4 show clubs.  |
|------|---|
| 3♣/◊ | Nat, presumably 5-3-3-2. Major rebids by Opener are shortness, $3 \diamondsuit$ if avail is $6+\diamondsuit$ . With $5=\diamondsuit$ and short $\clubsuit$ rebid 3NT. |

# **5.3** 1 ◊ **-2m**

The  $2 4/2 \diamondsuit$  responses 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      |           |  |

| 2♡   | Any minimum. (Different from Meckwell) Over this 2♠ is "Lebensohl", requesting 2NT for sign off there or in a minor. (Opener can bid 3m instead of 2NT if appropriate.) |
|------|---|
| 2 🏚  | GF, Unspecified splinter raise of Responder's minor. 2NT asks LMH.  |
| 2NT  | Typically 12–13 bal. 3m rebid non-forcing.  |
| om,R | Natural, non-min, GF.   |

#### Info

Over 2NT, rebidding the minor by Responder is NF.

Over the  $2\heartsuit$  minimum bid,  $2\spadesuit$  starts all weak sequences and 3 of a minor directly (new or old) is forcing.

## **5.4** 1 ◊ **-2M**

#### Info

New version 23.3.9

(UPH) 4=M, 5+ either m, GF. +1 asks for the minor and denies support for M. +2 asks for the minor while showing support for M. In both cases, first step is all  $\clubsuit$  hands with +1 asking shortness NLH. +2-+4 responses are NLH short with  $\diamondsuit$  length.

(PH) 5+M, 5+ either m, max PH. Responses mirror Michaels agreements: 2NT asks minor forward going (minor),  $3 \clubsuit$  is pass or correct,  $3 \diamondsuit$  forward going (major). Slam is generally off the table so no shortness bids.

#### 5.5 $1 \lozenge - 2NT$

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

## 5.6 $1 \diamondsuit -3m$

Mixed strength, 6+ natural.

## **5.7 1 ○ -3 M**

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

# **5.8** 1 **○ -3NT**

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

## 5.9 Other

4M natural and to play.

4m is South African Texas / Namyats: 4 - 0, 4 - 0. Opener may bid the step in between to express slam interest, presumably 14–15 unbal. Over sign off, new suits by Responder are exclusion (like most Texas xfers).

# 1 Major

#### 6.1 Intro

General approach is natural with semi-forcing NT and using  $2 \clubsuit$  and  $2 \diamondsuit$  as artificial bids;  $2 \clubsuit$  is a GF hand (usually minor oriented or balanced),  $2 \diamondsuit$  is TaJ.

# 6.2 Response Summary (UPH)

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1 ♥/♠  | ?         |

| 1 🌲 | Natural, F1  |
|-----|--|
| 1NT | Semi-forcing, does not include limit raises. The only expected invite is balanced.                   |
| 2 ♣ | Art GF. Most GF hands that have 2- M will bid this, although $1 - 2 \%$ is nat GF.                   |
| 2 ◊ | TaJ, Limit+ in Opener's major  |
| R   | Simple Raise   |
| JS  | Jump shifts (including $1 	riangledown - 2 \spadesuit$ ) are natural and game invitational           |
| DR  | Weak   |
| DJS | Void Splinter; regular splinters start with TaJ  |
| 2NT | Mixed Raise  |
| 3NT | T: Was 17-18 bal, not sure that makes sense in a $2  \$$ bal world. Leaving as no agreement for now. |

## 6.3 2♣ Art GF

We have removed the 2NT GF response, so 2♣ now acts as a general GF without 3 card support. No changes to responses, the only minor change is that a 2NT rebid is simply balanced rather than having any inferences about specific minor shapes.

Note that  $2 \circ$  over  $1 \spadesuit$  is still a natural GF.

OPENER RESPONDER 
$$1 \heartsuit / \spadesuit$$
  $2 \clubsuit$ 

| 2 ♦ | Waiting, typically denies the other listed hand types  |
|-----|--|
| 2M  | 6+ M   |
| 2OM | 4= Nat   |
| 2NT | Good 6-4. Weaker 6-4 bids 2M.  |
| 3x  | 5–5 any strength   |
| 3M  | Strong suit, setting trumps. Responder shouldn't expect more than 1 side high card control, with 2 honors Opener should likely just open 1♣. |

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

| OPENER | RESPONDER |  |
|--------|-----------|--|
| 1 ♥/♠  | 2♣        |  |
| 2 ♦    | ?         |  |

| 2M  | Honor doubleton                             |
|-----|---|
| 2OM | Natural, long minor still ambiguous         |
| 2NT | Natural balanced.                           |
| 3m  | 6+  |
| 3M  | Shortness, 5-5 in the minors (Only over 2♦) |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |  |
|--------|-----------|--|
| 1 ♥/♠  | 2 👫       |  |
| 2NT    | ?         |  |

| 3♣  | Relay for suit LMH                      |
|-----|---|
| 3 ♦ | 6+ Nat, less interested in other suits. |
| 3M  | Hx with slam interest                   |
| 3OM | 6+ ♣, as per 3 ♦                        |

# **6.4** TaJ

 $1M-2 \diamondsuit$  is a limit raise or better and asks for size, with the normal responses being  $2 \heartsuit$  (min) and  $2 \spadesuit$  (max). 2NT kicks off zooming into über responses. Those are roughly defined as hands which may have slam opposite a perfect Limit Raise.

Over normal responses:

2NT asks TaJ with slam interest.

3M rebids are both "Are you sure?", either good or bad in context.

New suits are natural length, generally probing for game or possibly a better game. No one likes to play  $4 \spadesuit$  with a 5-5 heart fit.

3NT rebids are choice of games

#### 6.5 Other

Over  $1 \spadesuit -2 \heartsuit$ ,  $2 \spadesuit$  is waiting and 2NT is  $6+ \spadesuit$ , other natural. 3m tends to be 5-5.

Direct splinters are voids. 1M-3NT undefined. Could possibly combine with some two-tiered void splinters potentially.

# 6.6 Passed Hand

Things revert to natural by a PH. Notably we do not play Drury. A raise to 2M is our strongest bid, generally constructive. With a weaker hand we just pass the 1 bid, even with a fit. (2NT mixed and 3M weak are still both available too.)

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+ <b>♠</b>   |
| 2 🏚    | Range ask. Includes hands with interest in ♣.                             |
| 2NT    | Puppet Stayman.   |
| 3♣     | 6+◊   |
| 3 ♦    | 5+♦, 5+♣, GF  |
| 3♡/♠   | 3=1-(5-4)/1=3-(5-4), GF.  |
| 3NT    | To play   |
| 4 ♣    | Gerber (1430)   |
| 4 ◊ /♡ | Texas; due to Jacoby agreements this is rarely bid outside of Exclusion.  |
| 4 🌲    | Both minors, balanced, Quant or better                                    |

# 7.1 Stayman Sequences

Normal Stayman responses by Opener.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1NT    | 2 👫       |
| 2. ♦   | ?         |

| 2♡  | Weak hand with both majors. Pass or correct. |
|-----|--|
| 2 🏚 | 5=♠, inv. Only way to invite with 5=.        |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |             |
|--------|-----------|-------------|
| 1NT    | 2 🐥       | (Continued) |
| 2 ♦    | ?         |             |

| 2NT  | Inv. Promises at least one 4-card major.       |
|------|--|
| 3♣/◊ | 5+ Nat, GF                                     |
| 3♡/♠ | Smolen. 4= M, 5+ OM, GF                        |
| 4 ♣  | Gerber(1430)                                   |
| 4 ♦  | Delayed Texas, $4=4$ , $6+\%$                  |
| 4♡   | Delayed Texas, $6+\spadesuit$ , $4=\heartsuit$ |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1NT    | 2 🐥       |
| 2 ♦    | 2 🏚       |
| ?      |           |

| Pass | Minimum, $2-3 \spadesuit$ . With $2=$ , 2NT is an option as well.  |
|------|--|
| 2NT  | 2=♠ min. 3m rebids by Responder are Nat, Inv, NF.  |
| 3♣   | 2=♠ max, GF. Responder may show 2 suited hands LMH via the next 3 steps. 3NT by Responder is NF, typical response.   |
| 3 ♦  | $3=\spadesuit$ max. 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♠   | 3=♠ good min. Better than pass, not enough to commit to game.  |
| 3NT  | Probably a 2-card maximum that <del>forgot</del> chose this over 3♣.   |
| 4 🌲  | Acceptable alternative to $3 \diamondsuit$ , no interest in 3NT.   |
|      |  |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1NT    | 2 🐥       |
| 2M     | ?         |

| 2 🏚 | (Over $2\heartsuit$ ) $5=\spadesuit$ , Inv. Same follow ups as above.  |
|-----|--|
| 2NT | Nat Inv. Promises 4 cards in OM.   |
| 3 ♣ | 5+ either minor, GF, implies 4 cards in OM. $3 \diamondsuit$ asks for the minor, LH. Other bids are natural, including bidding the other major to confirm a fit there. |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |             |
|--------|-----------|-------------|
| 1NT    | 2 🐥       | (Continued) |
| 2M     | ?         |             |

| 3 ◊ | Artificial, confirms a fit in M, typically no shortness. Opener can bid 3M to suggest playing in M, 3NT to suggest a contract, or 4M to insist on M, denying slam interest. Other suit bids are cuebids with hands well suited for slam. |
|-----|--|
| 3M  | Nat Inv  |
| 3OM | Unspecified splinter. Next step asks, LMH.   |
| 3NT | To play  |
| 4 ♣ | Delayed Texas; $4=$ M, $6+$ OM. Opener's 4OM rebid is an offer to play. $4\diamondsuit$ asks shortness LHLH (sing, void) 4NT is "Hexa" RKC   |
| 4 ♦ | RKC for M  |
| 4NT | Quantitative   |
| 5NT | Forcing, choice of slams.  |

# 7.2 Jacoby Sequences

## **1NT-2** ◊

1NT-2  $\Diamond$  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 $\spadesuit$ .

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1NT    | 2 ♦       |
| 2♡     | ?         |

| 2 🏚 | Artificial, shows either (5= $\heartsuit$ inv) OR (5+ $\heartsuit$ , 5+ $\spadesuit$ Inv+).             |  |
|-----|---|--|
| 2NT | 5+♡, 4+♣, GF  |  |
| 3♣  | 5+♡, 4+◊, GF  |  |
| 3 ♦ | Inv+, "Transfer" to $\heartsuit$ showing good hearts. 6+ $\heartsuit$ with 2 of top 3 honors            |  |
| 3♡  | Inv, $6+\heartsuit$ . Denies 2 of top 3 heart honors. (Subject to memory.)                              |  |
| 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+♥, no shortness. Denies 2 of top 3 heart honors.                                    |  |
| 4 ♦ | RKC for $\heartsuit$ .  |  |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |             |
|--------|-----------|-------------|
| 1NT    | 2 ♦       | (Continued) |
| 2.♡    | ?         |             |

| 4♡  | Mild slam try. Opener is expected to pass, but allowed to bid on with a good fitting hand. |
|-----|--|
| 4NT | Quantitative with $5=\%$ .   |
| 5NT | Choice of slams, $5=\emptyset$ .   |

2 ♠ after the heart transfer starts invitational sequences with a structure similar to 1NT-2 - 2X-2 - 2. This allows the invite 5-5s to show their suit. 2 - 2X-2 - 2 notably also includes all hands with both majors, 1x - 2x - 2x - 2.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1NT    | 2 ♦       |
| 2♡     | 2 🏚       |
| ?      |           |

| 2NT | 2=♡ min   |
|-----|---|
| 3♣  | 2=♡ max   |
| 3 ♦ | 3+♡ max   |
| 3♡  | 3+♡ min   |
| 3NT | NF but 3 & is the preferred bid. Responder can have a slam try. |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1NT    | 2 ♦       |
| 2♡     | 2 🏚       |
| 2NT    | ?         |

| 3♣   | $5+\heartsuit$ , $5+\clubsuit$ , invitational                  |
|------|--|
| 3 ♦  | $5+\heartsuit$ , $5+\diamondsuit$ , invitational               |
| 3♡   | $5+\heartsuit$ , $5+\spadesuit$ , invitational                 |
| 3♠   | 5+♡, 5+♠, GF without slam interest                             |
| 3NT  | 5+♡, 5+♠, Mild slam interest                                   |
| 4♣/◊ | Shortness, serious slam interest $(5+\heartsuit, 5+\clubsuit)$ |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1NT    | 2 ♦       |
| 2♡     | 2 🏚       |
| 3♣     | ?         |

| 3 ◊ / ♡ / ♠ | 5+♡, 5+ second-suit, LMH  |
|-------------|---|
| 3NT         | To play   |
| 4♣/◊        | Shortness, serious slam interest $(5+\heartsuit, 5+\spadesuit)$ |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1NT    | 2 ♦       |
| 2♡     | 2 🏚       |
| 3 ♦    | ?         |

| 3♡   | COG preferring ♡   |
|------|--|
| 3♠   | 5+♥, 5+♠, Mild slam interest                                   |
| 3NT  | COG preferring NT  |
| 4♣/◊ | Shortness, serious slam interest $(5+\heartsuit, 5+\clubsuit)$ |
| 4♡   | To play  |

#### **1NT-2**♡

 $1NT-2 \odot$  shows  $5+\spadesuit$ , any strength with caveats. Note that with  $5=\spadesuit$  and 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  $4+ \spadesuit$ .

Secondary transfers work the same as over 2%, repeated here for clarity.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1NT    | 2♡        |
| 2 ♠    | ?         |

| 2NT | 5+♠, 4+♣, GF  |
|-----|---|
| 3 ♣ | 5+♠, 4+♦, 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.   |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |             |
|--------|-----------|-------------|
| 1NT    | 2♡        | (Continued) |
| 2♠     | ?         |             |

| 4 ♣ | Serious Slam try, 6+♠, no shortness. Denies 2 of top 3 spade honors.                      |
|-----|---|
| 4 ♦ | RKC for ♠.  |
| 4 🏟 | Mild slam try. Opener is expected to pass but is allowed to bid with a good fitting hand. |
| 4NT | Quantitative with $5=$ $\spadesuit$ .   |
| 5NT | Choice of slams with $5 = \spadesuit$ .   |

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

(UPH) After a GF secondary xfer, we play this structure:

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1NT    | 2 ♦/♡     |
| 2♥/♠   | 2NT/3♣    |
| ?      |           |

| +1    | Agreeing the minor (4+). Responder can bid 3NT/5m to play or bid LH shortness (3NT not a step). Shortness bids do <i>not</i> imply slam interest, it may simply be searching for the best game. |
|-------|---|
|       | 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.  |
|       | 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 major, looking for a fit.   |
| 3NT   | NF  |
| Other | undefined   |

#### Info

(PH) Not noted above but new as of version 23.3.9, xfers are Inv+ with natural rebids by Opener. New suits may be faked to GF accept the minor.

#### **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 inbetween 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 balanced or $\Diamond$ shortness. If balanced, should have some slam interest. $3 \heartsuit$ asks for clarification, NL. |
| 3♡  | 6+♣, shortness in ♡   |
| 3♠  | 6+♣, shortness in ♠   |
| 3NT | To play. Over 2NT (min), it is implied that Responder had slam interest.  |
| 4 ♣ | Gerber 1430   |
| 4 ♦ | RKC for ♣.  |

# 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 | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 1NT    | 2NT       |
| ?      |           |

| 3♣  | No 5 card major. Says nothing about 4 card majors. |
|-----|--|
| 3 ♦ | 5=♡  |
| 3♡  | 5= <b>♠</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. (Cuebids, RKC, etc.)

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:

| NORTH | SOUTH            |
|-------|------------------|
| 1NT   | 2NT              |
| 3 ♦   | $4 \diamondsuit$ |
| 4♡    | Pass             |

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



Our 2♣ opener shows about 10-15 HCP with 6+ ♣. 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.

# **BETA**

Since we did play this in PHX I'm marking it as BETA but assuming we are playing it in NOLA.

The general idea is every bid is artificial and generally either the suit bid (natural) with a good hand or a sign off in the next step. The reason I wanted to test this structure was similar to why Joel and I played it back in the day, it lets the good hands be played from the strong side while letting you get out with the weaker hands.

For the purposes of below, Opener is allowed to break the "forces" responses with ill fitting hands for the xfer suit. I will not note this in those sections, but it is understood that **all** of these puppets can be broken. (A few of them it makes no sense to do so that I can see.)

RESPONDER

|             | 2♣  | ? |  |
|-------------|---|---|--|
| 2 ◊         | $\rightarrow$ 2 $\heartsuit$ , many options |   |  |
| <b>2</b> 00 |   |   |  |

**OPENER** 

| 2 ♦ | $\rightarrow$ 2 $\heartsuit$ , many options                                     |
|-----|---|
| 2♡  | $\rightarrow$ 2 $\spadesuit$ , sign off in $\spadesuit$ or inv+ in $\heartsuit$ |
| 2 🏚 | Size ask, inc GF in ♠   |
| 2NT | →3♣, weak raise or GF Stayman or 5–5 GF   |
| 3♣  | Constructive Raise  |
| 3x  | Nearly GF Splinter, 4♣ rebid NF   |

## **8.1** 2 ♣ - 2 ♦

 $2 \diamondsuit$  is a multipurpose bid with Responder's rebids showing invitational or more values, depending on the action.

CHAPTER 8. 2C 32

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2♣     | 2 ♦       |
| 2♡     | ?         |

| Pass  | This is how you escape to $2  ^{\circ}$  |
|-------|--|
| 2 🏚   | 5+♠, inv, NF   |
| 2NT   | "Jacoby", GF ♣ raise asking for shortness. 3♣ is a balanced maximum (12–13), 3NT is a balanced min. (Fast Arrival style) |
| 3♣    | Light Invite. Sound invites use a direct 2 ♠ as a Size Ask   |
| 3 ◊ + | Bids above 3 $\Diamond$ (except 4 $\heartsuit$ ) are natural rebids in the context of a GF $\Diamond$ response.          |
| 4♡    | Rare, but a NF way to force game in $\heartsuit$ from the Opener's side  |

#### **8.2 2** ♣ **-2** ♡

One of the simpler responses, this is a pure 2-way bid. Responder either has  $\spadesuit$  and is planning on passing  $2 \spadesuit$  or they have an invitational or better hand in  $\heartsuit$ . (Or the rare Texas to  $4 \spadesuit$ .)

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2♣     | 2         |
| 2 🏚    | ?         |

| Pass  | Escape to ♠                                 |
|-------|---|
| 2NT   | 5+♥, Inv strength, NF but correctable to 3♣ |
| 4 🏚   | Texas to ♠                                  |
| Other | 5+♡ and natural GF bidding                  |

## **8.3** 2 **♣** - 2 **♠**

"Size or Spades". Size ask (min/max) but also includes GF Spade hands.

#### Info

Note that  $2 - 2 \circ$  has a 3NT rebid to show the 5-3-3-2, but here it would be ambiguous as to whether you possess spades or not if you bid 3NT over a size response. Therefore we use a  $3 \circ$  bid as an artificial rebid to show 5 only spades. It is worth noting that there is another sequence which can show 5-5 in  $4 \circ$   $4 \circ$ 

CHAPTER 8. 2C 33

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2 ♣    | 2 🏚       |
| 2NT/3♣ | ?         |

| 3♣  | To play opp min   |
|-----|---|
| 3 ♦ | GF with $5=\clubsuit$ . This leaves room for Opener to show $4=\heartsuit$ , show $\clubsuit$ support or suggest 3NT. |
| 3♡  | 5+♠, $4=♡$ , GF. We have a different sequence for 5-5 hands.  |
| 3♠  | 6+♠, GF   |
| 3NT | To play   |
| 4 ♣ | Sets trumps, forcing  |
| 4 ♦ | RKC in ♣  |

## 8.4 2 **♣**-2NT

2NT is the weaker "preemptive" raise, a GF hand which wants to look for a 4= Major or a 5-5 GF hand.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2♣     | 2NT       |
| 3♣     | ?         |

| Pass | Less than constructive raise    |  |
|------|---------------------------------|--|
| 3 ◊  | Stayman, GF. Natural responses. |  |
| 3♡   | ♡ & ♠ GF                        |  |
| 3♠   | ♦ & ♦ GF                        |  |
| 3NT  | ♦ & ♥ GF                        |  |

## 8.5 Other

- 2♣-3♣ is a Constructive Raise. Note that this is *only* constructive, light raises go through  $2 \diamondsuit$ .
- 2♣-3♦/%/♠ is a splinter raise of clubs. 4♣ rebid by opener is the only non-GF bid.
- 2 4 is not currently defined, I'd expect undiscussed it would be preemptive but open to other meanings.
- 2♣-4  $\diamondsuit$  is RKC for ♣

## 8.6 Old System

This is here in case we decide we cannot try the new system out in PHX.

CHAPTER 8. 2C 34

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2♣     | ?         |

| 2 ♦           | Artificial asking bid, promising INV+  |
|---------------|--|
| 2 ♡ /2 ♠      | NF constructive, usually about 7-11 HCP, 5+ card suit  |
| 2NT           | Puppet to $3 \clubsuit$ , showing either a weak raise in $\clubsuit$ (most common) or a GF 5+5+ hand without $\clubsuit$ . |
| 3♣            | Constructive up to a mild invite, usually around 8-11  |
| 3 ◊ /3 ♡ /3 ♠ | Nat, 6+ card suit, GF.   |
| 3NT           | To play.   |
| 4 ♣           | Preemptive   |
| 4 ♦           | RKC ♣  |
| 4 ♡ /4 ♠      | To play.   |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2♣     | 2 ♦       |
| ?      |           |

| 2♡    | 4 cards in either major. 2 $\spadesuit$ asks, $\heartsuit$ min/ $\spadesuit$ min/ $\heartsuit$ max/ $\spadesuit$ max. |
|-------|---|
| 2 🏚   | Maximum, no 4-card major, unbalanced or unsuitable for declaring NT.  |
| 2NT   | Maximum, interest in declaring NT. Bal or 6-3-3-1 with stiff K.   |
| 3♣    | Minimum, no 4-card major.   |
| 3 ♦   | Maximum, 4+ ♦   |
| Other | Undefined.  |

2♣-2♦-2NT asks for shortness, NLMH.

## Weak 2 bids

We play weak 2 bids in  $\lozenge$  and  $\spadesuit$ . Our bids are mostly undisciplined. Non-vul 5 card suits are common, vul they are unexpected. (A 7 card suit is possible instead.) The HCP range is nominally 3–9, but it should be noted that 9 with 6= is often a 1 bid in our style.

+1 is 5/7 Ogust. ( $2 \diamondsuit - 2 \heartsuit$  or  $2 \spadesuit - 2NT$ ).  $2 \diamondsuit - 2NT$  is the forcing heart response,  $2 \spadesuit$  is non-forcing.

OPENER RESPONDER 
$$2 \diamondsuit / \spadesuit$$
 +1

| +1  | An odd number of trumps, 5 NV or 7 Vul. Next step asks strength bad/medium/good |
|-----|---|
| +2  | 6=, bad opener  |
| +3  | 6=, medium opener   |
| +4  | 6=, good opener   |
|     | Over 2♦ only  |
| 3♡  | 4= ♠, 6= ◊  |
| 3♠  | 4= ♡, 6= ◊  |
| 3NT | 4= ♣, 6= ◊  |
|     | Over 2♠ only  |
| 3NT | 6= ♠, 4= ♡  |

Over the 5/7 step, +1 re-asks for bad medium good steps. Over  $2 \diamondsuit$  we have room for 2 extra steps so we have preserved being able to show 4= majors:

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2 ♦    | 2♡        |
| 2 🏚    | 2NT       |
| ?      |           |

| 3♣  | Min    |
|-----|--------|
| 3 ♦ | Medium |
| 3♡  | Max    |
| 3♠  | 4= ♡   |
| 3NT | 4= ♠   |

## Ekren

Our  $2^{\circ}$  Opener shows a very weak hand with both majors. The expected length is at least 5-4 in either direction, but a  $3^{rd}$  seat WR on 4-4 wouldn't shock anyone. Expected HCP is weaker than our Weak 2s, approximately 1 to a bad 9. (Singleton Q, etc.) The only asking bid is 2NT. This is a best effort by Tom to put together a simple structure, but it has been agreed as of PHX.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2♡     | ?         |

| 2 🏚  | NF   |
|------|--|
| 2NT  | Asking   |
| 3♣/◊ | Nat and forcing  |
| 3♡/♠ | Wide ranging preempt   |
| 4 ♣  | Preemptive, asks for transfer to longer or ♠ if equal            |
| 4 ♦  | Preemptive, asks for bid to longer, Opener may choose when equal |

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2♡     | 2NT       |
| ?      |           |

| 3♣  | All non-minimum.           |
|-----|----------------------------|
| 3 ◊ | Min with longer ♡          |
| 3♡  | Min with equal or longer ♠ |

Over the non-min response,  $3 \diamondsuit$  asks with criss-cross responses:

| RESPONDER |
|-----------|
| 2NT       |
| 3 ♦       |
|           |
|           |

| 3♡   | Longer ♠                   |
|------|----------------------------|
| 3♠   | Longer ♡                   |
| 3NT  | 5-5 Medium                 |
| 4♣/◊ | 5-5 and shortness, maximum |

In 2NT – Resp auctions,  $4 \clubsuit$  by Responder is Hexa Preempt RKC if no trump suit is established or normal Preempt RKC if there is a trump suit.

2NT

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

#### Responses:

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2NT    | ?         |

| 3♣  | Extended Stayman                                       |
|-----|--|
| 3 ♦ | Xfer   |
| 3♡  | Xfer   |
| 3♠  | Puppet to 3NT for minor suit hands.                    |
| 3NT | To play  |
| 4 ♣ | 1430 Gerber  |
| 4 ♦ | Xfer   |
| 4♡  | Xfer   |
| 4 🏚 | Both minors balanced (typically 4-4), quant or better. |
| 4NT | Quant. New suits are 5+ card suits.                    |
| 5NT | Forcing, invites 7. New suits are 5+ card suits.       |

## 11.1 Stayman Agreements

T: This is optional but Tom's preference. It's mostly ignorable. See  $3 \spadesuit$  and 3NT responses as well as  $3 \heartsuit$  extensions.

| OPENER | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2NT    | 3♣        |
| ?      |           |

| 3 ♦ | No 4 card major. 3M rebid over this is Smolen. 4m is natural and forcing. |
|-----|---|
|     | There are no delayed Texas type sequences directly, go through Smolen.    |

Continued on next page

CHAPTER 11. 2NT 40

| OPENER | RESPONDER |             |
|--------|-----------|-------------|
| 2NT    | 3♣        | (Continued) |
| ?      |           |             |
|        |           |             |

| 3♡  | $4+ \circ. 3 \ $ asks about heart length and/or is a $\circ$ slam try. Opener bids 3NT with only 4, (over which a new suit is a cuebid slam try for $\circ$ ) or bids $4 \circ$ or cuebids a minor with $5 \circ.$ Responder doesn't promise a slam try, they can simply be trying to confirm a 5 card suit. |
|-----|--|
| 3♠  | $4$ = ♠. $4$ $\heartsuit$ agrees ♠ with slam interest, $4$ ♣/ $\diamondsuit$ are natural (not cuebids).  |
| 3NT | $5 = 4 \cdot 4 \cdot 4 \cdot 4 \cdot 4$ (with or without slam interest), $4 \cdot 4 $  |

## 11.2 Transfer Agreements

3♥ then 4♥ shows 5=5=x=x or better without slam interest. 3♦ then 3♠ shows 5=5=x=x or better 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 | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 2NT    | 3 ♠       |
| 3NT    | ?         |

| 4 ♣ | ♦ Optional KC   |
|-----|---|
| 4 ♦ | ♣. Optional KC  |
| 4M  | Shortness in bid M, $x=x=5=5$ or better with slam interest. |
| 4NT | x=x=5=5 or better 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 Tom 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 and forcing 1 round. 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 | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 3NT    | ?         |

| 4 ♣        | Requesting partner transfer to their major. Cuebids and RKC.               |  |
|------------|--|--|
| 4 ♦        | Requesting partner bid their major. Cuebids and RKC.                       |  |
|            | WARNING  |  |
|            | Herein lies doom. Everything below is a specific sort of asking bid/relay. |  |
|            |  |  |
| 4♡         | Asking for suit and about control in the off major. Passable!              |  |
| 4 🌲        | Asking for ♣ control.  |  |
| 4NT        | Asking for ◊ control.  |  |
| 5 <b>♣</b> | Asking for ♣ high card control only.                                       |  |
| 5 ♦        | Asking for $\Diamond$ high card control only.                              |  |

Over 4%, responses are alternating  $\%/\spadesuit$  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 . 5 . 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.

CHAPTER 13. 3NT 43

3NT-4 - 5 would show  $\bullet$  with no  $\bullet$  control.

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 | RESPONDER |
|--------|-----------|
| 4NT    | ?         |

| 5 <b>♣</b> | 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 1430 if the asking bid is below the 5 level, or 0314 if on the 5 level.

## **Preempt KC**

Auctions such as weak  $2 - 4 \clubsuit$ , responses are fairly typical: 0, 1 w/o 0, 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, none of which are all that great. Open to suggestions.

## **Possible Improvements**

I may want to explore using a spiral style of Response to Q-Ask rather than Specific King. Something like a stop/go scheme (like SQUARE):

- +1 No Q
- +2 O but no low K
- +3 Q and low K but not medium K

...and so on.

## 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.

As some framework for meta-rules:

- 9+ card fits
- "Set trumps" type sequences. One which came up recently was  $1 (1 \circ) 2 \circ (P) 3$ , we decided that 3NT should be NS here.
- · Double fits
- 2-suited auctions with a major fit

# Part II Competitive Bidding

## General Rules

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♣ opener responses.) This does include things like XYZ which will not apply when there is a cuebid available.
- **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 Tom/Ari play (bidding only, cards aren't relevant) from the JLall with what Tom thinks the bids should mean:

| Opener | Overcaller | Responder | Advancer       |
|--------|------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1 ♣    | 3♠         | 4x        | $4 \spadesuit$ |
| ?      |            |           |                |

| 4NT  | Encouraging in partner's suit, better than $5x$ . If $x=Maj$ , this is RKC.           |
|------|---|
| 5x   | Mild encouragement  |
| 5y   | 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 own suit, suggesting a contract, no slam 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). If Opener bids 2NT G/B, Responder may choose to bid something other than 3. if they do not wish to be passed there.

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.

Scrambling 2NT type sequences generally are either hands with 2+ places to play or a weak hand (in context) for the highest suit. This also applies in high level auctions where 4NT is the takeout bid.

#### **16.3** Misc

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

#### XX of cuebids

When does XX promise  $\mathbf{1}^{st}$  round control? Does it matter if last train is in play?

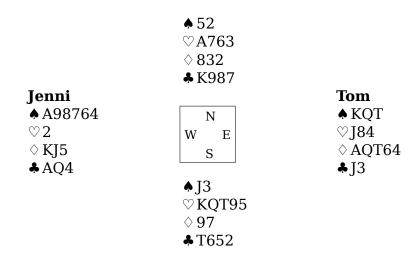
Auction with Jenni

| West            | North  | East           | South |
|-----------------|--------|----------------|-------|
| Jenni           |        | Tom            |       |
| _               | _      | 1 ♦            | 1 ♡   |
| $2  \heartsuit$ | 3♡     | 3♠             | Pass  |
| 4♣              | Pass   | <b>4</b> ♦     | 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  $4\heartsuit$ -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:  $1M-3 \diamondsuit$  Bergen). If the artificial bid can be less than Inv values then our double is takeout. (Example:  $1M-3 \clubsuit$  Bergen).

Does not apply by a PH, double is always lead directional. (i.e., Drury)

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  $4 = \circ$ .

#### **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  $2 \clubsuit$  becomes a Size-ask Stayman, with normal responses showing 11-14 and 2NT showing any 15-16. Over the 2NT rebid,  $3 \clubsuit$  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 & 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** ◊

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  $(1 \heartsuit)$ -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.

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

#### 17.9 1NT

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

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

T: It may be worthwhile treating all 3<sup>rd</sup> seat 1NT openers as weak.

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

| Opener | Overcaller | Responder | Advancer |
|--------|------------|-----------|----------|
| 1NT    | 2♣         | Double    | ?        |

| 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 hand  |

| Opener | Overcaller | Responder | Advancer |
|--------|------------|-----------|----------|
| 1NT    | 2♣         | Double    | Pass     |
| 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

Opener

Opener

#### Vs. 2 ♦ Flannery:

|     | 2 🗘 ?                    |
|-----|--------------------------|
| X   | Bal 13-15 bal or 19+ any |
| 2♡  | 3 suited takeout         |
| 2 🏚 | Natural                  |
| 2NT | 16-18 bal                |
| 3m  | Natural                  |

Responder

Responder

Advancer

Advancer

Overcaller

Overcaller

#### Vs. 2♥ Flannery:

|     | Z V :                     |
|-----|---------------------------|
| 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  $2 \circ$  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 autopuppeting 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  $4 \clubsuit$  rarely when advancer only wants to play clubs.

#### **Soloway**

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

| Opener | Overcaller | Responder | Advancer |
|--------|------------|-----------|----------|
| 2M     | 2NT        | Pass      | ?        |

| 3♣  | Puppet to 3 ♦ for sign off anywhere                                |
|-----|--|
| 3 ♦ | Xfer to other major, Inv+. Opener can accept by bidding game or Q. |
| 3M  | Stayman  |
| 3OM | Puppet for minor hands as per 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  $2 \lozenge$  weak,  $4 \clubsuit$  is  $\clubsuit$  &  $\heartsuit$ ,  $4 \lozenge$  is  $\clubsuit$  &  $\spadesuit$ ,  $3 \lozenge$  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. both majors,  $4 \diamondsuit 1$  major, 4M = M + minor.

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

Opener

## 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.

Over a 3 level preempt and 3NT overcall we play the following response structure:

Overcaller

|        | 3x   | 3NTt            | Pass            | ?              |               |
|--------|--|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 4 ♣    | Range/Hand Ask.<br>starting at 16-18                       |                 | ased 3NT bid, o | other bids are | 3 point steps |
| 4 ◊ /♡ | Transfer   |                 |                 |                |               |
| 4 •    | Christian whippe<br>Tom thinks it sho<br>preempt I usually | ould be a minor | suit xfer over  | a 3m preempt   | t. Over a 3M  |

Responder

Advancer

# Interference Defense (We Open)

## **18.1** General Agreements

#### 18.2 1 &

#### 2 ♠ and Below

Over direct interference below  $2 \spadesuit$  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  $\clubsuit$ . 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 interference 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.)

## **18.3 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.  $1 \lozenge -(1 \heartsuit) \text{Dbl}-?$  Over  $2 \diamondsuit$  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  $1 \lozenge - (Dbl \text{ or } 1 \heartsuit)$  we play a similar transfer based system.

|    | Opener<br>1 ◊      | Overcaller<br>Double | Responder<br>? | Advancer |
|----|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------|
| XX | 4+ %, any strength |                      |                |          |

| XX    | $4+$ $\heartsuit$ , any strength                             |
|-------|--|
| 1♡    | 4-5 ♠  |
| 1 🌲   | Balanced or both minors. Responder pulls 1NT to show minors. |
| 1NT   | Single minor, competitive. 2♣ is pass or correct.            |
| 2♣/2♦ | Natural, forcing 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

"Reverse Capp":

|     | Opener<br>1 ◊ | Overcaller<br>1NT | Responder<br>? | Advancer |
|-----|---------------|-------------------|----------------|----------|
| Dbl | Penalty       |                   |                |          |

Continued on next page

Opener Overcaller Responder Advancer (Continued)  $1 \lozenge 1$ 

| 2 ♣ | Single suited minor or Minor+Major 2 suiter |
|-----|---|
| 2 ◊ | Both Majors                                 |
| 2♡  | $\heartsuit$                                |
| 2 🏚 | <b>^</b>                                    |

Opener Overcaller Responder Advancer  $1 \diamondsuit 1NT$  Pass Pass ?

| Dbl      | 5+ \(\phi\), 4+ other                               |
|----------|---|
| New Suit | Nat, denies 5 ♦. 2♣ specifically 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**

West North East South  $1 \diamondsuit$  Pass 1NT  $2 \spadesuit$ 

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

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

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.

3x Nat GF

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

#### 18.4 1M

#### **Takeout Double**

Over 1M-Dbl we play:

| Opener | Overcaller | Responder | Advancer |
|--------|------------|-----------|----------|
| 1M     | Double     | ?         |          |

| 1 🌲 | Natural (over $1 \circ$ )  |
|-----|--|
| 1NT | Xfer to ♣. All xfers promise 5 cards in the suit bid, but can be preparing to raise the major as well. |
| 2 ♣ | Xfer to ◊  |
| 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'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.

#### 18.5 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 ♣ is Stayman regardless of meaning. *Mar2022: D* ouble of both natural 2 level and 3 level bids are negative/takeout.

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

Ruebensohl style:

| Opener | Overcaller | Responder | Advancer |
|--------|------------|-----------|----------|
| 1NT    | 2M         | ?         |          |

| 2 🏚 | NF  |
|-----|---|
| 2NT | Forces 3♣, auction from here looks like Lebensohl |
| 3♣  | xfer to ♦, Inv+. Opener can accept game.          |
| 3 ♦ | xfer to OM, Inv+.                                 |
| 3M  | Stayman, no stopper.                              |
| 3OM | 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 | $2  \odot$ |
| Pass | Pass  | 2 🏚  |            |

is 4 \( \infty \) and a longer minor. 2NT would be both minors.

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**♥ Majors and similar

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

#### 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 ⋄, Sys On over ♣.

#### **18.6** 2♣

The general style is to treat this bid much like other openers: negative doubles, new suits forcing after an overcall, etc.

Doubles are ignored; systems on.

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

#### 18.7 Weak 2

Over double we play "Transfer McCabe" with power XX. 2NT is a substitute for  $clubs/2 \spadesuit$ , hearts/2  $\diamondsuit$ . (That is, the cheapest rank suit that has no easy xfer.)

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.

#### **18.8** 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. Mar2022: I f 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  $1 \diamondsuit - (1 \clubsuit) - Dbl$  do not promise any one suit, even the other major. Takeout doubles are presumed to not claim any suit. Note that if both hands have promised 4+ cards in the suit then either one would lead Rusinow if they are on opening 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 NT 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.

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)

|            | ♠ 76<br>♡ AKQ<br>◊ J53<br>♣ QJ986 |                 |
|------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Tom        |                                   | Ari             |
| ♠ AKJ52    | N                                 | <b>♦</b> T83    |
| ♡JT83      | $ _{\mathbf{W}}$ $_{\mathbf{E}} $ | $\heartsuit954$ |
| ♦ K96      | S                                 | ♦ AQ72          |
| <b>♣</b> 3 |                                   | <b>♣</b> T72    |
|            | <b>♦</b> Q94                      |                 |
|            | ♥762                              |                 |
|            | ♦ T84                             |                 |
|            | <b>♣</b> AK54                     |                 |

| 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.

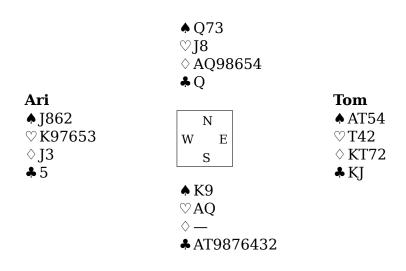
♡3 ...

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 &J in a hope to indicate a holding like this. Declarer's &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  $\clubsuit$ 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  $\clubsuit$ 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.