

The Contested Auction

System based on Polish Club.

1 ♣ Opening

Requirements

- a) 12-14 HCP, denies a 5-card major, 6 clubs, or 5 clubs and a side 4-card suit,
- b) 15-17 HCP, unbalanced with clubs
- c) 18+ HCP, any distribution.

1 ♦ Response

The 1 ♦ response in Polish standard has three variants:

- (a) 0-6 HCP, any shape
- (b) 7-11 HCP, unbalanced without a 4-card major
- (c) 17+ HCP NT, without a 4-card major
- (b) bidding 2 ♠ over a 1 ♥ rebid

1 ♣-1 ♦-1 ♥-2 ♠.

With this **artificial** sequence responder shows 5-4 minors with 9-11 HCP.

1N, 2N rebids

The 1N and 2N rebids by opener show a balanced hand and 18-20(21), 21-23(24) respectively. Responder follows analogous methods to over the 1N opening (see *uncontested auctions. 1N opening.*):

1 ♣-1 ♦-1N-?

2 ♣ is Stayman, 2 ♦/♥ are transfers to a major, and higher bids hold the same meanings as over an opening 1N, but with strengths stipulated by the first 1 ♦ response.

1 ♣-1 ♦-2N-?

3 ♣ = Stayman, 3 ♦/♥ = transfers, 3 ♠ = 5-4 minors, 4 ♣/♦ = natural (not transfers!) 6-carders

1♥/♠ rebids

With 12-14 HCP opener **may not** rebid 1N (since this bid shows the "strong NT"). Opener bids a cheap 4-card major, and if he doesn't have one, the cheapest 3-card major. Responder takes into account that the bid suit could be a "contrived" 3-card suit and does not jump-raise partner.

2♦ rebid

Opener's 2♦ is an artificial bid guaranteeing game (the auction cannot die before reaching game). Later bidding is natural with the exception of responder's 2♥, which means: "I don't have a suit to show and am too weak to bid NT", or: "I have hearts, but not enough for a jump to 3♥". With ♠QTxxx (the rest small cards) or ♠JTxxxx he must bid his suit instead of the 2♥ negative. With a six-card major with 2 honors he must bid his suit at the 3-level.

1♣-1♦-2♦-2♥-2N-?

Responder shows his (weak) major with a transfer, and 3♣ asks for a 4-card major. With two 4-card majors opener bids 3♥, and without major, 3♦. Over this last bid responder can bid 3 of a major to show 5-4 with the major.

1♥, 1♠ Responses

The responses of 1♥ and 1♠ show 7 HCP (no upper limit) and least 4 cards in the bid suit. With both 4-card majors we respond 1♥ (following the general principle that with 4-card'ers we bid the lowest first), with 5 spades and 4 hearts we bid 1♠, and with two 5-card majors we respond 1♠ (following the principle that with two 5-card suits we bid the higher one first).

Holding a 4-card major and a 5-card minor we first bid the 4-card major if not game-forcing (up to 11 HCP), but with 12 HCP we bid the minor at the 2-level first.

1♣-1♥-1♠

The 1♠ by opener is forcing. He bids this with the preparatory variant (12-14 HCP), with the strong club with 4 spades, with the strong club and five good spades (following up with repeating the spades), and also hands with 5 clubs 4 spades and 15 HCP (following up with a club bid).

"Magister" Checkback

In the chapter *Conventions. The uncontested auction* is discussed the *Magister* convention. This convention is required for sequences like: 1♣-1♥-1♠-2♣ since opener could still have the strong club. Strong-club responses (2♦, 2♥, 2♠, 2N are described in the main discussion of the convention) are:

3♣ = 5 clubs, 4 spades, 15+ HCP

3♦ = 5 diamonds, 4 spades, 18+ HCP

3♥ = 5 spades, 3 hearts, 18+ HCP

3♠ = 5 spades, less than 3 hearts, 18+ HCP

3N = 4 spades, 18+ HCP (denies 3 hearts, since opener did not make an artificial reverse [below])

Fit-Reverse (a.k.a. 'Odwrotka')

1♣-1♥/♠-2♦-?

The 2♦ bid by opener (*fit-reverse*) shows the strong club variant with at least a 3-card fit for responder's major. The chief advantage of this bid is revealing at a low level that the combined strength is enough for game and at the same time there is a minimal fit in the major. Another plus that results from this is the negative inference: if partner has the strong club in a balanced hand, and does *not* bid the *fit-reverse*, he doesn't hold 3-card support for responder's suit.

We respond to the *fit-reverse* according to the **4-4, 5-5, 6-6** scheme:

2♥ = weak (less than 10 HCP) with **4-cards** in the bid suit

2♠ = strong (11+ HCP) with **4-cards**

2N = weak with **5-cards**

3♣ = strong with **5-cards**

3♦ = weak with **6-cards**

3♥ = strong with **6-cards**

Other sequences over 1♥/♠ responses

1♣-1♥/♠-1♠/N-2♦: The 2♦ bid by responder shows 7-10 HCP, at least 5 diamonds, and a hand not suited for play in NT. Opener could pass, or choose perhaps try 2N.

1♣-1♥/♠-2♣: The 2♣ rebid shows 15+ HCP. It isn't forcing to game, but forces for one round. Responder has 3 possible non-forcing bids: repeating his suit, 2N, and 3♣.

1♣-1♥/♠-2♣-2♦: Responder's 2♦ is an artificial game-force. Responder can bid this with a good hand, to find the best contract. Further bidding is natural.

1♣-1♥/♠-2N: Opener shows 18-23 HCP without 3-card support for responder. Allowed is a singleton in responder's suit (e.g. with 5 diamonds and 4 hearts over a 1♠ response). Further bidding is natural. Responder repeats his suit only with 6 cards or a very good 5.

1♣-1♥/♠-3♣/♦: This bid practically guarantees a six-card suit and 18+ HCP.

1♣-1♥/♠-3N: Opener tries for the 9-trick game based on a club suit.

1N Response

The 1N response shows 8-11 HCP with no 4-card major or shortness. Allowed is a 5-card minor (even 5-4 minors). In principle the response promises 8 HCP, in tournaments we can cheat with 7 HCP. Partner with the weak variant does not even hold 15 HCP (he would have opened 1N), therefore even with a somewhat-good 11 HCP we bid 1N.

Developments after a 1N response

1♣-1N-2♣: This sequence is natural, forcing, showing 15+ HCP, but is not forcing to game. Continuations are considered natural. Of course responder's major bid has a semi natural meaning - showing an honor (honors) in the suit, and not a 4-card suit, since responder denied holding one with the 1N response. Over this initial auction one can still stop in 2N or 3♣.

1♣-1N-2♦: Opener has a strong club and at least 4 diamonds. Nobody can pass below game. Continuations are natural or semi natural (as in 1♣-1N-2♣ above). Responder with a 4-card diamond fit can bid a strong major or raise diamonds to the 3-level, if both majors are equal-strength.

1♣-1N-2♥/♠: Opener has at least 5 cards in the major, a strong club, and the auction is game-forcing.

1♣-1N-3♣/♦: A good 6-card suit, strong club, forcing to game.

1♣-1N-3♥/♠: Sets the bid major as trumps. Requires partner to cue-bid any ace or king.

2♣ and 2♦ Responses

The 2♣ and 2♦ responses show at least five cards in the bid suit and are game-forcing. The minimum strength is 12 HCP.

Developments over the 2♣ and 2♦ responses

Opener shows his 4-card major (hearts, if both). With a strong club, opener doesn't have to jump, since the auction is already forcing to game (in fact a jump-shift is a *splinter*). Raising responder's suit shows a 4-card fit and no major - it does not promise extras. Responder rebidding the minor is forcing, eg. 1♣-2♦-2♥-3♦: opener cannot pass.

2♥ and 2♠ Responses

4-6 HCP, 6(5) card suit.

2N Response

The 2N response shows 11-12(13) HCP and a balanced hand with no 4-card major.

Continuations are natural. Opener's 3♣ rebid is forcing and shows 15+ HCP. Rebidding the suit (above 3N) shows the strong club.

3♣ and 3♦ Responses

These are non-forcing bids showing a good 6-card suit. By a good suit we mean a major honor with partner would provide a good chance of running the suit. The suit can include two major honors (AK, AQ, KQ) or any two of the honors and the ten (AJT, KJT).

Opener shows the strong club variant by bidding his suit at the 3-level. These bids are double-meaning in the following way: continuations show stoppers (described with the *en passant* convention), but responder is required to raise a suit bid by partner to the 4-level when he holds at least 3 cards (if the response is natural with 5 cards, it succeeds in setting the suit, but if it is *en passant*, we will play in 5 of a minor or 4 of the major with a 7-card fit).

3♥ and 3♠ Responses

These bids show 7-card suits to two top honors, and nothing on the side. Partner with three "bare" aces (one in our suit) can try to make 3N with 17 points.

3N Response

The 3N response shows 12-16 HCP balanced with no 4-card major.

Responder bids only with the strong club variant (but with the "middle" variant, clubs). Note: 1♣-3N-4♣ shows the strong (or "middle") club with 5 clubs. 4♦ by responder is a cue-bid agreeing clubs.

Opener's 4♥/♠ rebids show the strong club with 5+ cards and are **forcing**. Responder bids 4N without a 3-card fit or continues bidding (cue-bid) with a fit for partner's suit.

4N is invitational to slam.

1♦ Opening

Description:

(a) 12-17 HCP with at least 5 diamonds, or any 4-4-4-1 with 4 diamonds

(b) 12-14 HCP, 4 diamonds and 5 clubs

1♥/♠ Responses

The responses of 1♥ and 1♠ are natural. They show 6+ HCP and at least 4 cards in the suit. Of course this is the theoretical HCP requirement. Yet I don't recommend responding light without a diamond fit - better to pass and in the worst case play in a bad suit than later to be hit with a double, when we finally stop bidding.

Developments after a major-suit response

1♦-1♥/♠-1N-2♣: This sequence is *Magister*

1♦-1♥-1♠-2♣: Not *Magister* but 4th suit forcing

1♦-1♥/♠-2♣: This sequence shows 5 diamonds and 4 clubs 12-17 HCP, or the reverse with 12-14 HCP. To get more information about the distribution of the minors, responder can bid the fourth suit. Opener shows now 4 diamonds and 5 clubs via 3♣. Repeating responder's suit shows 5 diamonds. Note: With a 3-suiter and a singleton spade, over a 1♠ response, we rebid 1N!

1♦-1♥/♠-2♦: This bid shows 12-14 HCP and at least six diamonds after a 1♥ response. Over a 1♠ response opener can bid this way with 5 diamonds and 4 hearts, if he decides not to bid NT with an improper hand. Responder's rebid of the other major (e.g. 1♦-1♠-2♦-2♥) is forcing and does not promise 5-4 in the majors.

1N Response

As over the 1♣ opener this response shows 8-11 HCP without a 4-card major. Unlike in response to the 1♣ opener, over the 1♦ opening certain hand-types (not suited for "grabbing" NT) have alternatives such as 2♦ and 3♦.

Later bidding over the 1N response is natural. Opener rebids 3♣ forcing for one round, but it can stop at 3♦. The 3♦ rebid is invitational to 3N, but nonforcing (with 17 HCP and 6 diamonds we must bid something else).

2♣ Response

The 2♣ response is absolutely natural and shows at least 5 clubs and game-forcing strength (12+ HCP) or 6+ clubs and invitational to game (9-11 HCP). With the second variant responder repeats clubs at the next round.

2N rebid

The 2N rebid shows 3-suited distribution (4-4-4-1) with short clubs and 12-17 HCP. Later bidding is natural. 3♣ by responder is nonforcing. Every other bid forces to game, and opener can show a minimum by bidding game (e.g. 3N over 3♦, 4♥ over 3♥) or cue-bid with a maximum opener.

3♣ rebid

This rebid shows a 4-card club fit and some extra HCP (14+). Holding 5 clubs, however, opener should bid partner's suit even without extra HCP. Sometimes with these holdings bid partner's suit with just a 3-card fit.

2♦ Response

The 2♦ response is forcing for one round. It shows at least 4 diamonds, no major, and 10+ HCP.

Developments after the 2♦ response

Bidding over the 2♦ response is natural by opener (showing stoppers) and responder. This agreement results from the fact that responder with 2♦ has already shown much of his hand (no 4-card major, no more than 5 clubs), yet opener can have still many possible distributions. The rebids should be geared so that opener can show his distribution and decide the contract and the level. Let's see some example auctions:

1♦-2♦-2♥-3♥-4♥-Pass: Opener shows 4 hearts. Responder raises with 3 hearts (!), also indicating his hand cannot stop the black suits (bidding a suit shows a stopper in the suit). Opener proposes the Moysian trump-fit.

1♦-2♦-2♠-3♥-3N-Pass: Opener shows 4 spades. Responder shows the heart stop and denies a club stop (by not bidding NT). With a club stop opener therefore bids 3N.

1♦-2♦-2N-3♦-Pass: Opener bids 2N to show a minimum hand with balanced distribution. Responder also doesn't hold much, and therefore bids the partial.

1♦-2♦-3♦-3♥-3♠-3N: Opener bids 3♦ showing a weak opener not suitable for NT. Responder decides to try for game. He shows a stopper with 3♥. Opener shows the spade stopper, and so 3N becomes the final contract.

2♥, 2♠ Responses

4-6 HCP, 6(5) suit.

3♣ Response

2N, 3N Responses

Like over 1♣, 2N (11-12 HCP) and 3N (13-15 HCP) show balanced hands without a major. Responder should feel required to have stops in both major (for those will be led). Without those responder can bid 2♦ (or 2♣). Later bidding (if any) is natural.

3♦ Response

The 3♦ response is preemptive and shows 5+ to 9 HCP and at least 4 diamonds. Opener continues bidding (naturally) only with the exceptionally interesting hands.

3♥, 3♠, 4♣ Responses

Splinters (see *Conventions. Slam-seeking*). It is still possible to play 3N.

4♦ Response

A preemptive/tactical bid. Opener passes with all hands.

1♥ Opening

Description

The opening shows 12-17 HCP and at least 5 hearts.

Developments over the 1♥ opening

Further bidding over the 1♥ opening is analogous to over a 1♦ opening. Detailed below are only the remaining sequences that differ in their description from the 1♦ opening.

1♠ Response

The key problem presented in this area is as follows: with a 3-card heart fit and a 4(5)-card spade suit do we bid 1♠ or 2♥?

We propose this answer (it is popular in America): *Respond 1 ♠ when you have enough to bid 3 ♥ on the next round.* For example:

1♥-1♠-2♣-3♥: Responder shows an invitational hand (9-11 HCP) with at least 4 spades and 3 hearts.

1♥-1♠-2♣-2♥: Responder completes a negative choosing the suit with a doubleton (!) heart. With 3 hearts and 7-9 HCP responder should not be bidding spades the first time around, but raising hearts.

In comparison to the bidding over a 1♦ opening there is still one key difference:

1♥-1♠-3♣-3♥: This auction is forcing, showing a definite heart fit. It is still possible to play 3N or 4♠.

1N Response (probably will be F)

This response has a higher maximum than over a 1♦ opening (7-11 HCP). The 1N bid denies 4+ spades or a heart fit.

Two-over-one Response 2♣

Generally GF (12+) or 9-11 with ♣ colour. Could be natural, with support and without it.

Look below.

Two-over-one Response 2♦

With the two-over-one bids responder shows a new suit at the two-level without jumping. It is accepted that the 2♦ response as well as 2♥ (over 1♠) show a 5-card suit. Resulting from this is:

The strength of these bids is that of the 2♣ response to 1♦ (12+ HCP, or 10 with a six-card suit).

Continuations

Raising clubs by opener shows 4 clubs. He can raise diamonds with a tripleton honor in the suit. Raising responder's suit shows extras and is forcing to game.

Repeating the opening suit (1♥-2♦-2♥) shows a minimum opener (12-14) and says nothing about the number of hearts.

Jump-shifting to a new suit below the opening suit (1♥-2♣-3♦, e.g.) shows 5-5 and a maximum opener. Jumping to a new suit higher than the opening suit (1♥-2♣-3♠, e.g.) is a *splinter* (see *Conventions. Slam-seeking*).

With 6-4 distribution in the opening suit and a side suit at a cheap level (e.g. over a 1♥ opening and 2♣ response: holding 6 hearts and 4 diamonds), opener rebids his suit with a weak hand (first putting a limit on the strength) and then shows the 4-card suit.

1♥-2♣/♦-2♥-3♥: forcing! Slam interest as well as showing that the response was a 5-card suit. Opener continues as in *Conventions*.

2♥ Response

This shows 6-10 HCP and at least 3 hearts.

Opener's sign-offs are pass or 4♥. If opener still wants to invite game he has several ways:

(a) Straightforward: 1♥-2♥-3♥

This is a power invite. Partner bids game with a maximum for the 2♥ response (many think the 3♥ should serve a preemptive function - we don't recommend it).

(b) Semi-artificial: help-suit game try

A supplemental suit of at least 3 cards. It can be KJxx, but also Axx. For certain this suit is not KQJx, since it is already "helped". What should partner have in the help-suit? Best support is a doubleton honor, worst three small, and in the middle are a worthless doubleton or tripleton honor.

(c) Very complex: (see *Conventions. 2N over a major-suit raise*).

2♠ Response

Invitational to game with shortness.

1♥-2♠-2NT – show singleton (2♥ - spades)

2 NT Response

Invitational to game without shortness

3♣, 3♦ Responses

3♥ Response

The bid is preemptive. The strength depends on the vulnerability.

If over the preempt opener sees chances of slam, he bids the next step asking for shortness.

3N Response

The artificial meaning of the 3N response. This response shows the "inconvenient splinter": 1♥-3N shows a diamond splinter and a 4-card heart fit. 1♠-3N shows a heart splinter.

4♦ Response (or 4♥ over 1♠ opening)

The "released" splinter bid receives the meaning of a balanced raise to game (9-13 HCP with a 4-card fit for opener).

4♥ Response (or 4♠ over 1♠ opening)

Raising partner's major to game is just preemptive (0-8 HCP depending on vulnerability).

Third-seat Responses

By a passed hand 2♣ is *Drury*. The 2♦ response can be weaker by a passed hand (8 HCP, but with a good suit and no fit). The 3♣ and 3♦ responses show 9-11 HCP with a good 6-card suit and no fit for opener. *Magister* is not used by a passed hand.

Two way game tries *by Szurig*

Invitational or slam try tactically could be preemptive, showing a shortness.

1♥ – 2♥

2♠* – 2NT (automatically)

1♣/♦ – 1♥

2♥ – 2♠*

2NT (automatically)

Inv: 3♣ – 1/0 clubs; 3♦ – 1/0 diamonds; 3♥ – 1/0 spades; slam try: 3♠ – 0 spades; 3NT – 0 diamonds; 4♣ – 0 clubs. ♣♦

After invitational bid, next bid lower than game is cue bid showing an ace. After slam try, bid game is negative.

1♠ Opening

Requirements:

This opening and continuations are analogous to the 1♥ opening. With two 5-card majors we open 1♠.

The key sequences to discuss concern 1♠-2♥.

2♥ Response

Meaning: 8+ HCP with 6 hearts or 10+ HCP with 5 hearts.

The 2♥ response is allowed with a bit weaker hands than a two-over-one response in a minor. It results first from the fact that game in hearts requires fewer HCP than game in a minor, and second from the better score that we obtain in a heart partial than NT at matchpoints. But in choosing a 2♥ response we must consider the following dangers:

(a) if we have few HCP (e.g. 8), we need a good heart suit, for over a 2♠ will we be able to rebid hearts at the 3-level?

(b) if we bid 3♥ with 5 hearts and a minimum (e.g. 10) will we be prepared for a 2♠ rebid?

Developments over a 2♥ response

1♠-2♥-3♥: minimum opener, 3 hearts.

1♠-2♥-4♥: better opener, 3- or 4-card heart fit.

With strong hands and a heart fit opener has available the following bids:

(a) *Splinter* with a 4-card heart fit

(b) Bid 2N with balanced distribution (and later rebid 4♥)

(c) Bid a minor and then 4♥ with 5 spades, 3 hearts, and a 4-card minor

Two way game tries *by Szurig*

1♠ – 2♠

2NT* - 3C (automatically)

1♣/♦ – 1♠

2♠ – 2NT*

3C (automatically)

Inv: 3♦ – 0/1 diamonds; 3♥ – 1/0 hearts, 3♠ – 1/0 clubs; slam try: 3NT – 0 hearts, 4♣ – 0 clubs, 4♦ – 0 diamonds.

1N Opening

Description:

1N shows 15-17 HCP balanced.

2♣ Response

Meanings:

(a) 0+ HCP with one or both 4-card majors unbalanced

(b) 8+ HCP with a 4-card major balanced

With variant (a) we pass any response by partner or we bid 2♠ over 2♥ to show a weak unbalanced hand with 4 spades.

With variant (b) we raise partner's suit, or we bid NT otherwise.

Developments after the 2♣ response

2♦ = no major, over which responder can bid:

2N/3N = natural

2♥ = weak hand with 5 hearts and 4 spades

2♠ = weak hand with 5 spades and 4 hearts

3♣/♦ = natural (with a 4-card major), invitational to 3N (7-9 HCP)

3♥/♠ = Smolen

2♥ = 4 hearts, possibly 4 spades. Over this response 2N and 3N by responder are natural, but promise a 4-card spade suit (opener, with spades, must remove the NT contract to spades). With other variants, bid as:

2♠ = weak hand, 4 spades unbalanced

3♣ =

3♦ = 5 diamonds, 4 hearts, invitational to game (7-9 HCP)

3♥ = invitational to 4♥

2♠ = 4 spades, denies 4 hearts. Notable continuations are:

3♣ =

3♦ = 5 diamonds, 4 hearts, invitational to game (7-9 HCP)

2♦, 2♥ Responses

Transfers - at least 5 cards in the next higher suit (2♦ shows 5+ hearts, 2♥ shows 5+ spades), any strength.

Continuations

Developments follow these examples:

1N-2♥: With all hands opener bids 2♠. Over this bid a new suit by partner is game-forcing! Hence in the auction 1N-2♥-2♠-3♣-3♠ opener shows slam interest (4♠ would be a weaker sequence).

1N-2♥-2N: Opener has a very good hand and a good spade fit, but cards suited for NT. Over this bid 3♥ by responder says, "bid 3♠". Responder can over 3♠ pass (3♥ then said nothing about hearts) or rebid the hearts - in this case it shows that 3♥ was really hearts.

1N-2♥-3♠: This bid sets spades as trumps. Further bids by responder (except for 4♠) are slam-seeking: 3N = balanced slam try, 4♣/♦/♥ = shortness slam try

2♠ Response

(a) *Invitational to 3N*

(b) *Transfer to clubs*

Developments over the 2♠ response

Opener bids 2N with a minimum opener. Then responder bids:

Pass = variant (a)

3♣ = weak hand with clubs

3N = strong hand with clubs (slam invite)

3♦/♥/♠ = shortness with a long club suit

Over 3♣ by opener all bids are the same except for 3N, which is variant (a).

2N Response

Transfer to diamonds

Developments over the 2N response

Opener bids 3♣ with a good diamond fit and a pretty good opener (generally we bid 3♣ with cards that if partner has a 6-cards diamond suit to two top honors and nothing else, we can make 3N). With other hands opener bids 3♦. Further bidding is analogous to bidding over the 2♠ transfer.

3♣/♦ Responses

Invitational to 3N

3♥/♠ Responses

These responses show shortness in the bid suit and a 5-card minor. This convention is a template for others that show 5431 distributions. Allowed are some other distributions (5521, 5530 but without a 5-card major, even 6430, 6421). The strength of these bids must guarantee game (if one doesn't stop at game, then it's a slam try).

Here are what the individual bids show, then:

3♥ = short hearts, at least 5-4 in the minors

3♠ = short spades, at least 5-4 in the minors

The 5431 convention we can also apply with shortness in a major and 4 cards in the other major. To do this we must proceed by first asking for a 4-card major:

Developments over the 5431 convention

Examples:

1N-3♥ [short hearts without 4 spades] - ?

3♠ = 4 (5) good spades - suggests a Moysian

3N = "I want to play in NT - I have 'solid' heart stoppers"

4♣ = agrees clubs

4♦ = agrees diamonds

4♥ = 4-card fits in both minors, maximum, no heart stopper

4N = 4-card fits in both minors,

Not suited for 3N, not as strong as 4♥.

2♣ Opening (Precision)

Description:

We open 2♣ with 11-14 HCP, and 5 clubs with a 4-card major, or 6 clubs. The number of clubs can be greater in both variants, but opening with a 5-card major is not allowed. Consider, reader, returning to the 1♣ opening description to recollect what hands fulfill some of the above criteria for opening 2♣, yet must choose however the 1♣ opening.

Continuations over the 2♣ opening

All bids (except 2♦) are natural:

2♥/♠ = non-forcing with at least a good 5 cards (7-11 HCP)

3♣/4♣ = preemptive

3♦/♥/♠ = forcing with 6 cards in the bid suit - convention: *Jump-shift*

2♦ Response

Meaning: asks for distribution

Over this response we can still stop in a partial (2N, 3♣), but generally this functions to find the best game.

Continuations over the 2♦ response

Opener shows his distribution as follows:

2♥ = 4 hearts

2♠ = 4 spades

2N = 6 clubs, good hand for NT

3♣ = 6 clubs, not suited for NT, minimum

3♦ = 6 clubs, 4 diamonds

3♥/♠ = 6 clubs, shortness in the bid suit (!), maximum

3N = solid clubs

The "asker" has the possibility at the next rounds to ask a further question with a cheap bid in the next highest suit artificially (e.g. 2♠ over 2♥, 2N over 2♠, etc.), and over this opener is required:

- to show his 3-card suit, if has shown 5-4 distribution
- to repeat clubs, when he has 6 (3♦ is then asking for shortness)

- to show shortness if he has previously shown 6-4 distribution

Other bids by "asker" besides the cheap artificial bid are natural and - if introducing a new suit - forcing.

Openings "TUTTI - FRUTTI"

2♦ Opening

1) 3-10 PC, (5)6+♥,

2) 3-10 PC, 5+♠ i 5+♣/♦ ,

So: weak opening on heats or weak two suiter hand with spades and minor

Continuations over the 2♦ opening

- 2♥ - bid to partner's suit;
- 2♠ - relay;
- 2BA - GF, 5+♠; now:
 - 3♣/♦ - shortness with spade support,
 - 3♥ - minimum without spade support,
 - 3♠ - support without shortness;
 - 3BA – nice hand without spade support;
 - 4♣/♦ - 5♠ i 5♣/♦;
- 3♣ - GF with any shape, (now opener automatically bid 3♦, and responder bid his own suit);
- 3♦ - inv. with supp. both majors;
- 3♥ - preemptive with supp. both majors;
- 3♠ - nat. inv.;
- 3BA - sign off;
- 4♣ - asking to bid a transfer of major suit which opener has;
- 4♦ - show major suit;
- 4♥/♠ - sign off.

2♦ - 2♠

?

- 2BA - 6♥, good hand; now:
 - 3♣/♦ - nat or seminat., F,
 - 3♥, 3BA - sign off,
 - 3♠, 4♣/♦ - cue bids;
- 3♣ - 5♠ i 5♣; next:
 - 3♦/♥ - cue bids agreed spades,
 - 3♠ - sign off,
 - 4♣ - slam bid, agreed clubs;
- 3♦ - 5♠ i 5♦; next:

- 3♥, 4♣ - cue bids agreed spades,
- 3♠ - sign off,
- 4♦ - slam bid, agreed diamonds;
- 3♥ - 6♥, week hand (new suit is a cue bid on hearts);

2♥ Opening

- 1) 3-10 PC, (5)6+♠,
- 2) 3-10 PC, 5+♥ i 5+♣/♦,

So week hand on spades, or two suiter hand – hearts and minor;

Continuations over the 2♥ opening

- 2♠ - to partner's suit;
- 2BA - relay;
- 3♣ - GF with any shape, (now opener automatically bid 3♦, and responder bid his own suit);
- 3♦ - inv. with supp. both majors;
- 3♥ - preemptive with supp. both majors;
- 3♠ - preemptive, supp. in spades and minors;
- 3BA - sign off;
- 4♣ - 4♠ - asking to bid a transfer of major suit which opener has;
- 4♦ - show major suit;
- 4♥/♠ - sign off.

2♥ - 2BA

?

- 3♣ - 5♥ i 5♣; now:
 - 3♦/♠ - cue bids agreed hearts,
 - 3♥ - sign off,
 - 4♣ - agreed clubs, asking for cue bid;
- 3♦ - 5♥ i 5♦; dalej:
 - 3♠, 4♣ - cue bids agreed hearts,
 - 3♥ - sign off,
 - 4♦ - agreed diamonds, asking for cue bid;
- 3♥ - 6♠, good hand; now:
 - 3♠ - sign off,
 - other - cue bid on agreed spades;
- 3♠ - (5)6♠, week hand (next new suit - cue bid on spades);

2♠ Opening

- 1) 5-10 PC, 5+♥ i 5+♠, (54)

2) 1-10 PC, (5)6+ ♣/♦,

Majors, or destructive block on minor;

Continuations over the 2♠ opening

- 2BA - relay;
- 3♣ - to partner's suit or GF on clubs (than after 3♦ bid 4♣)
- 3♦ - to partner's suit with good club supp. or GF on diamonds (than after 4♣ response bid 4♦)
- 3♥/♠ - nat., inv.;
- 3BA - sign off;
- 4♣ - preemptive with supp. both minors and one major;
- 4♦ - show better major suit – two suiter hand on majors;
- 4♥/♠ - sign off.

2♠ - 2BA

?

- 3♣ - 6+♣; now:
 - 3♦ - strong clubs agree;
 - 3♥/♠ - nat., GF;
 - 3BA - sign off;
 - 4♣ - preemptive);
- 3♦ - 6+♦; now:
 - 3♥/♠ - nat., GF;
 - 3BA - sign off;
 - 4♣ - strong clubs agree;
 - 4♦ - preemptive;
- 3♥ - 5♠ i 5♥; now:
 - 3♠, 3BA - sign off;
 - 4♣ - hearts agree;
 - 4♦ - spades agree;
- 3♠ - 6♠ i 5♥ (now – look above);
- 3BA - 6♥ i 5♠ (now – look above);

2N Opening

Description:

5-10 HCP with at least 5-4 in the minors.

Developments

Later bidding is natural. Responder can bid his better minor at the "proper" level. Bids at the 4-level in minors are preemptive non-vulnerable, and preemptive-invitational vulnerable (when vulnerable with better than 5-4 distribution it is possible to bid game).

The artificial response is 3♥ - asking for distribution. Over this response opener bids his longer major (3♠ shows doubleton spades, 3N shows doubleton hearts, 4♥ shows 3 hearts, 4♠ shows 3 spades) or bids naturally a 6-card suit (4♣, 4♦).

3♣/♦ Openings

6+♣/♦, constructive;

3♥ Opening

- 1) 6+♥, preemptive,
- 2) 7+♣, preemptive;

Continuations over the 3♥ opening

- 3♠ - relay;
- 3BA - sign off;
- 4♣ - bid to guess – opener pass whatever he has;
- 4♦ - show your suit:
 - 4♥ - hearts,
 - 5♣ - clubs;
- 4♥/♠ - sign off;

3♥ - 3♠

?

- 3BA - 7+♣ z asem;
- 4♣ - 7+♣ bez asa;
- 4♦ - 7♥, dobra ręka;
- 4♥ - 6+♥, słaba ręka.

3♠ Opening

- 1) 6+♠, preemptive;
- 2) 7+♦, preemptive;

Continuations over the 3♠ opening

PO OTWARCIU 3♠:

- 3BA - sign off;
- 4♣ - relay;
- 4♦ - bid to guess, look above;
- 4♥/♠ - sign off;

3♠ - 4♣

?

- 4♦ - diamonds;
- 4♥ - 7♠, good hand;
- 4♠ - 6+♠, weak hand;

Point's limits should be treated very flexible. 2nd, 4th hand position should be more constructive, also depends on vul.

Opening 3NT

Description:

Solid 7-card minor with nothing else.

Developments

4♣ and 5♣ responses are to play in opener's suit - partner passes with clubs, and bids ♦ with diamonds. 4♥ and 4♠ responses are natural.

The 4♦ response is artificial: it asks for shortness. Opener bids a short suit in a major, however with a minor shortness he bids 4N. 5♣ and 5♦ show no shortness.

Over a double of 3N, pass by responder accepts playing 3N-X !

The Contested Auction

The discussion of the contested auction we divide into two parts. The first deals with situations where our side has opened the bidding - this we will call *bidding over interference*. Auctions which are begun by the opponents, we will call *defensive bidding*, and we discuss them in the second part.

Bidding over interference

Auctions over a takeout double

We discuss here sequences pertaining to the situations when partner has opened the bidding and the intervening opponent doubles for take-out.

General principles

PS 2000 differs from PS 95. Let's review the general principles (resulting from the poll):

- (1) Over an intervening enemy double of our opening 1♣ pass shows at least 3 clubs. Next auction is transfer.
- (2) Over an intervening enemy double of our openings, responses at the 1-level are forcing, and at the 2-level are non-forcing.
- (3) Over an intervening enemy double over our openings jump-shifting to a new suit shows that suit and a fit.
- (4) Over an intervening enemy double over our opening 1N we ignore dbl, pass forcing to rdbl and if not pass in second time show possibility of playing in 2 suits (look at auction after 1NT like a overcall).

The first principle covers sequences where the enemy tries to "catch" us:

1♣-(X)-P-(P); ? Pass by third-hand says he has at least 3 clubs. It can help opener to decide whether to pass or look for safety.

1♦ shows hearts

1♥ show spades

1♠ transfer to NT

1NT show clubs

2♣ show diamonds

1♣-(X)-1♦-(X)-1♥ - only with 3 card Supp.

The second principle does not require a long explanation. Let's look at some sequences:

(a) 1♥-(X)-2♣

(b) 1♥-(X)-1♠

In sequence (a) 2♣ is non-forcing (6-10 HCP and at least 5 good clubs). In sequence (b) 1♠ is forcing. Both bids deny (in principle) a heart fit.

The third principle finds application in sequences like:

1♥-(X)-3♣

The 3♣ bid promises a heart fit and a good club suit. Primarily this bid helps partner to appraise whether to go for game or just a partial. It can also aid in deciding whether to bid higher when the enemy outbids us.

Note the double-jump is a *splinter*.

1♥-(X)-4♣

4♣ shows short clubs.

Note that the "fit-jump" convention can be used over a 1♦ opening too (and equally with 2♠ over a 1♥ opening). Since we have the problem of whether to bid our suit (to risk submerging a fit can in the contested auction cause unsolvable problems later), or to show just the fit (risking the same), we can in one bid show the bid suit and a fit with partner's suit:

1♦-(X)-2♥

The 2♥ bid shows 5 hearts, a diamond fit, and is forcing for one round.

Redouble

The redouble indicates 10+ HCP. The redouble is both an attempt to catch the opponents doubled in a contract and says something about our minimum final contract.

With the redouble we can have a fit or no fit for the opening suit. In the first case we should quickly let partner know about the fit. 1♠-(X)-XX-(2♥); P-(P)-? 2♠ would show about 10 HCP and a doubleton spade (without the ability to double 2♥), and 3♠ would show about 10 HCP and exactly 3 spades.

Bidding after a redouble

Over partner's redouble the auction is forcing (over the enemy we are required to bid one more time). It is agreed that bidding immediately over the enemy shows a minimum opener:

(a) 1♠-(X)-XX-(2♥); 3♣-(P)-?

(b) 1♠-(X)-XX-(2♥); P-(P)-X-(P); 3♣

In both the above sequences opener shows he is not happy to defend 2♥ doubled - but showing either good distribution (5-5) or shortness in hearts. In sequence (b) opener shows more(!) strength.

We add that a new suit by responder over the XX is forcing for one round:

1♠-(X)-XX-2♥; P-(P)-3♣

The 3♣ bid is forcing (with a weak hand he must on the preceding round bid 2♣).

Fit auctions over 1♥, 1♠ openings

Over the auction 1♥-(X)-?, there are several possible bids to show a fit for partner. Several we have mentioned above. Let's lay out the rest:

(a) simple raise (2♥) = weak bid (4-7 HCP depending on the vulnerability)

(b) jump-raise (3♥, 4♥) = preemptive with 4 trumps

(c) 1N = 7-10 HCP with a 3+ card fit

(d) 2N = 10-11 HCP bal.

(e) XX = 10+ HCP with supp. or 13+ without it

(f) single-jump in a new suit (2♠, 3♣, 3♦) = fit-showing

(g) double-jump in a new suit (3♠, 4♣, 4♦) = *splinter*

After a suit overcall

General principles

(1) A new suit at the 1-level and 3-level is forcing. A new suit at the 2-level is non-forcing. Examples:

(a) 1♦-(1♥)-1♠

(b) 1♠-(2♥)-3♣

(c) 1♦-(1♠)-2♥

(d) 1♥-(1♠)-3♣

1♠ in sequence (a) promises at least 4 spades and is forcing. 3♣ in sequence (b) indicates at least 5 clubs and is forcing. In sequence (c) 2♥ promises 5 hearts (with 4 hearts we would offer a double) and is non-forcing (6-10 HCP). In sequence (d) it is not the "fit-showing" convention that we play only over an enemy double. Here we don't have the possibility to reveal a strong hand cheaply with a redouble, hence we jump so that partner cannot pass.

(2) A jump-raise to the 3-level is preemptive. Examples:

(a) 1♦-(1♠)-3♦

(b) 1♠-(2♥)-3♠

In both the above sequences the bid at the 3-level is preemptive and shows not much strength and a 4-card fit for partner's suit.

(3) 2N over a 2-level enemy overcall is "general Lebensohl". It shows a non-forcing hand in any lower suit or is invitational to game with a fit for partner.

1♠-(2♥)-2N-(P); 3♣-(P)-?

Pass = clubs, weak

3♦ = diamonds, weak

3♠ = invitational to game in spades

If the enemy preempts, the invitational hand is shown with a double:

1♠-(2♥)-2N-(4♥); P-(P)-**double**

This double shows that 2N was the invitation to 4♠. Partner has to decide whether to bid 4♠ or pass 4♥.

(4) The simple cue-bid of the enemy suit shows a game-forcing raise:

(a) 1♥-(1♠)-2♠

(b) 1♠-(2♥)-3♥

(5) A bid in the **reopening** position over the enemy overcall we treat as following:

(a) A balancing double indicates shortness (at most a doubleton in the doubled suit). It does not show extras, if the enemy suit does not exceed 2 of the opened suit. Let's look at some sequences:

(i) 1♥-(2♣)-P-(P); X

(ii) 1♥-(2♠)-P-(P); X

In sequence (i) the double does not say extra HCP (2♥ is still available). In sequence (ii) the double promises extras (since the enemy suit is above 2♥) - thus the reopening double is not obligatory.

Before deciding to *trap-pass* we must take this principle into account.

(b) Bidding NT shows extra HCP:

(i) 1♥-(1♠)-P-(P); 1N

(ii) 1♣-(1♠)-P-(P); 1N

In sequence (i) opener shows 15-17 HCP and in sequence (ii) describes the strong club (18-21 HCP) - balanced distribution each time.

(6) Bidding over the interference we play the following conventions discussed in the section

- negative doubles
- Lebensohl
- trap-pass
- 2NT inquiry
- splinters

We underline that over the enemy overcall double jump-shifts to new suits are *splinters* (and not *fit-jumps*).

After a 1N opening and an enemy suit overcall

Increasingly more popular is having the agreement that over an enemy overcall double has take-out (negative) character. However the poll was not able to ask for the meaning of the double - we are left therefore with the "antique" penalty meaning.

Over natural 2♦, 2♥, 2♠ overcalls we play the *Lebensohl* convention.

After a 2♣ opening

Over the enemy double bids of new suits are non-forcing, and club raises are preemptive.

Over an enemy overcall doubles are negative, and partner with 4 cards in the opponent's suit passes.
Examples:

(a) 2♣-(2♥)-X

(b) 2♣-(3♦)-X

In example (a) double is negative (showing 4 spades) and shouldn't include shortness in hearts, since opener with 4 hearts must pass. In example (b) double is trying to find a major suit.

After 4th-seat interference

Here we discuss the situations where we have opened the bidding, the first opponent passes, and over a positive response the second opponent enters the bidding.

After an intervening double

In general we bid as if the double had not occurred, except:

(a) Pass shows bad shortness in the doubled suit

(b) jump-raise of partner's suit is weaker and with good distribution - with a strong hand we redouble

(c) Redouble shows we want to double the opponents, or a strong hand with a 4-card fit for partner. If the opening was 1♣, this redouble does not yet guarantee the strong club.

After a suit overcall

In "ancient" bridge the opener's position over an enemy overcall was called the "free" position, since without extra HCP he is "free" to pass. These days it's played differently. Opener is forbidden to bid lacking extra *distribution*. For example:

1♥-(P)-1♠-(2♣); ?

Opener with 5-5 in the fourth suit bids 2♦ independent of strength, and 2♥ also does not require extras HCP, but a good 6-card heart suit, yet 2♠ shows 4-card spade support and is obligatory even with a completely wretched opener and a 4-card spade fit.

We add that in the discussed sequences we also play *support-doubles*.

Also 1♣-(P)-1♠-(2♣); 2♦ is *fit-reverse* just as if the overcall had not happened (*odwrotka*).

Reopenings after 4th seat interference

This refers to the following type of situation: 1♣-(P)-1♥-(2♣); P-(P)-? Here we have the following agreements:

- (1) Double is "balancing" - it shows extra strength without shortness in the enemy suit. Partner passes with hands which are willing to double (but that couldn't, since we play "support-doubles").
- (2) Cue-bidding the enemy suit shows shortness.
- (3) All remaining bids are non-forcing (with strong hands we must choose to double or cue-bid).

Note: Over second-seat or fourth-seat interference we don't play the "Magister" convention.

Examples:

(a) 1♣-(1♥)-1♠-(P); 1N-(P)-2♣

(b) 1♣-(P)-1♥-(1♠); P-(P)-2♣

(c) 1♣-(P)-1♥-(1♠); 1N-(P)-2♣

In the above sequences the 2♣ bid is natural, non-forcing. With hands that would have without intervention bid the "Magister" convention, it depends on the above case:

(a) 2♥

(b) Double or 2♠

(c) 2♠

Defensive bidding

General principles

- 1) A suit overcall at the 1-level shows at least a 5-card suit and 8-16 HCP.
- 2) A suit overcall at the 2-level shows at least a good 5-card suit and 11-16 HCP.
- 3) 1N, and 2N over an opening at the 2-level, are classic with 16-18 HCP (so a little stronger than the opening) with a stopper in the enemy suit.
- 4) Jump-overcalls are always preemptive.
- 5) Double is *take-out* - 12+ HCP and support for the unbid suit(s) or *explanatory* - hand with good distribution and 17+ HCP.
- 6) A simple cue-bid is *Michaels cue-bid*.
- 7) A jump cue-bid is *NT-asking* or game-forcing in one's own suit.

1-level overcalls

We agree that a 1-level overcall promises at least 8 HCP and a 5-card suit. Opposite a passed partner not vulnerable it is possible to overcall even weaker. If we decide on this aggressive style of overcall, we must weigh the points and counterpoints of weaker bids.

Advantages:

- to direct partner to a good lead
- to find a suit to play (which sometimes be lead-directing)
- to render more difficult the enemy auction

Disadvantages:

- possibly getting doubled
- revealing distribution to the opponents

In deciding whether to overcall or not to overcall we should take into account the above points.

Over partner's overcall we bid according to the following principles

- (1) A simple new suit is non-forcing whether at the 1- or 2-level. Overcaller can pass with a weak overcall.
- (2) If we don't want partner to pass we jump-shift to a new suit.
- (3) If we have a very strong hand, but we don't have a good suit in which to jump, we cue-bid.
- (4) 1N shows 9-12 HCP and 2N 13-15, without a fit
- (5) After a major-suit overcall, with a fit in partner's suit we bid with 10+ HCP 2♣, to use in this way *Drury-fit*. Jump-raising partner is preemptive.

2-level overcalls, non-jump

The 2-level overcall should be as solid as 11-12 HCP and promise a good suit, six cards vulnerable.

Over this overcall a new suit is forcing for one round, and a cue-bid asks for a stopper.

1N Overcall

We agree that the 1N overcall is classic: 16-18 HCP somewhat balanced and a stopper in the opponent's suit.

There are many differences between the opening 1N and the 1N overcall:

- (a) the strength of the overcall is a point higher than that of the opening
- (b) for an overcall the requirements are a stopper in the opponent's suit
- (c) with a 1N overcall as the vulnerability allows we can have atypical NT distribution - possible are 5-4 distributions or a 6-card minor.
- (d) With hands that fulfill the criteria for an opening 1N we must open 1N. But in the case of the 1N overcall we have some alternatives: pass or double.

Reflecting on the 1N overcall we must consider the quality of the stopper in the enemy suit. It is enough to have "slow stoppers" like QTxx, QJxx, KT9x, where a small number of HCP in the enemy

suit practically ensures two stoppers. The worst stopper for a NT overcall is an ace without any intermediates. Here it is better to desist from overcalling 1N, since it would play better in a suit, and an eventual NT contract would be better played from partner's side.

Further bidding after a 1N overcall is the same as over an opening 1N. The exception is the enemy double. Over an enemy double partner across from the overcalling NT ignore dbl, but rdbl is a transfer for minor (opener automatically bid 2♣), pass forcing to rdbl and if not pass in second time show possibility of playing in 2 suits.

(1♥)-1N-(X)-P-(P)-XX-(P) –

Responder shows his suits as following:

2♣ = 5 clubs, over which 2♦ asks for the major

2♦ = diamonds-hearts

2♥ = hearts-spades

2♠ = spades-diamonds

The above agreements also pertain to overcalling **2N over a 2-level opening**. Further bidding after this overcall is analogous to the auction after a 1N overcall (3♣ is Stayman, 3♦ and 3♥ are transfers).

Jump-overcalls

Jump-overcalls are more or less the same as the openings (e.g. overcalling 2♠ after a 1♥ opening shows a hand that would have opened 2♠). Here we bid as over our openings (cheap bid asks for a singleton).

Double

The double of an opponent's opening has one of two possible meanings: it is *take-out*, showing a hand with opening strength without a good suit to bid, or *explanatory*, showing a hand that would overcall, but has 17+ HCP.

Take-out double

The take-out double is looking to play in one of its suits, not an attempt to penalize the opponents. So a hand is best suited for a take-out double, if we hold few cards in the doubled suit (hence we have more cards in the remaining suits, increasing the chance of finding a fit in which to play). The better distribution we have in the side suits the less strength we need for our double. If for example the opponents open one heart, with 4144 distribution (singleton heart) we can double with 12 (11) HCP, but with 4333 distribution we should think twice before doubling, even with 13 HCP.

In deciding to take-out double, according to the classic definition, we should have at least 3 cards in all the side suits (the ones not bid by the enemy). In reality this condition is difficult to fulfill, so we are forced to make the following compromise: a take-out double should promise at least 3 cards in any unbid major(s) and at least 2 cards in any unbid minor. (Pressure on the major suits requirements is because after an enemy opening as a rule our side has to have the majority of the HCP to make game in NT, but there is at least some chance of game playing in a major with less HCP, but good distribution) Doubling for takeout over an artificial (e.g. Polish) 1♣ opening, we should have at least 3 cards each in hearts and spades, and at least 2 cards in diamonds and clubs. A double of an opening 1♦ promises a 3-card fit for each major and a doubleton in clubs. In order to double a 1♥ we should have at least 3 spades and no shortness in a minor. Similarly, to double 1♠ we require at least 3 hearts and no shortness in clubs or diamonds.

Explanatory double

The explanatory double handles the following hand types:

(1) 19+ HCP balanced. In this variant of the explanatory double we cheaply rebid on the following round NT, e.g. (1♥)-X-(P)-2♣; (P)-2N, or (1♦)-X-(P)-1♠; (P)-1N. In both these sequences doubler indicates 19-21 HCP. With 16-18 he bids instead NT on the previous round, while with 13-15 HCP it is required to pass (partner's suit may be contrived if he can't pass the double... 3 clubs in the first example above and 4 spades in the second example).

Note: The above principles don't pertain to the double over 1♣.

(2) 17+ HCP unbalanced. With this variant of the double we rebid a new suit or raise partner's suit:

(a) (1♦)-X-(P)-1♠; (P)-2♥

(b) (1♥)-X-(P)-1♠; (P)-2♣

(c) (1♥)-X-(P)-1♠; (P)-2♠

(d) (1♥)-X-(P)-1♠; (P)-3♠

In sequence (a) and (b) doubler shows the explanatory double with 5 hearts (a) or clubs (b). In example (c) the doubler has about 16(17)-18(19) HCP with 4 spades. In example (d) doubler has 19-20 HCP and 4 spades.

Note: The above rules do not pertain to the double over 1♣.

(3) Some GF hand. With this type of hand on the following round we cue-bid the enemy suit

(1♥)-X-(P)-1♠; (P)-2♥

This shows a very strong hand. With a weak hand responder repeats his suit (2♠ in this case), which says nothing about the spade length - it could be in the extreme case 3 cards still. If doubler does not pass over this bid - but bids his own suit or raises partner, this shows that he has too much strength for a minimum explanatory double variant and counts on partner not passing.

We should add at this point that game-forcing 1-suited hands may be bid another way (see *Jump cue-bidding the enemy suit*).

Responding to a double

If our partner doubles, we must first read it pessimistically, which is that partner has a take-out double and about 13-14 HCP. Adding the assumed points of partner to ours, we sum our combined holdings and bid to the appropriate level that this supposed strength of the combined hands allows us. Of course, sometimes we will be holding a completely hopeless hand - here we are forced to bid our best suit at the lowest possible level - and it can possibly be a level higher than our combined strength makes safe. In this situation there is no solution, as after partner's double we rarely want to pass - unless we have a good "stack" in the opponent's suit.

Example: Let's assume that the opponents open 1♥ and partner doubles. Here are our possible bids:

(a) Pass - undefined strength, at least 5 hearts in a "sequence" (like KQJT_x, QJT98)

(b) 1♠ - at least 4 spades (see the previous discussion) - 0-7 HCP

(c) 1N - 6-9 HCP with a heart stopper

(d) 2♣, 2♦ - at least 4 clubs (diamonds), 0-9 HCP

- (e) 2♠ - at least 4 spades, 7-10 HCP
- (f) 2N - 10-11 HCP with a heart stopper
- (g) 3♣, 3♦ - 9-11 HCP, at least 5 clubs (diamonds)
- (h) 3♠ - 8-10 HCP, at least 5 spades

Note: With several distributions partner of the doubler may have 4 cards in the doubled suit and too few points to bid NT (0-5). Here one bids the cheapest 3-card suit. E.g. (1♥)-X-(P)-1♠ can have only 3 spades.

Over this HCP-based response to the double, doubler with the take-out variant normally passes.

Besides the HCP-based bids responder has at his disposal the cue-bid (2♥ in this example). This bid shows a 10+ HCP hand that is not suited for any of the preceding HCP-based responses.

Responding to the double of 1♣

Different rules apply over an enemy 1♣ opening and double. Our responses are the same as over our opening 1♣: 1♦ is negative (0-6 HCP), and others are forcing with 7+ HCP.

(1♣)-X-(P)-1♥

Responder shows at least 4 hearts and 7 HCP. Doubler's continuations are the same as if he had opened 1♣.

(1♣)-X-(P)-1♥; (P)-?

1♠ = 13+ HCP, 4 spades

1N = 13-15, no major

2♦ = fit-reverse!

Responding to a double over third-hand interference

If opener bids 1♣, partner doubles, we bid as over a 1♣ opening:

(a) (1♣)-X-(1♥)-X

(b) (1♣)-X-(1♠)-X

In example (a) double is negative (without 4 spades) and in example (b) the double is negative with 4 hearts.

After other opens the double of a new suit is penalty:

(a) (1♥)-X-(1♠)-X

(b) (1♠)-X-(2♣)-X

In both examples the doubles are penalty (we avoid in this way being psyched by the opponents).

The exception to the preceding rules is the double of the suit agreed by the opponents - *responsive double* - which shows the ability to play in at least two of the unbid suits. This double requires partner to bid his next 4-card suit. Examples:

(a) (1♥)-X-(2♥)-X

(b) (1♠)-X-(3♠)-X

In both sequences the double tries to find the best trump suit and requires appropriate strength.

Doubles of 2-level openings

The double of an opening at the 2-level has much the same meaning as one over a 1-level opening. Below are explained certain additional aspects.

1) The double of an artificial 2♦ (Wilkosz or Multi) has the same meaning as the double of a natural 2♠ opening. It shows a general take-out but not a spade fit (could be short in spades), instead requiring at least 3 hearts. If we don't have at least 3 hearts, with less than 15 HCP we pass and come in on the next round. If the opponents remove to 2♥ (or 3♥), now we can double for take-out, showing at most a doubleton heart. If the opponents have spades we must then keep silent or bid NT.

2) After 2♥ and 2♠ openings and a double we play Lebensohl (see *Conventions. The contested auction*).

Michaels Cue-bid

Michaels cue-bid we call bidding the suit the opponents' opened at the lowest possible level, e.g. (1♥)-2♥, which shows 5-5 distribution with a major suit. Michaels cue-bid is also played over a 2-level opening, e.g. in the sequence (2♥)-3♥. More exact details are given in the chapter *Conventions. The contested auction.*

Jump cue-bid

This bid can occur in the following setup: (1♥)-3♥. The jump cue-bid has the following meaning:

- (1) asks for a stopper with a solid minor
- (2) forcing to game with any self-sufficient suit

Assume over the enemy 1♥ opening we overcall 3♥ with the following hands:

- (a) ♠ J43 ♥ 8 ♦ A2 ♣ AKQ9865
- (b) ♠ AKJT653 ♥ - ♦ AQ3 ♣ AJT
- (c) ♠ AJ ♥ 2 ♦ KQJT98765 ♣ AK

Partner always initially assumes variant (1), and tells whether he holds a stopper in the enemy suit: with a stopper he bids 3N, and without a stopper something else (4♣ would indicate weakness). With hand (a) we pass over 3N or 4♣, and over 3♠ from partner ("I have something") we bid 4♣. With hand (b) over any bid by partner we bid 4♠ showing self-sufficient spades. With hand (c) over each bid by partner we rebid 5♦ (not 4♦!) to say that the heart stopper didn't matter, but that we want to possibly try for slam.

Overcalling an enemy 1N opening (Jassem convention)

Some changes have followed since PS 95. The recommended convention (a.k.a. *Jassem*) allows us to show any 2-suiter:

Double = 5-card minor (at least) and a 4-card major (but not 5-cards). Over this, 2♣, 2♦, and 2♥ are "pass-or-correct" and say that doubler must pass if he holds 5 or 4 cards in the bid suit.

2♣ = any one-suited hand with at least 6 cards (2♦ asks for the suit)

2♦ = 2-suited with the majors (at least 4-4, 2N asks for distribution)

2♥ = 5 hearts and a 4+ card minor

2♠ = 5 spades and a 4+ card minor

Overcalling a 1N opener is not based on strength, but distribution. This follows the rule of straining to show shape, since rarely over a 1N opening (strong) do we have game. Because of this partner tries to get to a playable contract at the lowest possible level.

Over higher openings

Double at the 3-level is pure take-out. Double at the 4-level is very "card-showing".

To help in "contested auctions" we agree on the following principle: carrying back a double of a 5-level contract has constructive character: bid knowing that we have chance of making the announced contract (not bid by the defense). Other principles are not given, since "preempts work".

In the reopening seat

Here, we discuss the situation where the enemy has opened the bidding, there have been two passes, and it is our turn to speak. We bid according to the following principles:

- 1) A take-out double can be weak, even 9 HCP, but if weak the hand promises shortness in the doubled suit. Partner of the doubler makes a HCP-based response assuming a weak take-out double.
- 2) 1N in the reopening seat shows 11-14 HCP balanced. Further bidding is natural (no transfers!)
- 3) 2N shows 19-21 HCP balanced
- 4) 16-18 HCP balanced hands double, and then rebid NT over the response.
- 5) Jump-shifting (even not vulnerable) has constructive character, and requires a good 6-card suit and 11-15 HCP.