

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 1

## Puppet Stayman

**A. Background:** Use of the standard Stayman Convention results in the No Trump bidder disclosing his/her Major suit holdings when partner responds "2C". The majority of times, however, in excess of 55% of the instances when the Stayman Convention is invoked, the opener has the opposite Major suit from that sought by the Responder, or no 4-card Major at all. Thus, the partnership returns to a No Trump contract with declarer having disclosed a 4-card Major suit or lack thereof. The result is that the defense now has insight into declarer's distribution with specific reference to the Major suits, and, by deductive reasoning, the Minors as well. This information can be of great value in their defense of the hand.

The Puppet Stayman Convention, used in conjunction with Jacoby Transfer Bids, is a modification of the regular Stayman Convention, and is designed specifically to allow the same requisite disclosures while seeking a Major suit fit, but without the accompanying above-mentioned negative aspect afforded the defense. **With this Convention it is the responder, not the opener, who evidences his/her Major suit holding.** Remember, statistically speaking, it is responder's hand which is likely to be tabled as the eventual Dummy. With this Convention the opener never discloses his/her Major suit holdings unless a fit is found, and even under a favorable fit circumstance, no disclosure is made by opener regarding the alternate Major suit about which responder has no central interest.

A secondary advantage of Puppet Stayman is to allow an opening bid of 1NT with a 15 HCP count (even 2NT with commensurate values) either scenario with an otherwise balanced hand, without giving up the possibility of eventually finding a potential 5-3 Major suit fit, especially under circumstances where there be invitational values by responder to the NT opener. Under circumstances where Puppet Stayman is not played by the partnership, such hands, oft times, offer opener a lack of an adequate rebid following a one Heart or a one Spade opening call. Note that if opener were to have opened 1 Spade as in Example (a), or 1 Heart as in Example (b), and assuming a possible 2 Club or 2 Diamond response by partner, any potential rebid by opener would be, to a greater or lesser degree, either inadequate, misleading and distorted, or both.

Example: (a) AQXXX AQX KXX XX (or) (b) XX AJXXX KQX AJX

**B. The Convention:** Puppet Stayman uses the "2C" response to a 1NT or a "3C" response to an opening 2NT to initiate a series of subsequent bids en route for a possible search for an 8-card Major suit fit. However, rather than asking opener to bid a 4-card Major, opener is asked to bid a Major suit only if it contains five pieces. If opener responds either 2H or 2S, responder can then proceed as if opener had opened 1H or 1S but with the additional knowledge that opener has just 5 pieces of the Major suit and 15-17 HCP's. A response of "2D" by opener signifies the absence of any 5-card Major, but offers no information on opener's possibly having none, one or two 4-card Majors. Note that **almost all bids in the Puppet Stayman Convention need be alerted, for almost all are artificial.** (*All bids that are artificial, and thus alertable, are shown, hereafter, in quotes.*)

### 3-Way Jacoby Transfer/Inquiry Bids By Responder

- (A) “2D”/ = Transfer to Hearts (“3D” over an Opening 2NT)
- (B) “2H”/ = Transfer to Spades (“3H” over an Opening 2NT)
- (C) “2S”/ = Minor Suit Inquiry (“3S” over an Opening 2NT) - Seeking a Minor suit preference from opener. (Opener responds “3C” (“4C”) to show equal or longer Clubs or “2NT” )”3NT”) to show longer Diamonds). (Note 3C (4C) level is never by-passed by opener’s responses in case a final 3C (4C) destination be desired by responder. This Minor suit inquiry serves two purposes: (1) To find a 5-3 or better Minor suit fit in hands where responder, holding a 5-5 or better Minor suit holding, wishes to escape from a perceived doomed 1NT or 2NT contract, or (2) To explore a Slam interest in one of the Minors evidenced by an artificial “3H” further bid by responder subsequent to opener’s first answer to the Minor suit inquiry. Such a furtherance requests additional information about opener’s Minors in step fashion. Example: After 1NT/”2S”/”2NT”/”3H”/ “3S”= 3 Diamonds, “3NT”= 4 Pieces. After 1NT/”2S”/”3C”/”3H” “3S”=3 Clubs, “3NT” = 4 Pieces, “4C” = 5 Pieces.

### Direct Puppet Stayman Bids By Responder After 1 NT By Opener (By Groupings)

The following three groups of bids are used where Responder *is not* interested in opener’s Major suit holdings. In these series of bids, the Responder is the undisputed Captain of the bidding process and opener responds only to that which is asked by Responder.

#### 1. Game Level Bids By Responder

All bids in this category are utilized when responder makes the unilateral decision that game is suitable and that it is presumed best if he/she be declarer; i.e., that the opening lead were to come towards, rather than through, responder; notwithstanding the stronger hand being revealed as the Dummy hand. (Opener passes all of the bids in this category)

- (A) 3NT = To Play (Responder has **no** interest in either Major suit **even if** a 5-card Major held by Opener)
- (B) 4H = To Play (Used when responder opts to become declarer rather than to transfer.)
- (C) 4S = To Play (Used when responder opts to become declarer rather than to transfer.)
- (D) 5C = To Play
- (E) 5D = To Play

#### 2. Game-Forcing Texas Transfers Bids By Responder

All bids in this category are utilized when responder makes the unilateral decision that game is suitable and that it is presumed best if the strong hand be concealed, that opener become the declarer, and that the opening lead come towards the strong hand.

- (A) “4D”/ = Transfer to 4H
- (B) “2C”/”2D”/ “4H” = Transfer to 4S (“New Mexico Transfer”)

### **3. Intended Drop Dead Bids By Responder**

- (A) **“2C”/** = **Willingness to accept any response from opener**; i.e., “2D”, 2H or 2S. (Ideally done with Responder having a 3-3-5-2, 3-3-7-0, or 3-3-6-1 distribution. Is invoked when Responder wishes to exit from a NT contract holding as few as 0-8 HCP's) Could even be utilized with a weak 6-card Diamond suit wherein, absent a “2D” response, and subsequent to a 2H or 2S response from opener, responder will run to 3D.
- (B) **“2NT”/** = **Forces “3C”** (Responder is either desirous of playing in a “drop dead” 3C contract or else has a likely Slam 4-4-4-1 distribution. Subsequent to the “3C” response from opener, responder will bid his/her singleton seeking support for one of the other three suits.

### **4. Puppet Stayman Bid To Investigate for a 5-Card Major Before Settling on 3 NT**

If Responder has game-going values; i.e., at least 10 HCP's, knowing that the final destination is to be no less than a 3 NT contract, but yet having an unbalanced hand with a 3-card Heart suit and/or a 3-card Spade suit, Responder may well investigate for a possible hidden, as-yet-undisclosed, 5-card Major held by opener before settling on an alternate 3 NT contract.

- (A) **“2C”/”2D”/3NT = To Play** (Responder first investigates the possible presence of a 5-card Major. If opener responds 2H or 2S evidencing a 5-card Major suit, responder can accept the Major suit if having 3 matching pieces, or, if opener responds “2D”, responder can return to 3NT .)

### **Puppet Stayman Bids After “2D” Response By Opener**

(By Groupings)

The following four groups of bids are used when Responder is **interested in opener's Major suit** holdings. In these series of bids, the opener and the Responder work together as a team with one, or the other, acting as the ultimate Captain of the team in so far as the final contract dependent upon the series of questions and answers by the individual partners.

### **5. Invitational Bids With Responder Holding 6-4 or 4-6 in the Majors**

The only means to accomplish this goal would be to handle the scenario as if there were a 5-4 invitational scenario and if opener does not evidence a fit for the 4-card suit, responder may then exit into his/her 6-card suit confident of no fewer than two cards from opener.

### **6. Game-Forcing Bids With Responder Holding 6-4 or 4-6 in the Majors**

- (A) **“2C”/”2D”/”4C” = 6 Hearts and 4 Spades, Game Force** (Opener bids 4S with 4 Spades or 4H absent the latter)
- (B) **“2C”/”2D”/”4D” = 6 Spades and 4 Hearts, Game Force** (Opener bids 4H with 4 Hearts or 4S absent the latter)

**7. Bids with Responder Holding 5-4 or 4-5 in the Majors**

- (A) “2D”/2H/2S = **5 Hearts and 4 Spades, Invitational Values** (With 15 HCP’s, opener will pass with a Spade preference, bid 3-Hearts with a Heart preference, else 2NT. With 16-17 HCP’s, opener will bid either 4H, 4S, or 3NT.)
- (B) “2C”/”2D”/”3D” = **5 Spades and 4 Hearts, Invitational Values** (With 15 HCP’s opener will bid either 3H or 3S. With 16-17 HCP’s opener bids 4H, 4S, else 3NT.)
- (C) “2C”/”2D”/”3H” = **5 Spades and 4 Hearts, Game-Force** (Opener bids 4H holding 4 Hearts, 4S holding 3 or 4 Spades, else 3NT with  
\*(See # 10. Below for 2-way alternate meaning) specifically 3 Hearts and 2 Spades.)
- (D) “2C”/”2D”/”3S” = **5 Hearts and 4 Spades, Game-Force** (Opener bids 4S holding 4 Spades, 4H holding 3 or 4 Hearts, else 3NT with  
specifically 3 Spades and 2 Hearts.)

**8. Bids With Responder Holding One 4-Card Major**

- (A) “2C”/”2D”/”2H” = **4 Spades and Fewer than 4 Hearts** (Opener responds 2S holding 4 Spades and a Minimum 15 HCP’s, 3S holding 4 Spades and a Maximum of 16-17 HCP’s, 2NT holding fewer than 4 Spades and a Minimum of 15 HCP’s, or 3NT with fewer than 4 Spades and 16-17 HCP’s)  
\* (See # 10. Below for 2-way alternate meaning)
- (Responder may pass, continue to 4S, or correct to 3NT when holding game values.)
- (B) “2C”/”2D”/”2S” = **4 Hearts and Fewer than 4 Spades** (Opener responds 3H holding 4 Hearts and a Minimum 15 HCP’s, 4H holding 4 Hearts and a Maximum of 16-17 HCP’s, 2NT holding fewer than 4 Hearts and a Minimum of 15 HCP’s, or 3NT with fewer than 4 Hearts and 16-17 HCP’s.)
- (Responder may pass, continue to 4H, or correct to 3NT when holding game values.)

**9. Bids With Responder Holding Two 4-Card Majors**

- (A) “2C”/”2D”/”2NT” = **Holding Both 4 Hearts and 4 Spades, and Invitational Values**. (Opener corrects to 3H or 3S with 4 of either and a minimum 15 HCP’s, 4H or 4S with 4 of either and a maximum 16-17 HCP’s, Passes 2NT with a minimum and neither 4-card Major, or responds 3NT with a maximum 16-17 HCP’s and neither 4-card Major.)
- (B) **Holding Both 4 Hearts and 4 Spades, with Game Values**. (See # 10 (2) below)

## 10. 2-Way Heart-Bids By Responder

There is one further nuance in order to evidence the missing possibilities not yet included. **All Heart responses by the Invokee evidence a Two-Way possibility** and not the single manner already shown.

(A) “2C”/”2D”/”2H” = Either: (a) **Four Spades and Fewer than Four Hearts** (Opener responds 2S with 4 Spades and a minimum of 15 HCP’s, 3S with 4 Spades and a maximum of 16-17 HCP’s, 2NT with fewer than 4 Spades and a minimum of 15 HCP’s, or else 3NT with fewer than 4 Spades and a maximum of 16-17 HCP’s.)

(With greater than 9 HCP’s, responder can either continue to 4S if opener bids 2S or 3S evidencing a holding of 4 Spades, or continue to 3NT if opener denies a 4 Spade holding and having evidenced 15 HCP’s by bidding 2NT.)

or: (b) **An invitational 2NT scenario** (Responder, not having been interested in Spades at all, will correct to 2NT with 9-10 HCP’s if opener bids 2S, or will continue to 3NT if opener responds 3S evidencing 16-17 HCP’s.)

(B) “2C”/”2D”/”3H” = Either (1) **Five Spades and Four Hearts, Game Forcing**, or (2) **Four Spades and Four Hearts, Game Forcing**

Opener will respond: (a) 4H with 4 Hearts

(b) 3S with 3 Spades (In case responder has 5 Spades)

(c) 4S with 4 Spades

(d) 3NT with specifically 2 Spades and 3 Hearts (No Major interest)

## 11. Puppet Stayman Over a 2NT Opening Bid

(A) **3-way Jacoby transfers as before.** (D = Hearts, H = Spades, and S = Minor Suit Inquiry)

(B) “3C” asks for a 5-card Major, “3D” reply by opener denies a 5-card Major.

(C) “3NT” shows 4-4 in the Majors with game values, opener passes or corrects to 4H or 4S.

(D) “3C”/”3D”/”3H” = **4 Spades and fewer than 4 Hearts, or 5 Spades and 4 Hearts.**

1. Opener will then bid 3NT if no interest in either scenario; (i.e., having 2Spades and 3 Hearts),

2. Or “3S” if having some interest in either or both scenarios.

Responder will pass 3 NT in instance 1. or if 2. will bid:

a) 3NT if holding 4S and fewer than 4 Hearts (Opener can correct to 4S if so desires).

b) or 4H if holding 5 Spades and 4 Hearts (Opener can then choose).

(E) “3D”/”3H”/”3S” = **5 Hearts and 4 Spades.** Opener bids 4H, 4S, or 3NT.

(F) “3C”/”3D”/”3S” = **4 Hearts and fewer than 4 Spades.**

(G) “3C”/”3D”/3NT = **To play**, Must be alerted as being necessary even if Responder has no interest in a 5-card Major because of (C) above. or having an interest in one of the Majors holding three pieces looking for five pieces from opener.

### **12. Quantitative Invitational NT Bids Over a 1NT Opening Bid**

- (A) 4NT = Demands a pass with a minimum (15 HCP's) and 6NT with a maximum (16-17 HCP's)  
(B) 5NT = Demands 6NT with a minimum (15 HCP's) and 7NT with a maximum (16-17 HCP's)

### **13. Odd-Ball Holdings Utilizing Puppet Stayman**

- (A) “2C”/”2D”/”3C” = **A long unspecified Minor Suit with Slam Possibility.** Opener will take a relay to “3D” after which responder, with Slam inquiry and 6-losers in a pre-supposed 6-card or better Minor suit of choice, bids “3H” with a semi-solid Club suit, “3S” with a semi-solid Diamond suit, and 3NT with a totally solid Minor (easily discernible by opener). Opener will then apply the losing trick count, and with 6 losers and support for the semi-solid Minor, or 6 losers opposite the solid Minor will proceed to 6 of the Minor.
- C. **Summation:** The Puppet Stayman Convention is admittedly more intricate and involved than regular Stayman. In some of its fancy sequences, declarer's hand is sometimes revealed, but in the “bread and butter” sequences, it usually is not. In the final analysis, it is usually more fun to play, more exacting and diverse in its capacity for Responder to show his/her holdings, yet devoid of mechanisms which inadvertently impart information useable by the defense should No Trump become the final contract. It is a valuable and useful bidding tool.

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### Lesson 2

### “SOINX”

“SOINX” an acronym for “Scramble Out of 1NT Doubled (X)” is an artificial convention utilized when the Opponents double your Partner’s opening 1NT bid (evidencing an equivalency of approximately 16 or more HCP’s over a Strong (15-17 HCP) No Trump System, or 13 or more HCP’s over a weak (11-14 HCP) No Trump System, and you, the partner of the 1NT bidder, must decide, based upon your distribution, and/or the presence or absence of any of the remaining HCP’s left in the combined hands of you and your LHO (Doubler’s partner), whether to save your partner’s doubled 1NT, or to punish the original Doubler by steering the bidding into a penalty double scenario.

<u>Example:</u>	<u>North (Opponent)</u> “Double”	
	<u>West (Partner)</u> 1NT	<u>East (You)</u> <u>???</u>

The standard, more usual ways such a scenario is handled are either of the following:

- a. Everything is natural to play.

Example: 1NT Dbl. 2H (To Play)

- b. “Front of Card”; i.e., Stayman and transfers are both still in force.

Examples: (1) 1NT Dbl. “2C” (Stayman)  
(2) 1NT Dbl. “2H” (Transfer to Spades)

The problem with the above-referenced extrication methods is that they fail to include a method wherein the NT bidder can be brought into the decision-making process when Partner has two suits with which to “save” the situation. The “SOINX” Convention, however, solves this problem and utilizes three bids by Opener’s partner, each of which signifies a very different kind of holding, and with variant intent. They are as follows:

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a) A Redouble forces a puppet bid of “2C” by West, with East then placing the contract into a 1-Suiter by either passing if his/her suit is Clubs, or by bidding 2D, 2H, or 2S.

b) Any suit bid by East is the lower-ranking of 2 touching suits with the NT bidder either passing or bidding the next higher ranking whichever he/she prefers of the two offered choices.

(Examples: “2C” = C&D; “2D” = D&H; “2H” = H&S)

c) A “Pass” by Partner forces a “Redouble” by Opener. East now either converts the Redouble to penalties by passing; else bids the lower ranking of 2-Non-Touching suits (C= C&H; D=D&S) with Opener then choosing the lower-ranking by passing else converting to the higher-ranking suit if that be Opener’s preferred choice.

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 3

#### New Minor Suit Forcing

“New Minor Suit Forcing” is generally recognized as **a rebid by Responder, subsequent to a Minor-Major- NT bidding sequence by the partnership.** It is an alertable cuebid using the alternate, previously-unbid Minor suit as the initiating, artificial cue bid.

		<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
<u>Examples:</u>	(a)	1C 1NT	1H “2D”
	(or)		
	(b)	1D 1NT	1S “2C”
	(or)		
	(c)	1D 2NT	1H “3C”

It can, however, be thought of as being provoked in a surrogate, alternative similar-meaning type sequence such as,

(d)	1H 2H	1S 3C
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even though, in this latter example, the 3C Minor suit bid is natural; as opposed to the cuebids listed above in (a) or (b) or (c) which may well be conventionally artificial, it is still possible to be used in such a manner as to invoke a similar possible response from the opening bidder, as we shall discuss herein.

In each of examples (a), (b), and (c), above, **Responder’s new Minor suit rebid evidences a possible 5-card Major suit holding with at least invitational strength;** i.e., 10 HCP’s or more. **Opener**, who has evidenced a balanced hand, too weak to open 1NT in examples (a) and (b), or 2NT as in example (c); **is asked to either evidence or to disavow a 3-card support for responder’s previously-mentioned Major suit.**

Opener, who has already denied 4-card support as a result of his/her response of NT, responds:

	<u>Without 3-card Support</u>		<u>With 3-card support</u>	
	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
(a)	1C 1NT "2S" (with a minimum)	1H "2D"	1C 1NT 2H (with a minimum)	1H "2D"
	1C 1NT "2NT" (with a maximum)	1H "2D"	1C 1NT 3H (with a maximum)	1H "2D"
	(or)			
(b)	1D 1NT "2H" (or 2D) (With a minimum)	1S "2C"	1C 1NT 2S (with a minimum)	1S "2D"
	1D 1NT "2NT" (With a maximum)	1S "2C"	1C 1NT 3S (with a maximum)	1S "2D"
	(or)			
(c)	1D 2NT "3S" (With a minimum)	1H "3C"	1D 2NT 3H (with a minimum)	1H "3C"
	1D 2NT "3NT" (With a maximum)	1H "3C"	1D 2NT 4H (with a maximum)	1H "3C"

Subsequent to any of these bidding sequences, Responder then becomes the Captain, signing off at 2- or 3NT, 3- or 4 of the agreed-upon Major, else invites or examines for Slam with the knowledge gleaned from the bidding interplay. Note that without 3-card support for Responder's Major suit, all of Opener's rebids in response to the New Minor Suit cue-bid are artificial in nature. Having acknowledged this fact, however, all of the bids in the New Minor Suit system are alertable since they have a specificity of meaning to the partnership.

For the most part, when responder invites to game on many hands with as few as 10 HCP's., but one *with* a fit, a distributional point or two added to partner's maximum could conceivably elicit game, whereas, if partner has only a 12 HCP count *without* a fit for responder's Major suit, the partnership will usually fare best in a 2NT contract with their combined 22 HCP count.

New Minor Suit Should *never* be utilized by a Responder in above-type auctions with fewer than 10 HCP's.

The ability of Responder to handle the bidding subsequent to opener's rebid of 1NT in a Minor-Major-NT sequence is now complete with the availability of the "New Minor Forcing" Convention.

In each of the following six (6) types of hands, what is Responders rebid?

Examples: The bidding has gone: Opener (Partner) Responder (You)

1D 1H  
1NT ????

a) XX Opener (Partner) Responder (You)

KQXXX 1D 1H (Bid 2H. You are concerned not

XXX 1NT ????

QXX

to leave the final contract in NT with partner denying 4 Spades. You know opener can have no fewer than 2 Hearts due to his/her rebid of 1NT and you hope it be 3 pieces, but you are willing to play the hand in 2H even with a 7-card fit it lieu of 1NT. Your 2H bid is a drop dead rebid.)

b) X Opener (Partner) Responder (You)

KQXXXX 1D 1H (Bid 2H once again a drop dead

XXX 1NT ????

QXX

scenario. This time you are confident of the 8 or 9 piece Heart fit with partner guaranteeing 2 or 3 pieces with his/her 1 NT Rebid.)

c) XX Opener (Partner) Responder (You)

KJXXXX 1D 1H (Bid 3H, Invitational. You

AXX 1NT ????

QX

Commit the partnership to a Heart contract evidencing at least 6 pieces, you need only to ask partner to proceed with a 4H rebid holding a maximum of 13-14 HCP's, else pass the 3H bid holding a minimum of 11-12 HCP's.)

d) X Opener (Partner) Responder (You)

KQXXXX 1D 1H (Bid 4H. You know opener has

AXX 1NT ????

AXX

no fewer than 2 Hearts and opposite the opening 7-loser hand you can see no less than a game contract in Hearts as the proper end contract.)

e) XX Opener (Partner) Responder (You)

KQXXX 1D 1H (Bid "2C", the New Minor Force.

KXX 1NT ????

QXX

You hold at least 10 HCP's and 5 Hearts. Opener has already denied 4 Hearts, but can have no fewer than 2 owing to his/her rebid of 1NT. You now require information as to openers having either 2 or 3 Hearts, and whether his/her point count is either a minimum of 11-12 or a maximum of 13-14 HCP's. If opener bids "2S" (2 Hearts + minimum) you will rebid 2NT (Drop Dead). If opener bids "2NT" (2 Hearts + a Maximum) you will Pass. If opener bid 2H (3 Hearts + a Minimum) you will pass. If opener bids 3H (3 Hearts + a maximum) you will proceed to 4 Hearts.)

f) XX Opener (Partner) Responder (You)

KQXXX 1D 1H (Bid "2C", the New Minor Force.

AXX 1NT ????

AXX

You know your team belongs in game, you only need to know whether opener has 2 or three pieces to determine whether 3NT or 4H is the better final contract. If opener bids "2S" or "2NT" showing 2 Hearts and a minimum or maximum point count respectively, you will proceed to 3NT. If opener bids 2H or 3H showing a holding of 3Hearts, in either case you will proceed to 4H.)

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 4

# “4<sup>th</sup> Suit Forcing”

Usually, any new suit bid by Responder is natural and forcing for at least one round. There is one circumstance, where a new suit by Responder, is, however, *not* forcing. When Opener opens with either 1C or 1D, Responder then bids 1S, Opener rebids 1NT, and Responder rebids 2H, such sequences are not forcing.

	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>Responder's Hand</u>
(a)	1C 1NT	1S 2H	AXXXX KXXX (X) X (X)
(b)	1D 1NT	1S 2H	XX

In both of these examples above, Responder is showing 5-Spades and 4 or 5 Hearts, and, with less than game values, as Captain, is presenting, a final contract of either 2H or 2S as a better alternative than Opener's 1NT. Here, even though a new suit by Responder has been introduced, the bid of 2H in each of the above, is not forcing. In most other examples, a new suit by Responder is forcing for one round.

At the 1-Level, as Opener and Responder both bid “Up the Ladder”, the new suits by Responder are all natural, and are both forcing for one round (Example c). **Any new suit, presented by Responder at the 1-Level, is forcing for one round.**

	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>Responder's Hand</u>
(c)	1C 1H	1D 1S	AXXX XX KXXX XXX

When Responder bid of any new suit is presented as a Reverse, such new suit bids are natural and are forcing to game (Example d). **A Reverse by Responder evidences, at least, opening count, and is forcing to game.**

	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	<u>Responder's Hand</u>
(d)	1C 1NT	1H 2S	AXXX AXXXX AK XX

A 4<sup>th</sup> suit bid by Responder may be artificial or natural, but, unless at the 1-Level as in Example c above, is usually forcing to game (although some partnerships play 4<sup>th</sup> suit is forcing only for one round). Such a bid is called “4<sup>th</sup> Suit Forcing”. Until proven otherwise by any further rebid by Responder of that 4<sup>th</sup> suit, **the bid is considered conventional, is alertable, is usually artificial in that it, most likely, says nothing about that suit in particular and forces the partnership to game.** (Examples [e], [f], [g], and [h])

Examples: You (North) Hold:

(e)	XX AXXX AKQX XXX	1D 2C	1H "2S"
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(f)	AX XXX XXX AKJXX	1S 2D	2C "2H"
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(g)	XX KX AKQXXX XXX	1S 2H	2D "3C"
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(i)	XX KX AKXXXX QJX	1C 1H	1D "2S"
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(Notice in this example, North jumped to "2S" in order for the bid to be 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing. If his/her bid had, alternatively, been presented as 1S it would not have been artificial and forcing, rather an "Up the Ladder" natural bid, as in Example c, above.)

Under most circumstances, when 4<sup>th</sup> suit by Responder is employed, Responder seldom wishes to bid the 4<sup>th</sup> suit in a natural sense. Had Responder truly held that 4<sup>th</sup> suit, he/she would have, most likely bid NT himself/herself. The bid, therefore, generally evidences no stoppers in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit, and is asking Opener to bid NT if Opener has a stopper in that 4<sup>th</sup> suit. It is absolutely forcing to game, and, therefore, Responder must never bid as such unless he/she holds opening count, or better.

Absent a stopper in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit, thereby obviating any NT call, Opener's next obligation is to either (1) support Responder's suit with a 3-card support, having already denying a 4-card support by not supporting previously, or (2) re-bidding his/her own 5-card suit absent any of the above alternatives.

If Responder rebids his/her 4<sup>th</sup> suit, however, Responder then evidences a natural second suit, as in the following example:

		<u>South</u>	<u>North</u>
Example: You (North) Hold:	AKXXXX	1D	1S
	AKJXX	2C	"2H"
(i)	X	2NT	3H (Natural)
	X		

**A bid, by Responder, of the only as-yet-unbid (4<sup>th</sup>) suit at his/her second turn, above the 1-Level, is an artificial forcing bid, usually forcing to game. It is called "4<sup>th</sup> Suit Forcing". It is considered an "asking bid" unless that suit is rebid by Responder in which case it is then considered as natural (as in Example d).**

## Lesson 5

### **Forcing and Transfer Responses Over Reopening No Trump**

A balancing, pass-out seat, 1NT shows a much wider range than does an opening 1NT, or a direct overcall of 1NT, both of which traditionally show a generally-accepted 15-17 HCP range. The balancing, or so-called "Reopening 1NT", usually shows a 6-point range; i.e., perhaps 10-15 HCP's.

<u>Examples:</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
(a)	1H Pass	Pass ???	Pass	1NT (10-15 HCP's)

Responder, although a previously-passed hand, could conceivably have invitational or even as much as opening values or more, previously unable to bid in second position following the opening bid by his/her RHO. With the reopening No Trump evidencing a wide six point range it is important for the reopening No Trump bidder to be induced to reclassify his/her hand into one of three categories (Minimum 10-11), (Moderate 12-13), or (Maximum 14-15) so that an appropriate final contract be achieved.

In order to invoke such a request, responder utilizes an inquiry with a "2C" artificial relay-type response when holding at least invitational values; i.e., approximately 10+ HCP's or more.

#### **With a Reopening No Trump Bidder Holding a Maximum 14-15 HCP's**

Subsequent to the "2C" inquiry bid by responder, the reopening No Trump bidder, when holding a maximum of 14-15 HCP's, bids Baron-style 4-card suits up the ladder at the 3-level or 3NT when holding a four-triple-three distribution with a 4-card Minor suit and a stopper in opener's suit, or with four cards in opener's bid suit. After any bid by re-opener showing a maximum, however, all sequences are game-forcing.

<u>Examples:</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
(b)	1H Pass	Pass "2C"	Pass Pass	1NT 3NT (14-15 HCP's and a 3-3-4-3 or a 3-4-3-3 distribution)
(c)	1D Pass	Pass "2C"	Pass Pass	1NT (3H - game forcing)

#### **With a Reopening No Trump Bidder Holding a Moderate 12-13 HCP's**

Subsequent to the “2C” inquiry bid by responder, the reopening No Trump bidder, with any intermediate hand, (12-13 HCP’s), bids 2H, or 2S in an up-the-ladder style when holding a 4-card Major suit, or 2NT in order to denying any 4-card Major suit. After any medium range bid, 3-level bids by responder are forcing, while 2NT or 2S over 2H are invitational.

<u>Examples:</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
(d)	1D Pass  Pass	Pass “2C”  2NT (Invitational)	Pass Pass  Pass	1NT 2H (a 4-card Heart holding saying nothing yet about his/her Spade holding)  2NT (Absence of either 4-card Major)
(e)	1D Pass  Pass	Pass “2C”  3C (Forcing)	Pass Pass  Pass	1NT 2S (a 4-card Spade suit denying 4 Hearts)
(f)	1H Pass  Pass	Pass “2C”  Pass	Pass Pass  Pass	1NT 2NT (Absence of either 4-card Major)

**With a Reopening No Trump Bidder Holding a Minimum 10-11 HCP’s**

Subsequent to the “2C” inquiry bid by responder, the reopening No Trump bidder, with any minimum hand, (10-11 HCP’s), bids an artificial “2D” bid without any reference, at this point, to his/her Major suit holding. After a 2H or 2S bid by the relay-er which show a 4-card suit, non-forcing; re-opener may either pass, correct to 2S over 2H, or else bid 2NT.

<u>Examples:</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
(g)	1D Pass Pass Pass	Pass “2C” 2H or 2S (4-card suit) Pass	Pass Pass  Pass	1NT “2D” Pass 2NT
(h)	1C Pass Pass Pass	Pass “2C” 2S Pass	Pass Pass Pass Pass	1NT “2D” 2NT
(i)	1D Pass Pass	Pass “2C” 2NT (Denies either 4-card Major)	Pass Pass  Pass	1NT “2D”

When responder has less than 10 HCP’s, the question then arises as to whether it be more beneficial to leave the re-opener in NT, else convert the contract to a suit bid at the 2-level.

Therefore, by partnership understanding, Jacoby transfer bids can also be used subsequent to a 1NT reopening bid occurring in the balancing, fourth seat pass-out position. The weaker the responder's hand, the more likely the advantage of any such transfer to a 5-card or longer suit held by responder. With responder holding less than 10 HCP's, the likelihood of a game being possible even if the reopening 1NT-er has a maximum of 15HCP's is highly unlikely.

<u>Examples:</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
(j)	1H Pass Pass	Pass "2H" (Transfer to Spades) Pass	Pass Pass Pass	1NT (10-15 HCP's) 2S
(k)	1S Pass Pass	Pass "2D" (Transfer to Hearts) Pass	Pass Pass Pass	1NT (10-15 HCP's) 2H

**MARSHALL MILES CONVENTION OVER "2C" OPENING BIDS**

The traditional method of responding to a strong, artificial, and forcing "2C" opening utilizes a bid of 2NT as a positive response evidencing 8-9 HCP's without a 5-card suit (a); and a bid of 2H as a positive response evidencing the same 8-9 HCP's with a reasonably good 5-card or longer Heart holding (b). Traditionally, as well, rebids by the Opening bidder of 2H following a negative bid of "2D" by Responder evidences a 5-card or longer Heart suit held by Opener (c); a 2NT rebid evidences a balanced hand with 23-24 HCP's (d) ; and a jump to 3NT evidences a balanced hand with 25-27 HCP's (e).

<u>Examples:</u>	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	
(a)	"2C" (1)	2NT (2)	(1) Strong, Artificial, & Forcing (2) 8-9 HCP's with no 5-card suit
(b)	"2C"	2H (3)	(3) 8-9 HCP's with 5 or more Hearts
(c)	"2C" 2H (5)	"2D" (4)	(4) Negative, 0-7 HCP's (5) A Natural Heart suit, 5+ Pieces
(d)	"2C" 2NT (6)	"2D"	(6) A Balanced 23-24 HCP Hand
(e)	"2C" 3NT (7)	"2D"	(7) A Balanced 25-27 HCP Hand

The above bidding sequences present multiple problems. In example (a), should the partnership decide upon a No Trump contract, the strong opener hand becomes the tabled Dummy with the weaker hand thus becomes Declarer. In example (b), the same problem of the wrong hand becoming the open hand exists should Hearts become the final contract. Furthermore, Responder's ability to utilize Stayman in example (f), or a Jacoby Transfer bid in example (g), in either instance in order to explore for a Major suit fit, is precluded in that an unsuccessful attempt will necessarily take the partnership beyond the 3NT level .

<u>Examples:</u>	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	
(f)	"2C" 3NT	"2D" ????	Responder holds: XXXX KXXX XXXX X  (Responder must Pass. Opener might not have a 4-card Major and the partnership inadvertently exceed the 3NT level as a result of the desired Stayman attempt, thus precluded.)
(g)	"2C" 3NT	"2D" ????	Responder holds: AXXXX XX XXXX XX  (Responder is similarly precluded from a Jacoby transfer attempt to find a 5-3 Spade fit.)

**The Miles method of responding makes use of a reversal in meaning of either, or both, the Heart and No Trump bids by the Responder and the Opener with**

beneficial effects in both instances. As you will see, the above-listed problems will be eliminated by means of this technic.

**A. Miles Rebids By the Opening "2C" Strong, Artificial, and Forcing Bidder -**

In the Miles system, subsequent to a "2D" negative 0-7 HCP response from Responder, when opener bids a rebid of "2H" it is either a true Heart suit, else a hand where opener would have otherwise jumped to 3NT evidencing a 25-27 HCP count. Opener, thus, uses a "2H" rebid as a 2-way response.; i.e., evidencing either a natural Heart suit, else a very strong NT hand. Responder **must** then puppet "2S" to allow opener to show his *real holding*. If opener bids 2NT, he/she has a 25-27 HCP balanced hand allowing for Staymen or Jacoby Transfers to be employed by responder without by-passing 3NT, and if opener rebids anything other than 2NT, he/she has a legitimate Heart suit. Responder then acts accordingly.

<u>Examples:</u>		Responder holds:	XXXX	KXXX	XX	XXX
(h)	<u>Opener</u> "2C" "2H" (1) 3H (3) or [4C or 4D] (4)	<u>Responder</u> "2D" "2S" (2) 4H	(1)	A 2-Way bid requesting a "2S" puppet	(2)	A requested artificial puppet bid
			(3)	A natural Heart suit	(4)	Hearts <u>and</u> Clubs or Diamonds; etc.
(i)	"2C" "2H" (1) "2NT" (5)	"2D" "2S" (2) "3C" (6)	(5)	A Balanced 25-27 HCP Hand which would have normally rebid 3NT	(6)	Stayman - Responder will exit at 3NT if no Major fit is found
		Responder holds:	XXX	KXXXX	XX	XXX
(j)	"2C" "2H" "2NT" 3H	"2D" "2S" "3D" (7) 3NT (8)	(7)	Jacoby Transfer to Hearts	(8)	Check-back looking for 3 Hearts
		Responder holds:	QJXXXX	XX	XXX	XX
(k)	"2C" "2H" "2NT" 3S	"2D" "2S" "3H" (9) 4S	(9)	Jacoby Transfer to Spades		
-----						
(l)	"2C" 2NT (10)	"2D"	(10)	The normal 23-24 HCP Balanced Hand Stayman and Jacoby Transfer apply as usual		

**B. Miles Bids By the Responder -** In the instances where responder would normally have made a positive response of either 2H or 2NT, he/she reverses these two bids.

Examples: Responder holds: XX KQXXX KXX XXX

(m) Opener  
"2C"  
4H

Responder  
"2NT" (11) (11) A positive 8-9 HCP Heart bid  
holding 5 or more pieces -

Opener who is likely to hold 3 or more pieces can then bid Hearts and the stronger hand thus remains the concealed hand. A potential disadvantage to this singular possibility is that should opener not have 3 or more Hearts, and the end contract be in NT, then the opener will not be the declarer.

Responder holds: XX KQX KXXX XXXX

(n) Opener  
"2C"  
3NT or 3S

Responder  
"2H" (12) (12) A positive 8-9 HCP NT bid  
absent any 5-card suit.  
Opener, who is now likely to want

to exit into NT now remains declarer.

**C. Miles Bids By the Responder other than "2H" or "2NT"** - The Miles convention retains the standard meanings of the responses of 2S, 3C, or 3D. Each of these bids show a reasonable suit and a hand worth a positive response.

## “TWERB”

Many Conventions exist used to interfere with, as a defense against, or to overcall subsequent to the opponents opening of a strong 1NT, 2NT, “2C”, or a Precision Strong “1C”. These include, but are not limited to the Brozel, Capeletti, Astro, Landy, Ripstra, and the most recent, “DONT” Conventions. Each has its advantages and disadvantages, all may be played over weak NT openings by the opponents as well. Each can be used either in direct position only, else in both direct and balancing positions.

The “Twerb” Convention (An acronym for “**T**wo **W**ay **E**xclusion **R**elay **B**id”) is perhaps the most versatile of them all, and this author advises its use in both the direct and balancing positions subsequent to the opponent’s opening bid of any of the afore-mentioned openings. In all, there are but 10 (ten) possible hands that one would wish to bid in such a position; i.e., four (4) one-suited hands, and six (6) two-suited hands {four [4] with touching suits, and {two [2] with non-touching suits}. Each of these ten possible hands can be presented with the “Twerb” Convention, while preserving the “Double” for an equivalent or better hand to either be converted to penalties by partner’s “Pass”, else rescued as necessary if partner is weak. All bids by both the invoking and the responding partners are alertable since they are artificial. To be even more obstructive, if that be the intent, the invoking partner may jump a level by his/her invoking exclusion suit mentioned, and come in at the 3-level or even higher. All subsequent bids are still in effect as per the below-mentioned bids.

The bids of the Twerb Convention are as follows:

- a) “Double” = An equivalent or better holding - Partner may “Pass” thereby converting the double to penalties, else bid evidencing either a poor hand or one interested in game as opposed to penalties.

===

- b) “2C” = Either a one-suited Diamond holding **or** a two-suited Heart and Spade holding (5-5 or better) - Responder takes the relay of “2D” - Invoking partner may pass if Diamonds be his/her one-suiter, else bid “2H” if holding

both Hearts and Spades - Responder then chooses Hearts by Passing, else bids 2 Spades if that be preferred. **Note:** “2C” over a precision “1C” is **not** a Michaels bid for the Majors.

- c) “2D” = Either a one-suited Heart holding **or** a two-suited Spade and Club holding (5-5 or better) - Responder takes the relay of “2H” - Invoking partner may pass if Hearts be his/her one-suiter, else bid “2S” if holding both Spades and Clubs - Responder then chooses Spades by Passing, else bids 3 Clubs if that be preferred. **Note:** “1D” could be used over a precision “1C”.
- d) “2H” = Either a one-suited Spade holding **or** a two-suited Club and Diamond holding (5-5 or better) - Responder takes the relay of “2S” - Invoking partner may pass if Spades be his/her one-suiter, else bid “3C” if holding both Clubs and Diamonds - Responder then chooses Clubs by Passing, else bids 3 Diamonds if that be preferred. **Note:** “1H” could be used over a precision “1C”.
- e) “2S” = Either a one-suited Club holding **or** a two-suited Diamond and Heart holding (5-5 or better) - Responder takes the relay of “3C” - Invoking partner may pass if Clubs be his/her one-suiter, else bid “3D” if holding both Diamonds and Hearts - Responder then chooses Diamonds by Passing, else bids 3 Hearts if that be preferred. **Note:** “1S” could be used over a precision “1C”.

**Note:** That in b) through e) above, the bid taken by the invoking partner is the exclusion suit and that which is actually held by the invoking partner is either a one-suiter above, else a two-suiter below the suit actually mentioned.

===

- f) “2NT” = A non-touching two-suiter (5-5 or better) evidencing either Clubs and Hearts **or** Diamonds and Spades. - Responding Partner then bids the lower-ranking of his/her two longest suits. Invoking Partner then either accepts if that be one of his/her two suiters, else bids the cheapest of the other set of two suits held and Responder can then choose from that pair. **Note:** “1NT” could be used over precision “1C”.

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## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 8

## The ROMAN KEY CARD (BLACKWOOD) CONVENTION

### “RKC”

**The Roman Key Card Convention (RKC)** recognizes that the possession of the King of the agreed-upon trump suit may be just as important as the possession of any side suit Ace. Furthermore, it operates on the premise that possession of the Queen of the agreed-upon trump suit is the preeminent additional information of importance. With this additional information imparted, it is oft times easier for a partnership to determine if the final contract should be at the game level, the 6-Level (Small Slam) or, alternatively, even the 7-level (Grand Slam).

A. Using **RKC**, there are, therefore, **five (5) key cards**; i.e., the four (4) Aces **and** the King of Trumps. The King of trumps is, in the final analysis, almost as important a card as any Ace; for if a partnership is lacking both an Ace **and** the Trump King, a slam is likely to be a poor proposition.

**The RKC Responses** to 4NT are, therefore, more complicated than over the standard Blackwood Convention. They allow the responder to show the 4NT-bidder whether or not he/she holds the Queen of the specified Trump Suit as well as the five “Aces”.

(Using the **0314 Method**):

“5C” = **0** or **3** key cards

“5D” = **1** or **4** key cards

“5H” = **2** or **5** key cards, **without** the Queen of the agreed-upon Trump Suit

“5S” = **2** or **5** key cards, **with** the Queen of the agreed-upon Trump Suit (\*)

(\*) When holding 5 or more pieces in the agreed-upon Trump Suit, Responder may respond as if he/she holds the Queen of Trumps even if it is not present (The unknown extra trump length acts as if the Queen of Trumps were present).

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B. When the Responder has shown 0, 3, (“5C”) or 1, 4, (“5D”) key cards to the 4NT inquiry, he/she has not yet disclosed whether or not he/she holds the Queen of the Trump suit. If the “4NT” bidder wishes to ask about that card, he/she makes the cheapest possible bid

exclusive of the trump suit, the latter of which would signal a sign-off. Using this method the responder would then answer the presence or absence of the Trump Queen along with his/her side suit Kings as follows:

- First step = No trump Queen
- Second step = Trump Queen and no side suit Kings
- Third step = Trump Queen and one (1) side suit King
- Fourth step = Trump Queen and two (2) side suit Kings
- Fifth step = Trump Queen and three (3) side suit Kings

<u>Example:</u>	<i>Opener</i>	<i>Responder</i>
	1S	3S
	4NT	"5D" (One or Four Key Cards)
	"5H" (Trump Q?)	"6C" (Trump Queen + One King)

C. If the partnership holds all five key cards and the trump Queen, 5NT is then bid by the invoking partner asking for Kings. Asking for Kings playing Roman Key Card is similar to asking for Kings using regular Blackwood; it promises all the Aces (plus the King and Queen of Trumps) and shows an interest in a Grand Slam.

The responses to 5NT in the RKC system are as follows: Note: The showing of one King (The King of Trumps) has already been accounted for.

- "6C" = 0 or 3 Kings
- "6D" = 1 King
- "6H" = 2 Kings

D. If the Responder has a useful void, the responses to 4NT are as follows, **as long as he/she does not go past the agreed-upon suit**: Note than in so doing, h/she cannot distinguish between hands that do and do not contain the trump Queen.

- "5NT" = 0 or 2 key cards plus an unspecified void
  - "6C" = 1 or 3 key cards, void in Clubs
  - "6D" = 1 or 3 key cards, void in Diamonds
  - "6H" = 1 or 3 key cards, void in Hearts
- 6 of the agreed-upon suit = 1 or 3 key cards, plus a void in a higher-ranking suit.

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 9

## FORCING NO TRUMP

Whenever a partnership is utilizing a 5-card Major suit opening system, it is useful, in conjunction with a 2/1 (two-over-one) Game Force, to also use a Forcing 1NT response system. This pattern helps to narrow the ranges of other bids by the responder and thus helps in otherwise difficult situations. In general, the 1NT response to an opening of 1H or 1S is forcing, and alertable, and usually exhibits a range of between 5-11 HCP's. (Note: In some situations, the responder's HCP range may exceed 15; that is, may be unlimited.) Opener **must** make a rebid, even if it be a 3-card Minor or a 4-card Heart suit. Opener's rebid then shows both distribution and point count. Responder, then becomes the team captain, and can then place the final contract, or invite to game, or slam.

### Opener's Rebid following Responder's 1NT Force

<u>Opener:</u>	AKXXX AXX KXX XX	1S 1NT	2D (Minimum Opening)
	AQXXX KXXX XX AX	1S 1NT	2H (Minimum Opening)
	AQXX KQXXX AQ KX	1H 1NT	2S (Hand is strong enough to reverse)
	AQXX KQXXXX XX X	1H 1NT	2H (Minimum Opening + 6-Hearts)
	AXXXX AKX AK QXX	1S 1NT	3H (Jump shift, Game Force)
	JXX AXXXXX AKX A	1H 1NT	3H (One Trick Better than Minimum + 6 or more Hearts)
	AXXXX AQX AX KXX	1S 1NT	2NT (A 16-18 HCP hand inviting to 3NT)

Thus, since the 1NT force usually exhibits 5-11 HCP's, then any 2-level response of a new suit by responder shows 12+ points and is forcing to game in all but the following sequences where both opener and responder repeat their suits evidencing a misfit:

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| (a) 1H 2C           | (b) 1S 2D           |
| 2H 3C (Not Forcing) | 2S 3D (Not Forcing) |
| (c) 1S 2D           |                     |
| 2S 3C (Game Force)  |                     |

Normally, under conditions where forcing NT is not employed the following response shows a wide range of between 5-10 HCP's.

1H            2H (Support and 5-10 HCP's)

With the use of the forcing NT, however, one can differentiate the following responses as:

(a)        1H            1NT  
          2C            2H (Support with 5-7 HCP's and 10 Losing Tricks;  
                          i.e., a hand weaker than (b) below, else a hand  
                          holding only two trump support pieces)

(b)        1H            2H (Support with 8-10 HCP's) (9-Losing Tricks)  
----- or

(c)        1S            1NT  
          2D            3S (Limit raise with only 3 Supporting pieces)

**NOTE:** Responder would have jumped to 3 Hearts directly with the same values, but with 4 Pieces in support of Spade suit instead.

(d)        1S            "2NT" (Jacoby 2NT evidencing Support for Spades with Opening values. Forces partnership to game or higher if opener has extra values.)

**NOTE:** Some partnerships have a non-standard "Multi-2NT Response" Bid showing a **Specialized bid**. This Requires Partnership Agreement as an alternate "2NT" response.)

----- or

Responder holds:            XXX XX KQXXXX XX

(e) 1H    1NT (Forcing)  
      2C    2D (A "Drop Dead" bid evidencing a 6-card or longer suit.

(or)

X AJXXXX JXX XXX

1S    1NT (Forcing)  
2D    2H (A "Drop Dead" bid evidencing a 6-card or longer suit.

----- or

Responder holds:            AXX KQX KQXX AXX

(e) 1S    1NT (Forcing - with intent to either jump to 4H should opener show a minimum hand with a rebid of 2H, 2S, 2C, or 2D; else proceed onward to a possible slam should opener evidence a better than minimum opening values with a rebid of 3S, 2NT, 3C, 3D, 3H, or 4S)

**Advanced Bridge**

**Lesson 10**

# Defense to Two-Suited Interferences

## Unusual No Trump Over Unusual 2NT

&

## Michaels Over Michaels Cuebid

When an opponent conventionally overcalls over your partner's opening bid of 1C, 1D, 1H, or 1S, and evidences a two-suited hand, as with a MICHAELS CUEBID OVERCALL, or as with an UNUSUAL NO TRUMP OVERCALL, the opening bidder's partner has several countermeasures; i.e., a double, a raise in opener's suit, one or two cuebid(s) in the opponent's implied suit(s), and a bid of the fourth suit not yet evidenced either by opener or by the implied two suits of the opponent's overcaller. One must ascribe different meanings to each of these potential actions by the would-be responder.

- 
1. A **"Double"** is a strength showing action. It is a hand that would be worth a redouble over opponent's take-out double and should be avoided unless responder is prepared to penalize the opponents in at least one of the two choices implied by the interference.

-----

Alternatively, if responder has offensive features, he/she should begin to describe his/her hand as in 2-5 below.

- 
2. A **Single Raise** in opener's suit is equivalent to a normal constructive raise in partner's suit and is merely competitive. Although such a raise takes the partnership one level beyond a normal constructive raise, it has pre-emptive value on the assumption that the opponents have a fit which they would otherwise more easily find.

**Example:** You hold: XX QXXX AXXXX JX

1H "2H" ???

(Bid 3H even though without interference responder has insufficient values for a Limit raise to 3H. At favorable vulnerability, such a raise can be made with even fewer values.)

-----

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3. A **Bid in a New Suit at the 2-level is natural and non-forcing, and a Bid of a New Suit at the 3-level is forcing to game.**

**Examples:** You hold: QX AXXXXX KXX AX

1S "2NT" ??? (Bid 3H - forcing to game)

(or)

You hold: QX XXX AXXXXX KX

1C "2C" ??? (Bid 2D - Non-forcing)

-----

**4. A Cuebid** in either suit shown by the interference, when two specific suits are evidenced by the opponents, is a general force that begins the further investigation for the best final contract. Responder must have **invitational strength or better and either support for opener's suit or length in the fourth, as-yet-unmentioned suit**. In such instances, a cuebid in the **lower ranking** suit of the opponent's implied two suits shows invitational strength or better in the **lower ranking of the alternate two suits**; and a cuebid in the **higher ranking** suit of the opponent's implied two suits shows a good hand of invitational strength or better in the **higher ranking of the alternate two suits**. This parallelism; i.e., **the lower cuebid = the lower of the alternate suits, and the higher cuebid = the higher of the alternate suits** can be easily interpreted by opener as opener's suit or, alternatively, the fourth, as-yet-unmentioned suit, simply by their relative suit positions on the bidding ladder.

**Ex.:** 1S "2NT" "3C" (Clubs and Diamonds are shown by the opponent.  
Therefore, this cuebid of the lower ranking  
of their two suits signifies a limit raise or better in the lower  
ranking of the remaining suits; i.e., the as-yet unmentioned Heart suit.)

(or)

1S "2NT" "3D" (Clubs and Diamonds are shown by the opponent.  
Therefore, this cuebid of the higher ranking  
of their suits signifies a limit raise or better in the higher ranking  
of the remaining suits; i.e., partner's Spade suit.)

(or)

1H "2NT" "3C" (Clubs and Diamonds are shown by the opponent.  
Therefore, this cuebid of the lower ranking  
of their suits signifies a limit raise or better in the lower ranking  
of the remaining suits; i.e., support for partner's Heart suit.)

(or)

1C "2C" "2H" (Hearts and Spades are shown by the opponent.  
Therefore, this cuebid of the lower ranking of  
their suits signifies a limit raise or better in the lower  
ranking of the remaining suits; i.e., support for partner's Club suit.)

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(or)

1D "2NT" "2C" (Clubs and Hearts are shown here by the  
opponent. Therefore, this cuebid of the  
lower ranking of their suits signifies a limit raise or better in  
the lower ranking of the remaining suits; i.e., support for partner's Diamond  
suit as opposed to the higher ranking unmentioned Spade suit.)

-----

**5. Note:** In some two suit interferences, however, the opponent's action also shows two suits, but, one of them remains unspecified. In these instances, responder only has one known cuebid available and the actions as outlined in # (4.), as well as the ability or need to mention a fourth suit, as before, becomes mute since the second unmentioned suit held by the interfering opponent remains as-yet-unmentioned.

**(Examples:** 1H "2H" (or) 1S "2S")

In the above examples, Spades is the only available cuebid in the first instance, and Hearts, in the second, and the opponent's Minor suit remains as-yet unmentioned. For these reasons, in these two unique instances, the following alternate responses by Responder to the opener are suggested.

- (a) Most of all above-listed responses in numbers 1 through 3 are still in force; namely, a bid at the 3-level in a new suit is game forcing, and a double is penalty oriented.
- (b) A bid of partner's suit at the cheapest level is constructive.

**(Examples:** 1H "2H" 3H (or) 1S "2S" 3S

- (c) A cue-bid in their unmentioned Major suit is invitational or better in support of opener's Major suit.

**(Examples:** 1H "2H" 2S (Invitational or better in support of partner's Hearts)  
1S "2S" 3H (Invitational or better in support of partner's Spades)

- (d) A Bid of 2NT is natural with invitational values.

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 11

# Cuebids

A **Cuebid**; i.e., a bid of a suit previously bid by the opponents, can mean different things at different times. They come in all shapes and sizes, denominations and bidding levels. A cuebid must always be considered within the framework of the bidding in which it takes place. It is, always, a **forcing bid**, and is usually in a suit in which the bidder does not wish to play, unless it is a natural bid as illustrated in the four examples listed in Section # 8., herein. Cuebids are sometimes alertable, but usually not. Cuebids can:

- a) show a Control for Slam Purposes
- b) show a Two-suited Hand (Michaels)
- c) show a Strong (Limit Raise or Better) in Partner's Bid Suit
- d) create a Force to Game
- e) create a Force for One More Round
- f) ask for a Stopper
- g) evidence a Stopper
- h) Long-(Help-)suit and Short-suit Game Tries (Not herein discussed)

## 1. Cuebids By the Opening Bidder

**A. Cuebids Above or At Game Level** – The level at which any cuebid is made is a vital consideration. At, or above the level of game, there can be no doubt that such a bid is a slam try. A cuebid used under these circumstances is also sometimes called a **Control Bid** in that it evidences *First Round Control* of the opponent's bid suit. **After a Major suit agreement at the 3-Level or higher, or a Minor suit agreement at the 4-Level or higher, new suits are slam-oriented cuebids showing first round control.** Such bids are **not** alertable.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
2H	"3H" (Limit	Raise or Better	1S in Support of Spades)
		Pass	"4H"

South has already committed the partnership to playing in at least a game level in Spades, so his/her bid of "4H" must, indeed, be a slam attempt. In such circumstances, a cuebid here guarantees first round control of the Heart Suit (**either an Ace or a void**) and asks partner to proclaim his/her next cheapest first round control. Absent any, partner then rebids the agree-upon suit, Spades in this instance.

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1D	Pass	4D	Pass
"4S" (A slam-oriented cuebid)			

**B. Cuebids Below Game Level** are much less precise. Under such conditions, a cuebid may or may not show slam ambitions, and the cue-bidder may, or may not, have a control in the cuebid suit. Such bids are **not** alertable.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1H	1S	Pass	1C "2H"

All North can tell at this stage is that South has an enormous hand and wants to be in at least a game-level contract. Indeed, hypothetically, if South liked Spades and wanted to be in a Spade contract below game, South could have made a competitive bid of 2S, or a one-trick-better-than-opening bid of 3S. Here, however, South is either exploring for a contract higher than game in Spades (with holdings as in Example {a}), or is looking for a Heart stopper for a 3NT game (as with a holding as in Example {b}).

{a}	AQ74 64 A6 AKJ54	{b}	A5 75 AJ5 AKQJ86
-----	---------------------------	-----	---------------------------

North must make the most helpful bid he/she can conjure. If holding a Heart stopper, North must bid NT. In example {a} it would have been wrong for South to go immediately to 4S. South plans, however, to bid 4S on his/her next bid whatever the response from partner. A **delayed or slow arrival to game** always signifies a stronger hand than does a **fast arrival**. In {a} if North signifies a Heart stopper by bidding NT, then South will be interested in Slam. Absent a Heart stopper 4S is the optimum contract. In {b} South is seeking a Heart stopper for a 3NT contract else, absent one, a 5-Club contract appears to be the preferred game.

The use of a cuebid to seek a stopper (sometimes referred to as a **Western Cuebid**) is quite common. South holds the following hand:

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
86				1C
J5	2S	3H	Pass	"3S"
Q97				
AKQ864				

The only way for South to determine if a 3NT contract be viable, would be To ascertain whether North were to have, or not have, a Spade stopper. If South had had a Spade stopper himself/herself, he/she could have simply bid 3NT directly.

-----

## 2. Cuebids By the Responder

A. Cuebids by Responder in a Competitive Auction Scenario; i.e., where there is overall interference by the Direct Seat Opponent signifies support for partner's suit and

guarantees a **limit raise** (11-12 HCP's or its equivalent; i.e., 8 Losers or fewer) **or better** in terms of point count. There is no upper limit to the strength of the cuebid when used under these conditions, and such bids are **not** alertable.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1S	"2S"		1H

Notice here that 2H, 3H, and 4H bids were also available. The consensus, however, in these circumstances, seems to favor a 2H bid to be constructive (7-10 HCP's; i.e., 9 Losers) – and 3H or 4H bids to be pre-emptive (0-6 HCP's) holding four (4) and five (5) pieces of Hearts respectively. The cuebid thus becomes an invitational or better holding with trump support for opener while supporting directly in opener's suit is either competitive or pre-emptive.

-----.

**B. A Double Jump Shift ("Splinter Bid") guarantees (1) support for Partner's last-named suit, (2) opening count or better, (3) and either a singleton (Not a singleton Ace) or a void in the Suit in which the jump was made.** Such unusual jumps guarantee game and suggest the possibility for a slam. (Note: Such bids can be made by either Responder or Opening Bidder. Splinter bids **are** alertable.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1H	Pass	"4D"	Pass (Here, East shows support for Hearts, 13 or more HCP's, and a singleton or void in Diamonds.)
(or)			
<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1H "4C"	Pass	1S	Pass (Here, West shows support for Spades, 20 or more HCP's, and a singleton or Void in Clubs.)

-----

**C. "Fourth-suit Forcing"** – A bid by Responder of the only unbid suit at Responder's second turn, such bid being at the two-level or above, is an artificial force to game. Such bids **are** alertable. (Note: At the one-level, The "Up-The-Ladder" Principle applies and does not constitute a "fourth-suit forcing" scenario. Example: 1C, 1D, 1H, 1S)

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1H 2D	Pass Pass	2C "2S" (Fourth-suit Force)	Pass

East is clearly looking for a Spade-stopper. He/she would have bid NT himself/herself if a Spade-stopper was present in this otherwise obvious misfit hand.

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### **3. Cuebids By an Overcaller**

Charles Goren originally conceived that an immediate cuebid overcall, in the second seat relative to opener's bid; i.e., 2C/1C, 2D/1D, 2H/1H, or 2S/1S was the equivalent of an opening

forcing bid, guaranteeing a game. Today, such cuebids are two-suited take-outs commonly known as **Michaels Cuebid**. Such bids are not alertable.

**A. Cuebids of Opener's suit used in either the Direct or Balancing seat to signify a two-suiter with either 0-10 HCP's or 16+ HCP's.** The distribution is usually 5-5 or better in the two suits held.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	(or)	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>
1C	"2C" (Hearts & Spades)		1D	"2D" (Hearts & Spades)
<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	(or)	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>
1H	"2H" (Spades & Minor)		1S	"2S" (Hearts & Minor)

---

**B. Leaping Michaels.** – A special type of Michaels bid made after an opponent's opening weak 2-bid in a Major suit (Hearts or Spades). A jump to four (4) of a Minor suit under such circumstances shows the other Major suit and the bid Minor (probably 5-5 or better) with Game values. These bids are alertable.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	(or)	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>
2H	"4D" (Spades & Diamonds)		1S	"4C" (Hearts & Clubs)

---

## **4. Cuebids By the Responder to an Overcaller**

The only forcing bid that a Responder to an overcaller can make is a cuebid of the **opponent's bid suit**. Such a cuebid shows primary support for partner's bid suit and an interest in game (a limit raise or better in HCP's). Such bids are not alertable.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1S	Pass	"2H" (Limit raise or Better in support of Spades)	1H

---

When the opposition has bid two suits, however, and their first bid suit is a Minor, then a cuebid of their Minor suit is natural and a cuebid of their second bid suit a cuebid with support for partner's suit, as before.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
-------------	--------------	-------------	--------------

	1H	1S		1C or 1D "2S" (Limit raise or Better in support of Hearts)
(But)	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
				1C
	1H	1S		"2C" (A natural overcall with 10 or more HCP's and a 6-card or better Club suit)
(or)	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
				1D
	1H	1S		"2D" (A natural overcall with 10 or more HCP's and a 6-card or better Diamond suit)

---

## 5. Cuebids in Response to Partner's Take-out Double

A jump response to partner's take-out double evidences a good hand with 10 HCP's or more. Such jump responses, however, although a positive and encouraging response, is not forcing to game. Indeed it is not even forcing for one round. The doubler is invited to move towards game if he/she has extra strength, but much of the time, he/she will pass the jump. Bids stronger than such jump responses are, therefore, needed. A cuebid of the opponent's bid suit initiates such encouragement. Such bids are alertable.

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
South Holds:	1H	Dbl.	Pass	"2H"

KQXX  
 XXX (With this hand worth 15 points, South is too strong for a  
 AQJXX jump to 2S, or to 3D, for, indeed, the doubler might pass.  
 X South desires to be in game, but where? The way to find  
 Out is to cuebid. If doubler answers 2S, South will jump  
 to 4S. If he/she answers 3C, South can now bid 3D without  
 fear of being passed there, for South will have described a  
 hand too strong for an immediate jump.

## 6. Cuebids as Part of the Lebensohl Convention

A cuebid of the opponents suit with which they interfered over partner's opening bid of 1NT, is used as a game-forcing Stayman bid evidencing a 4-card Major, 11+ HCP's, but

**without** a stopper in the opponent's suit. (See Lesson on The Lebensohl Convention – Other Cuebids exist within the Lebensohl Convention.) All Lebensohl cuebids **are** alertable.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1NT	2H	"3H" (4 Spades, 11+HCP's but NO Heart Stopper)	

-----

## 7. Cuebids on the Way Towards 3NT When:

**A. The Opponents have bid only One Suit:** Under this circumstance, such a Cuebid is an *ASKING BID*, inquiring whether or not partner has a stopper in the opponent's bid suit enabling the partnership to afford a 3NT final contract. Such bids are **not** alertable.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1D	1H	2D	Pass
"2H" (ASKING East for a Heart Stopper on the way to 3NT. A 3D Response by East would deny a Heart Stopper. A NT bid By East would proclaim a Heart Stopper.)			

-----

**B. The Opponents have bid two Suits:** Under this circumstance, such a Cuebid is a *TELLING BID*, proclaiming a stopper in the bid suit of the opponents and inquiring whether or not partner has a stopper in the opponent's other bid suit thereby enabling the partnership to afford a 3NT final contract. Such bids are **not** alertable.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1C	1H	2C	2D
"3D" (TELLING East that West has a Diamond Stopper, and asks for a Heart stopper to enable a NT contract. If East bids 3C he/she would, in effect, deny a Heart Stopper.)			

When the opponents have bid one suit, a cuebid asks, when they have bid two suits, a cuebid tells.

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## 8. Natural Cuebids

There are four specific situations in which cuebids are natural; i.e., evidencing an interest in the particular suit, or telling of a stopper in the new suit which has been bid. None of these circumstances require an alert since all of the following bidding scenarios are natural.

**1. When the Opponents have Bid Two Suits:**

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1C	Pass	1S	2C (A Natural Overcall with 6 or more Clubs)

-----

**2. When a Player has Passed and then Bids the Opponent's Suit:**

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1D	Pass	1H	Pass
1S	2D (A Natural Overcall with 6 or more Diamonds)		

-----

**3. A Jump Minor Suit Cuebid:** Because a Minor suit cuebid is a Michaels Cuebid as previously mentioned, and because an opening bid of a Club or a Diamond by the opponents can, in reality, be as few as three (3) pieces in the bid Minor suit, it is important for a would-be overcaller to be able to evidence a natural Minor suit overcall with the requisite HCP's and a 6-card or better Minor suit holding. A jump to three of the Minor is used for that purpose, and is NOT a Michaels Cuebid, but rather a natural Minor suit overcall.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1D	3D (A natural 6-card Diamond suit with a good 11+ or more HCP's)		

(or)

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
Pass	Pass	1C	3C (A natural 6-card Club suit with near Opening count or better)

-----

**4. A new suit mentioned after a Minor suit Agreement at the 2- or 3-level.** Such bids offer a stopper in the bid suit and ask for a stopper in the unbid Major(s) for a possible 3NT final contract.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1D	Pass	3D	Pass
3H (Claiming a Heart stopper, requesting a Spade stopper in order to finalize a make able 3NT contract. Absent one, East bids 4D.			

-----

**Advanced Bridge**

**Lesson 12**

**Support Doubles**

A **Support Double** is a double used by the opening bidder to clarify the degree of support for Responder's 4-card suit in a competitive auction scenario. **The support double is usable as long as the overcaller does not raise the level above two of the Responder's suit.** A double, therefore, of a jump overcall over Responder's response remains a penalty double, as before.

With 4-card or better support, standard bidding allows opener to evidence primary support for his/her responding partner's 4-card or better suit. We are all accustomed to such bidding sequences such as:

(a)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	1D 2H	Pass	1H	1S

(Here, North has shown 4 or more Hearts with a minimum 11-15 HCP count (seven or eight loser) opening bid.

-----

(b)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	1D 3S	Pass	1S	2C

(Here, North has shown 4 or more Spades with a one-trick better than minimum 16-18 HCP count (six loser) opening bid.

-----

(c)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	1C 4H	Pass	1H	2D

(Here, North has shown 4 or more Hearts with a maximum 20+ HCP count (five loser) opening bid.

-----

In any of the above-listed sequences, however, it could, hypothetically be possible that South could, indeed, have had a 5-card suit, in which case North would only require 3-piece support to verify a Golden fit in Responder's bid suit. We have already seen that standard bidding produces a way for opener to show a 4-card support for Responder. **If opener doubles or re-doubles, he/she is showing precisely 3-card support for Responder's suit. A support double or re-double is alertable.**

All of the following bidding sequences are examples of a support double: Each is alertable.

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1C Double	1H	1S	2H

1C Double	Pass	1H	2D
1D Re-Double	Pass	1S	Double

-----

**If, conversely, opener passes, rebids his/her own suit, or bids another suit at opener's second opportunity to bid, the implication is that (1) he/she does not hold 3-card support, or (2) that he/she will show support later. Such negative inference is also alertable.**

In all of the following examples, the primary message is that opener has fewer than 3-card support for Responder's suit because, (1) in the first, a new suit was bid, (2) in the second, opener has passed, and (3) in the third, opener has rebid his/her own suit.

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1C 2D	Pass	1H	1S
1D Pass	Pass	1H	1S
1H 2H	Pass	1S	2C

-----

Thus, in summary, **the support double does not seek to penalize the overcaller (the option to double the opponent's overcall for penalties has been lost), but merely stipulates that the opener wishes to raise responder's suit to the 2-level with a holding of only three trumps.** It is generally accepted, anyhow, that low-level penalty doubles are rarely fruitful most of the time, in any event.

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 13

# Negative Doubles

In a five-card Major suit bidding system, the frequency of a Minor suit opening is, of course, increased. As a result, it is easier for the opponents to overcall, and their having done so, may obviate the responder's bid of a 4-card suit that he/she was planning to bid. (Examples: 1, 2 & 3) Responder may be precluded from making his/her desired call because of either a lack of holding five or more pieces of the desired suit, too few HCP's, or even both.

The **Negative Double** is a convention which copes with this situation. **A double by Responder at his/her first opportunity, opposite a one-of-a-suit opening bid by partner followed by an interference overcall by Responder's RHO (Right Hand Opponent) is a double for take-out rather than a double for penalties.** *The HCP count of a Responder who utilizes a negative double is unlimited.* (Example: 4)

(Example: 1)	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b><u>East Holds:</u></b>	1D	1S	Dbl.	
XXX				
AXXX				(East's Double shows at least four Hearts and at least
XX				enough strength to have responded to opener's 1D bid had
QXXX				there been no interference. Responder hopes opener will
				Be able to bid 2H. Here if instead, opener rebids 2C,
				Responder will pass.)

---

(Example: 2)	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b><u>East Holds:</u></b>	1D	1S	Dbl.	
XXX				
KJXX				(Absent a 2H call from opener in this case, Responder is
KXXX				prepared to correct to 2D.)
XX				

---

(Example: 3)	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b><u>East Holds:</u></b>	1S	2H	Dbl.	
KX				
JXX				(Once again, the use of the Negative Double allows the
AXXX				Responder to describe his/her hand.)
KXXX				

---

(Example: 4)	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b><u>East Holds:</u></b>	1D	1S	Dbl.	
AX				
KQXX				(Here, Responder has a very strong hand but still requires
QXXXX				the use of the Negative Double in that the overcaller has
AX				made it difficult for East to bid the hand naturally. Once
				East finds out whether or not the opener has four Hearts,

East plans to force at least to game thereafter.)

-----

**Note:** The use of an immediate double of an overcall as a negative or takeout double means that Responder cannot double the overcall for penalties. The fact, therefore, that the use of negative doubles may force the Responder to pass when otherwise he/she would have made a penalty double places a heavy obligation on the opening bidder. As a result, the opener **must make every reasonable effort to keep the bidding open if his/her left-hand opponent's overcall is passed around to him/her, especially if he/she be short in the over-caller's suit.** (Example: 5)

(Example: 5)	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<u>West Holds:</u>	1S	2D	Pass	Pass
AQXXX	????			
KXX				
X				
AX				
			<u>East Holds:</u>	
			XX	
			AXX	
			KJ10XX	
			XXX	

(One guideline for the opener as to whether or not to re-open the bidding is his/her length in the suit of the overcall. The shorter he/she is in that suit the more he/she should strain to keep the bidding open and conversely, the more cards he/she has in the over-caller's suit, the more inclined he/she should be to pass. In Example 5 above, if West were to re-open the bidding with a re-opening double, East is prepared to pass the re-opening double thereby converting it to a penalty double. Also, note that East had had the original option of bidding NT, else passing and hoping for a re-opening double from partner which Responder then plans to pass.

-----

A secondary advantage of the use of negative doubles is that the overcaller may have a penalty inflicted upon him from either side as Opener may (having the necessary length in the over-caller's suit) pass the double for penalties instead of bidding onwards. (Example: 6)

(Example: 6)	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<u>West Holds:</u>	1S	2C	Dbl.	
AKXXX				
XX				
X				
AKJXX				

(Here, Opener, having a lack of support for East's negative double evidencing a probable Heart-Diamond holding, has the option of passing the negative double thereby converting it to a penalty double.)

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 14

## Splinter Bids

**A Splinter Bid is any unusual (double) jump of a suit guaranteeing a fit for partner's last named-suit and showing a singleton (other than a Singleton Ace) or a void in the suit in which the jump was made. Such bids guarantee game and often suggest a slam. (Note: All splinter bids are alertable.) Splinters bids can be in both Major and Minor suits. Splinter bids can be utilized in a variety of situations. The most common are:**

1) <u>By Responder:</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	1H	Pass	<b><u>"4D"</u></b>	

South exhibits a game-forcing raise (13 or more HCP's) in support of North's Heart suit (Willing to play in a 4H contract opposite what could be as little as a minimum opening bid), and a diamond shortage (Singleton or Void). Note: A 3D bid by South would have been a jump shift evidencing 19 or more HCP's (Weak with some partnerships) as opposed to the shown double jump in Diamonds which reads as a Splinter Bid.

2) <u>By Opener:</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	1D	Pass	1S	Pass
	<b><u>"4H"</u></b>			

North exhibits a game-forcing raise (20 or more HCP's) in support of South's Spades (Willing to play in a 4S contract opposite what could be as few as 6 HCP's), and a Heart shortage (A Singleton or Void).

3) <u>By Responder to an Overcaller:</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	1C	1S	Pass	<b><u>"4D" (But not 4H)</u></b>

Splinter bids are available when the opponents have opened, provided the bid is made below the game level, and is **not** in a Major.

4) <u>Following Stayman:</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	1NT	Pass	<b><u>"2C"</u></b>	Pass
	2H	Pass	<b><u>"4D"</u></b>	

Here, South having invoked Stayman, liking North's 4-card Heart suit, splinters in Diamonds in order to both guarantee game and to suggest slam possibilities in Hearts.

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Splinter bids suggest slam, not necessarily on the basis of high cards, but rather on the basis of fit and distribution.

<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>
A9853	QJ742	1S	<b><u>"4C"</u></b>
KQ2	A84		
K4	A1052		
952	8		

Note: Even with a minimum hand in the above-listed instance, North is encouraged to seek a 6S contract as a result of the fact that two of his previously-thought losers in Clubs are eliminated by South's Splinter bid of "4C" in support of opener's Spades.

Splinter bids may be in support of Minor suit bids as well as in support of Major suits as shown previously.

<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>
1C	<b><u>"3H"</u></b>	J108	A53
		KQ10	6
		A2	KJ97
		KJ763	A9852

Here, South denies a 4-card Major suit holding, but shows excellent Club support (usually 5 or more pieces), opening bid values, and Heart shortage.

Note: North, Holding the hand shown above with strength and few losers in the Heart suit to begin with, will not be encouraged to consider a slam, and will bid 3NT, ending the auction. Reverse North's Major suit holdings, however, as shown below, and North should easily get to a cold 6D contract.

<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>
1C	<b><u>"3H"</u></b>	KQ10	A53
		J108	6
		A2	KJ97
		KJ763	A9852

A Splinter bid at the 5-level, which automatically deprives the partnership of the use of Blackwood, should only be used to show a void in the Splinter suit.

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1H	Pass	3H	Pass
<b><u>"5D"</u></b>			

Here, South is being asked to re-evaluate his/her holding for slam in light of North's Diamond void.

In some situations, Splinter bids can be in partner's opening suit.

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1C	Pass	1H	Pass
1S	Pass	<b><u>"4C"</u></b>	

Here, South is showing at least 4-card Spade support, game values (i.e., an opening bid or better), and Club shortage.

-----

Splinter bids may also occur in competition.

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1C <b><u>"3S"</u></b>	Pass	1H	1S

Here, North is showing Heart support, Spade shortage, and at least 20 or more HCP's. North guarantees game in Hearts, and suggests the possibility of a slam, should South have the appropriate holding.

-----

## **Advanced Bridge**

### **Lesson 15**

## **REGULAR, REVERSE, & TWO-WAY REVERSE**

## **DRURY CONVENTIONS**

**BACKGROUND:** After two previous passes at the table, the third player may sometimes opt to open the bidding relatively freely; i.e., with several HCP's less than that normally required. This is partly because of the negation of the responsibility of a rebid (partner has already passed), partly because the bid made may inconvenience the forth player who has yet to have the opportunity to open the bidding (the player who is likely to have the best hand at the table), and partly because partner may utilize the information for lead directing significance should that team ultimately become defenders of an eventual contract by the opponents.

**PURPOSE:** After passing, the responder to a third or fourth-chair opening bid faces two special problem in describing his/her hand:

- (1) A simple change of suit is no longer forcing (opener knows responder has less than opening values), so responder cannot make a temporizing bid; opener my pass.
- (2) The opener may well have opened the bidding on a sub-minimum hand so that a jump response by responder could easily get the partnership too high.

In short, responder does not have a good bid available which will describe the maximum previously-passed hand with support for opener's suit. Determining the nature (full or sub-minimum) of partner's third or forth seat opening is crucial in finding the best level of the final contract. Utilizing one of the Drury Conventions enables responder to show his/her fit and values WITHOUT jumping to the 3-level.

**DEFINITION:** - A convention that uses an **ARTIFICIAL "2C"** response by a **PREVIOUSLY-PASSED HAND** in response to a third-hand or fourth-hand opening of a Major suit by partner. The responder must have 11-12 HCP's; i.e., very nearly an opening bid (Invitational Quality), as well as primary support for partner's Major suit. **This Convention is Alertable.**

Examples: P P 1S(1H) P (or) P P P 1H(1S)  
 "2C" P "2C"

**PURPOSE:** - To ask the opening bidder to clarify the strength of his/her opening bid; i.e., whether it be a full (13-14 Points or better) or a sub-minimum opening strength (11-12 HCP's) so as to seek the possibility of game WITHOUT OVER-BIDDING. The artificial "2C" bid guarantees support; i.e., at least 3 cards for the opening bidder's Major suit. -

Example: Q8532 P P 1S P  
 K864 "2C"  
 Q8  
 KJ

(Note: Without Drury, Responder would have no convenient response to Opener's 1S bid. Indeed, "2S" would have been an underbid, and "3S" might well be an overbid if Opener had a sub-minimum opening count.

**INVOKING THE CONVENTION:** In order to initiate this Convention, the Responder bids an artificial "2C" in response to a third or forth chair opening bid of one (1) of a Major (Hearts or Spades). This 2-Club response does NOT say anything about responder's Club holding (unless Clubs are subsequently rebid by responder); but simply asks opener whether or not he/she has a full opening bid.



## THE “REVERSE” DRURY CONVENTION

**Definition:** - A more modern version of the Drury convention in which a third- or fourth-position Opener of a Heart or Spade, in response to an artificial “2C” response by a previously-passed partner (asking Opener to clarify the strength of his/her opening bid) responds as follows:

- a. Returns to his original Major suit with a sub-minimum opening count
- |      |   |      |   |       |
|------|---|------|---|-------|
| P    | P | 1S   | P | AXXXX |
| “2C” | P | “2S” |   | KX    |
|      |   |      |   | AXXX  |
|      |   |      |   | XX    |

(or)

- b. Any other bid is natural, and forward-going showing a full opening count
- |      |   |    |   |       |
|------|---|----|---|-------|
| P    | P | 1S | P | AKXXX |
| “2C” | P | 2H |   | KXXX  |
|      |   |    |   | AX    |
|      |   |    |   | XX    |

## THE TWO-WAY “REVERSE” DRURY CONVENTION

**Definition:** - Opener, who has previously passed, in response to Partner’s third position opening bid of a Heart or a Spade, and holding Major suit support and invitational strength (11+ HCP’s or 8 Losers) will bid as follows:

- a. “2C” with 3-card support  
 b. “2D” with 4-card support (All other bids which follow are identical as in regular Reverse Drury)

### Advanced Bridge

#### Lesson 16

## RESPONSIVE DOUBLES

**Definition:** The use of a double for take-out when there has been an immediate raise to the 2- or 3-level over partner's takeout double (Examples 1 & 2) or overcall (Example 3) or over a supported weak 2-bid (Example 4).

The use of this form of Double says: "Partner, I have scattered strength, I have no specific long suit, but I wish us to compete further. You bid your best suit and I will have support for it!"

**Strength Required:** The minimum strength required for a responsive double varies slightly with the preceding level of the auction and will vary with the level at which the prospective user is forcing partner to bid. Even with a balanced hand, a double at the 2-level requires about 6 HCP's, and that at the 3-level about 9 HCP's. As one's hand becomes more distributional, even fewer HCP's are necessary.

**Maximum Level For Usage:** Each Partnership must agree exactly how high this type of Double should apply. "Responsive Through 4D" is a common agreement but it is up to each partnership as to what level, beyond which, such a bid necessarily be a Penalty Double as an alternative.

**Example 1**

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1D	Dbl.	2D	???

<u>South Holds:</u>	JXXX QXXX X QXXX	(It would be foolish for South to Pass with this holding, yet he/she is not nearly strong enough to make a "3D" Cuebid. Not wanting to guess which Major suit to bid, South makes a <u>Responsive "Double"</u> . Since it
---------------------	---------------------------	---

be highly unlikely for South to desire to make a penalty double even if East had raised directly to 3D. South is merely showing values, a desire to compete further, but no specific choice as to which of the remaining unbid suits to choose.)

**Example 2**

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1S	Dbl.	2S	???

<u>South Holds:</u>	XXX AJX QXXX JXX	(This would be ideal for a Responsive Double, and, indeed, would be the case even if the opposition had bid Clubs, Diamond, or even Hearts.)
---------------------	---------------------------	--

**Example 3**

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1H	2C	2H	???

<u>South Holds:</u>	KXXX XXX	(Here North has shown a simple overcall at the 2-Level (10-15 HCP's) and a 5-card
---------------------	-------------	---

AXXX or longer Club suit. South, wishing to  
 XX compete further, but not having support for  
 Partner, yet no clear choice of his/her own,  
 makes a Responsive Double showing values and length in the two unbid suits.  
 North is now free to make choice as to whether to rebid his/her Clubs if 6  
 cards or longer, else bid one of the remaining suits as an alternative  
 knowing South has values and length in the remaining suits.)

---

**Example 4**

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
2H	Dbl.	3H	???

South Holds:      KXXX      (Partnerships must agree to at which levels  
                           X            a Double over both Minor and Major suit  
                           AXXX      supported Pre-empts warrant the use of  
                           QXXX      Responsive Doubles.)

---

**Prohibition to Use: One must not make Responsive Doubles or Cue-Bids in response to a Take-out Double with hands that are suited to No Trump (Examples 5 & 6).**

**Example 5**

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1H	Dbl.	2H	???

South Holds:      AX            (A Responsive Double is never made with  
                           KJXX      excessive strength in the opponent's suit.  
                           QXXX      Here South should bid 2NT.)  
                           XXX

---

**Example 6**

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1H	Dbl.	2H	???

South Holds:      XX            (A Responsive Double is never made with  
                           AQ            excessive strength in the opponent's suit.  
                           KQXXX      Here South should bid 3NT.)  
                           JXXX

---

**Advanced Bridge**

**Lesson 17**

**4-WAY (MINOR SUIT) TRANSFERS  
OVER PARTNER'S 1NT OPENING**

Transfers over Partner's opening bid of 1NT are, today, almost universal. Some partnerships use 2-Way Transfers (for the Majors only); some use 3-Way Transfers (Minor Suit Stayman); and some utilize 4-Way Transfers. The following 4-Way Transfer method incorporates the best combinations of the several ways 4-Way Transfers can be played.

**A. Minor Suit Transfers:** Transferring to the either Minor suit (Clubs or Diamonds) piggy-backs similarly on top of the two Major suit transfers one customarily uses. Such transfers, however, customarily evidence a 6-card Minor suit holding as opposed to at least 5 cards when a Major suit Transfer is used. The reason is that when you are weak and wish to play in 3C or 3D, you require six cards (not five) in the suit in order to make a better contract than 1-NT. Indeed, there is no point in showing a five-card Minor suit holding when Responder's shape is something like (3-2-3-5) - you're going to play in No Trump anyhow.

1NT	"2S" (Alertable)	(Shows at least 6-Clubs)
1NT	"2NT" (Alertable)	(Shows at least 6-Diamonds)

**B. Opener's Response to Minor Suit Transfers:** Notice that Minor suit Transfers, used as stated herein, are two levels below the indicated suit. Opener, therefore, has two possible rebids that do not go past the intended suit of the Responder. The Responder may wish to know how strong Opener's holding is in the directed suit in cases where a "Gambling 3NT" holding is held by the Responder. If the Opener holds a good fit in Responder's suit (at least K-X-X), Opener makes a "Super Acceptance" or "Break From the Transfer" by bidding the in-between bid ("2NT" over "2S" and "3C" over "2NT"). On all other hands Opener will accept (or complete) the transfer and bid 3 of Responder's suit. Thus, when Opener replies with a bid in Responder's suit, this is known as "accepting the transfer"; whereas if Opener bids the in-between suit, Opener is making a "super-acceptance" in case game be feasible.

(1)	<u>Opener's Hand</u>	<u>Opener's Bids</u>	<u>Responder's Bid</u>
	AKX	1NT	"2S"
	KQXX	"3C" (Completing the Transfer)	
	KXX		
	XXX	1NT	"2NT"
		"3C" (Breaks the Transfer)	

(2)	<u>Responder's Hand</u>	<u>Responder's Bids</u>	<u>Opener's Bid</u>
	XX		1NT
	XX	"2S" (Transfer to Clubs)	3C
	KXX	Pass	
	QXXXXX		

(3)	<u>Responder's Hand</u>	<u>Responder's Bids</u>	<u>Opener's Bid</u>
	XX		1NT
	XX	"2NT" (Transfer to Diamonds)	"3C" (Break)
	AQXXXX	3NT (Gambling Game Attempt)	
	XXX		

**C. Responder's Invitational NT:** Since the "2NT" bid by Responder is used to denote a transfer to Diamonds, it is no longer available when Responder, holding 8-9+ HCP's wishes to invite Opener to 3NT. In such instances, therefore, Responder must bid a Stayman "2C" and then rebid an invitational 2NT notwithstanding the absence of a 4-card Major suit holding. A sequence such as 1NT-"2C"-2H-2NT no longer guarantees that Responder holds a 4-card Spade suit. **Responder's "2C" bid is thus Alertable** in that it may, or may not, evidence one or more 4-card Major suit holding(s).

(4) <u>Responder's Hand</u>	<u>Responder's Bids</u>	<u>Opener's Bid</u>
QXXX		1NT
KX	"2C"	"2D"
AXXX	2NT (Invitational)	
XXX		

**Note:** The 1NT Opener may use his/her judgment in deciding whether to make the in-between bid following Responder's transfer bid. Suppose, for example, Opener holds K-X-X in Responder's Minor suit but has a bundle of Queens and Jacks in one or more of the other suits and only one Ace. The chances of making three outside quick tricks is diminished and Opener may elect not to make a "Super Acceptance" bid so as NOT to entice Responder should he/she be contemplating a Gambling 3NT attempt.

-----

**D. Responder's Sign-Off in a Minor:** One of the most common purposes for a Minor suit Transfer is to sign off in a long suit when the Responder wishes to place the contract in what he/she believes is a more likely makeable contract than Opener's 1NT.

(5) <u>Responder's Hand</u>	<u>Responder's Bids</u>	<u>Opener's Bid</u>
XX		1NT
KXX	"2NT"	"3C"
JXXXXX	3D (Sign-off - No Interest in Game)	
XXX	(Not-with-Standing Opener's Super Acceptance)	
		1NT
	"2NT"	3D
	Pass	

-----

**D. Responder's Evidence of a Second Suit:** Suppose Opener opens 1NT and the Responder holds game values and a 6-4 shape including a 6-card Minor and 4 cards in a Major suit. Responder must, in these instances, show the Minor with a transfer response, and then bid his/her 4-card suit at the 3-Level.

(6) <u>Responder's Hand</u>	<u>Responder's Bids</u>	<u>Opener's Bid</u>
J		1NT

AQXX  
XX  
KQXXXX

"2S"  
3H (Showing 6-4 Shape)

"3C"

Here, the Responder bids "2S" showing long Clubs. Whether or not Opener breaks the transfer, Responder will continue with a bid at the 3-Level of his/her 4-card Major showing a second suit and game values. Opener can either bid 4H, 5C, or 3NT to deny a fit anywhere. Remember that with a 5-card Major and a 4-card Major, Responder must begin with Stayman, never with a Jacoby Transfer.

-----

**E. Use of 3C, 3D, 3H, and 3S by Responder:** Since Gambling tries can be attempted with a super acceptance by Opener, as seen above, any first responses to a 1NT opening bid at the 3-Level by Responder can be used as follows:

1NT	"3C" (Alertable)	(5-5 in the Minors - Weak)
1NT	"3D" (Alertable)	(5-5 in the Minors - Strong)
1NT	"3H" (Alertable)	(5-5 in the Majors - Weak)
1NT	"3S" (Alertable)	(5-5 in the Majors - Strong)

-----

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 18

## The "Redwood" Convention

### (A Variation of The "Kickback" Convention)

When Clubs or Diamonds is the agreed-upon Suit, asking for Aces with the standard Blackwood Convention can sometimes become a problem when the Responder's answer to the "Ace-asking" "4NT" takes the partnership beyond the agree-upon suit (Example 1). This would embarrass the partnership in that it would force them to the 6-level in some instances where twelve tricks were not feasible due to a lack of the number of necessary controls (Aces).

<u>Example 1:</u>	1C	P	3C	P	In this instance, Opener, hoping to find the Responder with two Aces, bids "4NT". When the 4NT bidder receives the "5D" answer (showing 1-Ace), Opener can no longer revert back to 5C and is, therefore, forced to bid an unmakeable 6C.
	"4NT"	P	"5D"	P	
	?????				

-----

In a game-forcing auction, therefore, a jump to a suit one above four of that Minor suit acts as Blackwood, or Roman Key-Card Blackwood, depending upon which Ace-asking Blackwood Convention that partnership employs (Examples 2 & 3). This, then, in most instances, saves needed space in most cases.

<u>Example 2:</u>	1C	P	3C	P	In this instance, Opener, hoping to find the Responder with two Aces, bids "4D", one suit above four of the agreed-upon Minor. When the "4D" bidder receives the "4S" answer (showing 1-Ace), Opener can comfortably stop at the 5C level.
	"4D"	P	"4S"	P	
	5C				

<u>Example 3:</u>	1D	P	3D	P	In this instance, Opener, hoping to find the Responder with two Aces, bids "4H", one suit above four of the agreed-upon Minor. When the "4H" bidder receives the "4NT" answer (showing 1-Ace), Opener can comfortably stop at the 5D level.
	"4H"	P	"4NT"	P	
	5D				

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 19

## The "Forcing Pass"

Most bridge partnerships know that certain bids invite, yes indeed, sometimes even force, partner to take bidding action. Several such bidding sequences are: (1) a "Take-out Double", (2) a "Support" Double, (3) a "Responsive" Double, (4) A new suit bid by the Responder,

(5) a “Reverse” by the Opening bidder *or* by the Responder, (6) a Blackwood “4NT” *or* a Gerber “4C” Ace-Asking bid, (7) a “4NT” or “5NT” *Quantitative* bid over partners opening “1NT”, (8) a “5NT – Grand-Slam Force”, and (9) A “Fourth-Suit-Forcing” bidding sequence, to name a few of the most commonly known examples.

One additional forcing bidding scenario, however, not frequently discussed, but important and necessary in many bidding situations is the “*Forcing Pass*”. A “*Forcing Pass*” is defined as a pass by either partner of the partnership which forces the partner to take action, either by bidding or by doubling. The guidelines are not always consistent, but the partnership must agree upon the definition of the forcing pass and recognize the circumstances under which the “forcing pass” comes into existence. Some of the more common scenarios are as follows:

A. One of the teams has volitionally reached game-level, or has issued and accepted a game invitation or force, and the opponents have put in an obvious sacrifice bid in their own suit. A pass by one's partner under these circumstances becomes a forcing pass, and implies the desire to continue the bidding, if the partner asked is willing to bid higher. Alternatively, the partner may, if he/she so desires, rather double for penalty.

<u>Example:</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	1H	Pass	3H	Pass
	4H	“4NT” (Unusual NT)	Pass	5D
	<u>Pass (Forcing)</u>	Pass	????	

B. After the auction has begun, it becomes clear to both sides that a certain safety level has been reached, and to precede with the auction means that one side may decide to sacrifice or one side may decide to bid higher knowing that the contract will be defeated, all depending upon the expectation of a better score. This is the situation where a pass by one's partner could become a forcing pass because of his inability to make a suitable call, and /or his desire to discover whether his partner has sufficient values and distribution to double the contract of the opponents.

<u>Example:</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	1H	1S	2H	2S
	3H	3S	<u>Pass (Forcing)</u>	Pass
	????			

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C. In the situation of a slam-level sacrifice, a forcing pass, according to the partnership agreement, promises control of the suit of the opponents, and requests that the partner bid a small or grand slam if the partner has sufficient outside values.

<u>Example:</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	1H	Pass	3H	Pass
	“4NT”	5D	<u>Pass (Forcing)</u>	Pass
	????			

**Note:** East could have used the "DOPI", "DOPE" or "DEPO" Convention (depending upon partnership agreement) over North's "5D" interference but, alternatively, passes instead.

-----

D. Under the scenario where partner has opened the bidding, your RHO (Right-hand Opponent) has made a takeout Double and you have "Re-Doubled", evidencing 10 or more HCP's. Your LHO (the partner of the Doubler) makes an overcall bid, and Opener then passes (forcing) showing no extra values over his/her original opening count. It is obviously your partnership's team has the majority of the HCP count and you, the Re-Doubler, must act.

<u>Example:</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	1H	Dbl.	Re-Dbl.	1S
	<b><u>Pass (Forcing)</u></b>	Pass	????	

-----

When using the "Forcing Pass" or any other feature of the game of bridge in your partnership agreement, one must make certain that the concept is understood by both partners. Additionally, the partners must be aware whether or not the feature is alertable, and whether an announcement should, or must, be made when it is invoked.

## **Advanced Bridge**

### **Lesson 20**

## **Balancing Overcalls**

**DEFINITION:** The bidding of partner's cards in the reopening position, (The so-called "PASS-OUT SEAT", or 4th seat relative to the last previous call or bid other than a pass) is commonly called "BALANCING". It is called this because the bidding presumes that the partner has the **balance** of the HCP strength, and because upon that player's shoulders rests whether or not the bidding dies or continues. This presumption is based upon the

opponent's bidding (or, in this case, the lack thereof) and the points the player in the fourth chair is NOT looking at in his/her own hand.

Example: (1C/1D/1H/1S) P P ???

The use of balancing bids will be a source of considerable profit to a partnership when used properly in situations in which the opposing bidding has stopped at a low level and where the bidding would otherwise cease. In order to balance effectively, however, it is extremely necessary to make and understand adjustments in the meaning of such competitive tools such as doubles, overcalls, no-trump bids, cue-bids, and jump-overcalls. Such tools all have altered meanings when used in the balancing position.

**B. BALANCING OVERCALLS:** A balancing (4th seat) overcall does *not* require the same strength and/or distribution, or either, that is normally necessary for a direct (2<sup>nd</sup> Seat) overcall.

1H P P ???

Examples: (a) XX JXXX A10XXX A10 (Overcall 2D with fewer than 10 HCP's)

(b) K10XX XXX KXX A10X (Overcall 1S even with a 4-card suit)

(c) QXXX X Q10XX AQXXX (Bid a Take-out "Double" even with less

(d) KXXX XXX AXX KXX (Overcall 1NT - evidencing a balanced Hand, a Spade stopper, but with 10-14 HCP's - not the usual direct (2nd) Seat 15-17 HCP's)

(e) AKJXXX XX AXX KX (Overcall 2S - A jump shift in the balancing seat, shows a strong opening count with a good 5-card or longer Suit, as opposed to the jump shift in the direct (2<sup>nd</sup> seat) which is equivalent to an opening weak 2-Bid.)

**Note:** None of these hands meet the standard requirements for a direct overcall, but all are appropriate balancing overcalls. When one balances with an overcall, partner should not get overly enthusiastic. Balancing overcalls are usually the weakest of the actions one may exercise in the balancing chair (with the exception of {e} above), and, as noted above, can even be done with a weak hand, a poor suit quality, and even with a 4-card suit. Even if the previously-passed partner holds a good hand, game is highly unlikely unless in addition to his/her good hand, he/she holds a fit for the balancing partner's suit.

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## Summary of Overcalls

	<u>Direct Position</u>	<u>Balancing Position</u>
	(Mandatory Requirements)	(Flexible Requirements)
1. Simple Overcall at The 1-Level	8-15 HCP's and a 5-Card Suit or Longer	8+ HCP's with a 4-Card Suit or Longer

-----

2.	Simple Overcalls at The 2-Level	10-15 HCP's and a 5-Card Suit or Longer	8+ HCP's with a 5-Card Suit or Longer
-----			
3.	Take-Out Double	Opening Count or Better With few Cards in the Opponent's Suit 4 Cards in the Unbid Major(s)	8 or More HCP's With few Cards in the Opponent's Suit 4 Cards in the Unbid Major(s)
		(or)	(or)
		16 or More HCP's + Your own 5-Card Suit or Better Bid at Your Next Opportunity	16 or More HCP's + A Cue-Bid or A NT Bid at the Next Turn to Bid
-----			
4.	1-No Trump Bid	15-17 HCP's Even Distribution One or More Stoppers in The Opponent's Bid Suit	10-14 HCP's Even Distribution Stopper(s) in the Opponent's Suit Desired But not required
-----			
5.	Cue-Bid in The Opponent's Suit	A Michael's Cue-Bid with a 5-5 or Better Distribution 0-10 HCP's <u>or</u> 16+ HCP's	A Michael's Cue-Bid with a 5-5 or Better Distribution 0-10 HCP's <u>or</u> 16+ HCP's
-----			
6.	Jump-Overcall	A Weak 2-Bid 5-11 HCP's with a 6-Card Suit or Longer 3 or More of the Top 5 Honors (Optional)	A Strong Opening Bid 16 HCP's or more (Usually) A 6-Card Suit or Longer
-----			

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 21

## Inverted Minor Raises

**DEFINITION:** - A deviation from standard bidding practices for showing support for an opening bid of one of either Minor suit, Clubs or Diamonds.

A single raise is strong and forcing (10 or more HCP's) (Example 1), while a double raise is weak and obstructive (Example 2). This combination of a reversal of bids from standard bidding allows more room for investigation with good hands while, concurrently, offering a preemptive effect with weak hands.

When using Inverted Minors, if the opponents intervene over the opening bid, it is a matter of partnership understanding whether or not the use of this inversion is still in effect.

Inverted Minor bids are alertable.

		<u>Example 1:</u>		You, South, hold:
<u>North</u>		<u>South</u>	AXX	(A bid of "2C" shows support
1C	P	<u>"2C"</u>	KX	with invitational or
			XXX	greater strength)
			KJXXX	

-----

		<u>Example 2:</u>		You, South, hold:
<u>North</u>		<u>South</u>	KXX	(A bid of "3C" is preemptive)
1C	P	<u>"3C"</u>	XX	
			XX	
			JXXXXX	

-----

**VARIATION:** - Many tournament players modify the above system in order to cover three types of support (forcing, invitational, and preemptive) for a Minor suit opening. In this variation, a jump bid in the Minor is, as above, preemptive; but a jump shift into the other Minor suit (Examples 1 & 2) is invitational showing 11-12 HCP's, and a simple raise to the 2-level in the original Minor (Example 3) is evidencing 13 or more HCP's and is game-forcing.

		<u>Example 1:</u>		You, South, hold:
<u>North</u>		<u>South</u>	AXX	(A jump shift into the
1C	P	<u>"2D"</u>	KX	opposing Minor suit shows
			XXX	invitational support for
			KJXXX	the original Minor suit)

-----

Example 2: You, South, hold:

<u>North</u>		<u>South</u>	AXX	(Invitational support for
1D	P	<b><u>"3C"</u></b>	KX	Diamonds)
			KQXXX	
			XXX	

-----

Example 3: You, South, hold:

<u>North</u>		<u>South</u>	AXX	(Game forcing support for
1C	P	<b><u>"2C"</u></b>	XX	Opener's Club suit)
			KQX	
			AJXXX	

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## **Advanced Bridge**

### **Lesson 22**

#### **Multi-2NT Responses to Partner's Opening Major Suit Bid**

In order to gain a competitive edge on deals where Responder has at least 4-piece support for Opener's Major suit opening, many players adopt Bergen raises; i.e., "3C" evidencing 7-9 HCP's, "3D" 10-12 HCP's, and 3 of the Major suit preemptive. These bids, combined with "2NT" Jacoby (opening count) and Splinter Bids with a side singleton or void offer a strong

armamentarium for almost any support holding by Responder. In these bidding sequences, Opener retains the Captaincy and directs the partnership into its final destination.

In the Multi-2NT responses system, however, the roles are reversed, and Responder becomes the Captain after Opener describes his/her holding with a rebid wherein Opener evidences his/her Losing Trick Count (LTC) followed by the Responder captaining the team to its final destination. This system retains the preemptive direct double raise, but telescopes the Bergen “3C” and “3D” responses and the Jacoby 2NT into a single package system wherein the Responder takes control over the final contract.

In this system, Responder, having four or more pieces of Opener’s Major suit accompanied by at least 8 HCP’s (9 or fewer losers) bids “2NT” (an alertable bid). Over “2NT” Opener then bids:

- (1) “three of his/her Major” – Evidences a 7- or 8-Loser hand with no personal interest in game from Opener’s perspective if Responder holds minimum values (any 7-9, 9-Loser Hand; or any 10-12, 8-Loser Hand);
- (2) “3C” – Evidences a 6-Loser hand (one trick better than a minimum opening count) with interest in game if Responder holds 10-12 but not opposite 7-9;
- (3) “3D” – Evidences a 5-Loser hand which forces to game, even if Responder holds a minimum of 9-Losers. This bid denies a side singleton or void;
- (4) “3NT” – Evidences a 5-3-3-2 shape with 5-Losers;
- (5) “The Other Major” or “Four of a Minor” – Evidences a singleton or void in that suit, 5-Losers, forcing the partnership to game but with a strong interest in Slam.

Responder’s follow-up bids are reasonably straightforward:

- (1) Over Opener’s simple same-suit rebid – He/She can “Pass”, “Raise”, or “Cue-Bid” with Slam interest;
- (2) Over Opener’s “3C” (6-Loser) rebid – He/She can “Sign-Off” at the 3- or 4-Level of the Major, or show “Slam interest” with any other bid;
- (3) Over Opener’s “3D”, “3NT”, or “Splinter” – He/She can “Sign-Off” at 4 of the Major, start “Cue-Bidding”, or ask for “Key Cards”

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### **Coping with Interference**

- (1) Over a Double (of 2NT) – Bids retain their normal meaning with a “Redouble” suggesting defending;
- (2) Over a Bid (Where normal responses are still available) – a “Double” substitutes for the interfering bid which was made, a “Pass” for a lower one, and/or the use of “The ‘DOPI’ Convention” (Where “Double” shows a 5-Loser hand, Pass a 6-Loser hand and the next higher-ranking suit a 7-Loser hand) – all by partnership agreement

There are, as in the case of most bids, advantages (gains) and disadvantages (losses) in the use of this Multi-2NT System.

### **Advantages of the Multi-2NT Responses over The Jacoby 2NT System**

- (1) Avoids losses resulting from lead-directing Doubles made by the Opponents over previous three-of-a-Minor Bergen responses;
- (2) Presents the capacity of using three-of-a-Minor for other purposes;
- (3) Gains some Slam-exploration space when Opener is weak and Responder is strong;
- (4) Distinguishes Opener's strength-level immediately when he/she has a short suit and Responder holds game-forcing values;
- (5) Provides less incentive for the Opponents to attempt disruption

### **Disadvantages of the Multi-2NT Responses when Compared to The Jacoby 2NT System**

- (1) Deprives Opener of the ability to show a strong second suit (as he/she can with a bid of 4 of a Minor after a Jacoby 2NT bidding system bid);
- (2) Requires a strong Opener to show a Minor suit Splinter Bid one level higher than after a Jacoby 2NT bid.

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## **Advanced Bridge**

### **Lesson 23**

### **“NAMYATS”**

**“NAMYATS” is an artificial convention in which an opening bid of “4C” promises a long Heart suit and an opening bid of “4D” promises a long Spade suit.** As most frequently used, these bids evidence a hand stronger than a direct opening of four of the Major which remains preemptive (Example 1).

Example 1:                   AJXXXXXX    (Open 4S - Preemptively)

North Holds:        QX  
                               X  
                               XX

-----

Responder usually accepts the transfer by bidding four of Opener's Major suit, else, by partnership agreement, can retransfer by bidding the next higher suit (Example 2). All NAMYATS bids are artificial and alertable.

Example 2:        AX  
North Holds:    AKQJXXX  
                               X  
                               AXX

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
"4C" (1)	P	"4D" (2)	P
4H	P		

- (1) A strong 4 Heart opening (one trick short of Game)  
 (2) A retransfer to Hearts

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To defend against NAMYATS, players have two choices. Either is appropriate subject only to partnership agreement. A double of the first artificial bid can either be used as a lead directing double, or, a slightly better usage of a take-out for the other Major suit (Example 3). A delayed double, however, is natural and used for penalties (Example 4).

	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
<u>Example 3:</u>	"4D" (3)	"Double" (4 or 5)
	(3) A strong 4 Spade opening (one trick short of Game) (4) Lead-Directing for Diamonds, else (5) A Take-out of Opener's Major, usually for the alternate Major	

	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
<u>Example 4:</u>	"4C" (6)	P	"4D" (7)	P
	4H (8)	Double (9)		
	(6) A strong 4 Heart opening (one trick short of Game) (7) A Retransfer to Hearts (8) Natural (9) A Penalty Double			

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 24

### The "Sandwich" No Trump Bid

A "Sandwich" No Trump Bid is a NT bid showing a two-suited hand, usually at least 5-5, made between two bidding opponents. It evidences both as-yet unbid suits and is, usually, of weaker strength (Example 1) than is a Take-out Double, in the same position (Example 2). A Sandwich No Trump call is analogous to a weak Take-out Double. It is both artificial and alertable.

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1D	Pass	1S	????

You (West) Hold the Following:

- X                    **(Make a Take-out Double!**    You have both shape; i.e., both  
 KQXXX                unbid suits, and good opening count.)  
 XX  
 AQJXX
- X                    **(Make a "Sandwich" No Trump Take-out call!** - You have the  
 QJXXX                shape for a Take-out, but your hand is too weak.)  
 XX  
 KQXXX

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## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 25

#### Negative-Freebids

“Negative-Freebids” have become a popular addition to many partnerships. **Negative-Freebids are classified as a bidding treatment or agreement wherein you and your partner agree to lower the point requirements for some of Responder’s bids in competitive auctions.** The use of these bids increases Responder’s ability to show a long suit after an Opponent overcalls, subsequent to Partner’s opening the bidding, and generally improves one’s chances of finding a fit.

**A. Problem:** Consider these typical scenarios: Partner opens 1D, your RHO overcalls 1S, and you hold the following hands:

Example 1: XX KJXXXX XX KXX (With standard bidding, a new-suit bid at the 2-Level would promise at least 11 HCP's. Here, the usual solution is to bid the Negative Double. Since Partner will seldom be kind enough to bid Hearts, you plan to bid 2H yourself over an anticipated 1NT, 2C, or 2D rebid by Opener. But what if LHO raises Partner's Spades? When the auction is passed back to you, you'll have another dilemma—pass and lose a possible Heart part-score, or, even worse, risk a 3H bid which might be a disaster.

Example 2: XXX XXX QX KQJ10X (Here, the Negative Double is not even an option. You, more or less, have to Pass and hope to show your hand at a later bidding opportunity. Even if Opener were to reopen with a Double, you have no good way to describe your hand. A jump to 3C would show some values but would promise a 6-card suit; and 2C would be an underbid since you have more values than Partner could reasonably expect.

**B. The Negative-Freebid Solution:** This system allows Responder, under circumstances as shown above, to make a natural response at the 2-Level, without promising game-invitational values or catapulting the auction too high. **A Negative-Freebid is used when an Opponent overcalls subsequent to Partner opening bid where Responder has a long suit that cannot be shown at the 1-Level.** In the examples shown above, one would make a Negative-Freebid (NFB) of 2H with hand #1, and 2C with hand #2. **Negative-Freebids are called “negative” because they are non-forcing.** (See Examples 1-3)

Partner	RHO	You
1D	1S	?

1. XXXX QXXXXX AX X (Bid 2H - A Negative Freebid)
2. JXX KXXXX XXX AX (Bid a Negative Double - Hand too weak for a NFB)
3. X AKJXX XXXXX XX (Bid 2H - A Negative Freebid)

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**A Negative-Freebid is always a non-jump to a new suit between 2C and 3D. It is alertable and shows the following:**

1. A good 6+card suit or a strong 5-carder
2. 5-11 HCP's
3. If Partner opened 1H or 1S, no 3-card or longer support for Opener's Major

**Responder's new-suit response is not a NFB if the bid is made:**

1. **At the level of 3H or higher. If Partner opens 1S and your RHO overcalls 3D, no Negative-Freebid is available. Any new suit bid of 3H or 4C is forcing.**

2. At the 1-Level, Responder's new suit bid carries the standard meaning; i.e., 6 or more HCP's and a 5-card suit, since Responder would have, alternatively, made a negative double if he/she held only 4 pieces.

**C. Adjustments to Handle Stronger Hands:** Since so many of Responder's new-suit bids are non-forcing when using Negative-Freebids, two (2) adjustments to handle stronger hands are, therefore, necessary.

1. **Negative Double Auctions:** Since Responders Freebids through 3D are not forcing, one needs a way to show a new suit with game-forcing values. To accomplish this, Responder first makes a "normal" Negative Double. The meaning of this action will then be amended if Responder then makes a rebid of a new suit later, which then denotes game values. **"Doubles" by Responder are, therefore, alertable, since they have a two-way meaning.**

Partner	RHO	You
1D	1S	?

1. AJX    KXXX    XX    AJXX (Bid "Normal" Negative Double)
2. X    AQ    KXX    AKJXXXX (Double and then bid Clubs)
3. AQ    QXXXX    AXX    QXX (Double and then bid Hearts)
4. X    AKJXXX    KXXX    XX (Double and then bid 4H)

2. **Jump-Shifts in Competition:** Shows an invitational hand (10-11 HCP's), and a strong 6-card suit.

Partner	RHO	You
1D	1S	?

1. JX    KQJXXX    XX    KJX (Jump to 3H)
2. XX    QXX    QX    AQJXXX (Jump to 3C)

## Advanced Bridge

### Lesson 26

## DEFENSIVE SIGNALS

**"Signaling"** is the language of defensive play. It is the method by which Defenders legitimately exchange information about the make-up of their hands. It is central and crucial to the defense being able to collect the greatest number of tricks to which they are entitled, to limit Declarer's tricks, and to potentially even set the contract at hand. Defenders are normally disadvantaged because they lack the ability to make decisions based upon seeing each others cards. The ability, therefore, of each

Defender to be capable of describing his/her hand through specific carding becomes paramount. Defenders have the ability to utilize one from any number of various methods of Signaling. Standard methods, described herein, are the most prevalent. Other methods, however; i.e., Upside-Down, Odd-Even, and Laventhal Discards are amongst the major alternative systems used today. Each partnership must choose from amongst these various available systems, and Declarer, at the start of any hand, may inquire from the Defenders as to which of the various systems of signaling they employ. No matter which system Defenders use, however, they share with each other, via the cards they play, the following four main categories of information during the signaling process:

### **Four Categories of Standard Defensive Signaling:**

(1) **Attitude Signals Regarding a Specific Suit:** (The signaling which evidences whether Partner wishes to encourage a continuation of that suit already led, or, conversely, to discourage a continuation of the suit referenced),

(2) **Count Signals Regarding a Particular Suit:** (The signaling as to the number of actual cards one holds in a specific suit referenced),

(3) **Suit Preference Signals for a Particular Suit:** (The preferential signaling as to which suit you desire partner to lead at his/her next available opportunity),

(4) **The Play of Specific Cards at Specific Times:** (Specific Carding which have unambiguous messaging under Specific Circumstances when played at specific times).

The planning and sharing of such information as outlined above is central to the ability of the Defenders to properly decide which suits to play, and which suits to avoid playing; which suits to keep, and which suits to discard; whether or not to continue a suit already played, or to switch. There are times, however, when a Defender may not wish to signal when he/she feels that Partner cannot use such information to the team's advantage, or when he/she feels that the information be better withheld from Declarer. When it is advantageous to share such information between Defenders, however, the standard techniques employed to accomplish these goals are herein presented as follows:

## **1. Attitude Signals**

1. **The Lead by Partner of any New Suit when that suit is First Played:** (Whether at the start of the hand on the first card led at the start of the play of the hand, or at anytime during the extended play of the hand subsequent to the opening lead) When Partner first makes the lead of any new, as-yet-unled suit, whether against a Suit Contract or a No Trump Contract, it is important that the Partner of the one who leads do one of two things:

a) **When the card led is other than an honor:** One's Partner must be cognizant of playing 3<sup>rd</sup> hand high; i.e., the highest card necessary to beat Dummy, or to take the trick if one is capable of doing so without, potentially, giving up a future trick. Such play of 3<sup>rd</sup> hand high is normal and customary.

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b) **When the card led is an honor:** Here Partner must give an attitude signal (a preference or a dislike) as to whether or not he/she, from his/her personal perspective, desires a continuation of that suit just selected by Partner. **The play of an unnecessarily high card (the highest that one can afford without potentially giving up a future trick) shows a desire for that suit to be continued.** (Example: Playing the 8 on Opener's Ace when holding K862). **A High Card played by Partner is Encouraging!** (One should never use a potential trick-taking card for such a signal.) (Example: *Do not* play the J from KJ82; rather,

alternatively, the Eight) Once given a positive attitude come-on, Opener may, of course, exercise his/her own prerogative and refuse to continue the suit if he/she thinks there is a better alternative, or if the lead of that suit may be trumped by Declarer or by Dummy, and, therefore, a continuance be worthless.

### **Possible Reasons Why Partner may wish a Continuance of Opener's Choice of Suits Led**

- a) Partner may wish to signal the capacity to trump a subsequent round of that suit.
- b) Partner may wish to signal the ability to take a subsequent trick in that same suit (Ex. QXX).
- c) Partner may wish to force Declarer to trump producing a so-called "uppercut" in Trumps in order to promote a later trump trick for the Defenders, or to shorten the numbers of Trump cards in either Declarer's or Dummy's hand.

**Alternatively, the play, by partner, of the lowest possible card to the trick shows a desire for Partner *not* to continue leading that suit which he/she previously played. A Low card played by Partner is Discouraging!** Naturally, here too, Partner's attempted dissuasion can be over-ruled if the original Partner who has led the suit feels an advantage for a continuance, notwithstanding any discouragement by his/her Partner.

2. **When first Discarding ("Sluffing") when showing out of any suit led:** - The play of a high card as one's first discard shows an interest (encouragement) in the suit discarded; and, alternatively, the play of a low card evidences a lack of interest (discouragement) in the particular suit discarded.

## **2. Count Signals**

1. **When Declarer first Leads a Suit, either from the Dummy or from Declarer's hand:** - When Declarer leads a suit, either from Dummy's hand or from Declarer's, each defender should give the other **Count**, which reflects the number of cards each possesses in the suit led by Declarer. They each evidence an even number of cards (2, 4, 6, etc.) with a **High-Low Signal**; or an odd number of cards (1, 3, 5, etc.) with a **Low-High Signal**. In this manner, each partner of the defending team is given information possibly important in the management of that suit in the later play of the hand. Each Defender, receiving this count signal, may then calculate how many cards Declarer has in the suit deduced from the information received coupled with that which can be seen by him in Dummy and what he/she holds personally.

2. **When a Trump suit is played by Declarer in a suit Contract: - A Trump Echo:** - In order to give an accurate count in the trump suit, the defenders should give a count signal, whenever possible as, occasionally, although, it is important not to play a card which might, otherwise, give up a trick. The play of **High-Low** by either Defender evidences, specifically, three (3) pieces of trumps. The play of **Low-High** by either Defender shows any number of Trumps other than three. Some Partnerships agree to *only* give a High-Low count in Trump when they have the ability to Trump one of the remaining suits. Under no circumstances, however, should one signal in the Trump suit if it gives up valuable information to the Declarer.

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3. **When Partner is following suit to a suit led by his/her Partner, but when he/she cannot beat the card played by Dummy** – Normally, when Partner leads a suit and you are playing third to the trick, it is customary for third hand to play high. When the third hand player cannot beat a card played from Dummy, however, Partner should give either a count as to the number of cards he/she holds: a **High-Low Signal** shows an even number of cards held within that suit, a **Low-High Signal** evidences an odd number of cards held (*against No Trump Contracts*); else an Attitude Signal a **High Card** evidencing encouragement, or a **Low Card** evidencing discouragement (*against Suit Contracts*). (See Paragraph 4.7 on Page 66)

## 2a. Combined Attitude/Count Signals

1. **The Second Card with which one Plays to the Suit which Partner has Led:** - The first card played to Partner's lead of any suit gives an attitude signal as suggested above. A high card encourages, a low card discourages. If Partner chooses to continue with, or even without, your encouragement, however, it is important for you to then give count as to the number of cards remaining in the suit with which partners continues to play. **The second card which one follows to any suit led by Partner shows a count as to the remaining cards held, at that moment, within that suit led.** When one signals a **High-Low Signal**, it signifies an even number of cards remaining (2, 4, 6, etc.) when one signals a **Low-High Signal**, it signifies an odd number of cards remaining (1, 3, 5, etc.). In this manner, partner is given information possibly important in the management of that suit in the later play of the hand.

## 3. Suit Preference Signals

Sometimes situations exist which call for neither attitude nor count signals. Under these circumstances, one alternatively has a need to direct his/her Partner to lead a specific suit. This is accomplished by a **Suit Preference Signal**. There are many circumstances where this type of signal applies:

1. **When following suit to partner's led suit but when it is clear to both you and to Partner that it would be useless for Partner to continue the suit.** – There are two major circumstances when Partner has led a suit where it would otherwise be undesirable for Partner to lead that suit once again. One circumstance might be where Dummy has either a singleton or a void. Another might be where Dummy exhibits the King in the suit where Partner has just played the Ace. In either instance, it would clearly be obvious that to continue leading that suit would be fruitless, and a switch of attack is, therefore, clearly appropriate. **When continuation of any suit led by Partner appears fruitless, the play to Partner's trick of a high card asks for a switch to the higher-ranking of the two remaining suits (the two suits exclusive of the Trump suit), and the play of a low card asks for a switch to the lower-ranking of the two remaining suits.**

2. **When Leading a Card that you know will be trumped by your Partner:** - Such a signal is called a **Suit Preference Signal** or a "**Laventhal**" or a **Secondary Suit Signal**. The assumption is that there are two suits from which to choose. **When giving a suit preference signal, a high card signals a preference for the higher of the two remaining suits, a low card signals a preference for the lower of the two remaining suits, and a middle card signals "no preference".**

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The suit in which the signal is given does not count nor does a second suit (usually obvious), usually the trump suit. One very useful opportunity to put the suit preference signal to work is in the situation where you are leading a suit for partner to ruff and desire to signal how Partner can re-enter your hand so as to proceed with yet an additional ruff. In the following examples, partner has led what you have reason to believe is a singleton Club against a 4H contract. After winning the Ace of Clubs which card do you return for partner to ruff from each of the subsequent hands?

1) A964

2) 765

3) 1064

104	104	A43
765	A964	765
A1062	A1062	A1062

- 1) 10 Clubs (Signaling a Spade Preference; i.e., Spades as opposed to Diamonds)
- 2) 2 Clubs (Signaling a Diamond Preference; i.e., Diamonds as opposed to Spades)
- 3) 6 Clubs (Signaling no preference for either, possibly encourages a Trump return)

## **4. Signals Made with the Play of Specific Cards**

### **1. The Play of Cards Held In Sequence –**

a. When following suit to any trick being played, holding a grouping of cards in a sequence, one should play the lowest of the cards held in sequence (Example: J109).

b. When leading a suit holding a sequence, however, one should always lead the highest card in the sequence (Example: J109).

2. **The Lead of either an Ace from an Ace-King combination or a King from an Ace-King combination** – Either is acceptable, subject only to partnership understanding, but applies only to an opening lead. When leading other than in an opening lead scenario, one *always* plays King from Ace-King or King from King-Queen.

3. **The Lead of 4<sup>th</sup> Lowest from either of the top three (3) honors (A, K, or Q) –**  
When leading a suit one should (subject to partnership agreement) lead low from any King or Queen (Example: K64 or Q653), and second highest from any holding absent a King or Queen (Example: 10862).

4. **The Lead of a Queen** – The lead of a Queen is either from a Queen-Jack Sequence, else from a King Queen-Ten Sequence. If Partner or the Dummy holds the Jack then it was, by a process of elimination, from the latter holding. This special instance asks partner to dump the Jack so as to allow the Partner who has led the suit to continue without giving away a trick. Absent Partner dumping the Jack, the player who has led the suit will discontinue the play of that suit until Partner can lead the suit back instead. If Partner were to hold doubleton Ace, such a lead asks Partner to unblock the suit by playing the Ace on Opener's Queen, then to return the suit. If Partner does not hold the Jack, he/she is obliged to give attitude when the Queen is led.

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5. **The Lead of Partner's Bid Suit** – When leading Partner's bid suit it is important for you to signal your holdings in that suit. *Top of a sequence; Top of a Doubleton; Low from Three or more to any Q, K, or A; or Second highest from Three or more small, then planning to give count* (“MUD” – Middle-Up-Down if originally three pieces).

6. **Leads against a No Trump Contract** – Usually 4<sup>th</sup> Best from Longest and Strongest, but:

- a. When Leading an Ace – calls for Partner to play his/her highest card to the

trick.

- b. When Leading a King – Calls for Partner to show attitude.
- c. When Leading a Queen – Calls for Partner to drop the Jack if held; otherwise to give attitude

7. **Playing to a trick where Partner has led and you cannot beat the Dummy** – Naturally, third hand plays high, and so if you can beat the card played from Dummy, one is expected to do so, and even to normally play one's highest card. If, however, the third hand player cannot beat the Dummy he/she is expected to:

- a. In a Suit Contract – To give Attitude
- b. In a No Trump Contract – To give Count

8. **When Breaking (Leading) a New Suit** (Against either a suit or a NT contract) – Lead low from a Q, K, or A; else lead second highest, top of sequence, or top of any internal sequence:

Q764 (or) J83 (or) QJ10X (or) KJ10X

9. **The Opening Lead of a Singleton or a Doubleton against a Suit Contract** – Under certain optimum conditions, a lead of a Singleton (or, rarely, a Doubleton) can, oft times, produce a trick or more through a ruffing process. Such plays work best when:

- a) When one holds a Trump Control
- b) When Partner has bid the suit in which one is short

If one is short in a side suit, however, but holds four (4) or more trumps, it is, oft times, best *not* to attempt to ruff; rather to go for a forcing attack in order to play the defending team's long suit(s) so as to make Declarer ruff instead thereby causing him/her shorten Declarer's trump holding and, as a result, to lose control of the hand.

10. **The Lead of Ace from any A-K combination** – Dependent upon partnership agreement, most teams on opening lead to any contract will play Ace from A-K and then King from A-K at any other time other than opening lead. (Naturally, if only a doubleton A-K is held, the presence of a Doubleton is evidenced by total reversal of the above-mentioned sequences.)

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