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# Finnish Expert Methods 2020

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	1NT
2♠	Pass	Pass	3♦
3♠	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

  

4♠	2♠	K♥	J♥	7♥	Q♣	8♣	7♣	2♣	A♦	9♦	5♦	2♦	♦
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**S** South: bagman

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>
<b>5.9</b>	<b>2024-05-16</b>	Changed advancer's 2NT over weak jump to Ogust. Changed doubles after 2♣ sequences to T/O. Defined doubles in 1x-(p)-1NT-(overcall) sequences. Added 3NT-system for constructive auctions.
5.8	2024-02-25	Minor corrections and clarifications
5.7	2024-01-20	Modified and corrected contested NT continuations.
5.6	2023-10-15	Added Non-leaping Michaels sequence (3♦) 4♣ (suggested by <b>Kauko Koistinen</b> )
5.5	2023-07-24	Added Puppet Stayman to 1NT opening: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1NT - 2♠ = range ask; either BAL INV without 4cM or clubs</li> <li>• 1NT - 2NT = Puppet Stayman (3cM, 4-3M or slam try with 4-4m)</li> </ul> Added Non-leaping Michaels against 3M
5.4	2023-01-27	Changed 4 level responses to 2NT opening (suggested by <b>Clas Nyberg</b> ) Changed transfer + raise to 2NT opening Changed the document location
5.3	2021-05-12	Changed 1M-1NT to semi-forcing (max 12 bad ill-fitting hcp). Added 3M and above as responses to 2♣-opening Clarified and added the Optional Minorwood sequences <b>Added Exclusion Blackwood sequences</b> Added 4m/om autosplinters to 1m-1M-1NT Clarified Ogust continuations Changed jump in suit continuations to weak two openings Clarified 2NT continuations after WTF (Lissabon minor) Clarified reverse sequences after 1NT response Added option: Cappelletti as the only NT defence against all NT ranges
5.2	2020-08-27	Changed the continuations for the sequence 1NT-2♥-2♠-3♥ Added clarifying sequences for 4m optional keycard
5.1	2020-03-27	Layout improvements
5.0	2020-02-16	Following improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1m-(1♥)- continuations (NB: 1♠ denies spade suit!)</li> <li>• keycard ask after preempts</li> <li>• optional minorwood</li> </ul>
4.4	2017-01-19	Added strong club defence.
4.3	2017-01-14	Copy/paste corrections. Changes suggested by <b>Vesa Fagerlund</b> and <b>Kauko Koistinen</b> to 1m-1x-1NT-3M and 1NT-2♣-2♥-3m Changed (4♠)-X from X=T/O to card showing X
4.2	2017-01-12	Test run with <b>Clas Nyberg</b> : Added passed hand 4 card Drury (after X=T/O); added 1m-2m-3NT sequence for 18-19 BAL with 3 card m
4.1	2017-01-01	Added 1m-1M-3NT as 4c support in BAL 18-19
4.0	2016-12-15	Major rewrite for Nordic Championships 2017: 5533 with transfers, Muppet Stayman, Kokish Relay, Weak 2♦, and Revised DONT; most low level doubles are for take-out

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Document location: <http://www.iki.fi/piv/bridge/fem.pdf>

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## Introduction

This (version 5 onwards) is a major rewrite of FEM. The system is now based on 5 card majors, 2/1 forcing to game and transfer continuations to 1NT opening. The old version 3.4 will stay available for those willing to continue with 4 card majors.

Finnish Expert Methods (FEM) is intended for casual expert partnerships. It is optimized for the best results possible instead of the best possible results.

The need for this document became obvious during the league seasons, when I played with many different partners each time spending less than half an hour for system discussion. Each time the details of the system changed depending on partner, state of mind, phase of moon etc.

This document focuses on those issues that always seem to be forgotten in the short system discussion before the game time.

With this document I hope to unify the methods used in my casual partnerships as well as the methods used by those other Finnish casual expert partnerships made out of my casual partners.

The choice of language for this document is rational: this can be filed as a system description for potential emergency partnerships in international tournaments like European Championships or Nordic Championships.

## Intended audience

This document is addressed for experienced bridge players. No basic bidding sequences or calls are described.

From the version 3.0 onwards I have introduced some more bidding philosophy describing some basic bidding sequences to help people with less than expert status to understand why certain sequences have pretty clear meaning even though they are not discussed in details. The main reason for this addition is the fact that FEM was taken as the official system for the Finnish MSC equivalent.

## Terminology and abbreviations

Opener = Player who opens the bidding  
Responder = Opener's partner  
Aggressor = Player who enters the auction after opponent has opened  
Advancer = Aggressor's partner

NT = no trump  
X = double  
XX = redouble

m = minor suit, bid minor suit  
M = major suit, bid major suit  
om = the other minor  
OM = the other major

4333 = any 4333 distribution  
4-3-3-3 = 4 spades 3 in all other suits  
5m332 = 5 card minor, 332 the rest of the suits  
=> = In the subsequent auction

ART = artificial  
BAL = balanced  
COMP = competitive  
DEPO = X=even / pass=odd  
DOPI = X = the 1<sup>st</sup> step, pass = 2<sup>nd</sup> step and lowest bid = the 3<sup>rd</sup> step etc.  
F = forcing, forcing situation  
FG = forcing to game and declares the ownership of the hand  
F1R = forcing for one round  
F<n><D> = forcing to level <n> in denomination <D> F2NT = forcing to 2NT  
INV = invitational (INV+ = invitational or better)  
Lissabon = bid in minor to agree major or bid in major to agree minor, ♣<=>♥ and ♦<=>♠  
MOD = Maximum overcall double  
NF = not forcing  
NV = not vulnerable  
P/C = pass or correct  
PRE = pre-emptive  
RESP = responsive  
ROPI = XX = the 1<sup>st</sup> step, pass = 2<sup>nd</sup> step and lowest bid = the 3<sup>rd</sup> step etc.  
SEMIBAL = semi balanced  
SPL = splinter  
STM = Stayman  
SUPP = support  
T/O = take out  
UNBAL = unbalanced  
UPH = unpassed hand  
VUL = vulnerable  
Xfer = transfer

## System basics

The FEM is based on modified Finnish 2000 Standard: five card majors, 15-17 NT and weak twos. The system employs pre-emptive raises, “Funny Splinters”, invitational or better J2N etc. All these give better definition to the system than the old “2000 Standard” book.

## General principles

Single raise of partner's 1-over-1 (e.g. 1♦-1♠-2♠) promises 4 card support. This is the practice used in SEF (the French standard) and WJ05 (the Polish Club) so I'm not completely alone in this thinking. With 5431 the opener sometimes (when 1NT is not appropriate) has to rebid the 5 carder; that's the penalty for being able to conduct a fast 1m-1M-2M-4M auction with 4-4 fit.

When holding 6 card major with a lower 4 card side suit, the opener sometimes needs to prepare for the 3<sup>rd</sup> round. The philosophy for preparation with 64 is to rebid the 6-carder with a weak minimum hand and bid the side suit with a strong minimum hand. Typical examples of these sequences are 1♥-1♠-2♥-2NT-3♦, where opener shows a bad 6-4 without accepting the invitation and 1♥-1♠-2♦-2NT-3♥, which shows a 6-4 hand accepting the invitation. Note that this applies only to sequences where opener can bid either suit at the 2-level without showing extra strength.

Opener's jump in a new suit after 1-over-1 (or 1x-1NT), shows a game forcing hand with at least 5-4 (or in case of the BWDH<sup>1</sup>, the 2<sup>nd</sup> suit can be shorter). If the responder jumps to game in the opener's first suit, it shows a good 3 card support and working values totalling about 7-9 hcp (note that this is the total of the working values; lower honours in other suits are discounted heavily; **this can be either downgraded 3 card limit raise or upgraded mini-raise**); the jump is a picture bid. The corollary is that the preference to 3 shows either a bad hand or a very good hand.

Opener's new suit at the 2 level after 1-over-1 shows at least 5-4 and less than a game forcing hand. The bid is very wide range and the responder must not pass with a reasonable 9-count or more. I recommend Gazzilli (or similar) for all regular partnerships playing unlimited openings. (I don't play Gazzilli myself, because I play limited openings in my regular partnership.)

Two over one is unconditionally forcing to game; this includes also 1♦-2♣.

When there is no forcing raise available, unnecessary jump is not a splinter but a cue bid.

A positive reaction to a splinter indicates that there are either no wasted values in the splinter suit or there are compensating values for the wastage.

Positive reaction to a limited hand slam-try promises that there are sufficient values for slam. The limited hand is allowed to take control.

Bidding a small slam instead of stalling when facing an unlimited partner promises that a key card is missing.

Fourth suit is forcing to game. Fourth suit by a passed hand is artificial and promises a maximum pass with no clear direction.

Jump reverse in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit is a splinter in support of opener's 2<sup>nd</sup> suit. Descending jump in 4<sup>th</sup> suit is NF, INV, at least 5-5.

1 The Bridge World Death Hand (BWDH) is a strong hand without a good forcing rebid; often 6322 with 3 cards in the responder's suit.



When opponents have bid two suits and we are looking for stoppers:

- when both suits can be cued below 3NT, cue shows a stopper and asks stopper in the other
- when only one suit can be cued below 3NT, cue asks for a stopper

There are no slam tries below 3NT.

There are no cue bids below 3NT, except 3♠, when hearts have been firmly agreed as trumps. If hearts are suggested as trumps but not agreed, 3♠ is not an advanced cue bid. As a corollary, 4m cuebid states nothing about the spade control.

3NT is always natural if our side has opened the bidding.

4NT is always RKCB, it that is a possible interpretation.

Note the changes after 1m – (1♥) sequence. See page 15

Note the addition of Optional Minorwood! Supporting partner's minor at the 4 level or rebidding 4m with an unlimited hand is an optional ace ask. See page 41

Note the addition of RKCB for preempts! After a preempt of 3♠ or lower, 4♣ is a special key card ask. See page 40

Note the addition of Exclusion Blackwood (Voidwood). See page 42

**X=T/O in the following sequences:**

- **1x-(p)-1NT-(2y)-X**
- **1x-(p)-1NT-(2y)-p-(p)-X**

If a bid is undiscussed and ambiguous, it shall be interpreted as natural and nonforcing. (Natural, because there is no reason to invent solo conventions and nonforcing, because there is nearly always a bid that is obviously forcing.) *Note: I have never declared a splinter but I have been dummy many times in such contracts. Beware!*

And here's the final warning known as the Rosenberg slam rule: *“Whenever you have the desire to make an undiscussed bid at the slam level, repress it - your partner will not be on the same wavelength. Even if you think the meaning is obvious, your partner will think it means something else”*

## Opening bids

Balanced hands containing 12 or more hcp are opened. Unbalanced hands can be opened with less but responder can expect at least 1.5 quick tricks and 10 hcp.

With 4-4 in the minors, suggested opening is 1♦ but in case the clubs are significantly better it is possible to open 1♣. With 3-3 in the minors the proper opening is 1♣ making 1♦ opening to promise at least 4 cards unless specifically 4-4-3-2.

With 6-5 with the longer lower ranking suit opener tries to bid the hand “correctly” but the hand can be treated as 5-5, if the hand is relatively weak. To reverse with a 6-5, a working 13 count with intermediates is enough.

### *Opening Description*

Pass	0-11, all hands containing 12 or more hcp are opened
1♣	10+ UNBAL or 12+ BAL, at least 3 clubs
1♦	10+ UNBAL or 12+ BAL, at least 3 diamonds (4 diamonds unless 4-4-3-2)
1♥	10+ UNBAL or 12+ BAL, at least 5 hearts
1♠	10+ UNBAL or 12+ BAL, at least 5 spades
1NT	15-17 BAL or SEMIBAL, 5 card major, 6 card minor or 5m4M possible
2♣	22-24 BAL or any FG
2♦	5-10, weak two
2♥	5-10, weak two
2♠	5-10, weak two
2NT	20-21 BAL, 5card major possible
3suit	Random pre-empt
3NT	Gambling, no side A or K
4m	Namyats, AKQ, AKJ10 or AQJ on top of the anchor suit. If the suit is not solid, a side ace is required.
4M	Pre-empt
4NT	Specific ace ask
5m	Pre-empt
5M	Acol type top honour ask

## X-Y-NT

After 1x-1y-1NT two-way checkback (aka x-y-NT) is utilized:

After 1♣ - 1♦ - 1NT

- 2♣ = puppet to 2♦ (any invitational or to play 2♦) =>
  - pass to play
  - any other bid = descriptive, invitational and NF
- 2♦ = ART FG =>
  - Natural picture bidding
- 2M = genuine reverse with strong suits, FG
- 2NT = INV, typically not long and strong diamonds
- 3♣ = to play
- 3♦ = strong 6+ card suit, FG
- 3M = ♣-support, splinter

After 1m - 1♥ - 1NT

- 2♣ = puppet to 2♦ (any invitational or to play 2♦) =>
  - pass to play
  - 2♥ = weakest invitation with 5 card suit, looking for maximum and fit
  - 2NT = invitational with 5 card suit, good invitation
  - any other bid = descriptive, invitational and NF
- 2♦ = ART FG =>
  - Natural picture bidding
- 2♠ = genuine reverse with strong suits, FG
- 2NT = INV, only 4 hearts
- 3♣ = to play
- 3♦ = at least 5-5, good suits, FG
- 3♥ = strong 6+ card suit, FG
- 3♠ = support to m opened; splinter
- **4m = Autosplinter with long strong heart suit (also opener's minor)**

**GENERIC NOTE FITTING TO THIS OTHERWISE EMPTY SPACE:  
YOU CANNOT AUTOSPLINTER IN THE OTHER MAJOR**

After 1m - 1♠ - 1NT

- 2♣ = puppet to 2♦ (any invitational or to play 2♦) =>
  - pass to play
  - 2♠ = weakest invitation with 5 card suit, looking for maximum and fit
  - 2NT = invitational with 5 card suit, good invitation
  - any other bid = descriptive, invitational and NF
- 2♦ = ART FG =>
  - Natural picture bidding
- 2♥ = at least 5-4, weak
- 2NT = INV, only 4 spades
- 3♣ = to play
- 3♦/♥ = at least 5-5, good suits, FG
- 3♠ = strong 6+ card suit, FG
- 4m = Autosplinter with long strong spade suit (also opener's minor)
- 4♥ = Both majors, choice of games (probably gambling)

After 1♥ - 1♠ - 1NT

- 2♣ = puppet to 2♦ (any invitational or to play 2♦) =>
  - pass to play
  - 2♠ = weakest invitation with 5 card suit, looking for maximum and fit
  - 2NT = invitational with 5 card suit, good invitation
  - any other bid = descriptive, invitational and NF
- 2♦ = ART FG =>
  - Natural picture bidding
- 2♥ = 3♥, at least 5♠, weak
- 2NT = INV, only 4 spades
- 3♣ = to play
- 3♦/♥ = at least 5-5, good suits, FG
- 3♠ = strong 6+ card suit, FG
- 4m = Autosplinter with long strong spade suit
- 4♥ = Natural, to-play (maybe this kind of a hand exists)

X-Y-NT is on after overcalls or X=T/O if and only if responder has made a one-over-one bid. X-Y-NT is off if responder is a passed hand.

**Note: We are not playing X-Y-Z; this applies only to 1x-1y-1NT.**

## Auction after jump to 2NT

Opener may bypass a major suit when making a jump rebid of 2NT. As we play WJR, responder has no need to sign off to 3 of the responded suit. Thus, 2NT is either passed out or a game shall be reached. The system structure permits the use of natural bids instead of ART checkback.

In sequence 1♣ - 1♦ - 2NT responder bids:

- 3♣ = 4+ card support, at least some slam interest
- 3♦ = 5+ diamonds, at least some slam interest, may hold 4 card M =>
  - 3M = 4 cards
  - 3NT = no support or unsuitable for slam
- 3M = 4 cards, not willing to hear 4 level ♦-support =>
  - 3♠ = 4 cards
  - 3NT = no support
  - 4M = support

In sequence 1m - 1♥ - 2NT responder bids:

- 3m = 4+ card support, at least some slam interest
- 3om = NAT, at least some slam interest, at least 5♥
- 3♥ = at least 5 cards =>
  - 3♠ = 4 cards
  - 3NT = no support
  - 4m = cue
- 3♠ = 4 spades and 4 hearts =>
  - 3NT = no support
  - 4m = cue agreeing spades
  - 4♠ = 4 spades, unsuitable for slam

In sequence 1m - 1♠ - 2NT responder bids:

- 3m = 4+ card support, at least some slam interest
- 3om = NAT, at least some slam interest, at least 5♠
- 3♥ = at least 4 cards, at least 5♠ =>
  - 3♠ = 3 spades, 2-3 hearts, some slam suitability
  - 3NT = no support
  - 4m = cue agreeing hearts
  - 4♥ = 4 card support, unsuitable for slam
  - 4♠ = support, unsuitable for slam
- 3♠ = at least 5 cards =>
  - 3NT = no support
  - 4m = cue
  - 4♠ = support, unsuitable for slam

## Opening 1m

### *Opening 1 club*

Opening 1♣ promises at least 12 hcp or a good unbalanced hand with at least 1.5 quick tricks and at least 10 hcp. If the hand contains less than 12 hcp in the 1<sup>st</sup> or the 2<sup>nd</sup> position, the general structure of the hand must be good. The club length can be three cards if the distribution is 4-3-3-3, 3-4-3-3 or 4-4-2-3.

Responder may skip 4 card diamond suit to bid a four card major but Walsh style responses are not used; opener bids his major with only three clubs in sequence 1♣ - 1♦.

### *Opening 1 diamond*

Opening 1♦ promises at least 12 hcp or a good unbalanced hand with at least 1.5 quick tricks and at least 10 hcp. If the hand contains less than 12 hcp in the 1<sup>st</sup> or the 2<sup>nd</sup> position, the general structure of the hand must be good. The diamond length can be three cards only if the distribution is 4-4-3-2.

### *Specific 4<sup>th</sup> suit sequence*

Sequence 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ shows 4(+) spades in an unlimited hand. Opener's 3<sup>rd</sup> bid, excluding all diamond bids, which are natural and limited, is the same as bid after a direct 1♠ response. **If opener's 3<sup>rd</sup> bid is 1NT, x-y-NT applies.**

Sequence 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 2♠ denies 4 spades and is 4<sup>th</sup> suit FG.

### *1m-1M-3N Sequence*

The sequence 1m-1M-3NT shows a strong (18-19) balanced raise with 4 card support. The corollary of this is that 1m-1M-4M shows 5422.

If responder has passed 1m-1M-4M has no definition: it can be made with various kind of hands as an Irish game try.

### *NT-responses*

1m - 1NT shows 6-10 without a 4 card major; due to IMSR there are no side inferences.

1m - 2NT shows 11-12 BAL without a 4 card major. In the subsequent auction:

- Opener's 3m is to play
- **Opener's 4NT is RKCB** (Responder has 2 point range and opener cannot have a suitable balanced hand (21hcp) for a quantitative raise)

1m - 3NT shows 13-16 BAL without a 4 card major. In the subsequent auction:

- Opener's 4NT is quantitative 18-19 BAL

## **1m-1M-2M Sequence**

1m-1M-2M promises 4 card support. Always. Responder may relay with 2NT:

1m-1M-2M-2NT = relay, FG

- 3♣ = 5-4 m&M
  - 3♦ = Relay
    - 3♥ = no shortness
    - 3♠ = lower shortness
    - 3NT = higher shortness
- 3♦ = 4441
  - 3♥ = Relay
    - 3♠ = lower shortness
    - 3NT = higher shortness
- 3♥ = 4m4M32
- 3♠ = 44 majors, 3 card m
- 3NT = 4M333
- 4m = Lissabon splinter with 6m-4M (4♣ = low shortness, 4♦ = high shortness)

## **Inverted minor suit raises (IMSR)**

1m - 3m is PRE promising such values that opener shall bid 3NT with 18-19 BAL.

1m - 2m is inverted promising at least invitational values. In the subsequent auction:

- Opener bids 2NT with minimum BAL and 3m with minimum UNBAL. Responder can pass or correct 2NT to 3m to play
- Opener bids 2♦/2M with FG values and stopper.
- Opener bids 3NT to show 18-19 BAL with 3 cards in the minor opened
- Opener bids 3♣ after 1♦ - 2♦ to show FG values and a real minor two-suiter where showing length is more important than showing a shortness
- Opener bids splinter 3M with FG values
- Opener bids splinter 3♦ after 1♣ - 2♣ with FG values
- Opener bids splinter 4♣ after 1♦ - 2♦ with substantial extra values; with FG values but not much extras opener starts with 2M
- Responder should bash 3NT after opener's 2NT with minimum FG values.
- **Responder's 3 new after opener's 2NT is splinter with substantial extra values.** (More than direct splinter after opening)

## **Sequence 1 diamond – 2 clubs**

The response 2♣ is forcing to game. The meanings of opener's rebids are similar to old-fashioned 2/1 sequence: reverse shows additional strength and splinter 3M shows a goodish hand. A minimum for a reverse is about xx AQJx AKJxx xx and for a splinter about xxx x AKxxx AQxx. Opener can raise with minimum values. **Double jump in a major is Exclusion Blackwood**

## **Sequence 1 diamond – 3 clubs**

1♦ - 3♣ is an invitational jump response. It shows 6+ card decent/good suit and about 10-11 hcp.

Passed hand response of 3♣ is a weak jump response.

## **Splinters**

Splinter responses to minor suit openings deny four card majors. Note that a splinter promising shortness in om implies at least six card support!

1m - 3M is a splinter promising 5+ support, a singleton or void and strength about 12-15 hcp.

1♣ - 3♦ is a splinter promising a singleton or void and strength about 12-15 hcp.

1♦ - 4♣ is a splinter promising a singleton or void and strength about 13-16 hcp.

## **Weak jump responses (WJR)**

1m - 2M and 1♣ - 2♦ are weak jump responses promising 6-7 card suit and 3-6 hcp. This has no effect to other sequences involving responder's limited one-suiters.

After 2-level WJR opener can make an Ogust 2NT ask. The responder adjusts the responses to context.

## **Reverses after 1NT response**

If opener reverses after the 1NT response, the following applies (8+ hcp = FG):

- 2M = FG, strong 3 card holding in the suit; typically looking for NT game with at most weak length in the remaining unbid suit
- 2NT = Lebensohl, shows weakness or unhappy 3NT call
  - 3♣ = the default, prepared to here a pass from partner's
    - With weak hand responder passes or corrects to opener's diamonds
    - 3NT = unhappy 3NT (= I wish I had a better bid, but haven't)
      - 4m (suit opened) = NAT NF (cancels the FG)
    - 3M = undefined, leads to problems
  - 3♦ after 1♦-opening = short clubs and long diamonds, NF
  - other = descriptive FG
- 3♣ after 1♦-opening and 2M reverse = FG, long clubs and no real support
- 3♦ after 1♣-opening and 2M reverse = FG, strong 3-4 card holding with weakness in OM



- 3M as a raise = FG, 3 card support, at most 3 card support to opener's main suit, at most weak length in the unbid suits
- 3M as a jump = FG, splinter in support of opener's main suit
- 3NT = happy 3NT

## **Reverses after 1-over-1 suit response**

Reverse is forcing for one round. Lebensohl is used after reverse.

After 1♣ - 1♥ - 2♦

- 2♥ = 5+ cards, F1R =>
  - 2♠ = 4<sup>th</sup> suit ART FG
  - 2NT = NAT, minimum reverse, NF
  - 3♣ = NAT, minimum reverse, NF
  - 3♦ = 6-5, can be only good 13 hcp, NF
  - 3♥ = NAT, minimum reverse, NF
  - 3♠ = SPL
  - 3NT = NAT, about 19-21
- 2♠ = ART, FG, no clear direction, denies 5+ hearts
- 2NT = LEBENSOHL, denies 5+ hearts, generally weak =>
  - 3♣ = would have passed NF 3♣ =>
    - 3♦ = to play
  - 3♦ = NAT (6-5), FG
  - 3♥ = 3 cards, suggests 4-3 hearts, FG
  - 3♠ = ART 4<sup>th</sup> suit, FG
  - 3NT = NAT, strong
- 3m = NAT, FG, looking for right game for the moment
- 3♥ = 6+ cards, FG
- 3♠ = SPL, ♦-support (General principles)
- 3NT = to play
- 4m = NAT slam-try

After 1♣ - 1♠ - 2♦

- 2♥ = ART, FG, no clear direction, denies 5+ spades
- 2♠ is 5+ cards, F1R =>
  - 2NT = NAT, minimum reverse, NF
  - 3♣ = NAT, minimum reverse, NF
  - 3♦ = 6-5, can be only good 13 hcp, NF
  - 3♥ = 4<sup>th</sup> suit, ART FG
  - 3♠ = NAT, minimum reverse, NF
  - 3NT = NAT, about 19-21
  - 4♥ = SPL, about 19-21
- 2NT = LEBENSOHL, denies 5+ spades, generally weak =>
  - 3♣ = would have passed NF 3♣ =>
    - 3♦ = to play
  - 3♦ = NAT (6-5), FG
  - 3♥ = ART 4<sup>th</sup> suit, FG
  - 3♠ = 3 cards, suggests 4-3 spades, FG
  - 3NT = NAT, strong
- 3m = NAT, FG, looking for right game for the moment
- 3♥ = SPL, ♦-support (General principles)
- 3♠ = 6+ cards, FG
- 3NT = to play
- 4m = NAT slam-try

After 1♣ - 1♠ - 2♥

- 2♠ is 5+ cards, F1R =>
  - 2NT = NAT, minimum reverse, NF
  - 3♣ = NAT, minimum reverse, NF
  - 3♦ = 4<sup>th</sup> suit, ART FG
  - 3♥ = 6-5, can be only good 13 hcp, NF
  - 3♠ = NAT, minimum reverse, NF
  - 3NT = NAT, about 19-21
  - 4♦ = SPL, about 19-21
- 2NT = LEBENSOHL, denies 5+ spades, generally weak =>
  - 3♣ = would have passed NF 3♣ =>
    - 3♥ = to play
  - 3♦ = ART 4<sup>th</sup> suit, FG
  - 3♥ = NAT (6-5), FG
  - 3♠ = 3 cards, suggests 4-3 spades, FG
  - 3NT = NAT, strong
- 3♣ = NAT, FG, looking for right game for the moment
- 3♦ = 4<sup>th</sup> suit, ART FG, denies 5+ spades
- 3♥ = NAT, FG
- 3♠ = 6+ cards, FG
- 3NT = to play
- 4♣ = NAT slam-try

## ***In competition***

After X=T/O the following applies:

- XX = 9+, penalty seeking
- 2NT = 5+ support, at least INV
- 2 over 1 = nonforcing, good (5)6+ card suit
- 1 over 1 as without X

After simple overcall the following applies:

- 1♣ - (1♦) X = majors 44
- 1m - (1♥):
  - X = 4 or 5 spades
    - 1♠ = 3 spades, NF
    - 1NT = 12-14 BAL equivalent, 1-2 spades
    - 2♠ = 4 spades, normal single raise
  - 1♠ = 0-3 spades, either competitive values or BAL FG or FG with support
    - 1NT = 12-14 BAL, does not promise stopper
  - 2♥ = 6+ spades, either competitive, NF or FG values
    - 2NT = Ogust ask with response 3NT being initial FG hand and FIR
    - new suit = F1 with cue showing initial FG hand
  - 2♠ = 6+ spades, invitational
    - new suit = FG
    - 2NT = NF (no fit but not minimum)
- cue = support, INV+ **BUT NOTE 1m-(1♥) sequence**
- 2 over 1 is forcing for one round => opener's new suits are forcing
- Jump = WJR **BUT NOTE 1m-(1♥) - 2♠ sequence**
- Double jump = splinter
- Jump raise = PRE

After 1NT overcall Cappelletti is utilized:

- 1m - (1NT) - X = PEN
- 1m - (1NT) - 2♣ = Any one suiter or support
- 1m - (1NT) - 2♦ = Both majors
- 1m - (1NT) - 2M = M + om
- 1m - (1NT) - 2NT = ART FG, distributional, not suitable for X=PEN
- 1m - (1NT) - 3X = PRE

Unusual over unusual:

- 1m - (2NT) - X = Penalty seeking, can double at least one of the suits
- 1♣ - (2NT) - 3♣ = Competitive up to weak INV
- 1♣ - (2NT) - 3♦ = FG with support (INV can be upgraded)
- 1♣ - (2NT) - 3♥ = FIR, 5+ spades => 3♠ = no support NF, 4♦♥ = cue

- $1\clubsuit - (2NT) - 3\spadesuit =$  Competitive, 6+ cards, NF
- $1\diamond - (2NT) - 3\clubsuit =$  INV+ with support  $\Rightarrow 3\diamond =$  minimum
- $1\diamond - (2NT) - 3\diamond =$  Competitive raise
- $1\diamond - (2NT) - 3\heartsuit =$  F1R, 5+ spades  $\Rightarrow 3\spadesuit =$  no support NF,  $4\clubsuit\heartsuit =$  cue
- $1\diamond - (2NT) - 3\spadesuit =$  Competitive, 6+ cards, NF

## Opening 1M

The major suit openings promise in the 1<sup>st</sup>, the 2<sup>nd</sup> or the 4<sup>th</sup> position at least a five card suit. In 3<sup>rd</sup> position it is permitted to open with a four card suit for tactical reasons.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> or the 2<sup>nd</sup> position the opening promises at least 12 hcp or a good unbalanced hand with at least 1.5 quick tricks and at least 10 hcp. If the hand contains less than 12 hcp, the general structure of the hand must be very good.

The response structure summary is depicted below:

- **Semi-forcing** 1NT response
- 2/1 forcing to game
- Invitational jump responses at the 3 level
- Jacoby 2NT INV+ (aka Limit-Stenberg)
- Funny Splinters
- Drury-Fit by passed hand

### **Semi-forcing 1NT response**

The semi-forcing 1NT response is a catch-all response for hands not suitable for other calls. At best it promises 12 ill-fitting bad hcp. The generic hand types for the forcing 1NT response are:

- unbalanced hand not good enough for 2/1 response
- balanced weak (6-9) hand
- balanced invitational hand (9-11)
- three card limit raise
- weakish raise not suitable to PRE raise nor constructive raise

Opener may pass a balanced or 4♠-5♥-2-2 if the hand is very minimum (would not accept a game invitation). The worst case scenario is that the responder holds a three trump invitation played in 1NT.

Opener may rebid a 3 card minor, in case opener holds a hand worth accepting an invitation but no other suitable call; not all 14 hcp hands are NT upgrades. With good but not reversing 4-5-2-2, opener makes the best guess.

**Note:** The 13-15 balanced junk hands need to go via 2/1 since opener may pass 1NT.

Responder's 2<sup>nd</sup> call discloses the hand type.

## Reverse after 1NT response

The following applies after this specific reverse sequence 1♥-1NT-2♠ (8+ hcp = FG):

- 2NT = Lebensohl, shows weakness or unhappy 3NT call
  - 3♣ = the default, prepared to here a pass from partner's
    - With weak hand responder passes, corrects to diamonds, or bids 3♥ to show a bad hand and normally only 2 card support
    - 3♠ = weak, most likely 3-1-(54)
    - 3NT = unhappy 3NT (= I wish I had a better bid, but haven't)
  - other = descriptive FG
- 3m = FG, 5+ cards and at most weak length in the om
- 3♥ = FG, original 3 card limit raise
- 3♠ = FG, 3 card strong support, most likely 3-1-(54) with weak length in the minors
- 3NT = happy 3NT (original NT invite or close to that)
- 4m = splinter with an original invitational 3 card raise
- 4♥ = weak initial heart raise

## 2/1 forcing to game

Responder's 2/1 is unconditionally forcing to game requiring, in general, at least 12 hcp.

Opener tries to describe and limit his hand as convenient. The following applies:

- New suit lower than the suit opened shows 4+ cards and does not define the strength. Opener can be 55 with good suits; the jump in a new suit is a splinter.
- Rebid in the suit opened shows either any minimum or 6+ card suit (with a minimum hand opener selects the most descriptive bid from rebid of the suit opened and 2NT)
  - opener rebids the 6+ card suit later if possible
- 2NT shows a balanced or semibalanced minimum suitable for NT or 18-19 BAL (with a minimum hand opener selects the most descriptive bid from suit rebid and 2NT)
  - opener goes above game with 18-19 BAL
- Reverse or high reverse shows extra strength (a good looking 15 is enough)
- Jump rebid in the suit opened shows a good hand (a good looking 15 is enough) with a solid or semisolid 6+ card suit
- Raise of responder's minor suit promises four card support but does not specially limit the hand
- Raise of 2♥ to 3♥ shows 3+ support and does not limit the hand
- Raise of 2♥ to 4♥ shows 5422 with concentrated minimum values (picture bid)
- Jump in a new suit is a splinter (a good looking 15 is enough)
- **Double jump in a new suit is Exclusion Blackwood**
- Jump to 3NT shows a bad looking 18-19 5332 with doubleton in the responder's suit.

Responder tries to describe and limit his hand as convenient with his 2<sup>nd</sup> call. The following applies:

- Jump to game shows a minimum and no interest to learn more about opener's hand
- 2NT is descriptive with stoppers. Opener makes a descriptive bid.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> suit is artificial and shows doubt about strain
- Jump in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit is splinter agreeing opener's 2<sup>nd</sup> suit

### ***Invitational jump responses at the three level***

As 2/1 is unconditionally forcing to game responder needs a way to show an invitational hand with 6+ card suit. Thus, a single jump in a new suit to the three level shows about 10 hcp and a decent, at least six card suit. All opener's non game bids are forcing, including opener's single rebid of the suit opened.

### ***Raises***

1M - 2M is semi-constructive raise, equivalent of 8-10, at least 3 card support

1M - 3M is PRE with a hand you don't want to throw up if partner raises it to make.

1M - 4M is PRE with at least 5 card support and a shortness. With 5332 or 6322 some other bid should be invented.



## **Jacoby 2NT (aka Limit-Stenberg)**

1M - 2NT shows at least four card support and at least invitational values. The subsequent auction follows the guidelines below:

1♥ - 2NT =>

- 3♣ = any minimum without void (less than 15 hcp) =>
  - 3♦ = ART, FG asks shortness =>
    - 3♥ = no shortness, default
    - 3♠ / 4m = shortness
    - 3NT = no shortness, happy dummy in NT
  - 3♥ = invitational, NF
  - 3♠ / 4m = shortness, stronger than direct splinter
- 3♦ = 4+ cards, 15+ hcp
- 3♥ = 1-suiter or 4+ clubs, 15+ hcp
- 3♠ = 4+ cards, 15+ hcp
- 3NT = 18-19 BAL
- 4m = void, not subminimum (12+hcp)
- 4♥ = spade void, not subminimum (12+hcp), NF
- 4♠ = spade void, makes slam against a fitting invitational raise

1♠ - 2NT =>

- 3♣ = any minimum without void (less than 15 hcp) =>
  - 3♦ = ART, FG asks shortness =>
    - 3♥ / 4m = shortness
    - 3♠ = no shortness, default
    - 3NT = no shortness, happy dummy in NT
  - 3♠ = invitational, NF
  - 3♥ / 4m = shortness, stronger than direct splinter
- 3♦ = 4+ cards, 15+ hcp
- 3♥ = 4+ cards, 15+ hcp
- 3♠ = 1-suiter or 4+ clubs, 15+ hcp
- 3NT = 18-19 BAL
- 4m/♥ = void, not subminimum (12+hcp)

If 1M - 2NT is doubled the following applies:

- XX shows interest to play for penalties
- pass shows a BAL minimum
- 3♣ shows SEMIBAL/UNBAL minimum => system on
- system is on

If 1M - 2NT is overcalled below 3M the following applies:

- X is for penalties
- **2NT is forcing only to 3M**
- pass shows a minimum hand with at least two cards in the overcalled suit =>
  - 3M shows a limit raise (after adjusting values in the overcalled suit) and is NF
- 3M shows a minimum with singleton (or void) in the overcalled suit and is NF
- new suit is natural(ish) and shows FG values
- cue shows shortness in the overcalled suit and is FG
- 4M is just a stab at game. It does not create a forcing situation

If 1M - 2NT is overcalled above 3M the following applies:

- X is for penalties
- **pass shows minimum and is NF**
- 4M is just a stab at game. It does not create a forcing situation
- cue shows shortness in the overcalled suit and promises substantial extra values
- new suit below 4M is naturalish FG

If 1M - 2NT is overcalled with 3M (Michaels type)

- X shows interest to play for penalties
- **pass shows minimum and is NF**
- 4M is just a stab at game. It does not create a forcing situation
- cue in the suit known to be held by opponents shows shortness and is FG
- new suit (non cue) below 4M is naturalish FG

## ***Splinters (The Funny Splinters)***

Splinter structure a.k.a. *Funny Splinters* distinguishes singleton splinters and void splinters. A singleton splinter promises about 13-15 hcp. A void splinter promises about 12-14 hcp. The splinters work in the following manner:

1♥ - 3♠ = any singleton splinter =>

- 3NT = Asks, slam interest against a right singleton
  - 4m = short
  - 4♥ = short spades
- 4♥ = No interest against any splinter

1♥ - 3NT = ♠-void

1♥ - 4m = void

1♠ - 3NT = any singleton splinter =>

- 4♣ = Asks, slam interest against a right singleton
  - 4♦/♥ = short
  - 4♠ = short clubs
- 4♠ = No interest against any splinter

1♠ - 4m/♥ = void

Funny Splinters are on after X=T/O and by passed hand (with hcp adjustment). **The Funny Splinters are off after an overcall.** After an overcall a double jump is an old-fashioned splinter i.e.

either singleton or void.

## ***Weak jump response (WJR)***

1♥ - 2♠ is a weak jump response promising 6-7 card suit and 3-6 hcp. Opener can make an Ogust 2NT ask. The responder adjusts the responses to context.

## ***Drury-Fit***

Passed hand 2♣ is Drury-Fit promising at least 3 card trump support and game invitational values.

The following applies to opener's rebids:

- Rebid in the suit opened is weak and can be only 4 card suit. Responder shall pass.
- New suit without jump is a help suit game try. Responder may re-invite with a descriptive bid even though immediate decision is often the best.
- Jump in a new suit shows a side suit with slam-invitational values
- Double jump in a new suit is void with slam invitational values
- 2NT is a balanced invitation with about 14 hcp
- 3NT is a suggestion to play there, often with 18-19 BAL

As a corollary to Drury-Fit the following applies:

- Passed hand 2NT is an invitational hand with 6+ clubs (normal passed hand 2♣ response)
- Passed hand 3♣ is weak jump response

## ***Other passed hand bidding***

2/1 forcing to game is (naturally) off. Invitational jumps to three level are off. Forcing 1NT is off.

## ***In competition***

After X=T/O the following applies:

- XX = 9+, penalty seeking
- 2NT = 4+ support, at least INV, j2n system on
- 2 over 1 = nonforcing, good (5)6+ card suit
- 1 over 1 as without X
- other as without X

After 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> hand M-opening and X=T/O:

- 2♣ = max pass with 4 card support
- XX may contain 3 card support with max pass

After simple overcall the following applies:

- cue = support, INV+
- Jump = WJR
- Double jump = splinter
- Jump raise = PRE
- 2 over 1 is forcing for one round => opener's new suits are forcing

After 1NT overcall Cappelletti is utilized:

- 1M - (1NT) - X = PEN
- 1M - (1NT) - 2♣ = Any one suiter
- 1M - (1NT) - 2♦ = 3+ card support and 5+ cards in OM with 2+ card disparity
- 1M - (1NT) - 2M = NAT
- 1M - (1NT) - 2OM = 5+ cards with (4)5+ side minor
- 1M - (1NT) - 2NT = ART FG, distributional, not suitable for X=PEN
- 1M - (1NT) - 3X = PRE

Unusual over unusual:

- 1M - (2NT) - X = Penalty seeking, can double at least one of the minors
- 1♥ - (2NT) - 3♣ = INV+ with support => 3♥ = minimum
- 1♥ - (2NT) - 3♦ = F1R, 5+ spades => 3♥ = NAT, 3♠ = no support NF, 4m = cue
- 1♥ - (2NT) - 3♥ = Competitive raise
- 1♥ - (2NT) - 3♠ = Competitive, 6+ cards, NF
- 1♠ - (2NT) - 3♣ = F1R, 5+ hearts => 3♦ = waiting, no support, 3♥ = support, 3♠ = NAT
- 1♠ - (2NT) - 3♦ = INV+ with support => 3♠ = minimum
- 1♠ - (2NT) - 3♥ = Competitive, 6+ cards, NF
- 1♠ - (2NT) - 3♠ = Competitive raise

## Opening 1NT

1NT opening promises 15-17 BAL or SEMIBAL. All these are possible: 5 card major, 6 card minor or 5m4M22.

### *Stayman with Transfers and Puppet Stayman*

The System described here is quite simple and based on Stayman, Smolen transfers and 4-suit transfers with Puppet Stayman 2NT. The system is very loosely based on WJ05 but contains multiple elements from other systems.

The responses to 1NT are

- 2♣ = Stayman; 54/64 majors with INV+ strength start with Stayman
- 2♦ = 5+ hearts, transfer (this contains 55M with invitational values)
- 2♥ = 5+ spades, transfer (this contains 55M with FG values)
- 2♠ = range ask; either 6+ clubs (no 4cM) or BAL INV without 4cM
- 2NT = Puppet Stayman with either 4-3 majors, just looking for 5-3 fit, or slam try with 4-4 minors
- 3♣ = 6+ diamonds weak or FG, transfer (no 4cM)
- 3♦ = 6+ diamonds, INV (no 4cM)
- 3♥ = short, at least 54 (up to 76) in the minors
- 3♠ = short, at least 54 (up to 66) in the minors
- 3NT = NAT
- 4m = SA Texas (double transfer to M)
- 4M = NAT, to play
- 4NT = NAT, quantitative invitation to 6NT
- 5m = NAT, to play
- 5NT = F6NT, quantitative invitation to 7NT

Some notes about the responding structure:

1. There's no Gerber. To ask for key cards in a major, use SA Texas and then 4NT as a normal RKCB. To ask key cards in a minor, transfer to the minor and then use kickback to ask for key cards. Note that the kickback is only by the responder to cover the lack of Gerber.
2. There are no weak runaways with both majors. If you want to run, transfer to the 5 carder. The only runaway hand type is 5♦ with 44 or 43 majors where one can pass any Stayman response. 1NT is a difficult contract to defend and a good declarer makes it more often than he should. Finding a "nice" 3-4 fit means easy time for the defence and minus (and sometimes the fit is 2-4 when opener has 2245 and responder runs with 44 majors).
3. I have described the system in more detail than WJ05; an experienced player should be able to understand the nuances. Some basic bidding sequences are omitted
4. There are fail-safes in the re-transfer structure. If you are building a partnership, remove them and use them to something more useful. In casual partnerships you learn to value fail-safes.

After 1NT - 2♣ the continuations are

- 2♦ = no majors
  - 2M = NF INV with 5+M & 4OM
  - 2NT = NAT INV (promises at least one major)
  - 3♣ = NAT, 4+ cards, FG
    - 3♦ = 5+ cards, 2-3 clubs
    - 3M = 4+ clubs, stronger major, less than great for slam
    - 3NT = 3343
    - 4♣ = 4+ clubs, great hand for slam
  - 3♦ = NAT, 4+ cards, FG
    - 3M = 4+ diamonds, stronger major, less than great for slam
    - 3NT = 2-3 diamonds
    - 4♣ = 4+ diamonds, control, great hand for slam
    - 4♦ = 4+ diamonds, no club control, great hand for slam
  - 3M = Smolen transfer (5+OM & 4M)
    - 3NT = no fit
      - 4♦ = transfer to the long M promising 6 cards
    - 4m = cue agreeing the 5 card M
- 2♥ = 4-5 hearts, can be 44M
  - 2♠ = 4+ **heart support, FG**, looking for slam or right game
    - 2NT = natural and suggests NT; some slam suitability
      - 3m/3♠ = 4+ side suit, slam interest
      - 3NT/4♥ = to play
    - 3m/3♠ = 4+ side suit with values (potential source of tricks)
    - 3♥ = no good side suit, some slam suitability
    - 3NT = 3433 good hand for NT, bad hand for slam
    - 4♥ = no slam suitability,
  - 2NT = NAT INV with 4 spades
  - 3♣ = NAT, 4+ cards, FG
    - 3♦ = 4 cards, 2-3 clubs => opener can bid 4♣ with 2-4-4-3 (then 4NT=to play)
    - 3♥ = 5 cards, 2-3 clubs => opener can bid 4♣ with 3 cards (then 4NT=to play)
    - 3♠ = 4 cards, 2-3 clubs, sets spades as trumps **unless responder bids 3NT**
      - 3NT = 5 cards in ♣s, 5332-type or 2-2-4-5 mild slam try (about 14-15 hcp)
    - 3NT = 3433
    - 4♣ = 4(5) cards

1NT - 2♣ - 2♥ continued:

- 3♦ = NAT, 4+ cards, FG
  - 3♥ = 5 cards, 2-3 diamonds => opener can bid 4♦ with 3 cards (then 4NT=to play)
  - 3♠ = 4 cards, 2-3 diamonds, sets spades as trumps **unless responder bids 3NT**
    - 3NT = 5 cards in ♦s, 5332-type or 2-2-5-4 mild slam try (about 14-15 hcp)
  - 3NT = 2-3 diamonds
  - 4♣ = 4(5) diamonds, control
  - 4♦ = 4(5) cards, no club control
- 3♠/4m = Splinter
- 3NT = NAT, promises 4 spades
- 4NT = quantitative, promises 4 spades
- 2♠ = 4-5 spades, denies 4 hearts
  - 2NT = NAT INV with 4 hearts
  - 3♣ = NAT, 4+ cards, FG
    - 3♦ = 4 cards, 2-3 clubs => opener can bid 4♣ with 4-2-4-3 (then 4NT=to play)
    - 3♥ = 4(5) clubs, not great hand for slam
    - 3♠ = 5 cards, 2-3 clubs => opener can bid 4♣ with 3 clubs (then 4NT=to play)
    - 3NT = 4333
    - 4♣ = 4(5) cards, great hand for slam
  - 3♦ = NAT, 4+ cards, FG
    - 3♥ = 4(5) diamonds, not great hand for slam
    - 3♠ = 5 cards, 2-3 diamonds => opener can bid 4♦ with 3 cards (then 4NT=to play)
    - 3NT = 2-3 diamonds
    - 4♣ = 4(5) diamonds, control, great hand for slam
    - 4♦ = 4(5) cards, no club control, great hand for slam
- 3♥ = 4+ **spade support, FG**, looking for slam or right game
  - 3♠ = no good side suit, strong slam suitability
  - 3NT = good hand for NT, bad hand for slam
  - 4m = 4+ side suit with values (potential source of tricks)
  - 4♥ = no good side suit, some slam suitability
  - 4♠ = no slam suitability
- 4m/4♥ = Splinter
- 4NT = quantitative (promises 4 hearts, fwiw)

After 1NT - 2♦ the continuations are

- 2♥ = default
  - 2♠ = 55 majors, invitational (NF)
  - 2NT = invitational, not necessarily balanced
  - 3m = NAT, 4+ cards, FG
  - 3♥ = NAT invitational (often 6 cards, but 5 cards possible)
  - 3♠/4m = autosplinter; 6+ hearts, shortness, slam try
  - 3NT = choice of games; often 5332-type
  - 4♥ = slam try without shortness (NF)
  - 4NT = quantitative, 5332-shape
- 2NT = good hand with good fit, suitable for NT
  - 3♣ = natural or semi-natural slam try without low shortness
  - 3♦ = re-transfer, but can be natural or semi-natural slam try without low shortness
    - 3♥ = forced
      - raise = to play
      - new suit = cue and promises diamonds
      - 3NT = slam try and promises diamonds; no suitable cue bid
  - 3♥ = to play (forgot the re-transfer)
  - 3NT = to play
  - 3♠/4m = splinter
  - 4♥ = to play (forgot the re-transfer)
- 3♥ = good hand with excellent fit; sets hearts as trumps
  - 3NT = slam try, no shortness
  - 3♠/4m = splinter

After 1NT - 2♥ the continuations are

- 2♠ = default
  - 2NT = invitational, not necessarily balanced
  - 3m = NAT, 4+ cards, FG
  - 3♥ = 55 majors, FG
    - 3♠ = support and slam suitability
    - 3NT = no fit
    - 4m = cue agreeing hearts
    - 4M = bad hand for slam
  - 3♠ = NAT invitational (often 6 cards, but 5 cards possible)
  - 3NT = choice of games; often 5332-type
  - 4m/4♥ = autosplinter, 6+ spades, shortness, slam try
  - 4♠ = slam try without shortness (NF)
  - 4NT = quantitative, 5332-shape



1NT - 2♥ continued

- 2NT = good hand with good fit, suitable for NT
  - 3m = natural or semi-natural slam try without low shortness
  - 3♥ = re-transfer or 55 majors and slam try
    - 3♠ = forced
      - 4m = splinter with 55 majors
      - raise = to play
  - 3♠ = to play (forgot the re-transfer)
  - 3NT = to play
  - 4m/4♥ = splinter
  - 4♠ = to play (forgot the re-transfer)
- 3♠ = good hand with excellent fit; sets spades as trumps
  - 3NT = slam try, no shortness
  - 4m/4♥ = splinter

After 1NT - 2♠ the continuations are

- 2NT = minimum opening (would have passed 2NT invitation)
  - pass = BAL INV; all continuations below show 6+ clubs
  - 3♣ = to play
  - 3♦/3M = shortness, FG
  - 3NT = to play with 6+ clubs and no shortness (original mild slam try in clubs)
  - 4♣ = slam try, no shortness (suit oriented)
    - 4NT = not slam suitable
  - 4♦ = **RKC in clubs**, (later relay asks for ♣Q and 5♦ for specific kings)
  - 4NT = NT oriented slam try (NF)
- 3♣ = maximum (would have raised 2NT invitation to game)
  - 3NT = to play (can be either BAL INV or gambling with clubs)
  - 3♦/3M = shortness, FG
  - 4♣ = slam try with 6+ clubs; no shortness
    - 4NT = not slam suitable
  - 4♦ = **RKC in clubs**, (later relay asks for ♣Q and 5♦ for specific kings)
  - 4NT = NT oriented slam try (NF)

After 1NT - 2NT the continuations are

- 3♣ = no 5 card major
- 3♦ = 4 hearts
  - 3♥ = slam suitable hand with 4 hearts
  - 4♥ = bad hand for slam with 4 hearts
  - 3NT = 2-3 hearts
- 3♥ = 4 spades
  - 3♠ = slam suitable hand with 4 spades
  - 4♠ = bad hand for slam with 4 spades
  - 3NT = 2-3 spades
- 3♠ = balanced slam try with 4-4 minors (about (29)30-32 combined hcp)
  - 3NT = no interest
  - 4m = 4+ support and suitable hand for slam
- 3NT = to play (was looking for 5-3 fit)
- 3M = 5 card major
  - 3NT = to play (2M-3OM-44m bids this as theres no primary fit and combined hcp < 33)
  - 4M = to play
  - 4NT = RKCB agreeing the major
  - other = cue bid agreeing the major

After 1NT - 3♣ the continuations are

- 3♦ = forced
- 3M = shortness, FG
- 3NT = mild slam try in diamonds; NF
- 4♣ = shortness, serious slam try
  - 4NT = negative
- 4♦ = serious slam try, no shortness (suit oriented)
- 4♥ = **RKC in diamonds**, (later relay asks for ♦Q and 5♥ for specific kings)

After 1NT - 3♥ the continuations are

- 3♠ = 4 good (or any 5) spades; suggests 7 card fit (bad hand for minors)
  - 4m = 6 cards, not suitable for spade play
  - 4♥ = void, lots of minors, not suitable for spade play
  - 4NT = singleton heart, 55 minors
- 3NT = to play with good stoppers in hearts
- 4m = sets the suit
- 4♥ = at least 44 minors, nothing in hearts
- 4NT = 33 or 44 minors, not suitable hand for 4♥

After 1NT - 3♠ the continuations are

- 3NT = to play with good stoppers in spades

- 4m = sets the suit
- 4♥ = 4 good (or any 5) hearts; suggests 7 card fit (bad hand for minors)
  - 4♠ = void, lots of minors, not suitable for heart play
  - 4NT = singleton spade, 55 minors
  - 5m = 6 cards, not suitable for heart play
- 4♠ = at least 44 minors, nothing in spades
- 4NT = 33 or 44 minors, not suitable hand for 4♠

## In competition

**If Stayman is doubled, the opener has the following options:**

Pass = stopper in clubs, no majors => XX = to play, 2♦ = to play, the rest as after 2♦ -response

XX = to play (4-5 good clubs) => 2♦ = to play, the rest as after 2♦ -response

2♦ = no majors, no stopper in clubs

2M = as without X

**If a transfer bid to a major is doubled, the opener has the following options:**

Pass = 2 cards in responder's suit => XX = to play; completion = to play; the rest as after completion

XX = to play (4-5 good cards) => completion of transfer = to play; the rest as after completion

completion = 3-4 cards, no super accept

2NT/3M = super accepts as without X

**If 2♠ is doubled, the opener has the following options:**

pass = minimum **without** stopper

2NT = to play with the bal invitation

XX = bal invitation with 5 card minor and no stopper going to 3m

other bids = system on with 6+ clubs

XX = maximum **with** stopper

2NT = bad invitation with spade weakness trying to bail out (opener can raise)

other bids = system on

2NT = minimum **with** stopper

all bids = system on

3♣ = maximum **without** stopper

all bids = system on (bal invitation without a stopper knows that it's down from the top)

**If 3♣ is doubled, the opener has the following options:**

**If 3♣ is doubled, the opener has the following options:**

pass = stopper

3♦ = no stopper

**If 3M is doubled, the opener has the following options:**

pass = bad stopper and no fit => XX = good hand, make your system bid; 4m to play (cancel FG)

## Over Natural 2-level overcall

After 2♣, stolen bid structure is utilized:

### 1NT (2♣) =>

- X = Stayman
- 2♦ and above = system on

Note that the above applies also to 1NT overcall.

Over other natural 2-level overcalls modified Lebensohl is played.

### 1NT (2♦/♥/♠) =>

- X = T/O, typically 7+
- 2 any = COMP
- 2NT = puppet to 3♣ =>
  - 3♣ = forced =>
    - cue = Stayman with stopper
    - 3any = to play or INV if the suit was biddable at 2 level
    - 3NT = to play with stopper (or can just bid the fast 3NT)
  - 3new = NAT FG
  - 3NT = NAT, stoppers are for children
  - 4m = SA Texas
  - 4M = to play

## Against 3 level overcalls

Against 3 level overcalls X=T/O. 3NT tends to show a stopper or some length.

## Defence against conventional NT defences

Against X=conventional showing some shape or another:

- XX = Interested to play for penalties (creates F at 2 level)
- System is on (2♣ = Stayman, 2♦ = transfer, etc.)

Against 2♣ = anything but both majors, X = Stayman and 2♦ and above = system on

Note that the above applies also to 1NT overcall.

Against 2-level suit overcalls that show one known suit (also a two-suiter) Lebensohl is used; the stoppers are shown with reference to the anchor suit. This is applicable at least against the following defence families: As[pt]ro 2♦, Cappelletti 2M, DONT 2♦.

Against 2♣ = both majors (Landy) (two known suits):

- X = Card showing (7+)
- 2♦ / 3♣ = COMP
- 2♥ = Any INV hand (generally some minor suit length)
- 2♠ = Any FG hand (generally some minor suit length)
- 2NT = both minors, COMP
- 3♦ = NAT INV

- 3M = SPL, both minors, FG
- 3NT = to play (short stoppers in majors)

Against 2♦ = both majors (Cappelletti) (two known suits):

- X = Card showing (7+)
- 2♥ = Any INV hand (generally some minor suit length)
- 2♠ = Any FG hand (generally some minor suit length)
- 2NT = both minors, COMP
- 3♣ / 3♦ = competitive
- 3M = SPL, both minors, FG
- 3NT = to play (short stoppers in majors)

Against other 2-level bids that show two known suits like DONT 2♥, Brozel, Pinpoint Astro the following applies:

- X = Card showing (7+)
- lowest bid in a free suit = COMP
- 2NT = a COMP 2-suiter in the free suits
- jump in a free suit = NAT FG
- 3NT shows short stoppers both suits and is to play
- cue = stopper in the suit bid, no stopper in the other, FG
- jump cue = SPL, both free suits, FG

Against 2-level overcalls without any known suit e.g. Suction, the following applies:

- X = Card showing (7+)
- 2 any = NAT, COMP
- 3 any = NAT, FG
- 4m = SA Texas
- 4M = to play

## Opening 2 clubs

Opening 2♣ shows either 22-24 BAL or any FG. The responses are:

- 2♦ = negative or balanced positive
- 2M = natural positive with a decent 5+ card suit and some 6+ hcp
- 2NT = both minors at least 55 and some 6+ hcp
- 3m = natural positive with a decent 6+ card suit and some 6+ hcp
- 3M = 6+ card suit with 2 of the 3 top honours; no side strength
- 3NT - 4♥ = transfer to solid 6+ card suit (AKQJxx / AKQxxx or better)

The only fancy thing is the Kokish Relay described below; no second negatives; obviously after opener's direct or delayed 2NT we play normal 2NT system.

If 2♣ is overcalled, responder's X=T/O with some values, pass = negative and the rest is natural. Opener's X=T/O if 2♦-response is overcalled.

### ***Kokish Relay***

Kokish Relay is utilized after negative/waiting 2♦; the purpose of the relay is to give definition to various NT calls.

After 2♣ - 2♦ the following applies:

- 2♥ = puppet to 2♠; it shows either natural heart bid or a strong balanced hand
  - 2♠ = obligatory
    - 2NT = 25-26 BAL, => 2NT system is on
    - 3NT = 27-28 BAL
    - 4NT = 29-30 BAL
    - 5NT = 31-32 BAL
    - 6NT = 33-34 BAL
    - other bid = natural bid promising primary hearts

As a corollary of the Kokish relay, sequence 2♣ - 2♦ - 3NT show an attempt to play there with a minor suit oriented 'gambling' hand.

Continuations after strong balanced 3NT:

2♣-2♦-2♥-2♠-3NT: (Baron, Flint)

4♣ = Asks 4 card suits up the line with at least slam-invitational values → 4NT = to play

4♦ = Puppet to 4♥, after which responder places the contract

4M = NAT slam try with 5+ card suit → 4NT by opener is to play

5m = NAT slam try with at least 6 card suit

4NT = NAT slam-invitation

## Opening 2 diamonds

Opening 2♦ is a weak two showing 5-10 and 5-7 card suit. In 3<sup>rd</sup> position the opening has even wider ranges. In 4<sup>th</sup> position the opening is disciplined 10-13 with 6 card suit. The following table describes the expectancies as function of vulnerability and position:

	<i>1<sup>st</sup> hand</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> hand</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> hand</i>	<i>4<sup>th</sup> hand</i>
<i>NV vs VUL</i>	5-6 cards, bad-good	5-6 cards, bad-good	Random	10-13, 6 cards
<i>NV vs NV</i>	5-6 cards, bad-good	6+ cards, bad-good	Random	10-13, 6 cards
<i>VUL vs VUL</i>	6+ cards, bad-good	6+ cards, not bad	Random	10-13, 6 cards
<i>VUL vs NV</i>	6+ cards, not bad	6+ cards, good	Random, not bad	10-13, 6 cards

## Responses

2NT is Ogust ask promising INV+ and F3♦. Responses to Ogust 2♦ - 2NT are:

- 3♣ = bad suit and weak hand (F3♦)
- 3♦ = good suit and weak hand (NF)
- 3♥ = bad suit and strong hand (FG)
- 3♠ = good suit and strong hand (FG)
- 3NT = AKQxxx

Once an Ogust ask is made, the available denominations are the suit opened and NT; a bid in a new suit is a cue bid; jump in a new suit is a splinter.

New suit is natural and F1R

Jump to 3M = FG, shows a strong suit and sets the suit and starts cue bidding.

Jump to 4♣ = Preempt RKCB

Jump to 4M = NAT, to play

## In Competition

Over X=T/O new suit with or without jump is lead directing and forces conversion if advancer passes. 2NT is still Ogust.

If Ogust 2NT is doubled, ROPI is used. (xx = bad, weak, p= good, weak, 3♣=bad, strong...)

If Ogust 2NT is overcalled below 3♦ DOPI is used

If Ogust 2NT is overcalled with 3M or higher

- pass = bad suit (can be strong without defensive values)
- X = PEN (bad suit and defence)
- 3NT = good suit

## Opening 2M

Opening 2M is a weak two showing 5-10 and 5-7 card suit. In 3<sup>rd</sup> position the opening has even wider ranges. In 4<sup>th</sup> position the opening is disciplined 10-13 with 6 card suit. The following table describes the expectancies as function of vulnerability and position:

	<i>1<sup>st</sup> hand</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> hand</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> hand</i>	<i>4<sup>th</sup> hand</i>
<i>NV vs VUL</i>	5-6 cards, bad-good	5-6 cards, bad-good	Random	10-13, 6 cards
<i>NV vs NV</i>	5-6 cards, bad-good	6+ cards, bad-good	Random	10-13, 6 cards
<i>VUL vs VUL</i>	6+ cards, bad-good	6+ cards, not bad	Random	10-13, 6 cards
<i>VUL vs NV</i>	6+ cards, not bad	6+ cards, good	Random, not bad	10-13, 6 cards

## Responses

2NT is Ogust ask promising INV+ and F3M. Responses to Ogust 2M - 2NT are:

- 3♣ = bad suit and weak hand (F3M)
- 3♦ = good suit and weak hand (F3M)
- 3♥ = bad suit and strong hand (FG)
- 3♠ = good suit and strong hand (FG)
- 3NT = AKQxxx

Once an Ogust ask is made, the available denominations are the suit opened and NT; a bid in a new suit is a cue bid; jump in a new suit is a splinter.

New suit is natural and F1R.

Jump to 3♠ over 2♥ = FG, shows a strong suit and sets the suit and starts cue bidding.

Jump to 4♣ = Preempt RKCB

Jump to 4♦ = FG, shows a strong suit and sets the suit and starts cue bidding.

Jump to 4OM = NAT to play

## In Competition

Over X=T/O new suit with or without jump is lead directing and forces conversion if advancer passes. 2NT is still Ogust.

If Ogust 2NT is doubled, ROPI is used. (xx = bad, weak, p= good, weak, 3♣=bad, strong...)

If Ogust 2NT is overcalled below 3M DOPI is used

If Ogust 2NT is overcalled with 3M or higher

- pass = bad suit (can be strong without defensive values)
- X = PEN (bad suit and defence)
- 4M = good suit, weak/moderate hand
- new suit = good suit, strong hand, feature (or something close to it)



## Opening 2NT

Opening 2NT shows 20-21 BAL (any 4333, 4432 or 5332). In 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> position 6 card minor or 5422 shape are possible but not recommended.

### Responses (*Muppet Stayman*)

The responses to 2NT (also to 2♣-2♦-2NT, 2♣-2♦-2♥-2♠-2NT and 2NT natural overcall) are:

- 3♣ = Muppet Stayman =>
  - 3♦ = no 5 card major, at least one 4 card major =>
    - 3♥ = 4 spades, can be 4 hearts =>
      - 3♠ = 4 spades
      - 3NT = 4 hearts, not 4 spades =>
        - 4m = 5(+) cards, slam try =>
          - 4NT = negative
        - 4♥ = 4 hearts, to play
        - 5♥ = 4 hearts, slam-try, NF
    - 3♠ = 4 hearts, denies 4 spades =>
      - 3NT = 4 spades, not 4 hearts =>
        - 4m = 5(+) cards, slam try =>
          - 4NT = negative
        - 4m = cue agreeing hearts =>
          - cue = enough values for slam
          - 4♥ = to play
        - 4♥ = 4 hearts, hand unsuitable for slam
      - 3NT = to play (was looking for 5-3 major suit fit)
      - 4m = 5(+) cards slam-try =>
        - 4NT = negative
      - **4M = Lissabon slam try with a good 6 card minor. Accident prone!**
      - 5m = to play
    - 3♥ = no 4 card majors =>
      - 3♠ = 5+ spades, 4+ hearts
        - 3NT = 2 spades
        - 4m/ = cue agreeing spades
        - 4♥ = no minor suit quacks, 3 spades and lots of goodies in the majors
        - 4♠ = 3 spades, bad hand for slam
      - 3NT = to play
      - 4m = 5(+) cards slam-try =>
        - 4NT = negative
      - **4M = Lissabon slam try with a good 6 card minor. Accident prone!**

- 3♣ = Muppet Stayman =>
  - 3♠ = 5 card suit =>
    - 3NT = to play
    - 4m = 5(+) cards slam-try =>
      - 4NT = negative
    - 4♥ = ART slam try in spades
  - 3NT = 5 card heart suit =>
    - 4♣ = ART slam try in hearts
    - 4♦ = transfer to hearts, can RKCB next
    - 4M = Lissabon slam try with a good 6 card minor. Accident prone!
    - 4NT = quantitative raise, may include 5cm, or 4144

**Note the WTF! convention: whenever responder bids 4M, when s/he is not supposed to hold a long major, it shows a Lissabon to minor. The WTF-feeling should be the memory protector.**

**The following applies for the Lissabon minor suit slam tries:**

- 4NT = to play → responder may either bid 6 or respond as to RKCB for 7 try
- 4♠/5♣ = suitable hand for slam → responder may either bid 6 or respond as to RKCB for 7 try
- 5♣/5♦ = bad hand for slam → responder may either bid 6 or respond as to RKCB for 7 try

**Note that responder cannot move to 5m after Lissabon and negative 4NT!**

## 2NT

- 3♦ = Transfer, at least 5 hearts =>
- 3♥ = neutral =>
  - 3♠ = at least 45, longer hearts =>
    - 3NT = no support
    - 4m = Lissabon
    - 4M = unsuitable for slam
  - 3NT = choice of contracts
  - 4m = 4+ cards, slam-try
  - 4♥ = Slam-try with bad suit
  - 4♠ = at least 55, slam-try, FIR =>
    - 4NT = RKCB for spades
    - 5m = Lissabon
    - 5M = unsuitable for slam
  - 4NT = Quantitative
  - 5♥ = Slam-try, good suit
- 3NT = Good 4+ support, bad controls, maximum =>
  - 4♦ = re-transfer
  - 4♥ = to play, forgot the re-transfer
- 4♥ = Good 4+ support, good controls, maximum

## 2NT

- 3♥ = Transfer, at least 5 spades =>
- 3♠ = neutral =>
  - 3NT = choice of contracts
  - 4m = 4+ cards, slam-try
  - 4♥ = at least 55, no slam interest
  - 4♠ = Slam-try with bad suit
  - 4NT = Quantitative
  - 5♠ = Slam-try, good suit
- 3NT = Good 4+ support, bad controls, maximum =>
  - 4♥ = re-transfer
  - 4♠ = to play, forgot the re-transfer
- 4♠ = Good 4+ support, good controls, maximum
- 3♠ = at least 5/4 in the minors, at least a mild slam try or lots of minors in a bad hand
  - 3NT = no 4 card minor, not a great hand for slam
    - 4m = good hand, longer minor
      - 4NT = I really don't like the idea of a minor suit slam
    - 4NT = good hand, equal minors, F1R
    - 5m = to play with a bad distributional hand
  - **4m = 4 card suit, not a great hand for slam => 4NT to play**
  - 4M = Lissabon with 4 card support and good hand for slam => 4NT = RKCB
  - 4NT = good fit for minors without 4 card support (33 with no major suit quacks)
  - 5m = great hand with good support, high + low stuff in minors and top cards in majors
- 3NT = forces opener to display a green card
- **4m = South African Texas, either to play 4M or follow-up with RKCB/Exclusion**
  - **4M = obligatory**
    - **pass = the default action**
    - **4♠ = Exclusion KCB**
    - **4NT = RKCB**
    - **5m/5♥ = Exclusion KCB**
- **4M = 6+ cards Lissabon slam try; WTF principles above apply**
  - **4NT = negative**
    - **any follow-up is a key card response for grand slam**
  - **4♠/5♣ = suitable hand for slam → responder may either bid 6 or respond as to RKCB for 7 try**
  - **5♣/5♦ = bad hand for slam → responder may either bid 6 or respond as to RKCB for 7 try**
- 4NT = quantitative
- 5m = to play

### 3 Level Preempts

Three level preempts are very dependant on position and vulnerability. The following table applies:

The following table describes the expectancies as function of vulnerability and position:

	<i>1<sup>st</sup> hand</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> hand</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> hand</i>	<i>4<sup>th</sup> hand</i>
<i>NV vs VUL</i>	Very bad hand; from xx xxx Jxxxx xxx up to xx xx KJxxxxx xx	Sound suit and about 6 sure playing tricks	Random	10-13, 7 cards
<i>NV vs NV</i>	Sound suit and about 6 sure playing tricks	Sound suit and about 7 sure playing tricks	Random	10-13, 7 cards
<i>VUL vs VUL</i>	Sound suit and about 7 sure playing tricks	Good suit and about 7 sure playing tricks	Random	10-13, 7 cards
<i>VUL vs NV</i>	Good suit and about 8 sure playing tricks	Good suit and about 8 sure playing tricks	About 7-9 playing tricks; can be extreme shapes	10-13, 7 cards

### Opening 4m

Opening 4m is Namyats showing a good 4M opening with the anchor suit having AKQ, AKJ10 or AQJ10 on top. If the anchor suit is not solid, a side ace is required. The opening is forcing to four of the anchor suit but does not declare the ownership of the hand.

### Responses

The relay is a slam try asking opener to start cue bidding.

4NT is RKCB.

### Opening 4NT

Opening 4NT is a specific ace ask.

### Responses

The responses are the modern responses instead of the old Acol responses:

- 5♣ = no aces
- 5♦ = the ace of diamonds
- 5♥ = the ace of hearts
- 5♠ = the ace of spades
- 5NT = the ace of clubs
- 6♣ = two aces

## RKCB

The used version of RKCB is the standard 0314. Even a simple convention like RKCB requires some agreements about continuations and void showing mechanisms. The following applies:

- When the RKCB response is 5♣ or 5♦ the relay asks for the queen of trumps. The relay is the lowest non-trump bid at the 5-level.
  - Responder denies the queen of trumps by bidding the trump suit at the lowest level
  - Responder promises the queen of trumps without side kings by bidding 5NT
  - Responder promises the queen of trumps and a side king by bidding the cheapest of the side kings
- After any response to RKCB, 5NT guarantees all six keys (4 aces and KQ of trumps) and asks for specific kings. The responder bids the cheapest king suit.
- After a specific king reply (either after 5NT or trump queen ask) a bid in a new suit asks king in that suit. Responder bids grand slam holding the king or six of the trump suit (or 6NT if six of the trump suit is already passed) without the king.
- Response 5NT shows odd number of key cards and a useful void
- Six-level response below six of the trump suit shows two key cards and a void in the suit bid
- Response six of the trump suit shows two key cards and a (useful) void in a higher ranking suit than the trump suit

### *In competition*

If RKCB is doubled, ROPI applies.

If RKCB is overcalled below five of the trump suit, DOPI applies.

If RKCB is overcalled with five of the trump suit or above, DEPO allies.

## Preempt RKCB

After a preempt of 2♦, 2M, 3♦ or 3M; 4♣ = key card ask with the following response scale:

- 4♦ = 0
- 4♥ = 1 without trump queen
- 4♠ = 1 + trump queen
- 4NT = 2 without trump queen
- 5♣ = 2 + trump queen

After 3♣; 4♦ = key card ask with similar step scale as above.

**NOTE:** Preempt RKCB is in effect after X=T/O and overcalls (including 3NT).

## Optional Minorwood

Supporting partner's minor at the four level (jump or non-jump) in power auctions (the 4m bidder holds unlimited hand) shows slam interest and asks partner's reaction. The same applies if the 4m bid is made by an unlimited hand after the m has been agreed **or the 4m bid is made by an unlimited hand as a 4 level rebid**. The reaction can be either denial of slam interest (the 1<sup>st</sup> step) or a RKCB response. After a negative reaction, a relay asks key cards for real and 4NT is to play.

**NOTE THAT RAISE SHOWS 2 KEYS + TRUMP QUEEN!**

Example:

In the sequence 1♠-2♦-3♣-4♣, 4♣ is an Optional Minorwood with the following continuations:

- 4♦ = bad hand for slam; I don't want to tell my aces:
  - 4♥ = I need to know; I have a good hand
    - 4♠ = 0 (because 3 keys will not bid this)
    - 4NT 1 or 4 etc.
  - 4NT = to play
- 4♥ = 3 (because zero keys will not bid this)
- 4♠ = 1 or 4 etc.

After the ace-response (weather direct or delayed), the non-trump suit relay asks for trump Q / specific kings. In case trump Q was shown/denied, the relay promises all key cards.

More examples; some minorwood and some natural:

1♥-2♣-2NT-3♠-4♣ is a preference with a limited hand; not minorwood

1NT-2♣-2♠-3♣-4♣ shows a 4-5 clubs and a great hand for slam; limited so not minorwood

1♥-2♦-2♥-3♣-4♣ is a raise with a limited hand; not minorwood

1♥-2♦-2♥-2NT-3♣-4♣ is an unlimited raise and, thus, minorwood

Any delayed unlimited 4m in an agreed suit is minorwood.

Any delayed supporting and unlimited 4m is minorwood.

1♥-2♣-3♣-4♣ is minorwood as the responder is unlimited.

1♥-2♣-3♦-4♣ is minorwood as the splinter agreed the suit and responder is unlimited.

1♥-2♦-2♥-3♦-3NT-4♦ is minorwood as the responder is unlimited and obviously one-suited.

**Basic rule:** if you need to ask yourself if 4m is optional minorwood, it isn't. This applies especially to sequences where the auction was geared towards 3NT but never got there due to stopper problems.

## Exclusion Blackwood (Voidwood)

Exclusion Blackwood is an extra level jump in comparison to a standard splinter. In addition to this “super” splinter, all unnecessary jumps into 5 level when another suit has been agreed is also Exclusion Blackwood.

Exclusion Blackwood shows void in the bid suit and acts as a keycard ask excluding (obviously) the void suit. The responses are step responses as in normal RKCB and the continuations are analog to the RKCB continuations (again, obviously, the king in the void suit is excluded).

The following examples show some sequences, which end in Exclusion Blackwood:

- 1♠ - 2♦ - 4♥ (3♥ is already a splinter)
- 1♥ - 2♣ - 4♦
- 1♥ - 2♦ - 5♣
- 1♣ - 1♥ - 4♦ (3♦ is already a splinter)

## GSF

The generic response to 5NT GSF is:

- 7♣ = two of top three trump honours

All other responses are dependant of the trump suit. The generic feature is that six of the agreed trump suit shows the weakest holding. The responses with different trump suits are:

- ♣: 6♣ = 0-1 of top three trump honours
- ♦: 6♣ = A/K; 6♦ = weaker (0 or Q)
- ♥: 6♣ = A/K; 6♦ = Q; 6♥ = 0
- ♠: 6♣ = A/K; 6♦ = Q; 6♥ = 0 with extra length; 6♠ = 0

## NT defence

The NT defence against weak NT is Cappelletti and against strong NT Revised DONT. A passed hand uses always Revised DONT.

**Definition:** 1NT opening is **strong**, if the sum of the lower range and upper range is **29 or more**.

**OPTION:** it is possible to play only Cappelletti against all NT's; in that case there's an addendum for passed hand X.

## Cappelletti

- X = PEN (at least 13 hcp with a good lead). The following applies after X:
  - If responder runs to 2m, advancer's X=PEN and pass=F1R giving doubler the chance to X=PEN. (After X opponents cannot play 2m undoubled.)
  - If responder runs to 2M or higher, advancer's X=COMP and pass=NF giving doubler the chance to make X=T/O with extra values. (Opponents can play anything above 2♥ undoubled. Doubler cannot make solo penalty doubles.)
- 2♣ = any one-suited hand, constructive, around 9-13 with good 6+ card suit =>
  - 2♦ = P/C
  - 2M = 6+ cards, to play
  - 2NT = NAT, INV
  - 3NT = to play
- 2♦ = both majors, constructive, around 9-13 with at least 4-4 (44 really rare) =>
  - 2M = preference
  - 2NT = ART, INV+, See Ekren 2♦
- 2M = 5+M and 4+m
  - 2NT = asks minor => if advancer supports major it shows INV
- 2NT = both minors, constructive, around 9-13 with at least 55 OR ANY FG 55+

## In competition

(1NT) 2♣ (X): advancer's pass = P/C and any suit bid shows 6+ cards and to play there

(1NT) 2♣ (2any): advancer's X=PEN and cheapest bid is P/C



## Revised DONT

Revised DONT was described in the Bridge World with the name New Millennium DONT; this is very close to what is known as Meckwell; the difference is in  $2\clubsuit$ , which in Meckwell shows  $\clubsuit+M$

Revised DONT is a tool to contest part scores in a crude way. For a precision tool it's as suitable as a 5kg sledgehammer.

- X = both majors or one-suited in a minor
  - Pass = at least -180
  - $2\clubsuit$  = P/C
  - $2\diamond$  = P/C with equal length in the majors and  $\clubsuit$ -support for  $3\clubsuit$
  - 2M = 6+ cards, to play
- $2\clubsuit$  = clubs and another suit (aggressive, generally 9+ cards in the suits) =>
  - $2\diamond$  = P/C
  - 2M = 6+ cards, to play
- $2\diamond$  = diamonds and a major suit (aggressive, generally 9+ cards in the suits) =>
  - $2\heartsuit$  = P/C
  - $2\spadesuit$  = 6+ cards, to play
- $2\heartsuit$  = NAT => 2NT is Ogust in context of vulnerability
- $2\spadesuit$  = NAT => 2NT is Ogust in context of vulnerability
- 2NT = FG, very distributional hand

## In competition

(1NT) X (XX): advancer's pass = P/C and any suit bid shows 6+ cards

(1NT) 2m (X): advancer's XX = asks the 2<sup>nd</sup> suit and any suit bid shows 6+ cards

(1NT) X (2any): advancer's cheapest bid = P/C

(1NT) 2m (2any): advancer's cheapest bid in the potential aggressor's suit = P/C

## OPTION: Cappelletti against any NT range

When Cappelletti is played against any NT range, passed hand X needs to be defined.

- X by a passed hand = 5+ minor & 4 card major (a.k.a Woolsey X)
  - $2\clubsuit$  = P/C
    - $2\diamond$  = shows diamonds as the 5+ m
      - $2\heartsuit$  = P/C for the major
  - $2\diamond$  = asks the major (not interested to play in the minor)
  - 2M = own suit and strong suggestion to play there

## Doubles, forcing passes and related stuff

The following applies:

- Support X and XX are used (also after 2<sup>nd</sup> hand X=T/O or overcall) whenever opener can raise responder's one-over-one to two. The only exception sequence is 1♣-(p)-1♦-(1♠) after which X by opener shows 4 card in hearts without reversing values.
- Maximum overcall X (MOD) is used when the advancer's bid is at the maximum level. MOD does not apply against solo bidder. The following sequences are the only possible MOD-sequences:
  - 1♥ - (2♦) - 2♥ - (3♦) X=MOD
  - 1♥ - (X) - 2♥ - (3♦) X=MOD
  - 1♠ - (2♥) - 2♠ - (3♥) X=MOD
  - 1♠ - (X) - 2♠ - (3♥) X=MOD
- COMP X at low (2/3) level when fit has not been established
- X = T/Oish / COMPish against opener's action after a balancing call
- In defensive bidding after an initial cad showing double, advancer's double is card showing; the third double is for penalties e.g. (1NT=12-14) X (2any) X = card showing or ((2♦ = Multi) X (2♥) X = card showing.
- When in penalty hunt, double in direct seat shows 4+ trumps and double in 4th position shows 3 trumps with good defence or 4+ trumps. A 4th hand double is removed by singleton or void.
- Forcing pass is on if
  - a game force is established in the auction OR
  - the ownership of the hand has been declared OR
  - the forced level has not yet been reached OR
  - the opponents are clearly sacrificing
- In forcing pass situation pass&pull is a strong move.
- Transferable value doubles are used when forcing pass does not apply
- A penalty pass at 1 level (or a penalty pass of 2 level non jump overcall) creates a forcing situation up to the 2 level. The weak move by the penalty passer is 1NT or bid in the penalty passed suit.
- If a solo opponent redoubles to show strength, a pass behind shows a penalty pass and seriously suggests defending with at least some hope of beating the contract. Note that this does **not** apply to the mundane (1Z) - X - (XX) – pass sequence, where pass simply tells partner to get out of the mess. A typical sequence would be (1M) - pass - (pass) - X - (XX) - pass.
- **X of splinter asks lead in the suit below the splinter suit BUT NV vs VUL shows length.**

## Defence against 1-level openings

### Overcalls

Overcalling style is quite aggressive. Four card overcalls are permissible in Lawrenceish way. The overcalls are advanced in the following fashion:

- A raise to two level can be a stretch if vulnerability suggests such moves
- A jump raise is pre-emptive and promises at least four trumps. When vulnerable, a pre-emptive raise shows some playing strength.
- A cue bid by an unpassed advancer is a general purpose forcing move. It shows either any game forcing hand or an invitational hand with at least three card support. A cue bid is forcing ->2 overcall suit. Aggressor repeats the overcall suit to show a minimum (can still be 4 cards).
- A cue bid by a passed advancer shows at least a sound raise to 2 level.
- A new suit response by advancer is constructive but not forcing. Aggressor can raise or repeat the overcall suit without promising extra values.
- A jump shift in a new suit by advancer shows a good 6+ card suit and constructive but NF values.
- A double jump by advancer is splinter
- A jump cue by advancer shows a mixed raise ( too weak for limit raise, too much defence for a pre-emptive raise)
- If responder raises opener or makes a higher bid, advancer's new suit bids are forcing.
- If responder raises opener, X by advancer = RESP; over jump raises X = RESP with tendency towards Transferable Values Double

### Jump overcalls

Jump overcall is weak. Against an unpassed partner a jump overcall is sound. Facing a passed partner a NV vs. VUL jump overcall is random.

The jump overcall is advanced in following manner:

- Advancer's 2NT is Ogust; responses are adjusted according to vulnerability
  - After Ogust, only NT and the jump overcall suit can be played.
- A new suit response by unpassed advancer is forcing.
- A new suit response by a passed advancer shows a raise with values (and often also length) in the suit bid.
- A cue bid by advancer shows a game invitation with support.

Balancing jump overcall is intermediate (about opening with a good suit); the responses are natural in context of passing the opening bid, i.e. NT bids are natural, cue is a raise with at least invitational values, and new suits show values there with tolerance (xx or better).

## **X=T/O**

X=T/O shows support to unbid suits or a good (normally 19+) hand. With a good distribution X=T/O can be made with ~9 decent hcp.

The take out X is advanced in following manner:

- Advancer's all NT-bids are natural and limited.
- Advancer's jumps are limited. A jump to 2M promises 4+ card suit with about decent 8 hcp. A jump to 3 level shows 5+ cards.
- Advancer's cue bid is forcing to suit agreement. Advancer's jump cue after a minor suit opening shows both majors. Advancer's jump cue after a major suit opening asks stopper with a long decent minor.
- Responsive doubles are used if responder raises:
  - Over a minor X=RESP promises equal length in majors.
  - Over a major X=RESP shows values and tends to deny 4 spades after heart opening.

Balancing X=T/O can be made with a weak hand with good distribution.

4th hand X=T/O in a live auction shows the unbid suits and about opening strength OR a very good hand.

## **The direct cue bid**

A direct cue bid promises the highest unbid suit and another suit at least 5-5. The hand is either weakish or strong. A minimum NV. cue promises about KTxxx KQxxx.

The direct cue bid is advanced in following manner:

- Advancer's 2-level bids are P/C. Advancer's 3 level bids (not in the known suit) show a long suit and constructive but NF values.
- Advancer's cue bid is a general FG move.
- Advancer's 2NT asks the 2nd suit. The hand can be weak. After 2NT advancer can raise the new suit invitationally, cue to show a forcing raise in the 2nd suit or prefer to the highest suit to show at least a mild slam try in the highest suit.
- Advancer's 4 level jumps are P/C

## **Unusual NT**

The unusual NT promises the lowest unbid suits at least 5-5. The strength is similar to direct cue bid.

The direct cue bid is advanced in following manner:

- Advancer's cue is a general FG move.
- Advancer's bid in the 3rd suit is constructive

In sequence (1♥)-P-(2♥) 2NT promises minors. In sequence (1♠)-P-(2♠) 2NT promises a two suiter.

## ***The direct jump cue bid***

A direct jump cue bid asks stopper with a solid suit without side voids.

Advancer either bids 3NT with a stopper or bids a P/C bid at appropriate level.

If 3NT reached in this manner is doubled XX by either player shows doubt.

## ***1NT overcall***

1NT overcall in 2<sup>nd</sup> position shows 15-18 hcp, BAL or SEMIBAL distribution and a stopper in the suit opened. => The NT system is on

Balancing 1NT in 4<sup>th</sup> position shows 11-14. It does not promise a stopper.

**1NT in 4th position in a live auction shows a good looking strong NT. => The NT system is on**

## **Defence against preempts**

### ***The defence against weak 2 diamonds***

- X=T/O, no Lebensohl
- 2NT = 16-19 BAL => 2NT-system on
- 3♦ = Stopper ask with a solid suit
- 3M = good hand, good suit
- 4♣ = ♣+ Major at least 55, FG
- 4♦ = Both majors
- 4M = very good hand, good suit, creates forcing situation if opponents compete

### ***The defence against weak 2M***

Generic:

- X=T/O => Lebensohl on (See below)
- 2NT = 16-19 BAL => Mod Muppet Stayman (See below)
- 3M = Asks stopper
- 4m = at least 55 m + unbid major, FG

Against weak 2♥:

- 3♠ = good hand, good suit
- 4♠ = very good hand, good suit, creates forcing situation if opponents compete
- 4♥ = minors, not equal length, advancer's 4NT asks longer suit
- 4NT = minors, equal length

Against weak 2♠:

- 4♥ = very good hand, good suit, creates forcing situation if opponents compete
- 4♠ = minors, not equal length, advancer's 4NT asks longer suit

## Lebensohl

(2♥) - X:

- 2♠ = NAT, weak
- 2NT = puppet -> 3♣ =>
  - 3♣ = normal, aggressor breaks only with a huge hand
    - pass/3♦ = weak
    - 3♥ = 4 spades + stopper
    - 3♠ = 5 spades, FG, slam-interest
    - 3NT = NAT, but shows doubt
- 3m = constructive (generally ~8)
- 3♥ = 4 spades, no stopper
- 3♠ = NAT INV
- 3NT = to play with good stopper

(2♠) - X

- 2NT = puppet -> 3♣ =>
  - 3♣ = normal, aggressor breaks only with a huge hand
    - pass/3♦/♥ = weak
    - 3♠ = 4 hearts + stopper
    - 3NT = NAT, but shows doubt
- 3m/♥ = constructive
- 3♠ = 4 hearts, no stopper
- 3NT = to play with good stopper

## Mod Muppet Stayman

(2M) - 2NT

- 3♣ = Muppet Stayman
- 3♦ = Xfer<sup>1</sup>
- 3♥ = Xfer<sup>1</sup>
- 3♠ = both minors, FG

<sup>1</sup>Transfer to opponent's suit promises a shortness there, no 4 card major, 4+ in either minor and at least invitational values. Aggressor's 3NT shows willingness to play there, 4m shows a bad hand and willingness to stay below game.

## Defences against other natural preempts

The generic defence against natural preempts is:  $X=T/O \Rightarrow 4\heartsuit$ . Against  $4\spadesuit/5m$  X shows cards; advancer is supposed to take out with equivalent of 6331 with AK in the long suit (Bridge World MSC early 2006).

The following applies against natural preempts:

- Jump to game shows a very good hand with good suit and creates a forcing situation if opponents compete.
- Against  $(3\clubsuit)$  jump to  $4\diamond$  shows at least 55 diamonds + major and FG values
- Against  $(3m)$  cue shows at least 55 majors and does not create forcing situation. Aggressor can make later a transferable values double to show FG values.
- Against  $(3\diamond)$   $4\clubsuit$  shows at least 55 clubs + major and FG values (Non-leaping Michaels)
- Against  $(3M)$  cue shows an 11 trick one-suiter; responder's relay is weak requesting the overcaller to show the suit. A suit bid higher than the relay is a cue bid showing the ace in the bid suit.

## Non-leaping Michaels

Against 3M-opening, both direct and balancing 4m shows 5+m with 5+OM and is FIR. Over  $3\heartsuit$  the minimum hand needs to be good, typically a 4 loser hand like  $\spadesuit AKJTx \heartsuit x \diamond AQJxxx \clubsuit x$ . Over  $3\spadesuit$  the requirements are a bit less; the minimum hand should be a good 5 loser hand like  $\spadesuit x \heartsuit AKJTx \diamond AQJTx \clubsuit xx$ .

Non-leaping Michaels is unlimited FIR. Responder's 4NT is RKCB in the major and cue is RKCB in the minor. Otherwise responder makes a judgement based call.

## 3NT System

The 3NT system is played in situations, where aggressor has bid 3NT over opponent's preempt. The 3NT bid has a very wide range in both the texture and strength. The hand can be balanced in range of 16-22 or unbalanced with good suit, stopper and range of some 15-20. In multiple situations, advancer does best by passing and hoping for the best.

If advancer wants to continue, these are the options:

- $4\clubsuit$  = Size and type ask; shows slam interest (11+ hcp)
  - $4\diamond$  = low end of running suit type  $\Rightarrow$  4NT to play
  - $4\heartsuit$  = low end of BAL (16-18)
  - $4\spadesuit$  = middle of BAL (19-20)
  - 4NT = top end of BAL (21-22)
  - 5suit = natural long suit, high end of running suit type
  - 6NT = crazy end of BAL (23+)
  - 7NT = Clas Nyberg version of BAL (requires squeeze to make)
- $4\diamond$  = Flint, puppet to  $4\heartsuit$ ; responder passes or bids  $4\spadesuit$  to play
- 4M = 5 cards, FIR, aggressor bids 4NT without support and cue bids with 3+ support

## The Defence against strong 1 club

(1♣):

- X = good overcall in clubs or bad overcall in diamonds
- 1♦ = good overcall in diamonds or bad overcall in hearts
- 1♥ = good overcall in hearts or bad overcall in spades
- 1♠ = good overcall in spades or bad overcall in clubs
- 1NT = both majors
- 2♣ = both majors, a good hand, willing to be in a game against 4 card support
- 2♦ = Two level PRE in either major
- 2♥ = at least 55 ♣&♥ OR ♦&♠
- 2♠ = at least 55 ♦&♥ OR ♣&♠
- 2NT = at least 55 ♣&♦
- 3♣→ = NAT PRE

Advancer's bids to good/bad overcalls are P/C. If advancer is not ready to raise the good version of the overcall he should pass and hope that either overcall is good or the overcall is bad enough that undoubled undertricks do not compensate. In case advancer passes, overcaller needs to show the hand type to opener's balancing X.

Note that new suit bids by overcaller show the strong variant with 2<sup>nd</sup> suit.

This defence can be used against two-way club opening (e.g. Polish Club) or artificial limited club opening (e.g. Magic). The good hand is then worth a sound natural system opening. This is not the default defence but has to be agreed.

This defence is also applicable against strong 1♦ with the following adjustments:

(1♦):

- X = good overcall in diamonds or bad overcall in hearts
- 1♥ = good overcall in hearts or bad overcall in spades
- 1♠ = good overcall in spades or bad overcall in clubs
- 1NT = both majors
- 2♣ = good overcall in clubs or bad overcall in diamonds



## Carding agreements

### ***Opening leads***

The opening leads are 1<sup>st</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> / 5<sup>th</sup> from any combination except:

- vs NT:
  - K is strong, forcing unblock or count signal
  - Q is lead from KQxx, if an honour is lead
  - 4<sup>th</sup> best can be lead from a four card suit if the 3<sup>rd</sup> has trick taking power e.g. KJ82
- vs Suit:
  - K is lead from AK bare

From three or more low cards top card can be lead to show bad holding.

In supported partner's suit a top card is lead from three (and sometimes from four) small.

### ***Later leads***

Later leads are very much like opening leads with following exceptions:

- No strong K
- K can be lead from AK when behind dummy
- In cash-out situation attitude leads can be used

### ***2<sup>nd</sup> hand plays***

2<sup>nd</sup> hand plays higher of touching honours unless playing a sure winner (then the lowest is played).

**Note, this is for the 2<sup>nd</sup> hand only!** Your partner has not played a card to this trick, yet.

## Signals

Low-high is either encouraging or shows even number of cards. The first discard is Roman (odd=encouraging, even=SP)

On partner's lead **attitude has the highest priority** with the following exceptions:

- If K is lead against NT, responder either unblocks or gives count
- If A is lead vs suit and dummy holds singleton in the suit, 3rd hand gives suit preference.
- If dummy's holding tells that 3rd hand does not have the hoped for strength we give count.

Examples:

- A lead vs suit: Qxx+ on dummy => count
- K lead: Jxx+ on dummy => count
- A lead: dummy has KQ+ => count or SP depending on who is short **BUT**
- A lead: dummy has Kx+ => attitude for Q
- x lead, 3rd hand cannot beat dummy's J or lower => count **BUT**
- x lead, 3rd hand cannot beat dummy's Q from Q(x+) =>attitude for J
- If a singleton is lead => SP
- If K-A is lead vs suit the **2<sup>nd</sup>** card by 3<sup>rd</sup> hand is SP

Count is given only when thinking that partner needs that information. All count signals are 'present count'. SP is often included into count signal from xxx or xxxx.

The first discard is Roman. The later discards show either count, or are the cards nearest the thumb. Discarding first a high odd card and then a low odd card of the same suit the encouraging message is cancelled.

NO SMITH ECHO IS USED.