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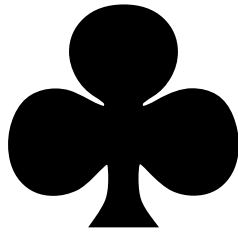


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Modified Precision Club

System Outline

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System Summary

(a) Opening Bids

- 1♣ - Any hand with 16+ points, except hands with 16-23 points and exactly 4441 distribution, hands with 30-31 balanced which are opened 3♦ and hands with 32-33 balanced which are opened 3♠.
- 1♦ - 10-15 points with any hand unsuitable for an opening of 1♥/1♠/1NT/2♣, and not catered for in the opening 2-level bids. This effectively means any hand with 5-card or longer Diamonds (not 6-card with a 4-card major which is opened 2♥ or 2♠), 4441 hands of this range, hands with 5-card Clubs and 4-card Diamonds, hands with a very weak 6-card Club suit, and balanced or semi-balanced hands not falling into the range for an Opening 1NT
- 1♥ - 10-15 points and at least a 5-card Heart suit. It denies being exactly 5-5 in the majors (opened 2NT).
- 1♠ - 10-15 points and at least a 5-card suit. It denies being exactly 5-5 in the majors.
- 1NT - 10-12 non-vulnerable, 13-15 vulnerable, balanced or semi-balanced with a 5-card minor. Continuations include Stayman, extended Stayman, Marx-Sharples Transfers, INTRO, Transfer Lebensohl and South African Texas Transfers.
- 2♣ - 11-15 points with a reasonable 6-card Club suit or a 5-card Club suit and a 4-card major. It specifically denies having 6-card Clubs and a 4-card major unless with a Diamond void (Opened 3♣), and denies possession of a 5-card major (Opened 2♦).
- 2♦ - Multi showing either
 - (1) 5-9 points and a 6-card major (sometimes 5-card) or
 - (2) 16-23 points and exactly 4441 distribution, or
 - (3) 11-15 points with 8 playing tricks in a hand with a 5-card major and a 6-card or longer minor suit.
- 2♥ - Reverse Roman, showing 10-15 points and exactly 4-card Hearts and 6-card Diamonds.
- 2♠ - Reverse Roman, showing 10-15 points and exactly 4-card Spades and 6-card Diamonds.
- 2NT - 5-9 points and at least 5-5 in the minors or 11-15 points and exactly 5-5 in the majors or a ¾-Level Club Pre-empt.
- 3♣ - 11-15 points and exactly 6-card Clubs and an unspecified 4-card major. It specifically denies having a Diamond void (Opened 2♣).
- 3♦ - (1) A 3-level pre-empt in either major, or
 - (2) a 4-level pre-empt in either minor, or
 - (3) 30-31 balanced.
- 3♥ - 5-9 points and at least 5-5 in the majors
- 3♠ - (1) An Acol Gambling 3NT with an outside Heart entry, or
 - (2) 11-15 points and exactly 6-6 in the majors, or
 - (3) 5-9 points and at least 6-6 in the minors, or
 - (4) 32-33 balanced.
- 3NT - Acol Gambling 3NT, a long solid minor with no outside stops.
- 4♣ - Texas Transfer to 4♥
- 4♦ - Texas Transfer to 4♠
- 4♥ - Normal Pre-empt
- 4♠ - Normal Pre-empt
- 5♣ - Normal Pre-empt
- 5♦ - Normal Pre-empt

System Summary

(b) Defensive Bidding

- Simple Overcalls: - These are constructive with a reasonable suit and values. Continuations include UCB's and Lebensohl sequences. Suit raises are largely pre-emptive.
- Jump Overcalls: - These are weak and obstructive, can be as weak as Jxxxx. When both opponents have shown values, suits tend to show a good suit with length and intermediates (but not necessarily top honours). Continuations are as per simple overcalls.
- Ghestem: - Cue-bid shows the extreme unbid suits, at least 5-5
2NT shows the lower unbid suits, at least 5-5
3♣ shows higher unbid suits, at least 5-5 (or 1♣-3♦)
- SuperGhestem: - Show strong, extreme 2-suited hands, at least 6-5 in shape
Jump Cue-bid shows extreme unbid suits
3NT shows lower 2 unbid suits
1♣ - 4♦ and 1x - 4♣ show the higher 2 unbid suits
- Takeout doubles: - Unlimited in strength. Transfer Lebensohl Sequences follow
- 1NT Overcall: - 16-18 in 2nd position, 11-14 in 4th position. Responses are as for an opening 1NT, but if in 4th position then all subsequent bidding is natural, with a cue-bid acting as Stayman.

System Summary

(c) Defences

To Precision Club: -	CRO-Panama: -	Simple Overcalls are natural. Double / 1NT / 2NT show 2-suited hands (CRO - Same Colour/Rank/Odd in that order) Jump Overcalls are weak with that suit or slightly stronger with the other three suits.
To Weak NT: -	Modified Brozel: -	Double shows 16+ balanced or single-suited. 2♣ shows ♣♥, 2♦ shows ♦♥, 2♥ shows ♥♠, 2♠ shows ♠ & ♣/♦, 2NT shows ♣♦. Jump overcalls are intermediate. Over double, if partner does not stand the double then 2♣ shows a weak 1-suited hand, 2♦ shows a weak 2-suiter, 2♥ shows a game-going 2-suiter without Spades, and 2♠ shows a game-going 2-suiter with Spades. If Opponents run then Transfer Lebensohl.
To Strong NT: -	Modified Brozel: -	As above but double shows a single-suited hand and is not for penalties.
To Pre-empts: -	FILM-X: -	Double is for penalties, 3NT is to play. Relay in next suit is for takeout, but if a major, then guarantees 4-cards in the suit, otherwise 4♣ is for take-out. Over 4-level pre-empts, the above is varied: - 4♥-X shows values and 4-card Spades. 4♠-4NT is for takeout and double shows values.
To Transfer Pre-empts: -	(a) By 2nd: - (b) By 4th: -	Double shows a 3-suited takeout, Pass then double is for penalties. Bid of pre-empt suit shows other 2 suits, whilst a bid of another suit shows that suit and the transfer suit. Pass then bid shows a single-suited hand. FILM-X as above.
To Weak Two Bids: -		Takeout doubles and Transfer Lebensohl.
To Multi 2♦: -	Dixon: -	With Transfer Lebensohl sequences over the doubles
To Double of 1NT: -	Mod. INTRO: -	Redouble shows weak and 4441 or 4333 distribution. Bid shows 5-card or longer suit, to play. Pass demands a redouble with either a strong hand or a weak hand with 4432 distribution (bids over the redouble).

System Summary

(d) Carding Methods

Leads: - Journalist throughout

Against Suit Contracts: - Journalist, 3rd & 5th, MUD

Against NT Contracts: - Roman, Attitude, Top of Nothing.

Signals: - Distribution: - High-Low shows an even number.
Low High shows an odd number.

Attitude: - Odd encourages,
Even Discourages.

Discards: - Roman: - Odd encourages in that suit,
Even discourages and is a McKinney Signal.

Bidding							
W	N	E	S				
1♦	X ¹	1♠ ²	No	2♠	No	2NT ³	No
3♣ ⁴	No	3♦ ⁵	No	4♠	No	No	No

- Showing Diamonds
- Natural, 8-10
- Lebensohl
- Forced relay
- Long-suit trial in ♦'s

Bidding							
S	W	N	E				
No	1♦	1♠	X ¹	No	2♥ ²	No	2NT ³
No	3♣	No	3♥ ⁴	No	No ⁵	No	

- 11-13 or 8-10 with Hearts
- 4-5 in red suits
- Lebensohl
- 8-10 with Hearts. A *fast* 3♥ shows 11-13 and Hearts.
- Enough opposite 8-10

Bidding			
W	N	E	S
1♦	2♦ ¹	3♣ ²	No
3NT ³	No	No	No

- Natural, showing Diamonds.
- Forcing. Could have doubled to show 11-13.
- 10-12 balanced. Might have bid 3♥ (natural) but as with 4-card Hearts partner is more likely to have doubled, this is the percentage bid

Bidding							
W	N	E	S				
1♦	1♠	2♥ ¹	2♠				
3♣ ²	No	3♦ ³	No				
3♥ ⁴	No	3♠ ⁵	No	4♣ ⁶	No	4♦ ⁷	No
4♥ ⁸	No	5♣ ⁹	No	5NT ¹⁰	No	6♣ ¹¹	No
7♣ ¹²	7♠	7NT ¹³					

- Alpha in Hearts
- Support and 4+ Controls
- Epsilon
- None or 1st & 2nd Round
- Epsilon.
- 3rd Round Control
- Beta
- 4 Controls
- Epsilon
- 2nd & 3rd Round
- Repeat Epsilon.
- Suit + Jack
- Can now Count 13 tricks as partner is known to have AK♦

Opening Bids

1.1 One Diamond

This opening will almost always show one of the following hand types: -

- Balanced or semi-balanced hands hand with a 5-card minor which are not suitable for an Opening 1NT (ie: 10-12 vulnerable and 13-15 not vulnerable)
- 11-15 points and any 4441 shape
- 11-15 point hands with a weak 6-card Club suit or a 5-card Club suit & a 4-card Diamond suit.
- 11-15 point hands with a 5-card or longer Diamond suit not suitable for another opening (ie: not with a 5-card major or 6-card Clubs, or 6-card with a 4-card major)

In response partner (unless a passed hand - see below) shows his point count unless 16+ and with a hand suitable to initiate Asking Bids immediately. The scheme is as follows: -

- 1♦ - No shows 0-7 points
- 1♦ - 1♥ shows 8-10 points, or occasionally 0-7 points with a long major and Diamond shortage
- 1♦ - 1♠ shows 11-13 points
- 1♦ - 1NT shows 14+ points
- 1♦ - 2x show 16+ and are Alpha in the suit bid

If Responder is a passed hand, then all bidding is natural, with 4-card majors being shown at the 1-level if possible. In natural 3-suited sequences Lebensohl is used at the 2-level with fast and slow 4th-suit-forces asking for stops and distribution respectively, immediate 3-level bids being signoffs or invitational depending on the sequence.

If there is interference immediately over the 1♦ bid then the point-showing sequences are as follows: -

- 1♦ - X - No shows 0-7 or 8-10 with no 4-card major or 5-card minor
XX shows 11-13 points, or 16+ with 5-card Clubs or Diamonds
1♥ shows 8-10, natural, may only be a 4-card suit
1♠ shows 8-10, natural, may only be a 4-card suit
1NT shows 14+, continuations as below
2♣ shows 8-10, natural, at least a 5-card suit
2♦ shows 8-10, natural, at least a 5-card suit
2♥/♠ show 16+ and are Alpha in the suit bid
- 1♦-1♥ - No shows 0-7 or 8-10 with no 4-card Spades or 5-card minor
X shows 11-13 points or 16+ with 5-card Clubs or Diamonds
1♠ shows 8-10, natural, may only be a 4-card suit
1NT shows 14+, continuations as below
2♣ shows 8-10, natural, at least a 5-card suit
2♦ shows 8-10, natural, at least a 5-card suit
2♥/♠ show 16+ and are Alpha in the suit bid
- 1♦ - 1♠ - No shows 0-7 or 8-10 with no 4 or 5-card Hearts or 5-card minor
X shows 11-13 or 8-10 with 4 or 5-card Hearts
1NT shows 14+, continuations as below
2♣ shows 8-10, natural, at least a 5-card suit
2♦ shows 8-10, natural, at least a 5-card suit
2♥/♠ show 16+ and are Alpha in the suit bid
- 1♦ -1NT - No shows 0-7 or 8-10 with no 5-card suit
X shows 11-13 or possibly 14+ at favourable vulnerability
2x shows 8-10 natural, with at least a 5-card suit

Opening Bids

- 2NT shows 14+ and asks for suits up the line (Usually a 2-suiter)
- 3x show 16+ and are Alpha in the suit bid
- 1♦ - 2x - No shows 0-7 or 8-10 with no interest in competing
- X shows 11-13 or 8-10 with an interest in competing (Negative)
- 2y is natural and competitive
- 3y is natural and forcing
- 2NT is Lebensohl, forcing 3♣ after which bids are competitive or invitational depending on whether or not they could have been bid at the 2-level. Fast and slow cue-bids and bids of 3NT carry exactly the same meaning as in normal Lebensohl sequences.

1.2 Continuations After 1♦ - 1♥

- 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ shows any 4441 hand. 1NT asks, and Opener shows the suit below the singleton. Responder now sets the suit or may make a Range Ask in the singleton suit with an exceptionally suitable hand. If Responder sets the suit, Opener may invite with a maximum, if space permits
- 1NT shows a bal or semi-balanced hand. Continuations are exactly as over an Opening 1NT except that 3-level suit bids are invitational with a good 6 or 7-card suit (KQTxxx minimum), but not much outside.
- 2♣ shows 6-card Clubs or 5-card Clubs and 4-card Diamonds. Continuations are natural, 2♥/♠ showing 5-card suits.
- 2♦ shows any hand with 5-card Diamonds and 4-card Clubs, a minimum hand with 5-5 in the Minors, a minimum hand with 5-card Diamonds and a 4-card major, or a minimum hand with a 6-card Diamond suit. Continuations are natural.
- 2♥ shows a maximum hand with 4-card Hearts and 5-card Diamonds.
 - 2♠ forces 2NT. If responder bids again, it shows 5-card ♠ & min.
 - 2NT asks: -
 - 3♣ shows singleton Spade
 - 3♦ shows 0454 or 0463 (ie void Spade)
 - 3♥ shows 3460 or 4450 (ie: void Club)
 - 3♠ shows singleton Club
 - 3NT shows 2452 shape
 - 3♣ is strictly to play, 6-card suit at least.
 - 3♦ is strictly to play.
 - 3♥ is an invitational raise. Opener continues with ♠ shortage.
 - 3♠ shows a maximum hand with a good 6-card Spade suit.
 - 3NT is natural and to play.
- 2♠ shows a maximum hand with 4-card Spades and 5-card Diamonds.
 - 2NT asks: -
 - 3♣ shows singleton Heart
 - 3♦ shows 4054 or 4063 (ie: void Heart)
 - 3♥ shows a singleton Club
 - 3♠ shows 4360 shape (ie: void Club)
 - 3NT shows 2452 shape
 - 3♣ is strictly to play, 6-card suit at least.
 - 3♦ is strictly to play.
 - 3♥ shows a 5-card or longer Heart suit, minimum range
 - 3♠ is an invitational raise, asking opener to continue if not 4252
 - 3NT is natural and to play.
- 2NT shows a max hand with 6-card Diamonds, semi-bal. Now Nat but
 - 3♣ shows a stop
 - 3♦ shows no Club stop. Opener can continue with good Clubs.
 - 3♥ natural. At least a 5-card suit.
 - 3♠ natural. At least a 5-card suit.

Opening Bids

- 3NT natural. Maximum, balanced.

1♦ - 1♥ - 3♣

shows 5-5 or 6-5 in the minors, maximum range. Continuations are natural.

3♦

shows 6-card or longer Diamonds, unbalanced and maximum range. If at all possible, this bid should only be made with a Club stop, handing without this bidding 2NT instead. Continuations are natural.

1.3 Continuations After 1♦ - 1♠

- 1♦ - 1♠ - 1NT shows a balanced or semi-balanced hand. Continuations are exactly as over an Opening 1NT bid, except that 3-level suit bids show a solid or semi-solid 6 or 7-card suit. Continuations are natural with new suit bids being cue bids and 3NT showing no particular interest.
- 2♣ shows a weak 6-card Club suit or 4-5 in the minors
 - 2♦ asks:-
 - 2♥/♠ show 3-card majors, minimum range.
 - 2NT shows 2245, minimum.
 - 3♣ shows 6-card Clubs, minimum range.
 - 3♦ shows 6-card Clubs, maximum range.
 - 3♥ shows 3-card Hearts, 1345 shape, maximum.
 - 3♠ shows 3-card Spades, 3145 shape, maximum.
 - 3NT shows 2245 shape, maximum.
 - 2♥/♠ show 5-card majors, minimum.
 - Other continuations are natural and non-forcing.
- 2♦ shows 5+-card Diamonds with no 4-card Major that is not semi-bal.
 - 2♥/♠ show minimum hands with a 5-card suit.
 - 2NT asks:-
 - 3♣ shows a minimum hand with 1354 or 3154 shape, or 5-5 in the minors, or 6-card Diamonds with a Club stop.
 - 3♦ asks again:-
 - 3♥/♠ show 3-card suits/stops with 6-card ♦
 - 3NT Maximum hand with no 3-card Major
 - 3♦ shows 6-card Diamonds with no Club stop. Now Natural
 - 3♥/♠ show 3-card majors with 1354, 3154, 1363 or 3163 shape, with maximum range.
 - 3NT shows a maximum hand with 2254 or 2263 shape.
 - 2♥ shows 4-card Hearts and 5 or 6-card Diamonds.
 - 2♠ shows a minimum hand with 5-card Spades.
 - 2NT asks:-
 - 3♣ Minimum hand with 1453/0454 shape.
 - 3♦ shows a minimum hand with 2470/2461 shape.
 - 3♥ shows a minimum hand with 3451/3460 shape.
 - 3♠ shows a maximum hand with 3451 shape.
 - 3NT shows 2452 shape, any range.
 - 4♣ shows a maximum hand with 1453/0463 shape.
 - 4♦ shows a maximum hand with 3460 shape.
 - 4♥ shows a maximum hand with 0454 shape
 - 3♣ shows a minimum hand with at least 5-card Clubs
 - 3♦ Minimum hand with at least 3-card Diamonds and no fit for Hearts
 - 3♥ shows at least 4-card Hearts, minimum.
 - 3NT shows a maximum hand, balanced with no Heart fit.

Opening Bids

- 1♦ - 1♠ - 2♠ shows 4-card Spades and 5 or 6-card Diamonds.
-2NT asks: -
 - 3♣ shows a minimum hand with 4153 or 4054 shape
 - 3♦ shows any range hand with 4360 shape.
 - 3♥ asks and now: -
 - 3♠ shows minimum
 - 3NT shows a maximum
 - 3♥ shows a minimum hand with 4153 shape
 - 3♠ shows a minimum hand with 4450 shape
 - 3NT shows any hand with 4252 shape
 - 4♣ shows a maximum hand with 4153 shape
 - 4♦ shows a maximum hand with 4450 shape
 - 4♥ shows a maximum hand with 4351 shape
 - 4♠ shows a maximum hand with 4054 shape
- All other continuations are natural, showing minimum hands.
- 1♦ - 1♠ - 2NT shows a maximum range hand with any 4441 shape
-3♣ asks: -
 - 3♦ shows a Heart singleton
 - 3♥ shows a Spade singleton
 - 3♠ shows a Club singleton
 - 3NT shows a Diamond singleton

Once the singleton suit has been shown, then an Eta Ask can be made **below** game level, thereby setting the suit, otherwise responder sets the suit at game level or can make a Beta Ask in the singleton suit. Bids of No Trumps and jumps in the singleton suit are strictly to play.

- 1♦ - 1♠ - 3♣ shows a minimum hand with exactly 4414 shape.}
- 1♦ - 1♠ - 3♦ shows a minimum hand with exactly 4144 shape.}
- 1♦ - 1♠ - 3♥ shows a minimum hand with exactly 1444 shape.}
- 1♦ - 1♠ - 3♠ shows a minimum hand with exactly 4441 shape.}

After any of the above, no Eta Asks are permitted. Responder sets the contract or may make a Beta Ask in the singleton suit with an especially suitable hand, but must set the contract after that.

1.4 Continuations after 1♦ - 1NT

- 1♦ - 1NT - 2♣ shows any hand (including 5332) with 5-card Clubs.
To all intents this is treated exactly like a positive 2♣ response to a 1♣ Opener, with one exception: -
 - 2♦ is a Range Ask, responses as follows: -
 - 2♥ shows a minimum hand
 - 2♠ shows a maximum with 0-2 Controls
 - 2NT shows a maximum with 3 controls
 - 3♣ shows a maximum with 4 Controls, etc etc
- New suit bids over the response to the Range Beta Ask are Theta.
- Over the 2♥ or 2♠ responses, if Responder hands over the Captaincy of the hand with 2NT, then Opener should bid along the following lines: -
 - 2♦ - 2♥/♠ - 2NT - 3♣ shows 6-card Clubs or 1345 or 3145
 - 3♦ is forcing enquiry and now
 - 3♥ = 1345 or 3316 etc
 - 3♠ = 3145 or 3136 etc
 - 3NT = 1246 shape etc
 - 3♦ shows 2245 shape
 - 3♥/♠ show 4-card majors with weak 6-card Clubs
 - 3NT shows any 2236 shape hand or any 5332 shape hand

Opening Bids

- All other bids are exactly as after 1♣ - 2♣. ie:- 2♥ and 2♠ are Alpha, 2NT is Alpha in Diamonds, 3♣ is Gamma, etc etc.
- 1♦ - 1NT - 2♦ shows any hand with 5-card or longer Diamonds (including 5332) and is treated like a 2♦ response to a 1♣ Opener (See comments above).
 - 2♥ is a Range Beta Ask on identical lines to those above.
 - 2♥ - 2♠ - 2NT
 - 3♣ shows 5-4 or 5-5 in the minors
 - 3♦ shows 6+ Diamonds
 - 3♥ shows 4-card Hearts
 - 3♠ shows 4-card Spades
 - 3NT shows 2353 or similar
 - All other bids are exactly as after 1♣ - 2♦, including over interference.
- 1♦ - 1NT - 2♥ shows any 4441 hand.
 - 2♠ asks for the singleton suit and Opener bids the suit below, 2NT showing a singleton Club. Now immediate bids in the singleton suit are a Range Beta Ask, as above (eg: 1 step shows minimum, 2 steps shows maximum with 0-2 controls etc etc). If responder goes this route he must set the contract after the Beta response. If, on the other hand, responder makes an immediate Eta in a 4-card suit (below game level), then Beta is always available in the singleton suit thereafter, and Epsilon Asks are available in side suits.
- 1♦ - 1NT - 2♠ shows any 4432 shape hand (ie: unsuitable for a 1NT Opener)
 - 2NT is Baron, asking for 4-card suits to be bid up-the-line.
 - 3x is Iota, a 3-step reponse agreeing the suit.
- 1♦ - 1NT - 2NT shows any 4333 shape hand (ie: unsuitable for a 1NT Opener)
 - 3♣ asks for the suit and Opener responds naturally, 3NT showing a Club suit.
 - 3x sets the suit and asks for controls on the lines of Zeta and subsequent new suit bids are Epsilon.

1.5 Continuations after an Immediate Alpha Ask

After 1♦ - 2♣/2♦/2♥-2♠, the full range of Asking Bids has been established. If no support is shown then a repeat ask in the same suit is Theta, whilst an immediate new suit bid is Iota. A responder's rebid of 2NT (if possible) hands over the captaincy, but this will be rare, as with a single-suited hand, the 1NT sequences will usually be used.

Opening Bids

2.1 One Heart and One Spade

These openings show 10-15 points and at least a 5-card suit.

The only exceptions to this are: -

- 5-card Major and 6-card minor with 8+ playing tricks (Opened 2♦)
- Exactly 5-5 in the Majors (Opened 2NT).

With a 5-card suit and no other features, Opener will have at least 11 HCP.

2.2 Basic Scheme of Responses

The basic outline of responses is as follows: -

2.2.1 Limit Raises

These are similar to Acol, but are more pre-emptive and based on good trump support and distribution rather than a genuine point count. Immediate jumps to game in a Major will always have at least 4-card trump support and a singleton. Immediate raises rarely contain more than 11 HCP.

2.2.2 One No Trump

Over 1♥ and 1♠, the 1NT bid is a Forcing No Trump (See below). This response can be made on a wide variety of hands from a good 2-level raise through to 15-point balanced hands without support for the Major, and even 16+ hands with trump support wanting to investigate for slam at a low level.

2.2.3 Change of Suit

A one-round force. 2-over-1 responses usually show at least a good 10 count and are forcing to the level of 2NT (See Lebensohl below, because 2NT is rarely natural). Delayed game raises deny a singleton or void but show a fair side suit in addition to at least good 3-card trump support.

2.2.4 Splinters

An immediate double jump-shift over the opening shows 9-12 points, at least good 4-card trump support and a side-suit void, **responder bidding the suit below the shortage**. With no interest beyond game, Opener can sign off in game in the agreed major, but may bid the void suit as Beta (0-2) or commence cue-bidding. Epsilon Asks are not permitted.

2.2.5 Mini-Splinters

1♥-2♠ and 1♠-2NT shows a mini-splinter in an undefined suit, typically about 8-9 points, good 4+-card trump support and a side-suit singleton or void. Opener can return to the 3-level in the agreed major if not interested but will rarely bid game directly. Instead 3♣ asks for the location of the singleton and Responder rebids as follows: -

1♥-2♠-2NT-3♣ shows a Diamond Singleton

1♥-2♠-2NT-3♦ shows a Spade Singleton

1♥-2♠-2NT-3♥ shows a Club Singleton

1♠-2NT-3♣-3♦ shows a Heart Singleton

1♠-2NT-3♣-3♥ shows a Club Singleton

1♠-2NT-3♣-3♠ shows a Diamond Singleton

2.2.6 3NT Response

This is rarely used as the requirements are very specific: It shows a balanced hand with either 4333 shape (3-card trump support) or 4432 shape with a doubleton in Opener's major. It **also** shows a severe shortage of controls, 2 at the most but more usually one, in a hand with 14-15 HCP. It is an obvious warning to declarer that 9 tricks in NT's may be easier than 10 tricks in a suit.

Opening Bids

2.2.7 Jump Shift

These are fit-showing, promising decent trump support and a source of tricks in a side-suit, but probably only 8-9 points. Over 1♥, 2NT is a fit-showing jump-shift in **Spades** (because 1♥-2♠ is the undefined mini-splinter).

2.2.8 Lebensohl

This gives this system enormous flexibility and range of nuance. This is particularly true in 3-suited auctions (with or without a reverse) where the third suit is bid at the 2-level. The range of responses is expanded as follows: -

- ☞ Simple preference to opener's suit at the 2-level is non-forcing.
- ☞ An immediate raise to the 3-level in Opener's suit is forcing and agrees the suit. If Opener has not reversed, the 'fast' 3-level preference is a Range Beta Ask. If Opener has reversed, it is Beta 0-2.
- ☞ A 'slow' (ie: via Lebensohl 2NT) preference to either of Opener's suits is non-forcing and to play, but if the suit could have been bid at the 2-level then it is invitational.

eg: - 1♥-2♣-2♦-3♥ is Range Beta.
 1♥-2♦-2♠-3♥ is Beta 0-2
 1♥-1NT-2♦-2NT-3♣-3♥ is invitational
 1♥-2♣-2♠-2NT-3♣-3♥ is simple preference.

- ☞ In general 'fast' bids at the 3-level are forcing and constructive, whereas 'slow' bids are non-forcing:

eg: - 1♠-2♦-2♥-3♦ is forcing whereas
 1♠-2♦-2♥-2NT-3♣-3♦ is non-forcing, showing a minimum single-suiter with no fit for either of Opener's 2 suits.

- ☞ **4th Suit Forces:-** If 'fast' these ask specifically for clarification of Opener's distribution and do not necessarily show any desire to play in 3NT. If 'slow' then the force shows interest in a stop in the 4th suit for the purposes of playing safely in 3NT.

eg: - 1♠-2♣-2♦-2♥-3♣ shows 5143 shape or similar,
 and now a bid of 3♥ (singleton suit) is Beta 0-2, whereas
 1♥-1NT-2♣-2NT-3♣-3♦ is asking for a Diamond stop and now 3♥/3♠ deny one.

- ☞ For the use of Lebensohl after a 2-level suit agreement, see Trial Bidding below.

Bidding

N	E	S	W
1♠	No	1NT ¹	No
3♦ ²	No	3♥ ³	No
4♥ ⁴	No	5♣ ⁵	No
6♣ ⁶	No	6♥ ⁷	No
7♦ ⁸	No	7♠ ⁷	

N/S Vul
 Dealer S

♠ KQxxx
 ♥ -
 ♦ AJxxx
 ♣ Axx

xx
 ♥ Jxxx
 ♦ xxx
 ♣ Jxxx

♠ AJTx
 ♥ AT9xx
 ♦ KQx
 ♣ x

♠ xx
 ♥ KQxx
 ♦ xx
 ♣ KQTxx

1. Forcing No Trump 2. 5-5 and Maximum

3. Gamma in Spades (Upgrading his hand to 16+ because of the double fit) 4. 5-card, 2 Top Honours

5. Epsilon in Clubs 6. 1st Round Control (No 2nd/3rd). 7. Epsilon in Hearts: A slight risk if North has a void club and Kxx in Hearts as the Response would go beyond 6NT which is all the combined hands could make, but it's difficult to imagine opponents ignoring a 12-card Club fit. 8. 1st Round Control. 9. Can now see 13 tricks, as North must be a void in Hearts and have Axx in Clubs.

Opening Bids

2.3 Forcing No Trump

This is the cornerstone of the 1♥ and 1♠ sequences and is used for almost all 'good' raises in Opener's trump suit. It can also be used with balanced hands with more than 8 points without sufficient support for partner's major.

The forcing relay is generally used with one of the following hand types: -

- Balanced hands of 8-11 points not containing primary trump support.
- Balanced hands of 12-15 points with no good support.
- Balanced supporting hands in the 8-12 points range with a ruffing value.
- Good supporting hands in the 12-15 point range with a side-suit singleton.
- Good supporting hands in the 12-15 point range with a side-suit void.
- Any 16+ balanced hand with or without primary trump support.
- Any 16+ hand with trump support.
- Any 16+ hand with a tolerance for Opener's major, but perhaps with a strong side suit of its own, where the hand is not considered suitable for an immediate Alpha.

Opener's rebids over the forcing relay are as follows: -

- Show a second 4-card or longer suit. A reverse shows extra values. With a near maximum and 5-5, opener can jump-rebid his second suit. It is very rare for opener to conceal a second suit, even if he holds a good 6-card major and a weak 4-card minor. The only common exception is a lower-range hand with 4-5 in the Minors where Opener normally rebids a 3-card Minor or rebids their Hearts in preference to reversing into Spades.
- Rebid a 6-card suit or a solid 5-card suit where no other bid is suitable. A jump rebid in the same suit shows a maximum hand, unbalanced, containing about 7 playing tricks.
- Over 1M-1NT Opener rebids his lowest 3-card minor with any 5332 shape
- Rebid 2NT with a set-up 6-card suit (eg: KQJxxx, AKJTxx, AKQxxx) and an otherwise balanced hand (eg: 6322 or 7222). This rebid guarantees 2 of the top 3 honours and the Jack, or all 3 Top Honours and is most commonly a solid suit, and usually a maximum hand as it shows some strength outside. Responder's rebids are largely natural. He can pass, give preference to Opener's major, bid 3NT or game in the major, or jump in the suit below a void, depending on which of the hand-types listed above he holds.

Opening Bids

2.4 Forcing No Trump with 16+ Hands

In standard Precision, relays in a new suit after a Forcing No Trump and response generally show a weak hand and a long suit. As this occurs infrequently and by no means guarantees that the contract will be played in the right strain anyway, it has been discarded and these bids given over to low-level slam exploration. There are two types of sequence depending on whether or not Opener has definitely shown a second suit.

2.4.1 Cheapest Relay

A relay in the cheapest new suit (but see comments on 1♥-1♠-1NT above) is always Gamma in Opener's first major, regardless of whether a second suit has been shown or not. A relay over the response asks opener to bid the suit below any shortage held and a bid of the short suit is then Beta 0-2. If responder does not make the second relay but bids another suit then this is Epsilon, unless 4♣/4♦ in which case it is Beta. If responder does make the second relay, then Opener responds as follows: -

(1) If he has shown a second suit, then he simply bids his fragment to show a shortage in the 4th suit, or bids his major, his 2nd suit or NT's (whichever is the cheaper and/or most appropriate) to deny a shortage. A relay by responder over the denial is Beta and any other bid is either natural and to play, or Epsilon.

(2) If Opener has denied holding a second suit, then he rebids his major or bids NT's to deny a shortage, or bids the suit below the shortage.

(3) If Opener has rebid a minor in a sequence where it may or may not be a second suit (eg: 1♠-1NT-2♣-2♦-2♠-2NT), then over the second relay he bids as follows: - With 5332 shape he rebids NT's at the cheapest level. If he has a second suit and a shortage then he bids his fragment to show the shortage in the 4th suit, as above. If he has a second suit but no shortage, then he returns to his major or second suit, whichever is the cheaper.

2.4.2 No Second Suit

If Opener has definitely denied a second suit, then a relay in the 2nd-cheapest new suit is Beta and does not necessarily agree Opener's major (ie: unconditional Beta).

After the Beta response, Responder may (and usually does) make a Theta in any suit other than Opener's major, a response showing Qxx or better agreeing the suit (and now Epsilons are permitted elsewhere).

If insufficient support is shown to agree the suit, then responder must set the final contract unless making an obviously invitational bid. If responder does not make a Theta, then he is setting the final contract in NT's or Opener's Major.

2.4.3 2nd Cheap Relay

If Opener has definitely shown a second suit, then a relay in the second-cheapest new suit is Gamma or Eta in the **second** suit. Continuations over the Gamma/Eta response are as in 2.4.1 above (ie: a 2nd relay asks for any shortage held to facilitate a Beta Ask in the short suit).

Opening Bids

2.5 Weak Single-Suiters

Hands which are essentially weak and single-suited can be treated in a variety of ways:

- Bid and rebid the suit (via Lebensohl if available), which is always a limited sequence.
- Use the forcing relay hoping partner might find a 3-card rebid in your minor (but you must be prepared to pass his rebid or give preference).
- In practice, with no tolerance for partner's suit and a weak single-suited hand, the most common action is to pass, since LHO will usually protect in some fashion, and you will now be able to show your single-suiter (if you want to) without partner getting the wrong idea. If however, opponents overcall at the 2-level above your suit, then if you decide you want to introduce your suit then it must be via 2NT Lebensohl, otherwise you imply at least a tolerance for partner's major.

2.6 Interference

2.6.1 Overcalls

Over simple or jump overcalls upto 3♥ doubles are negative and strong hands will almost always proceed via a double or cue-bid of their suit. Lebensohl 2NT is always available if space permits:

In general 'fast' new suits show that suit **and** partner's major whereas 'slow' new suits imply no fit for partner's suit.

'Fast' raises imply an ability to compete further, whereas 'slow' raises are weaker and showing less suitable hands.

Slow and fast bids of 3NT show the values to play there with or without holding a stop in their suit (a fast 3NT denies a stop).

A fast cue-bid of their suit is strong, agrees partner's major and is Gamma, a relay over the response being Beta. A slow cue-bid shows game values but is a DAB, denying primary trump support and promising some kind of holding in their suit (at least a half-stop, eg: Qx or Jxx).

2.6.2 Doubles

Redouble shows a good hand interested in a penalty, but promises a Top Honour is partner's suit (usually singleton or doubleton). Direct raises are still pre-emptive. See MOTOR below.

E/W Vul
Dealer E

♠ Kx
♥ KQ9x
♦ Qxx
♣ KJxx

♠ xx
♥ AJTxx
♦ Kxx
♣ Axx

♠ AQTxx
♥ x
♦ Axxx
♣ Qxx

♠ J9xx
♥ xxx
♦ Jxx
♣ xxx

Bidding

E	S	W	N
No	1♠	X	XX ¹
No ²	No ³	2♥ ⁴	No
No ⁵	X	No	No
No			

1. A classic redouble with Kx in partner's suit and anticipating rich pickings!!!
 2. "He can get himself out of this mess"
 3. More than happy to play in game at the 1-level.
 4. In desperation
 5. Helpless.
- At the table this went for 1100!

Opening Bids

2.7 MOTOR

MOTOR is a scheme of responses after our Opening of One of a Major is Doubled for takeout. The core part of these responses is that the bids from 1NT through to the suit below Opener's Major are all **transfers**. Mini-splinters, Full Splinters and fit-showing Jump-Shifts are unaffected by the Double. The basic scheme for MOTOR is as follows: -

2.7.1 Transfer to a New Suit and then Support Opener's Major

Transferring to a new suit and then Supporting Opener's Major at any level shows a limit raise in the Major with a **Lead-Directing Feature** in the transfer suit. This can be either a shortage or a 4-card or longer suit with 1st or 2nd round control.

2.7.2 Transfer to a New Suit and then Pass

Shows a weak hand with at least a 6-card holding in the transfer suit and no tolerance for Opener's Major.

2.7.3 Bid 1NT then bid a new suit at the 2-level or rebid Clubs at 3-level

1NT is effectively Rubensohl here, and this is invitational in the suit bid but with no good fit for Opener's Major.

2.7.4 Transfer to a New Suit and then bid a second suit

Other than as in 2.7.3 above, transferring to a new suit and then bidding a second suit or rebidding the transfer suit are all showing game-forcing hands with a strong single-suiter or 2-suiter

2.7.5 Transfer to Opener's Major

If Responder transfers to Opener's Major and then passes, this shows a solid raise to the 2-level, but without any lead-directing feature. Transferring to the Major shows a better hand than a pre-emptive direct-suit raise. A jump to 4 of Opener's Major after transferring to it at the 2-level is mildly slam-invitational (but probably a solid balanced raise, because no splinter and no jump in a side-suit).

2.7.6 Transfer to Opener's Major and then bidding a new suit

Transferring to Opener's Major and then bidding a new suit shows a game-forcing raise in the Major with a decent side-suit, equivalent to a delayed game raise. A Jump in a new suit is slam-invitational in the Major with a good side-suit.

2.7.7 Examples

- 1♥ - (X) - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥ Shows a 2-level limit raise with some kind of lead-directing feature in Diamonds
- 1♥ - (X) - 2♦ - 2♥ - 3♣ Shows a delayed game raise in Hearts with a good side-suit in Clubs
- 1♥ - (X) - 2♦ - 2♥ - 4♣ is slam-invitational in Hearts with a good side-suit in Clubs
- 1♥ - (X) - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ Is invitational in Diamonds (single-suited)
- 1♥ - (X) - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♣ Is a game-forcing Minor 2-suiter
- 1♥ - (X) - 1NT - 2♣ - 3♦ Is a game-forcing Minor 2-suiter with longer Diamonds
- 1♥ - (X) - 1NT - 2♣ - 3♥ Is a 3-level limit raise in Hearts with a Diamond feature
- 1♥ - (X) - 2♥ Is a poor raise in Hearts - pre-emptive only
- 1♥ - (X) - 2♦ - 2♥ - No is a decent 2-level raise in Hearts with no feature to show in the Minors
- 1♥ - (X) - 1♠ is 100% natural showing 4+ Spades, a 1-round force
- 1♥ - (X) - 3♣ is a fit-showing jump-shift
- 1♥ - (X) - 2♠ Is an unspecified Mini=splinter
- 1♥ - (X) - 2NT Is a fit-showing jump-shift in Spades

Opening Bids

2.8 Trial Bids

Where a Major suit has been agreed at the 2-level by natural means (ie: Asking bids not established), then both long-suit and short-suit trial bids are available. A relay over the major is Romex asking to make a short-suit trial-bid somewhere. Bids which do not use the Romex relay are long-suit trial bids in that suit (2NT being a long-suit trial in Spades if Hearts agreed). Thus: -

- ... - 2♥ - 2♠ is Romex, asking to make a short-suit trial bid. Now 2NT asks and then
 - 3♣ is a short-suit trial bid in Diamonds
 - 3♦ is a short-suit trial bid in Spades
 - 3♥ is a short suit trial bid in **Clubs**
- 2NT is a long-suit trial bid in Spades
- 3♣ is a long-suit trial bid in Clubs
- 3♦ is a short-suit trial bid in Diamonds
- 3♥ is a pre-emptive raise.
- ... - 2♠ - 2NT is Romex, asking to make a short-suit Trial Bid. 3!C Asks and now
 - 3♦ is a short-suit trial bid in Hearts
 - 3♥ is a short-suit trial bid in Clubs
 - 3♠ is a short-suit trial bid in Diamonds
- 3♣ is a long-suit trial bid in Clubs
- 3♦ is a long-suit trial bid in Diamonds
- 3♥ is a long-suit trial bid in Hearts
- 3♠ is a pre-emptive raise.

None Vul
Dealer N

♠ Kxxx
♥ Jx
♦ KJxx
♣ xxx

♠ Kxx
♥ K9xx
♦ xx
♣ KQJx

♠ AQTxx
♥ QTxx
♦ AQx
♣ x

♠ x
♥ Axx
♦ Txxx
♣ Axxxx

Bidding			
N	E	S	W
No	No	1♠	No
2♠ ¹	No	2NT ²	No
3♣ ³	No	3♥ ⁴	No
4♠ ⁵	No	No	No

1. Could equally have gone via 1NT
2. Requests to make a short-suit trial bid
3. Because it makes a difference, allows the short-suit trial bid.
4. Short-suit trial bid in
5. Can see that all his points are working well, so bids the game.

Clubs

E/W Vul
Dealer E

♠ Kx
♥ KQJxx
♦ x
♣ KQxxx

♠ Jxxx
♥ x
♦ AQJxxx
♣ Ax

♠ AQTxx
♥ ATxx
♦ xx
♣ Jx

♠ xx
♥ xxx
♦ Kxxx
♣ xxxx

Bidding			
E	S	W	N
No	1♠	2♦	X ¹
3♦	3♥ ²	No	4♥ ³

1. Negative. A classic Sputnik double showing the unbid suits.
2. Although minimum, he must show the very good support he has for partner's hearts.
3. With a singleton Diamond and Kx in Spades, he can hardly be better.

Opening Bids

2.9 Other Features

2.8.1 More on Relays In section 2.4 above it will be seen that responder can sometimes embark on a relay sequence unsure as to whether Opener has a second suit or not. However, in such a sequence as 1♠-1NT-2♣-2♦-3♦-3♥, where 2♦ is Gamma and 3♥ is the second relay, it is evident that responder has got a second suit here (6-card suit shown in response to Gamma, thus 2♣ was not a 3-card suit with 5332 shape) and the responses to the second relay can be adjusted accordingly: - So in the sequence above 3♠ would now show a Diamond shortage and 3NT would show a Heart shortage. In either case 4♣ is now Epsilon and 4♦ or 4♥ is Beta depending on where the shortage is. To illustrate this principle, the hand below is from actual game play and gave us a vulnerable slam swing which helped win us a Swiss Teams event.

♠ Jxx
♥ Kxx
♦ QT9xx
♣ Qxx

♠ AQxxxx
♥ J
♦ Axxx
♣ J9

♠ Qxx
♥ xxxx
♦ xx
♣ Kxxx

♠ KT
♥ AQTxx
♦ Kx
♣ ATx

Bidding			
W	N	E	S
1♠	No	1NT	No
2♦	No	2♥ ¹	No
3♥ ²	No	3♠ ³	No
4♣ ⁴	No	4♥ ⁵	No
5♣ ⁶	No	5♦ ⁷	No
6♦ ⁸	No	6♠ ⁹	No
No	No		

1. Gamma in Spades
2. 6-card, 2 Top Honours
3. Where is your shortage?
4. In Hearts (3NT would have = Clubs)
5. Beta
6. 4 Controls
7. What are your Diamonds?
8. Ace without the Queen
9. Enough without Q♦

2.8.2 Intervention over Relays

If there is intervention over the Forcing No Trump and Opener's rebid (eg: - 1♥-1♠-2♣-2♠) now 2NT is Lebensohl, Double is the cheap relay and 3♦ is the expensive relay. Thus the pass is always *natural*, and double is always the cheap relay (ie: Gamma in Opener's Major). The cheapest new suit bid is always the more expensive relay and 2NT is Lebensohl if available. With A penalty double of their suit responder passes, and Opener is virtually forced to re-open with a double.

If there is intervention over the Gamma response, then Pass is asking for the shortage (and now double or redouble by Opener shows the suit above the intervention) and double by responder is an immediate Beta.

If there is intervention over the response to the second relay, then Pass is now Beta, and double/redouble is Epsilon in the suit intervened (**not** the suit below), unless the intervention is in Opener's first or second suits or in NT's, in which case it is Epsilon in the suit below.

Opening Bids

3.1 Two Clubs

This Opening shows one of the following hand-types: -

- Hands with a reasonable 6-card Club suit (QJTxxx minimum) and no other 4-card suit except possibly 4-card Diamonds, unless 4-3 in the majors with a Diamond void.
- Hands with a 5-card Club suit and a 4-card major.
- Hands with a 6-card Club suit, a Diamond void and 4-3 in the majors

The initial responses to the Opening are as follows: -

- 2♣ - 2♦ is a forcing relay (see below), used by most good responding hands except those worth an immediate 16+ Alpha Ask.
- 2♣ - 2♥ shows a limited hand with 5-card Hearts. Over 2♣-2♥-2♠, 2NT Lebensohl is now available, so 'fast' 3-level bids are invitational and 'slow' ones are weak.
- 2♣ - 2♠ shows a limited hand with 5-card Spades. Over 2♣-2♠ continuations are largely natural.
- 2♣ - 2NT shows 11-12 balanced, usually with no 4-card major, and also usually with 4-card Diamonds. Continuations are largely natural, 3♣ showing a 6-card suit in an unbalanced weak hand.
- 2♣ - 3♣ is a natural and constructive, but non-forcing raise. With a maximum, Opener can show stops towards 3NT
- 2♣ - 3♦/3♥/3♠ are all Alpha in the suit bid, showing 16+ and denying a Club fit.

3.2 2♣ - 2♦ Sequences

The 2♦ Relay shows 12-15 points in principle, but can be stronger and forces a further description from Opener: -

- 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥ shows 4-card Hearts. If Opener has 3415 shape, then he is **maximum** (a minimum hand would bid 3♥ immediately to show this shape).
- 2♠ shows 4-card Spades. If Opener has 4315 shape then he is **minimum** (a maximum hand would bid 3♠ immediately to show this shape).
- 2NT shows 6-card Clubs with 2 side suit stops.
- 3♣ shows 6-card or longer Clubs with only one side suit stop
- 3♦ shows exactly 4405 shape (4♦ is Beta).
- 3♥ shows 3415 shape, **minimum** range (4♦ is Beta)
- 3♠ shows 4315 shape, **maximum** range (4♦ is Beta)
- 3NT shows 6-card Clubs, 2326 shape or similar, and a maximum, with all the side-suits stopped. In this instance, the Club suit is sometimes not 'best ever', because of the outside strength.
- 4♣ Shows 0346 3046, 0337 or similar, with a 3-card major and a void in the other major, 4♦ response asks for the 3-card major.
- 4♦ shows 5-6 in the minors (at least). 4♥ is Beta.

♠ Axx
♥ QJx
♦ x
♣ AQJxxx

♠ Qx
♥
AKxxxx
♦ Kx
♣ Kxxx

2♣
2NT²
3NT⁴

2♦¹
3♣³
4♦⁵

Bidding

	W	E
		4NT ⁶
	6♥ ⁷	

1. Forcing Relay
2. 6-card Clubs, 2 stops outside
3. Which stops?
4. Both Majors stopped
5. Beta
4. 4 Controls
7. Since Partner's 4 Controls must be Ace of Clubs and Ace of Spades (no diamond stop and he cannot have 2 Kings as East has 3) he bids the safe slam to protect K♦.

Opening Bids

If Opener shows one of the less extreme hand-types (ie: responds to the 2♦ relay with a bid not beyond 3♣), then the responses are as follows: -

- 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ shows 12-13 points and a 6-card suit
 - 2NT shows 12-13 balanced with no fit for Hearts
 - 3♣ shows 12-13 points, no Heart fit and a weakness in a sharp suit
 - 3♦ is a further forcing relay, after which
 - 3♥ shows 1435 shape, any range (3♠ is now Beta)
 - 3♠ shows 3415 shape, **maximum** range (because a minimum hand would have bid 3♥ over 2♦)
 - 3NT shows 2425 shape, any range (now 4♦ is Beta)
 - 4♣ shows 3406 shape (ie: can't open 3♣ with Diamond void). 4♦ is now Beta.
 - 4♦ shows 0445 shape, any range (4♠ is Beta)
- 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♠ - 2NT shows 12-13 balanced. Similar to above.
 - 3♣ shows 12-13, no Spade fit and a weakness in a red suit
 - 3♦ is a further forcing relay, after which
 - 3♥ shows 4315 shape, **minimum** range (because a minimum hand would have bid 3♠ over 2♦). 4♦ is now Beta.
 - 3♠ shows 4135 shape, any range. (4♥ is Beta)
 - 3NT shows 2425 shape, any range (now 4♦ is Beta)
 - 4♣ shows 4306 shape (ie: can't open 3♣ with Diamond void). 4♦ is now Beta.
 - 4♦ shows 4045 shape, any range (4♠ is Beta)
- 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT - 3♣ is to play, probably a weak hand with both majors
 - 3♦ is a further relay, after which
 - 3♥ shows Diamond and Spade stop, but no Heart stop.
 - 3♠ shows red suits stopped, but no Spade stop
 - 3NT shows major suit stops, but no Diamond stop
- 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♣ - 3♦ is a further relay, after which
 - 3♥ shows a Heart stop.
 - 3♠ shows a Spade stop.
 - 3NT shows a Diamond stop.
 - 3♥ shows 12-13 points and a 6-card suit
 - 3♠ shows 12-13 points and a 6-card suit

3.3 Intervention over 2♣ Sequences

If there is intervention over the Opening 2♣ bid, then doubles are negative up to the level of 3♠. Bids at the 2-level are competitive and fast bids at the 3-level (except 3♣) are forcing. 2NT is Lebensohl, allowing responder to compete in Clubs, or invite in any other suit. Slow and fast cue bids and slow and fast bids of 3NT are similar in character to those over 1NT - 2x. Over the sequence 2♣ - 2♦ (Int) - X, Opener should respond exactly as if partner had bid the 2♦ relay. 2♣ - 2x - 3♣ is invitational.

If LHO makes a take-out double over the 2♣ bid, then redouble is takes the place of the 2♦ relay and other bids are natural. Opener rebids, so far as is possible, exactly as if there had been no interference and partner had bid 2♦.

If there is intervention over the 2♦ relay, then opener bids normally if possible, but otherwise can make a negative double or pass if he can;t bid normally. 2NT Lebensohl is available with the normal nuances, slow and fast cue bids showing interest in unbid majors with or without stops in the opponents' suit. Slow and fast bids of 3NT show or deny stops, but in the latter case, responder must have a good Club fit.

In general any good hand should go via a negative double, the fast 3-level suit bids being reserved for strong single-suited hands.

Opening Bids

4.1 One No Trump

This shows 10-12 points non-vulnerable and 13-15 points vulnerable and is freely opened with any 4432, 4333, 2353 or 2335 hand (ie: with a 5-card minor). Hands of the right shape but 'wrong' point range are opened 1♦ and rebid appropriately, as in the 1♦ Section above. The scheme of responses below is used (with minor alterations when partner is known to be weak) for **any** 1NT Opening, Rebid or Overcall, except for an overcall in 4th position when bidding is entirely natural, with a cue-bid acting as Stayman.

4.2 Basic Scheme of Responses

This comprises, Stayman, Marx-Sharples transfers, game-forcing asking bids at the 3-level (not if partner is known to be weak, as in 1♦-1♥-1NT, 1♣-1♦-1NT, or 1♣-1♦-1♥-1♠-1NT):-

- 1NT - 2♣ is non-forcing Stayman
- 1NT - 2♦ is either a transfer to Hearts or the start of an invitational Baron sequence
- 1NT - 2♥ is a transfer to Spades
- 1NT - 2♠ is a transfer to Clubs
- 1NT - 2NT is a transfer to Diamonds
- 1NT - 3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠ are all 16+ and Alpha in the suit bid
- 1NT - 3NT is natural and to play
- 1NT - 4♣ is Beta 0-2 unless over 1♣ Opener in which case it's 0-4
- 1NT - 4♦ is a transfer to Hearts, pre-emptive or no interest beyond game.
- 1NT - 4♥ is a transfer to Spades, pre-emptive or no interest beyond game.
- 1NT - 4NT is natural and quantitative (very rare).

4.3 Special Sequences

4.3.1 Stayman Sequences

- 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥/2♠ are weak and to play, showing 5-4 or 6-4 in the majors. It may occasionally be used on very weak 4-4 or even 4-3 hands as an escape.
- 1NT - 2♣ - 2x - 2NT is natural, but partner should only proceed with a maximum. If Opener has shown 4-card Hearts, then it denies having 4-card Spades.
- 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT - 3♣ shows game values, but concern about suits, usually Diamonds, but occasionally a major. Stops are bid upwards
- 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT - 3♦ shows values for game but concern about Clubs
- 1NT - 2♣ - 2x - 3♣ shows values for game but concern about one of the other 3 suits, normally a major, but possibly Diamonds.
- 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♦ shows values for game but concern about Clubs
These last two sequences have a different meaning when partner is known not to have game values, and in that case merely show a hand with a 4-card major and a 5-card or longer minor (usually at least 6-card). If partner has shown no major or the wrong one, responder mere converts to 3 of his minor, to play.
- 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♥/3♠ are invitational with 5-4 in the majors.
- 1NT - 2♣ - 2♥ - 2♠ shows 4-card Spades and denies 4-card Hearts, forcing to 2NT. Opener can bid 3NT with a maximum or start bidding upwards at the 3-level if he is concerned about a gap, bypassing any suit where a gap exists.
- 1NT - 2♣ - 2♥ - 3♥ is forcing, but suggests that whilst game values are present, responder either has poor trumps or is completely flat and gives opener the option of playing in 3NT instead. If Opener bids 3NT and responder now bids 4♣/♦ this is a mild slam try.

Opening Bids

1NT - 2♣ - 2♥ - 3♠

is Eta in **Hearts**. A relay over the response is Beta 0-2 unless the 1NT shows 16+. Hearts now agreed and asking bids established.

1NT - 2♣ - 2♠ - 3♥

is Eta in **Spades**. Continuations as immediately above.

1NT - 2♣ - 2♠ - 3♠

is similar in character to the 2♥-3♥ sequence above.

1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 4♣

is Minor-suit Stayman, Opener can bid 4♦ to agree Diamonds or cue bid a major to agree Clubs. With no interest in Slam, Opener can simply bid game in either minor.

4.3.2 Transfer Sequences

1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠

1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ cancels out the transfer to Hearts and is a genuine raise to 2NT. Opener should bid 3NT with better than minimum.

1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ - 2NT

shows a minimum hand, now 3♣/3♦/3♥ are forcing Baron showing 4-card suits upwards.

1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ - 2NT

- 3♠ asks if opener has a 5-card minor. Opener bids 3NT to deny or bids the minor. This is a mild slam try and if Opener shows a minor, then any bidding is constructive towards a slam. Thus responder cannot use the Baron sequence if exactly 4333 and must go via Stayman instead.

1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ - 2NT

- 3NT is invitational to 6NT if Opener's cards are 'good' despite being a minimum. If Opener is interested he can start a Baron sequence at the 4-level or jump to 5 of a 5-card minor.

1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 3x

is forcing, showing a second suit

1NT - 2♦ - 2♥ - 4♣

is Beta, setting Hearts as trumps

1NT - 2♦ - 2♠

shows a maximum with exactly 4432 shape (doubleton Club which can be bid as Beta).

1NT - 2♦ - 2NT

shows a maximum with exactly 3442 shape (doubleton Club which can be bid as Beta)

1NT - 2♦ - 3♣

shows a maximum, 4-card Hearts & a doubleton Diamond.

1NT - 2♦ - 3♦

shows a maximum with exactly 2434 shape (doubleton Spade and 4-card Clubs)

1NT - 2♦ - 3♥

shows a maximum with exactly 2443 shape (doubleton Spade and 4-card Diamonds)

If, after any break in the transfer, responder converts to Hearts at the minimum level, this is to play. Any bid of Opener's doubleton suit is Beta, agreeing Hearts. A bid in another 4-card suit shown by Opener shows that Responder was going to make a Baron-type invitation. It does not agree Hearts but is forcing and tends to agree Opener's other 4-card suit. eg: 1NT - 2♦ - 2♠ - 3♠ agrees Spades, is forcing and a mild slam try. Now 4♣ is Beta and anything else is a cue-bid.

1NT - 2♥ - 2♠

sequences follow similar lines to the 2♦-2♥ sequences.

1NT - 2♥ - 2NT

Sequences after breaks of the transfer are as follows: -

1NT - 2♥ - 3♣

shows maximum, doubleton Diamond and 4324 shape

1NT - 2♥ - 3♦

shows maximum, doubleton Diamond and 4423 shape

1NT - 2♥ - 3♥

shows maximum, doubleton Heart and 4243 or 4234.

1NT - 2♥ - 3♠

shows maximum, doubleton Club and 4342 shape.

1NT - 2♥ - 3♠

shows maximum, doubleton Club, and 4432 shape.

Continuations after breaks in the transfer are identical in character to those shown in breaks of the transfer after 1NT-2♦.

Opening Bids

1NT - 2♠ - 3♣	merely completes the transfer and denies Qxx or better in Clubs.
1NT - 2♠ - 2NT	shows Qxx or better in Clubs, irrespective of range. Any bid by responder other than 3♣ is now game-forcing.
1NT - 2♠ - 2NT/3♣ - 4♣	sets the suit and asks for cue bids.
1NT - 2♠ - 2NT/3♣ - 4♦	is Beta
1NT - 2NT - 3♦	merely completes the transfer and denies Qxx or better in Diamonds.
1NT - 2♠ - 3♣	shows Qxx or better in Diamonds, irrespective of range. Any bid by responder other than 3♦ is now game-forcing.
1NT - 2♠ - 3♣/3♦ - 4♦	sets the suit and asks for cue bids.
1NT - 2♠ - 3♣/3♦ - 4♣	is Beta

4.3.3 Other Responses

1NT - 3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠

are all 16+ and Alpha in the suit bid. Asking bids are now firmly established. If, however, responder cannot have the values to invite or force slam (ie: he is known to be 0-10), then 3-level major responses show a good 6-card suit with at least 2 of the Top Honours but little outside and are invitational, based on distribution rather than solid values (which would be shown via a transfer).

In that situation, 3-level minor responses to 1NT show a 6-card suit with exactly one Top Honour and some values outside and invites partner to 3NT with a good fit (ie: at least KQx). The values outside are likely to be in Controls rather than Queens and Jacks.

1NT - 4♣	is Beta, but responder must set the contract or make an obviously invitational bid at the 5-level over the response.
1NT - 4♠	shows the minor 2-suiter. Continuations are as follows: -
- 4NT	shows slam interest in Clubs. Responder converts to 5♣/6♣ or may cue-bid at the 5-level if interested in a Grand Slam
- 5♣/5♦	show no interest in slam and show Opener's better minor. Responder may bid on but usually passes.
- 5♥/5♠	are cue bids in support of Diamonds (ie: with a view to 7♦).
	- 5NT asks responder to bid 6 of his better minor with only 3 top honours in his two suits combined, but to bid 7 of the better suit with 4 Top Honours in the 2 suits. It guarantees both Major suit Aces and will usually show one Top Honour in each minor. For example: -

♠ Axxx
♥ Ax
♦ Kxxx
♣ Qxx

♠ -
♥ xx
♦ AQTxxx
♣ AKxxx

Bidding

W	E
1NT	4♠
5NT	7♦

Whilst it is admitted that you would want to be in 7♦ even missing the Diamond Queen in the East hand, we can see no sensible way round this. If you swap the length of the suits round (give East ♦AQTxx ♣AKxxxx), then 7 of either minor is not a good proposition without the Diamond queen.

Opening Bids

4.4 Intervention - Transfer Lebensohl

After any sequence where Opener rebids 1NT and the opponents intervene at the 2-level, the scheme of responses is as follows: -

- 2-level bids are merely competitive.
 - Double is optional, showing values/length in the opponents' suit and values for a raise to 2NT.
 - 3-level bids are all transfers, and therefore either invitational or forcing. Opener completes the transfer if he would not accept the invitation.
 - 2NT forces 3♣ as usual, allowing responder to compete in Clubs or any other suit.
 - 'Fast' Cue bids (ie: transferring into 'their' suit) show no stop in the opponents' suit, but interest in any unbid major(s). 'Slow' cue-bids via 2NT-3♣ show a stop.
 - A Jump to 3NT shows no stop in their suit, but the values for a raise to 3NT. The slow route shows a stop.
 - A Transfer followed by a cue-bid of the opponents' suit shows a running 6-card suit and a half-stop in their suit, and asks Opener to bid 3NT with at least a half stop.
- It is worth noting that the above scheme of bids is also used over takeout doubles at the 1 or 2-level.

4.5 After 1NT - X:- Intro

If the opponents double a 1NT Opening or Rebid for penalties (ie: by 2nd-in-hand), then continuations are as follows: -

- Immediate 2-level bids show a 5-card or longer suit, to play.
- Immediate 3-level bids are invitational with **at least** a 6-card suit with at least one marked shortage and with no desire to risk 1NTX.
- Redouble shows a weak hand with 4333 or 4441 distribution. Opener bids his lowest 4-card suit and responder passes unless his singleton suit has been hit, in which case he relays in the next suit up and Opener can then determine where the best resting spot lies. If the Redoubler **raises** the suit Partner bids, then this shows an invitational 3-suiter.
- Pass instructs Opener to redouble and by this Responder shows either a hand strong enough to expect to make 1NT or a weak hand with 4432 distribution, or an invitational 2-suited hand: -
 - ☞ With the strong hand, Responder passes over the redouble.
 - ☞ With the weak 4432 hand, he bids his lowest 4-card suit over the redouble. And 4-card suits are bid upwards until a tolerable fit is found
 - ☞ With the invitational hand, Responder transfers into their lower-ranking suit (2NT being the transfer to Clubs). Opener completes the transfer with no game interest or bids the cheapest suit in which they would **not** accept an invitation to game. For example, if Responder bids 2NT (showing Clubs) then 3♠ from Opener shows a preference for Spades amongst the black suits, but no game interest in either, but game interest if Responder has either red suit.

Opening Bids

4.6 After 2-Suited Intervention

- If Opponents make an overcall which shows a 2-suited hand, with either one or both suits specified, then immediate cue-bids at the 2-level are as follows: - The lower cue-bid shows a competitive hand with the 'other' 2 suits, whilst the higher cue-bid shows at least an invitational hand with the 'other' two. eg: -

1NT - 2♣ (better minor with both majors) - 2♥ is the competitive hand and 2♠ the invitational or better hand. Transfer Lebensohl is available as usual, and slow and fast cue bids at the 3-level usually show which of their two suits responder can stop. If Responder can stop both and has interest in an unbid major, then he makes the lower cue bid.

- If the opponents make an overcall which shows 2 suits, but specifies only one, then if a cue-bid is available at the 2-level, it shows support for the other 3-suits. If their overcall shows 2 specific suits and only one cue-bid is available at the 2-level, then it shows a competitive hand with the other 2 suits.

☛ ***For a fuller explanation of this defence, see the section on Bergin at 12.8 below.***

Opening Bids

5.1 One Club

This Opening is used with almost every hand containing 16 or more points, and some with 11-15 but extreme distribution/playing values. The normal exceptions are as follows: -

- 16-23 strength and any 4441 shape (Opened 2♦)
- 30+ balanced (Opened 3♦ with 30-31 balanced or 3♠ with 32-33 balanced)

The initial responses to the Opening are as follows: -

- 1♣ - 1♦ shows any hand with 0-7 points (not 4-7 with a 6-card major), but note that a 7-point hand containing 3 controls (ie: An Ace and a King) is shown as a positive unless 4333 shape. This response is also given with 8-10 points and any 4441 distribution (See *Impossible Negative*, below).
- 1♣ - 1♥ shows 8+ points and 5-card Hearts (Game Force).
- 1♣ - 1♠ shows 8+ points **balanced** (Game Force).
- 1♣ - 1NT shows 8+ points and 5-card **Spades** (Game Force).
- 1♣ - 2♣ shows 8+ points and 5-card Clubs (Game Force).
- 1♣ - 2♦ shows 8+ points and 5-card Diamonds (Game Force).
- 1♣ - 2♥ shows 4-7 points and a 6-card Heart suit, non-forcing.
- 1♣ - 2♠ shows 4-7 points and a 6-card Spade suit, non-forcing.
- 1♣ - 2NT shows 8-9 points balanced and not more than 1 control, non-forcing.
- 1♣ - 3♣/♦/♥/♠ all show 11+ points and 4441 distribution, bidding the suit below the singleton. (Game Force).

5.2 Impossible Negative

Hands with 8-10 points and 4441 distribution initially respond 2♦ and then take action inconsistent with the 1♦ Negative. This takes the form of either jumping in the suit below the singleton (If their singleton is in the suit above partner's suit, then he jumps in the suit below partner's suit) or, if his singleton is in partner's suit, he jumps in NT's.

Thus: -

- 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♠ - 2NT shows 8-10, with a Spade singleton
- 1♣ - 1♦ - 2♣ - 3♠ shows 8-10 with a singleton Diamond
- 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♠ - 3♦ shows 8-10 with a singleton Heart
- 1♣ - 1♦ - 1♠ - 3♠ is not an impossible negative, but an invitational raise in Spades with 5-7 points.

If Opener bids 1♥ over the 1♦ Negative (See Heart complex below) then, with an impossible negative, responder assumes that partner has Hearts and jumps in the suit below or in NT's as normal. If, however, Opener rebids 1NT or 2NT, then Responder does not make an impossible negative, but proceeds via Stayman or Baron, since the Captaincy of the hand has been passed to him, eg: -

- 1♣-1♦-1NT-2♣-2♦-3NT implies 8-10 with 4441 distribution and a singleton minor, since jumps to the 3-level in a suit and invitational, single-suited, usually with a minor)

♠ QJxx
♥ x
♦ QTxx
♣ Axxx

♠ Kx
♥ AQJTx
♦ Kxxx
♣ KQ

Bidding		
W		E
No		1♣
1♦ ¹		1♥ ²
2NT ³		3NT ⁴

1. Initial Negative with 8-10 point 4441
2. Essentially natural but forces 1♠
3. Impossible Negative showing singleton heart and 8-10 4441
4. Opts for the obvious contract given his heart intermediates and stops elsewhere.

Opening Bids

5.3 Strong Balanced Hands - Cambridge Heart Complex

The system for showing strong balanced hands is as follows: -

1♣ - 1♦ - 1NT	shows 16-18 Balanced.
1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ - 1NT	shows 19-21 Balanced.
1♣ - 1♦ - 2NT	shows 22-23 Balanced.
1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ - 2NT	shows 24-25 Balanced.
1♣ - 1♦ - 3NT	shows 26-27 Balanced.
1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ - 3NT	shows 28-29 Balanced.
3♦ - 3/4x - 3/4NT	shows 30-31 Balanced
3♠ - 3NT - 4NT	shows 32-33 Balanced

If Opener rebids 1♥ over 1♣-1♦, this (with one exception - see below) forces Responder to relay with 1♠ and then Opener describes his hand, which will either be: -

- Strong Balanced (As above)
- Natural with a 5+-card Heart suit. eg:-

1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♣	shows a Club/Heart 2-suiter, minimum range
1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ - 3♦	shows a Heart/Diamond 2-suiter, with extra values.

After the sequence 1♣-1♦-1♥ Responder can refuse the relay in only 3 situations:-

- 5-7 points, exactly 5-card Hearts and a side-suit singleton
- 0-4 points and a 6-card or longer minor suit
- Impossible Negative

Responder bids as follows in these situations: -

1♣ - 1♦ - 1♥ - 1NT	shows 5-card Hearts with a minor suit singleton
-2♣	asks where the singleton is and
- 2♦	shows a Club singleton
- 2♥	shows a Diamond singleton
- 2♣	shows 0-4 and long Clubs
- 2♦	shows 0-4 and long Diamonds
- 2♥	shows 5-7, 5-card Hearts and a Spade singleton
- 2♠	is an impossible negative, showing 4441 exactly, 8-10 points and a Club singleton

The scheme of responses where Opener rebids 1NT, either directly or via the 1♥ relay, are exactly as for the Opening 1NT sequences, except that the 3-level suit responses are not Alpha or an impossible negative, but invitational with a 6-card or longer suit, most commonly a minor, since a major would normally give a semi-positive response of 2♥ or 2♠ to the opening 1♣ bid.

Where Opener rebids 2NT, 3NT or 4NT to show a strong balanced hand, then the scheme of responses is as follows:-

2/3/4NT - 3/4/5♣	is Baron. All raises to 3NT must go via Baron. Where the rebid is 3NT, invitations in NT's must go via Baron (eg: ...-3NT-4♣-4♥-5NT is invitational to 6NT, but ... - 3NT - 5NT is forcing to 6NT and invites 7NT).
- 3/4/5♦	is a transfer to Hearts
- 3/4/5♥	is a transfer to Spades
- 3/4/5♠	is a transfer to Clubs
- 3/4/5NT	is a transfer to Diamonds
- 4/5/6♣	is Beta (0-4 over 2NT except where this shows 24+ and Beta 0-7 whenever 24+ balanced has been shown
-	No other responses are permitted.

Opening Bids

5.4 Continuations over a Semi-Positive Response

5.4.1 Over Heart semi-positive

- 1♣ - 2♥ - 2NT is Gamma in Hearts. A relay over the response is Beta and any other new suit is Epsilon.
- 3♥ shows at Qxx and asks responder to bid the suit below any singleton held (NT's or ♥'s denies), following which a bid of the singleton suit is Beta and new suit bids are Epsilon.
- All other continuations are natural except that immediate Jump-shifts are Delta

5.4.2 Over Spade semi-positive

- 1♣ - 2♠ - 2NT is Gamma in Spades. Continuations as above.
- 3♠ asks for a singleton. Continuations as above
- Other continuations as above.

5.4.3 Over NT semi-positive

- 1♣ - 2NT - 3♣ is Baron, asking for 4-card suits upwards.
- 1♣ - 2NT - 3♦ is a transfer to Hearts
- 1♣ - 2NT - 3♥ is a transfer to Spades
- 1♣ - 2NT - 3♠ is a transfer to Clubs
- 1♣ - 2NT - 3NT is a transfer to Diamonds (thus any raise to 3NT must go via a Baron 3♣ sequence).
- 1♣ - 2NT - 4♣/4♦/4♥/4♠ are Zeta, setting the suit and asking for controls.

The normal rules for breaking transfers apply

5.5 Natural Bidding Sequences after 1♣ Opening

Natural bidding sequences after 1♣-1♦ do not, in general, make use of any asking bids, the only exception being that 4♣/4♦ Beta is always available and if Responder agrees Opener's suit at the 3-level (eg: 1♣-1♦-1♠-3♠) and shows a maximum for his negative in the process, then 4♣/♦ is still Beta and other side suit bids are Epsilon in that suit. When the suit agreed is a Major, then a rebid of 3NT by Opener asks opener to show the suit below any singleton or void held, and the short suit, if shown, is now available for a Beta ask.

Lebensohl is available in 3-suited auctions, or when a suit has been agreed at the 2-level, giving additional range for 4th-suit-forces and long/short suit trial bids. Sequences are exactly as described in the One of a Major Openings Section above. Splinter bids are also available to show a maximum negative, good trump support (Qxxx minimum) and a side-suit void.

♠ Kxxxx	♠ AJTxx		Bidding
♥ KJxx	♥ AQxx	W	E
♦ -	♦ Qxx	No	1♣
♣ xxxx	♣ A	1♦	1♠ ¹
1. Natural, 5-card suit		4♣ ²	4♦ ³
2. Maximum, excellent trumps & ♦ shortage.		4NT ⁴	5♣ ⁵
3. Beta in the short suit		5♦ ⁶	5♥ ⁷
4. 2 controls	5. Epsilon in Clubs	6♣ ⁸	6♦ ⁹
6. No control	7. Epsilon in Hearts	6NT ¹⁰	7♠ ¹¹
8. 2nd Round Control			
9. Epsilon in Diamonds	10. Void (see 7.9 below)		
11. Can essentially write down partner's hand and knows that only a favourable trump break is required.			

Opening Bids

5.6 Intervention over Natural bidding sequences

5.6.1 Over 1♣ Responder passes with 0-3, doubles with 4-7 or with a minimum positive response with no good bid available. Positive responses are bid as normal, except that an immediate jump-shift shows any range of positive 4441.

5.6.2 After 1♣-1♦ Opener should pass with any minimum 1♣ Opener as any bid shows extra values. A Double by Opener is for takeout, but by responder in 4th position is negative, showing values but no good bid and implying interest in any unbid majors.

5.6.3 Lebensohl Lebensohl sequences are available as described above after intervention over natural sequences (ie: fast and slow cue-bids): Immediate bids at the same level are merely competitive, whereas fast bids at the next level by Opener are forcing and slow bids at the next level are invitational. Fast cue bids of opponents' suit ask for distributional information, whereas slow cue-bids ask for stops for the purpose of NT's.

By Responder, fast bids at the 3-level are invitational whereas slow bids are weaker and to play. Fast cue-bids shows a good 4-card raise in Opener's suit (if one has been shown) whilst a slow cue-bid shows a good 3-card raise.

Direct raises of Opener's suit by Responder are pre-emptive, whereas immediate raises of Responder's suit by Opener agree the suit and ask for any shortage to be shown by bidding the suit below.

5.7 Positive Responses

Responder should always describe his hand as accurately as possible. A 5-card suit should always be shown, no matter how weak. If Responder has two 5-card suits he should generally show the cheaper even if the more expensive one is a stronger suit. With 6-5 distribution, Responder should normally show the 6-card suit first, the exception being that it is normally right to show a strong 5-card major before a weaker 6-card minor.

Once a Positive response has been given, the sequence becomes game-forcing and Asking Bids are firmly established. These only lapse when Opener hands over the Captaincy of the hand or makes a natural return to No Trumps or an agreed trump suit at game level or above. All such sign-offs are to play unless obviously invitational in nature.

If at any point Opener makes a Jump Shift during the course of an Asking Bid sequence, this is always 'to play'. If Opener makes a third bid in a suit where he has already made two Epsilon asks, then this is always to play unless Responder has shown a singleton or void and exact controls are not known, in which case it is Beta.

Asking Bids

6.1 Asking Bids - General

6.1.1 Order of Asking Bid Sequences

The rules which govern which Asking Bid is which are clearly defined and there can never be any doubt as to it: -

Alpha	is always the first Asking Bid in any sequence if it is used at all. Normally used with 2-suited hands, in practice.
Beta	is available at a low level or 4♣/4♦, or in known (ie: declared) short suits, but at no other times except as defined in special sequences.
Gamma	is a trump-asking bid in Responder's suit only if no other suit has yet been agreed as trumps. Some other bids are defined as Gamma (ie: not actually in Responder's suit but referring to it
Delta	is an immediate Jump-Shift over 1♣-1♦ and is not used otherwise.
Zeta	is a Jump-Shift after a positive response to 1♣, setting the suit unconditionally and asking for controls along the lines of Beta.
Eta	is a trump asking bid when 4441-shape hands have been shown.
Theta	Trump asking bid generally used after a low-level Beta Ask.
Iota	is used after a negative Response to Alpha or Theta, or instead of Theta when a balanced hand has been shown.
Epsilon	is only used in new suits once a suit has been firmly agreed as trumps. Note, however, that 4♣/4♦ Beta takes precedence over 4♣/4♦ Epsilon, and that 4♣/4♦ Iota takes precedence over either Beta or Epsilon, on the basis that suit agreement is the most important issue to be decided.
Sigma	is used after a positive Response to Alpha, to check on trump solidity.

6.1.2 Which Sequence to Choose

This is a matter of judgement and experience, and there are usually a number of possible routes which can be taken: - Alpha is usually used to best advantage with 2-suited hands, but is sometimes used for single-suiters when Opener can judge that a negative response will allow a cheap Gamma in Responder's suit (eg: 1♣-1♥-2♣-2♦-2♥) whereas otherwise it is often better to make a low-level Beta and then a Theta ask in Opener's suit rather than an immediate Alpha.

Gamma always agrees Responder's suit unless followed immediately by a minimum bid in NT's which hands over the Captaincy of the hand. It's worth noting, however, that Opener can always make a Gamma and agree Responder's suit, holding all the time a completely solid suit of his own, or one in which he can ascertain Responder's holding via an Epsilon, and then Jump-Shift into a final contract in that suit at a later stage. It is always clear to responder what is happening. If a suit has been agreed by other means, then any bid in Responder's suit is Epsilon rather than Gamma.

In general, experience has shown that the cheapest possible sequence is usually the best one. Sometimes, however, it is necessary to anticipate the likely response and perhaps choose what seems like a more expensive sequence in order to conserve space at a later stage. If the anticipated response would take the bidding too high, then generally the Ask should not be made.

Asking Bids

The responses to all the asking bids have been considerably widened from the original scheme of Asking Bids and some new Asking Bids introduced to give added flexibility and to conserve bidding space in some situations where the cheaper responses to an asking bid have already been ruled out by responses to a previous ask, perhaps one relating to a different suit.

Asking Bids

6.1.3 Suit Agreement

Alpha	A 3-step response agrees the suit.
Beta	Asks solely about controls and does not relate to any trump suit.
Gamma	Any response agrees the suit unless Opener immediately hands over the Captaincy of the hand by bidding NT's at the minimum level, or makes an obviously invitational or natural bid in another suit at a later stage.
Delta	A 4-step response agrees the suit.
Zeta	sets the suit unconditionally.
Eta	sets the suit unconditionally.
Theta	A 4-step response agrees the suit, but if a Theta is made in the same suit after an Alpha Ask, then a response showing Qxx/xxx agrees the suit.
Iota	(Contracted Theta). If Iota is a repeat Theta or Delta in the same suit (ie: asking for clarification), then this sets the suit. If Iota is a contracted Theta when a balanced hand has been shown, or in a new suit after an insufficient Alpha response, then a 3-step response agrees the suit.
Epsilon	is usually used only <i>after</i> trumps have been agreed, but see above.
Sigma	is used after a positive Response to Alpha, so Trumps are agreed.

Once a suit has been agreed as above, then any bid in any other suit is Epsilon or Beta

E/W Vul
Dealer E

♠ KQ	♠ xxx
♥ Qxx	♥ xx
♦ xxx	♦ Jxx
♣ AQJT9	♣ xxxxx
♠ xx	♠ AJTxxx
♥ xxx	♥ AKJTx
♦ KQxxxx	♦ A
♣ Kx	♣ x

Bidding			
E	S	W	N
No	1♣ ¹	No	2♣ ¹
No	2♠ ²	No	2NT ³
No	3♥ ⁴	No	4♣ ⁵
No	4♦ ⁶	X ⁷	4♠ ⁸
No	5♦ ⁹	X ¹⁰	XX ¹¹
No	5♠ ¹²	No	6♥ ¹³
No	6♠ ¹⁴	No	7♦ ¹⁵
X ¹⁶	7NT ¹⁷	X	No
No	XX ¹⁸		

1. Positive, 8+ with 5-card+ Clubs
2. Alpha in Spades
3. No Support, Less than 4 Controls
4. Iota in Hearts
5. Qxx (or KQ)
6. Beta (Clubs have been bid naturally so 4♦ becomes Beta)
7. A double to make up for not pre-empting over 1♣, no doubt.
8. 3 Controls
9. Epsilon in Diamonds (likely to be a very cheap ask as partner is unlikely to have an Honour in diamonds, and therefore cheaper than 5♣ Epsilon).
10. Obviously didn't learn from the explanation of North's 4♠ bid.
11. No Control

Asking Bids

12. Epsilon in Spades

13. 2nd and 3rd Round Control

14. Clarify, please

15. Both (ie: KQ exactly)

16. "Didn't you hear me last time?" 17. Knows partner must have A♣ for his 3 controls and can therefore count 13 tricks, since both majors are solid.

18. Can still count up to 13.

After all this, East led his 4th highest club (!!!), which gave us 17 tricks off the top. ...and this was in a Manchester League 1st Division match!

Asking Bids

7.1 Alpha

This asking bid occurs in the following situations: -

- A new suit bid after a positive response to 1♣, but not a relay in the next suit over a response of 1NT, 2♣ or 2♦, which is Beta.
- An immediate jump-shift after an opening bid of 1♥, 1♠ or 2♣.
- A 2-level suit response to an Opening bid of 1♦, or a jump-shift response when opponents have interfered over an Opening of 1♦.
- A rebid of 2NT when responder has made a positive response of 1NT, 2♣ or 2♦ to a 1♣ Opening. This is Alpha in the relay suit (which would be Beta, as above). eg:- 1♣-1NT-2NT is Alpha in Clubs.
- A 3-level jump-shift over an Opening bid of 1NT or a rebid of 1NT. But note that in the sequences 1♦-1♥-1NT, 1♦-1♠-1NT (where this shows 10-12), 1♣-1♦-1NT and 1♣-1♦-1♥-1♠-1NT, where responder has already limited his strength, 3-level jumps are not Alpha, but merely invitational with a good 6-card suit and little outside.

The responses to Alpha are as follows: -

1 step	0-3 controls and no good support (less than Qxx or xxxx)
2 steps	4+ controls and no good support
3 steps	0-3 controls and support (at least Qxx or xxxx)
4 steps	4+ controls and support
5 steps	4 controls and good support (at least Qxxx)
6 steps	5 controls and good support
7 steps	6 controls and good support
8 steps	7+ controls and good support

No other responses are permitted.

Notes:-

- A 1 or 2 step response does not agree the suit, but any other response does.
- The response to Alpha always affects the range for a subsequent Beta ask. After a 1 or 3 step response, the Weak range of Beta is used, while after a 2 or 4 step response, the range is Strong, and after an 8 step response it is Super. After a 5, 6 or 7 step response, no further Beta is required.
- If Opener gets a negative response to Alpha he can make a repeat ask in the same suit, which is Theta (unless responder has already shown a balanced hand, in which case it is Iota) and in this case a response showing Qx or xxx agrees the suit. If Opener makes a repeat ask and gets an insufficient response, then all asking bids lapse with the exception of Gamma in Responder's suit, and 4♣/4♦ Beta.. If Opener makes a Gamma bid, thereby agreeing the suit, then Asking Bids are re-established and Epsilon asks are also permitted. In such situations it is often better to hand over the captaincy after the first Alpha and allow responder to show his hand naturally (eg: to show a second suit, extra length in his first suit, or Qx or xxx in Opener's suit).
- If Opener gets a negative response to Alpha and makes a new suit bid (not Gamma), then this is Iota (ie: a contracted Theta) and must be at least a 5-card suit, since a 3 step response (showing Qxx or KO) agrees the suit. If Opener has a second suit of 4-card length, he usually hands over the captaincy which allows the suit to be agreed by natural means, thereby re-establishing asking bids.
- See Sigma below for bids to check on trump solidity after a positive response to Alpha.

Asking Bids

7.2 Beta

Beta is almost always available in one form or another in any sequence, not just after a 1♣ Opening Bid. The main situations where a bid is Beta are as follows: -

- In natural auctions where a suit other than Clubs has been agreed as trumps, or when Clubs have not been mentioned as a possible trump suit, 4♣ is Beta.
- In natural auctions when Clubs have been agreed or where trumps have not yet been agreed and Clubs have been mentioned as a suit, 4♦ is Beta.
- In asking bid sequences 4♣ and 4♦ can be Beta (as above) as long as responder's exact number of controls is not yet known (ie: no low-level control-asking bid used or a range response to a low-level Beta, Alpha or Zeta). In a sequence where 4♣ would be Beta but space does not permit it (ie: 4♣ was the previous response) 4♦ can be Beta as long as Diamonds have not been agreed. Similarly, where 4♦ would be Beta, but 4♦ was the last response, then 4♥ is Beta.
- After 1♣ and a positive response, a low-level Beta is always available.
- ☞ After a response of 1♥ or 1♠, 1NT is Beta.
- ☞ Over 1NT, 2♣ is Beta.
- ☞ Over 2♣, 2♦ is Beta.
- ☞ Over 2♦, 2♥ is Beta.
- ☞ If the response to this is a range, then 4♣/4♦ is still Beta.
- Where any 4441 shape hand has been described by bidding the suit below the singleton, then a bid in the singleton suit is Beta. Note, however, that sometimes the first bid in the singleton suit is only a Range ask rather than Beta, and at other times the bid is a Range Beta ask (see below). This is where responder's declared HCP has not made the sequence game-forcing.
- In general, where **any** shortage has been shown by bidding the suit below the void or singleton (including splinter, fragment or short-suit Trial bids), or even shown merely by inference (eg: Opener shows 2 suits, responder gives preference, and then Opener makes a long-suit trial bid in a third suit, thereby effectively showing a shortage in the 4th suit), then a bid of the short suit is Beta.
- Some sequences contain specific provisions for Beta Asks or for Range/Beta Asks which do not fall into any of the above categories.

Notes:-

It cannot be stressed enough that suit agreement is more important than controls, and that general controls (ie: Beta) takes precedence over specific controls (ie: Epsilon).

Thus 4♣/4♦ Theta/Iota takes precedence over 4♣/4♦ Beta, which in turn take precedence over 4♣/4♦ Epsilon.

There are 5 Ranges, depending on Responder's known strength: -

- **Normal** Where responder's strength is not known or known to be intermediate (ie: 11-15). *Steps are 0-2, 3, 4, 5, etc (Ace = 2 Controls, King = 1 Control).*
- **Weak** Where responder is known to be weak (0-10 HCP) or to have less than 4 controls. *Steps are 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 etc.*
- **Range** In specific sequences where responder is 11-15 and range is important. *Steps are Min, Max & 0-2 controls, Max and 3 controls, Max & 4 Controls etc etc.*
- **Strong** Where responder is known to be 16+ or to have at least 4 controls. *Steps are 0-4, 5, 6, 7 etc*
- **Super** Where responder is known to be 24+ or to have at least 7 controls. *Steps are 0-7, 8, 9, 10 etc etc.*

Where Beta is used twice (To all intents this is when the response to the first Beta was 0-2, then the second ask is always using the Weak Range.

Asking Bids

7.3 Gamma

This is a trump asking bid in responder's suit. This will usually be of at least 5-card length, but there are occasions when it will only be 4-card (eg: - 1♠-1NT-2♥-3♦. The Heart suit will be only 4-card as with a 5-5, the hand would be opened 2NT).

A bid is Gamma only in the following situations: -

- After 1♣ and a positive suit response, the first bid in responder's suit is Gamma so long as no other suit has already been agreed as trumps.
- In any sequence where asking bids have been established but no suit yet agreed as trumps, then the first bid of responder's suit below game level is Gamma, unless slam values have definitely been established, in which case Gamma is permitted below slam level.
- In a Forcing No Trump sequence, the cheapest relay over Opener's rebid is Gamma in the Opening major. If Opener has definitely shown a second suit, then the 2nd-cheapest relay is Gamma in the second suit.
- There are some other specific sequences (mentioned elsewhere) where a bid is Gamma, but they most fall within the ambit of the 4th category above.

There are two ranges of Gamma, depending on whether Opener's exact length is known or not (eg: 1♠-1NT-3♣-3♥ is Gamma in Clubs, and Opener is known to have exactly 5-card Clubs, as with 6-card Clubs he would have opened 2♠. Thus: -

- **Length Known** Steps are: -
 1. No Top Honour
 2. One Top Honour
 3. One Top Honour and the Jack
 4. Two Top Honours
 5. Two Top Honours and the Jack
 6. Three Top Honours
- **Length not known** Steps are:
 1. No Top Honour (any length)
 2. One Top Honour (min length)
 3. 2 or 3 Top Honours (min length)
 4. One Top Honour (Min length + 1)
 5. Two Top Honours (Min length + 1)
 6. Three Top Honours (Min length + 1)
 7. One Top Honour (Min length + 2)
 - ... etc etc (Open ended responses)

Repeat Gamma

Unless responder shows 3 Top Honours or no Top Honour when his length is known, a repeat Gamma is permitted below game level (or even at game level if slam values have been established - Responder has to judge) to clarify responder's holding:

- **If no Top Honour shown,** Steps are: - Minimum length, Min + 1, Min + 2, etc
- **If One Top Honour shown,** Steps are: - Q or KJ, K or AJ, A or QJ
(If one Top Honour and jack shown, then responder simply shows which honour.)
- **If two Top Honours shown,** Steps are: - KQ or AKJ AQ or KQJ AK or AQJ
(Again, if the jack has already been promised then responder simply shows which combination of Top Honours he holds)

Asking Bids

7.4 Delta

Delta is always a strong bid showing at least 24+ points and occurs in only one situation, which is a jump-shift over a negative response to 1♣. It allows opener to establish asking bids even after a negative response to 1♣. It should be borne in mind that responses can be hideously expensive and should be used on sub-minimum hands only very sparingly: -

The step responses to Delta are: -

1. - or x
2. Q or xx
3. Qx or xxx
4. KQ or Qxx
5. Xxxx
6. KQx or Qxxx
7. KQxx
8. xxxxx or xxxxxx
9. Qxxxx or Qxxxxx
10. KQxxx or KQxxxx

- A 4-step response agrees the suit.
- If a lesser response is given, then an immediate new suit bid is Iota.
- An immediate repeat in the same suit below game level asks for clarification, and the shorter of two alternatives is always shown as 1 step and the longer as 2 steps.
- A second ask in the same suit always agrees the suit as trumps, whatever responder's initial response (ie: even if it was 1, 2 or 3 steps).
- If after the response to Delta, Opener bids No Trumps below Game level (In practice this is only possible in the sequence 1♣-1♦-2♥-2♠-2NT), then this is forcing but handing over the captaincy.
- If, more normally, the No Trump rebid is at Game level or above, then whatever the response to Delta, this shows that responder's holding is insufficient. The NT rebid is not forcing and with 0-3 points responder will normally pass. Given that Opener has shown 24+, however, with 4-7 points and a reasonable 5-card or 6-card suit, responder should bid on as if Opener has simply handed over the captaincy of the hand

N/S Vul
Dealer W

<p>♠ AKJx ♥ x ♦ AKJTxx ♣ AK</p>	<p>♠ xxx ♥ ATx ♦ 98xxx ♣ xx</p>	<p>♠ Qx ♥ xxxxxx ♦ Q ♣ xxxx</p>
---	---	---

Bidding

W	N	E	S
1♣	X ¹	XX ²	No
2♦ ³	No	2♠ ⁴	No
3♦ ⁵	No	3♥ ⁶	No
3♠ ⁷	No	4♣ ⁸	X ⁹
XX ¹⁰	No	4♠ ¹¹	No
6♦ ¹²	No	No	No

1. 2 suits of same Colour
2. This shows 4-7 points. The double was to prove hideously expensive: -
3. Delta in Diamonds, saving a whole round of bidding from normal sequences

4. Q or xx
5. Repeat Delta in Diamonds
6. Stiff Q. Diamonds now set as trumps.
7. Epsilon in spades
8. 3rd Round Control
9. Decides his partner must have the blacks!
10. Able to make a second Ask in Spades
11. Both (ie: exactly Qx)
12. Knows that only a 6-0 trump split can defeat this

This is a classic case of cheap interference being a positive assistance. Without the two doubles there is no way that West would have had the space to elicit the information that partner has exactly the 2 cards which make 6♦ possible.

Asking Bids

7.5 Eta

This is a trump asking bid, used only to enquire about the suit quality of one of Responder's 4-card suits when exactly a 4441 shape hand has been shown, or in some sequences where other 4-card suits have been shown. Only one Eta ask is ever permitted and it always sets the trump suit unconditionally.

Eta asks are only allowed in the following situations: -

- After 1♣-3♣/♦/♥/♠ or after an impossible negative. Opener will always make an Eta bid before any Beta in the singleton suit, otherwise he is likely to be making the Eta at game level and responder may view it as a sign-off.
- After 1♦-1♠-2NT, an Eta ask is permitted if space permits below game level
- After 1♦-1♠-3♣/♦/♥/♠, **No Eta asks are permitted.**
- After 1♦-1♥-1♠ an Eta ask is only permitted if Responder makes a Range Ask, Opener shows maximum range, and an Eta can be accommodated below Game level.
- After 2♦-2♥-2NT **No Eta asks are permitted.**
- After the sequence 2♦-2♥-3♣/♦/♥/♠ an Eta ask is only permitted if it can be accommodated below game level (ie: in a minor)
- After 2♦-2♠ and 2♦-2NT, Responder is always able to set the suit with an Eta Ask if Opener shows a 4441 hand.
- There are some other sequences where 4-card suits have been shown (eg: 2♥/2♠ Reverse Roman) where some bids are specifically designated as Eta Asks.

Responses to Eta are as follows: -

1. Jxxx or worse
2. Qxxx
3. QJxx
4. KQxx
5. KQJx
6. AKQx

No repeat asks are permitted to ascertain which honours are held.

- If an Eta ask is made, then a subsequent bid in the singleton suit is always Beta.
- Once an Eta ask has been made to set the suit, then any new suit bid is always Epsilon, but no repeat Epsilons are permitted if a 4441 shape hand has been shown (because they will never be necessary, since partner's exact shape is known).

Both Vul
Dealer S

♠ xxxx
♥ KQxx
♦ x
♣ KTxx

♠ KJx
♥ xx
♦ JTxx
♣ xxx

♠ Qxxx
♥ AJxx
♦ AKQ
♣ QJ

♠ Ax
♥ xxx
♦ xxxx
♣ Axxx

Bidding

S	W	N	E
1♣	No	1♦ ¹	No
1♥ ²	No	3♣ ³	No
3♠ ⁴	No	3NT ⁵	No
No ⁶	No		

1. Negative, with 8-10 and 4441
2. Intending to rebid 1NT over 1♠
3. Impossible negative, diamond singleton
4. Eta in Spades, an inspired bid by Jason, realising the horrible diamond duplication and the possibility of a shortfall of honours in the Majors.
5. No top honour. 6. Deciding this is

definitely the best spot with 3 probable losers in Spades

This was played in a Manchester Bridge Club Pairs event, and we were the only N/S pair to find 3NT, the rest of the room mostly going off in 4♥ or 4♠, unable to resist the 4-4 major fit, the bidding normally going 1♥-1♠-3♠-4♠, 1♥-3♥-4♥, 1♥-4♦-4♥, and some even 1♥-3♥-4NT-5♣-5♥. (In practice we romped home with 10 tricks after opponents kept attacking diamonds, for a clear top <grin>).

Asking Bids

7.6 Zeta

Zeta is a bid which unconditionally sets the trump suit (guaranteed solid) and asks for controls in the same way as Beta (always in the 0-2 Range, however). It occurs in only 3 situations:-

- A jump shift following a positive response to 1♣ (eg: 1♣-1♥-3♦)
- A jump-shift following 1♣-2NT.
- A bid of 3♦/3♥/3♠ after the sequence 1♦-1NT-2NT

☞ Because Zeta sets the trump suit unconditionally, any subsequent new suit bids are Epsilon unless a 1-step response to Zeta is given, in which case 4♣/4♦ Beta is still available if required.

☞ Returns to the trump suit and No Trumps are always to play unless obviously invitational.

7.7 Theta

Theta is used in only 4 situations but is the most common method for Opener to ascertain responder's holding in his (Opener's) main trump suit.

- When a low-level Beta has been used after 1♣ and a positive response, a new suit bid over the Beta response is Theta.
- When an Alpha ask is used and gets an insufficient response, a repeat is Theta.
- In a Forcing NT sequence where Opener does not show a 2nd suit, and responder makes a bid of the 2nd-cheapest new suit (ie: Beta), a new suit bid over the Beta response is Theta.
- After 1♦-1NT-2♣ and 1♦-1NT-2♦, continuations which would normally be Alpha in a 1♣ sequence are in fact Theta, not Alpha (eg: 1♦-1NT-2♣-2♥).

☞ The responses to Theta are identical to those for Delta.

☞ Repeat Theta's can be made to clarify Responder's holdings, and, as with Delta, the shorter of two alternatives is shown as 1 step. The only exception is where Qx or xxx has been shown, in which case the responses to a repeat are Qx, xxx, Jxx, QJ.

☞ A repeat Theta always sets the suit as trumps.

☞ A repeat Theta is not permitted in the Forcing No Trump sequence.

7.8 Iota

Iota is a slightly collapsed version of Theta and replaces Theta in some situations:-

- An immediate new suit bid after an insufficient response to either Alpha, Theta, Iota or Delta, except where the bid is Gamma (ie: in responder's suit).
- Where responder has shown a balanced hand (eg: 1♣-1♠), any bid which would normally be Theta is now Iota, as responder is known to have at least a small doubleton in every suit.

The responses to Iota are:-

1. Less than Qx or xxx
2. Qx or xxx
3. KO or Qxx
4. KOx or xxxx
5. Qxxx
6. KOxx
7. xxxxx or xxxxxx
8. Qxxxx or Qxxxxx
9. KOxxx or KOxxxx

☞ Rules for repeat Iota asks are exactly as for Theta, including the extended response where Qx or xxx has been shown. Repeat Iota's always agree the suit as trumps.

Asking Bids

7.9 Epsilon

Epsilon can never be used unless a suit has been agreed as trumps, but once a suit **has** been agreed as trumps, a bid in any other suit is Epsilon unless it is Beta, or unless the Captain of the hand jump-shifts to a new suit, which is always to play, or unless a cue-bidding sequence is specified as available (eg: in some 1♥ and 1♠ sequences)

Epsilon initially asks for the specific degree of control held in a suit. Responses are: -

1. No Control (ie: xxx or longer) or 1st and 2nd Round Control (ie: AKx or A)
2. 3rd Round Control (ie: xx, Qxx or Qx)
3. 2nd Round Control (x, Kxx or K)
4. 2nd and 3rd Round Control (Kx, KQx or KQ)
5. 1st Round Control (Void or Axx)
6. 1st and 3rd Round Control (Ax, AQx or AQ)
7. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Round Control (AK, AKQx or AKQ)

Repeat Epsilon

A repeat Epsilon can usually (not when 4441 shape hands have been shown) be made in order to clarify responder's exact holding, the responses being: -

1. Shortage
2. Honour
3. Both
4. Suit without the Jack
- 4 Suit with the Jack

Where 1st Round Control has been shown, Step (3) above is omitted. Where responder is already known to have at least a 4-card suit, then the responses to the repeat ask relate solely to possession of the Jack (ie: 1 step shows no Jack held and 2 steps show the Jack).

3rd Epsilon Ask

A third bid in an Epsilon suit (ie: after an Epsilon and repeat) is always 'to play' unless: -

- Small singleton or void shown **and**
- Exact level of controls is not yet known (ie: no Beta or Range response only)

In these circumstances, the bid is Beta in the appropriate range.

Epsilon in Singleton Suit

Where a singleton has been shown and Asking Bids established in a sequence where a suit has been firmly agreed as trumps, it is possible for the Captain of the hand to ask about the nature of the singleton, but only if Responder's exact number of controls has already been established (ie: the bid is not needed as Beta). This is the only occasion where repeat Epsilons can ever be made when 4441 shape hands have been shown.

An Epsilon in the singleton suit gets the following responses: -

- | | | |
|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| 1. X or J | and for a repeat | 1. X or Q |
| 2. Q or K | | 2. J or K |
| 3. A | | |

Where a shortage has been shown via a splinter which could be either a singleton or a void, an Epsilon gets uses the following steps:

- | | |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Step | Singleton (Not King or Ace) |
| 2 Steps | Singleton King |
| 3 Steps | Void |
| 4 Steps | Singleton Ace. |

Asking Bids

7.10 Sigma

Sigma is used only **immediately** over a positive response to Alpha (positive in terms of trump support) to check on how solid the agreed trump suit is. There are three scales used for Sigma, depending on whether the Alpha Response was a 3, 4, or 5-step or greater response.

A bid is Sigma in the following situations only:

- ✓ **After a 3 or 4-step response to Alpha** an immediate repeat bid in the same suit **below game level** is Sigma.
- ✓ **After a 5-step or greater response to Alpha** a **relay in the next suit** up over the Alpha Response is Sigma.

Note: 4♣ / 4♦ Beta takes precedence over 4♣ / 4♦ Sigma

The 3 Scales used for Sigma are as follows: -

a) After a 3-step response to Alpha

1. xxxx(x)
2. Hxx
3. HHx
4. Hxxx(x)
5. HHxx(x)

b) After a 4-step response to Alpha

1. xxxx(x)
2. Hxx

c) After a 5-step or greater Response to Alpha

1. Hxxx
2. Hxxxx
3. HHxx
4. HHxxx
5. HHHx(x)

Repeat Sigmas

If Responder shows **No** Top Honours or only **One** Top Honour in response to Sigma, Then a relay in the next suit up over the Sigma Response is a repeat Sigma, asking about possession of the Jack (One step denies, and two steps confirm).

- ✓ Sigma and especially repeat Sigma should be used sparingly because often the bidding space can be used more profitably in other ways, for Epsilon.

Asking Bids

8.1 Handing over the Captaincy

The player who institutes Asking Bids in any sequence is the Captain of the hand, in that he directs the course of the bidding. In some situations, however, the Captaincy of the hand can be relinquished. This usually takes the form of a bid of 2NT, but can sometimes be a bid of 3NT or even, rarely a sign-off in Opener's suit below game level after a positive response to an Alpha.

- After 1♣-1♠-1NT-2♣/2♦/2♥/2♠ -2NT is Baron looking for a 4-4 fit.
- After 1♣-1♥/1NT/2♣/2♦-(Beta & Response)-2NT shows a balanced hand with no good support for responder's suit. Responder can bid a second suit if held or show extra strength or length in his first suit or sign off in 3NT. Responder should not proceed beyond 3NT except with a very distributional hand.
- After 1♣-(Any Positive)-2NT (where this is not Alpha), this usually shows a minimum balanced hand with no good support for partner's suit if one has been shown and is either Baron (if partner has shown a balanced positive) or simply handing over the Captaincy as above, the difference being that as Opener has **not** made a low-level Beta, Responder is free to go beyond 3NT if his own values or distribution warrant it and 4♣/4♦ Beta is available to him. If Opener supports a second suit or gives preference to responder's first suit, then Responder can also make use of Epsilon Asks.
- In general where Opener does not make use of a low-level Beta or Alpha and subsequently signs off in 2NT or 3NT, or game in an agreed suit, then Responder is entitled to carry on further if his hand seems to warrant it. If, however, Opener **has** made use of a low-level Beta or Alpha, which always includes information about Responder's Controls, then the sign-off should always be respected except in exceptional circumstances (eg: a distributional 2-suiter with a side-suit void where this will probably compensate for the apparent lack of high-card controls).
- If Opener gets a positive (support) response to Alpha and immediately signs off below game level in a suit, this shows a minimum strength hand with no immediate ambitions beyond game.
 - ☞ If responder has shown 0-3 controls, it invites responder to bid the suit below any singleton or to jump in the suit below any void held, allowing a subsequent Beta in the short suit. If, however, Responder is known to be balanced, then it simply invites cue-bids. Responder is, of course, free to sign off in NT's or game in the agreed suit with no further ambitions and/or nothing to show.
 - ☞ If, however, Responder has shown 4 or more controls, the sign-off below game level invites Responder to continue with Beta and Epsilon bids and is usually showing a hand where Opener feels it will be easier or cheaper for Responder to elicit the right information rather than the other way round (eg: It may, for example, be a hand where Opener, despite his point count, has a severe lack of controls himself. Again, though, with minimum values Responder is free simply to bid 3NT or game in the agreed suit.
- Where Opener makes an Alpha, gets a negative response and immediately bids 2NT, this hands over the Captaincy and Responder's continuations are much as in the second category above. As there, the sign-off denies the wish to make a Gamma ask and therefore implies no good support for Responder's suit and Responder is best to re-suggest his suit naturally only if he has extra strength and/or length in the suit.

8.2 Four No Trumps

This is **never** Blackwood in any shape or variety but either Natural and to play, or Quantitative or a general slam try (perhaps if no Beta is possible), or an invitation to cue-bid. There are some specific situations where it is a rolling bid, usually denying a club control at the start of a cue-bidding sequence. Responder must judge in each instance the interpretation to be placed, but is rarely much room to doubt as to which it is. If it is an invitation to cue-bid then this either shows no further 1st Round Controls to show or it may be that Opener is particularly interested in any Club control(s) which Responder may have, in which case it is a rolling bid to facilitate this. There is one situation where 4NT is Beta (See 9.1.2 below).

Asking Bids

8.3 Asking Bids in Natural Sequences

For the most part natural sequences tend not to use Asking Bids unless Responder is completely unlimited and trumps have been agreed at or below the 3-level, except in those specific places where Asking Bid entry-points are defined by the system (eg: 1♦-2♣ Alpha, or 2♥-3♣ Gamma). Whilst in theory 4♣ Beta is available in any auction, prudence dictates that in practice the situations where it is used are quite limited. The rules surrounding Asking Bids in natural sequences are as follows:

1. Except as specifically provided for in the system, Asking Bids are **not** used unless responder is completely unlimited and trumps have explicitly been agreed below the level of 3NT.
2. Beta in a known singleton suit is always available
3. 4♣ Beta is normally available over Intermediate Openings only when Responder is either known to be very strong or is still completely unlimited, and trumps have been explicitly agreed at the 2 or 3-level. If trumps have been agreed and responder is limited in some way, then 4♣/4♦ will be a cue-bid rather than Beta.
4. In circumstances where trumps have been agreed and 4♣/4♦ Beta **is** used, then this establishes an Asking Bid sequence and subsequent side-suit bids are Epsilon.
5. In natural sequences, unless 4♣/4♦ Beta is available **and has been used**, Epsilons are never available, and side-suit bids are cue-bids.

To explain the above, take a sequence such as 1♠-2♦-3♦-4♣ Here Responder is completely unlimited and trumps have been explicitly agreed at the 3-level, so 4♣ is Beta here and following the Beta response, Epsilons are available in suits other than Diamonds.

Conversely in a sequence such as 1♠-1NT-2♥-3♠-4♣-?? here Responder has limited their hand with the 3♠ rebid, so 4♣ is a cue-bid rather than Beta.

In the sequence 1♦-1♠-2♥-3♣-3♠-4♣-?? here Responder is completely unlimited but trumps have not been explicitly agreed. 4♣, however, **is** Beta because Opener has shown a shortage in Clubs with the 3♠ response. Epsilons are **not** available after the Beta Response, however, because it is not clear which suit Responder wishes to play in and they must sign off over the Beta response.

Intervention

9.1 Intervention in Strong Sequences

Whilst there is no doubt that opponents can disrupt an asking bid sequence with psyches, random bids or determined and/or pre-emptive interference, if only by using up bidding space, as much as possible has been done to reclaim much of the space lost by the interference. Indeed, cheap interference, and especially doubles, actually *create* bidding space that wasn't there before. There are three areas which need to be considered.

- Interference Over an Asking bid and before the response
- Interference over the response to an asking bid and before the next Ask
- Interference immediately over a positive response to 1♣

9.1.1 Intervention over an Asking Bid

The follows the DOPI and ROPI style to save space, thus: -

- Ask-Interference-Double/Redouble shows 1 Step
- Ask-Interference-Pass shows 2 Steps
- Ask-Interference-1 Step shows 3 Steps
- Ask-Interference-2 Steps shows 4 Steps etc etc

If, however, the interference is of such a nature that it jumps at least one round of bidding to a level above 3NT or above game level in an agreed suit, then responder answers as follows: -

If the Asking Bid was	Alpha	Double Pass 1 Step 2 Steps	shows no Support shows Support with 0-3 shows support with 4 shows support with 5...
	Beta	Double Pass 1 Step	shows Min (0-2, 0-4 etc) shows Minimum plus 1 shows Minimum plus 2...
	Gamma	Double Pass	shows 0 or 1 Top Honour shows 2 Top Honours
	Delta	Double Pass	shows < Qxx/xxxx shows >= Qxx/xxxx
	Epsilon	Double Pass 1 Step	shows none or 3rd Round shows 2nd Round Control shows 1st Round Control
	Zeta	As for Beta, above	
	Eta	Double Pass	shows 1 Top Honour or worse shows 2 Top Honours or better
	Theta	As for Delta, above.	
	Iota	As for Delta, above.	

Intervention

9.1.2 Intervention over Response to an Ask

In general: **Double** is an Ask in the suit below that of the interference.
Pass is an Ask in the suit 2 below that of the interference.

☞ It will always be completely clear what sort of Asking Bid it is given the sequence thus far (ie: the normal rules for the order of Asking Bids applies). In a sequence such as: -

1♣-1♥-1♠-1NT-2♦ (Interference), now Double is Iota in Clubs, and Pass is Beta (ie: 1NT over 1♥ would have been Beta).

☞ Where, however, the intervention is such that it jumps at least one level to a level above 3NT or above game level in an agreed suit (eg: 1♣-1♥-1NT-2♦-2♥-3♥-4♠), then double is an ask in the suit below and Pass is Lebensohl, demanding a double from partner after which Opener will either pass for penalties or sign off (unless he makes an obviously invitational bid).

☞ Any bid by Opener is still an Asking Bid and the usual rules apply. The only exception is that if the Intervention has prevented Opener from making a Beta ask (or from making a second Ask where Responder's level of controls is still not known exactly), then an immediate bid of 4NT is Beta.

♠ Ax
 ♥ Ax
 ♦ KT9
 ♣ AQJ843

♠ KQxx
 ♥ K9x
 ♦ xxx
 ♣ K9x

♠ J
 ♥ Qxxx
 ♦ AQxxx
 ♣ Txx

♠ T98xxx
 ♥ JTxx
 ♦ Jx
 ♣ x

Bidding			
N	E	S	W
-	-	-	No
1♣ ¹	1♠ ²	2♦	2♥ ³
X ⁴	No	2♠ ⁵	X ⁶
No ⁷	No	3♣ ⁸	No
3♥ ⁹	3♠	No ¹⁰	No
X ¹¹	No	4♣ ¹²	No
4♠ ¹³	No	5♦ ¹⁴	No
6♦ ¹⁵			

- 16+
- Either long or short in Spades

3. "Competitive in Hearts"
4. Beta, Asking for controls
6. "I've got Spades"
8. 5-card, 2 Top Honours
10. 3rd Round Control
12. Honour (ie: At least Qxx)
14. 2nd Round Control

5. 0-2 Controls
7. Asking in Diamonds
9. Asking in Hearts
11. Asking in Hearts again
13. Asking in Spades
15. Knowing it's the right contract played from the right side (ie: West cannot Hearts to advantage).

lead

This hand and the one over the page are, like all the example hands, taken from real tournament play and show how the system copes with interference. Our experience is that even partnerships who are relatively experienced playing against Precision Club tend to give up with misleading or psychic interference once they realise that you have the system to cope with almost anything, and very often stop competing altogether once they realise that in many situations their interference is **creating** space for you that otherwise wouldn't be there, and is making the bidding easier for you rather than the other way round (eg: being able to make 2 low-level Beta Asks as has happened on occasion).

Intervention

♠ Qxx	♠ KJxxx
♥ x	♥ Txx
♦ KQTx	♦ Jxx
♣ QT98x	♣ xx
♠ AT9xx	
♥ K9xx	
♦ 9x	
♣ Jx	
♠ -	
♥ AQJxx	
♦ A8xx	
♣ AKxx	

Bidding			
N	E	S	W
-	No	1♣ ¹	X ²
2♣ ³	X ⁴	XX ⁵	No
2♥ ⁶	2♠	No ⁷	No
X ⁸	No	3♥ ⁹	No
4♣ ¹⁰	No	4♥ ¹¹	No
4♠ ¹²	No	5♠ ¹³	No
6♣ ¹⁴	No	7♣ ¹⁵	No
No	No		

1. 16+
2. 2 Suits with same colour (!)

3. 8+ with 5-card Clubs
4. Take-Out
6. 5-card, 1 Top Honour
8. 0-2 Controls
10. 2nd Round Control
12. Shortage
14. 3rd Round Control

5. Asking in Clubs
7. Control Asking
9. Asking in Hearts
11. Asking again in Hearts
13. Asking in Spades
15. Virtually able to write down North's hand as he must have KQ Diamonds to make up a positive and is almost certainly 3145 or 4135

9.2 Interference over a Positive Response to 1♣

In general this follows a similar pattern to that outlined in 9.1.2 above. It is, however, complicated by the need to allow Opener to make cheap Beta and Gamma Asks whenever possible. The full scheme over cheap interference is as follows (In all cases, the Interference bid is marked with an asterisk: -

9.2.1 After 1♣ - 1♥

1♣ - 1♥	- 1♠*	- Double	is Gamma in Hearts
		- Pass	is Alpha in Diamonds
	- 1NT*	- 1NT	is Beta
		- Double	is Alpha in Spades
		- Pass	is Gamma in Hearts
	- 2♣*	- 2♣	is Beta
		- Double	is Beta
		- Pass	is Alpha in Spades
	- 2♦*	- 2♥	is Gamma in Hearts
		- Double	is Alpha in Clubs
		- Pass	is Beta
	- 2♥*	- 2♥	is Gamma in Hearts
		- 2NT	is Alpha in Diamonds
		- Double	is Alpha in Diamonds
		- Pass	is Beta
	- 2♠*	- 2NT	is Gamma in Hearts
		- Double	is Gamma in Hearts
		- Pass	is Alpha in Diamonds
	- 2NT*	- 2NT	is Beta
		- Double	is Alpha in Spades
		- Pass	is Gamma in Hearts
		- 3♣	is Beta

Intervention

9.2.2 After 1♣ - 1♠

1♣ - 1♠	- 1NT*	- Double	is Alpha in Spades
		- Pass	is Alpha in Hearts
	- 2♣*	- 2♣	is Beta
		- Double	is Beta
	- 2♦*	- Pass	is Alpha in Spades
		- Double	is Alpha in Clubs
	- 2♥*	- Pass	is Beta
		- Double	is Alpha in Diamonds
	- 2♠*	- Pass	is Beta
		- Double	is Alpha in Hearts
	- Pass	is Beta	
	- 2NT*	- Double	is Alpha in Spades
		- Pass	is Alpha in Hearts
	- 3♣		is Beta
	- Higher*	- Double	is Alpha in the suit below or in Spades if the interference is in Clubs
		- Pass	is Beta

9.2.3 After 1♣ - 1NT

1♣ - 1NT	- 2♣*	- Double	is Beta
		- Pass	is Gamma in Spades
	- 2♦*	- 2NT	is Alpha in Clubs
		- Double	is Alpha in Clubs
	- 2♥*	- Pass	is Beta
		- 2NT	is Alpha in Diamonds
	- 2♠*	- Double	is Alpha in Diamonds
		- Pass	is Beta
		- 2NT	is Alpha in Hearts
		- Double	is Alpha in Hearts
	- Pass	is Beta	
	- 2NT*	- 2NT	is Gamma in Spades
		- Double	is Gamma in Spades
		- Pass	is Alpha in Hearts
	- Higher*	- 3♣	is Beta
		- Double	is Gamma in Spades
		- Pass	is Beta

9.2.4 After 1♣ - 2♣

1♣ - 2♣	- 2♦*	- Double	is Gamma in Clubs
		- Pass	is Beta
	- 2♥*	- 2NT	is Alpha in Diamonds
		- Double	is Beta
	- 2♠*	- Pass	is Gamma in Clubs
		- 2NT	is Alpha in Hearts
		- Double	is Alpha in Hearts
		- Pass	is Beta
		- 2NT	is Alpha in Spades
		- 3♣	is Gamma in Clubs
	- 2NT*	- Double	is Alpha in Spades
		- Pass	is Beta
	- Higher*	- 3♣	is Gamma in Clubs
		- Double	is Gamma in Clubs
		- Pass	is Beta

Intervention

9.2.5 After 1♣ - 2♦

1♣ - 2♦	- 2♥*	- Double	is Gamma in Diamonds
		- Pass	is Beta
		- 2NT	is Alpha in Hearts
	- 2♠*	- Double	is Beta
		- Pass	is Gamma in Diamonds
	- 2NT*	- 2NT	is Alpha in Spades
		- Double	is Alpha in Spades
		- Pass	is Beta
	- 3♣*	- Double	is Alpha in Spades
		- Pass	is Beta
	- Higher*	- Double	is Gamma in Diamonds
		- Pass	is Beta

9.2.5 Pre-emptive Interference at the 4-level

If opponents interfere at the 4-level over a positive response to 1♣, then Opener's rebids are as follows:-

Double is **Gamma** in Responder's suit if one has been shown, otherwise it is Beta over 1♣-1♠/2NT.

Pass is Lebensohl, forcing Responder to double and Opener then passes for penalties or makes a natural and non-forcing bid in his main suit. Responder must pass or judge to bid on with extra values. Any continuations are natural and constructive, 4NT being an invitation to cue-bid and agreeing Opener's suit. A 'slow' 4NT by Opener is 'to play'.

Bids by Opener are Alpha but without reference to controls, merely asking for support (2 steps) or no support (1 step). If Responder shows support then a relay over the response is Beta. A 'fast' 4NT over the interference is either Beta, agreeing Responder's suit or, if Responder has shown a balanced hand, natural but without any great holding in opponents' suit (otherwise he would go via a 'slow' 4NT).

9.2.6 Pre-emptive Interference at the 5-level

If the opponents intervene at the 5-level or higher over a positive response to 1♣ then continuations are on similar lines to those shown in 9.2.5 above except that the double shows no first round control on opponents' suit, but invites Responder to continue with control of the suit. The Pass is still Lebensohl instructing Responder to double, following which any continuation is to play. Immediate bids are invitational.

9.2.7 Opponents Double after 1♣ and a Positive Response

- 1♣ - 1♥ - X* - Redouble is Alpha in Diamonds, and Pass is Gamma in Hearts
- 1♣ - 1♠ - X* - Redouble is Alpha in Hearts, Pass is Alpha in Spades, and 1NT is Beta.
- 1♣ - 1NT - X* - Redouble is Gamma in Spades, Pass is Alpha in Hearts and 2♣ is Beta.
- 1♣ - 2♣ - X* - Redouble is Gamma in Clubs, Pass is Alpha in Spades, and 2♦ is Beta.
- 1♣ - 2♦ - X* - Redouble is Alpha in Clubs, Pass is Gamma in Diamonds & 2♥ is Beta.

Thus over a double the low-level Beta is always as normal, and redouble is the suit below except when responder has shown Clubs when it is Gamma in Clubs, and Pass is always Gamma except when responder has shown Clubs when it is Alpha in Spades. Continuations from there on are normal.

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

10.1 Multi-Coloured 2♦

This Opening shows one of the following hand types: -

- A Weak 2 in a Major (typically 6-card suit with 5-9 points)
- 16-23 points and any 4441 distribution
- 8 playing tricks in a 2-suited hand with at least a 5-card major and at least a 6-card minor and less than 16 points

The initial responses to the 2♦ Opening are as follows: -

- 2♦ - 2♥ is to play opposite a weak 2 in Hearts, but otherwise forcing
- 2♦ - 2♠ is to play opposite a weak 2 in Spades, but shows game interest opposite a weak 2 in Hearts
- 2♦ - 2NT is unconditionally forcing on Opener to show his hand type. Usually a strong hand but may be intermediate with both majors.
- 2♦ - 3♥/4♥ is pre-emptive in a major (ie: weak with both majors). In using these, Responder must bear in mind that Opener may be very strong so these must be used only with weak hands with shape where the prospects of a slam opposite a strong hand are remote opposite a 23-count.

No other initial responses are permitted

Continuations are as follows: -

10.1.1 After 2♦-2♥

- 2♦ - 2♥ - No shows the weak 2 in Hearts
- 2♠ shows the weak 2 in Spades
- 2NT shows interest in game in Spades
 - 3♣/3♦/3♥ show a shortage in the suit above, and maximum range.
 - 3♠ shows any minimum range hand
 - 3NT shows a maximum hand, semi-balanced (6322) with a good suit with 2 Top Honours and either the Jack or the T9
 - 4♣/♦/♥ show a maximum hand with a 2nd 4-card suit
 - 4♠ shows a maximum, semi-balanced, unsuitable for 3NT.
- 2NT shows 16-19 and any 4441 distribution
 - 3♣ asks and Opener bids the suit below the singleton, bidding 3♠ with 4441 and 3NT with 4414. Responder now either sets the contract or may make a Beta Ask in the singleton suit first. No Eta Asks are permitted.
- 3♣ shows the 8 trick hand with Clubs and Hearts.
 - 3♦ forces 3♥, following which any continuation is 'to play'
 - 3♥ is Gamma in Hearts (Relay over response is Beta)
 - 3♠ asks for distribution: -
 - 3NT shows 1516
 - 4♣ shows a Diamond void
 - 4♦ shows a Spade void
 - 4♥ shows at least 6-6 or 5-7 distribution with shortages in both other suits. Now 4♠ is Beta.
 - 3NT is Beta
 - 4♣ is Gamma in Clubs (Relay over response is Beta)

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

- 2♦ - 2♥
- 3♦ shows the 8 trick hand with Diamonds and Spades
 - 3♥ forces 3♠ following which any continuation is 'to play'.
 - 3♠ is Gamma in Spades (Relay over response is Beta)
 - 3NT asks for distribution:
 - 4♣ shows a Heart shortage
 - 4♦ shows 5161 distribution
 - 4♥ shows a Club shortage
 - 4♠ shows at least 6-6 or 5-7 distribution, with shortages in both Clubs and Hearts. Now 4NT is Beta.
 - 4♣ is Beta
 - 4♦ is Gamma in Diamonds (Relay over response is Beta).
 - 3♥ shows the 8 trick hand with Hearts and Diamonds
 - No is to play. No interest in game. Implies only a tolerance for Hearts
 - 3♠ is Beta
 - 3NT is Gamma in Hearts (Relay over response is Beta)
 - 4♣ is Gamma in Diamonds (Relay over response is Beta)
 - 4♦ is 'to play'
 - 3♠ shows the 8 trick hand with Clubs and Spades.
 - No is to play. As above it implies only a tolerance for Spades.
 - 3NT is Beta
 - 4♣ is 'to play'
 - 4♦ is Gamma in Spades (Relay over response is Beta)
 - 4♥ is gamma in Clubs (Relay over response is Beta)
 - 3NT shows 20-23 and 4441, singleton Club
 - 4♣ shows 20-23 and 4414, singleton Diamond
 - 4♦ shows 20-23 and 4144, singleton Heart
 - 4♥ shows 20-23 and 1444, singleton Spade
- When the stronger 4441 hands are shown then an immediate bid of the singleton suit is Beta (0-4) but with or without the Beta Ask, no Eta Asks are permitted.

10.10.2 After 2♦ - 2♠

- 2♦ - 2♠
- No shows the weak 2 in Spades
 - 2NT shows 16-19 and any 4441 distribution
 - 3♣ asks and Opener bids the suit below the singleton, bidding 3♠ with 4441 and 3NT with 4414. If Responder makes a Beta ask in the singleton suit immediately, he must then set the final contract. Otherwise, Responder sets the suit with a Eta Ask and may thereafter bid Beta in the singleton suit or Epsilons elsewhere.
 - 3♣ shows the 8 trick hand with Clubs and **Spades**
 - 3♦ forces 3♥ following which any bid is 'to play'
 - 3♥ is Beta
 - 3♠ is Gamma in Spades (rare, since Responder is normally short in Spades (Not interested in Game opposite weak 2))
 - 3NT is a distribution ask: -
 - 4♣ shows 5116 distribution
 - 4♦ shows a Heart void
 - 4♥ shows a Diamond void
 - 4♠ shows at least 6-6 or 5-7 distribution with shortages in both the other suits. (Now 4NT is Beta).
 - 4♣ is Gamma in Clubs (Relay over Response is Beta)

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

- 2♦ - 2♠
- 3♦ shows the 8 trick hand with Diamonds and Spades. Continuations are as over 2♦-2♥-3♦.
- 3♥ shows a minimum weak 2 in Hearts
 - 3♠ asks for a shortage: - Opener bids the suit below, bidding 3NT with a Club shortage and 3♦ with a Spade shortage. Responder can now bid the short suit as Beta
 - 4♥ shows semi-balanced shape. Now 4NT is Beta.
- 3NT is Beta.
- Other continuations are natural, but always invitational based on the fact that Hearts will always be the agreed suit.
- 3♠ shows a maximum weak 2 in Hearts, with a shortage.
 - 3NT asks for the shortage. Opener bids the suit below, 4♦ showing a Spade shortage and 4♥ showing a Club shortage. Responder can bid the short suit as Beta or 4NT as Gamma.
- 3NT shows 20-23 and any 4441 distribution
 - 4♣ asks and Opener bids the suit below the singleton (4♠ showing a Club singleton and 4NT showing a Diamond singleton). Responder will almost always set the suit with an Eta Ask, following which he can use the singleton suit as Beta and make Epsilon Asks in other side suits. If Responder makes an immediate Beta Ask, then he must set the final contract thereafter.
- 4♣ shows the 8 trick hand with Clubs and Hearts. Given that responder has already shown an interest in Hearts, Hearts will almost always be the agreed suit. Continuations are as follows:
 - 4♦ asks:
 - 4♥ shows 3 Top Honours in long suits.
 - 4♠ shows 4 Top Honours in the long suits.
 - 4NT shows 5 Top Honours in the long suits.
 - A relay over any of the above asks for distribution:
 - 1 Step shows 1516 distribution
 - 2 Steps shows 2506, 1606 or 1507
 - 3 Steps shows 0526, 0616 or 0517
 - 4♥ / 5♣ are both 'to play'.
- 4♦ shows the 8 trick hand with Diamonds and Hearts.
 - 4♥ is to play.
 - 4♠ asks:
 - 4NT shows 3 Top Honours between the long suits.
 - 5♣ shows 4 Top Honours between the long suits.
 - 5♦ shows 5 Top Honours between the long suits.
 - Relay asks for distribution:
 - 1 Step shows 1561
 - 2 Steps shows 2560, 1660 or 1570
 - 3 Steps shows 0562, 0661 or 0571
 - Continuations are similar to those over 4♣ above
 - 5♣ is 'to play'.
- 4♥ shows a maximum weak-2 in Hearts with **no** shortage. All continuations are natural with 4NT a general slam try asking Opener to cue-bid a side-suit Control if they have one.

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

- 2♦ - 2NT
 - 3♣ shows the 8 trick hand with Clubs and Hearts
 - 3♦ is Gamma in Clubs agreeing the suit. Asking Bids are now firmly established.
 - 3♥ is Gamma in Hearts, agreeing the suit. Asking Bids are now firmly established.
 - 3♦ shows the 8 trick hand with Diamonds and Hearts
 - 3♥ is Gamma in Hearts. As above
 - 3♠ is Gamma in Spades, As above
 - 3♥ shows the weak 2 in Hearts, **maximum** range.
 - 3♠ Asks for a shortage. 3NT shows Clubs, 4♥ shows semi-balanced.
 - Other continuations are natural.
 - 3♠ shows the weak 2 in Spades, **maximum** range.
 - 3NT is natural
 - 4♣ asks. Opener bids 4♦ with a Heart shortage, 4♥ to show a minor suit shortage (now 4NT relays and Opener bids longer minor), and 4♠ if semi-balanced.
 - Other continuations are natural.
 - 3NT shows 16-18 points and any 4441 distribution
 - 4♣ asks. Opener bids the suit below the singleton (4♠ showing a Club singleton and 4NT showing a Diamond singleton. Responder can now set the suit with an Eta Ask and then use Beta in the singleton suit or Epsilon in side suits, or makes an immediate Beta and then sets the final contract.
 - 4♣ shows the 8 trick hand with Clubs and Spades.
 - 4♦ is Gamma in Spades. Asking Bids now established.
 - 4♥ is Gamma in Clubs. Asking Bids now established.
 - 4♦ shows the 8 trick hand with Diamonds and Spades.
 - 4♥ is Gamma in Diamonds. Asking Bids now established.
 - 4♠ is Gamma in Spades. Asking Bids now established.
 - 4♥ shows a **minimum** weak 2 in Hearts.
 - Continuations natural except:
 - 4NT is a mild slam try and asks Opener to show a shortage by bidding the suit below.
 - 5♥ is invitational, interested strictly in trump quality. Opener should only bid on only if holding at least KQxxxx.
 - 4♠ shows a **minimum** weak 2 in Spades. All continuations are identical in character to those over the -4♥ rebid above.
 - 4NT shows 22-23 and any 4441 distribution.
 - 5♣ asks and Opener rebids the suit below the singleton. All continuations are as per those over the -3NT rebid, but one level higher.
 - 5♣/♦/♥/♠ show 19-21 and any 4441 distribution, showing the suit below the singleton. Continuations identical to those above.

Note:-

The minimum shape for the 8 trick hands is a 5-card major and a 6-card minor and the scales for Gamma are adjusted accordingly. HCP should be concentrated in the long suits rather than outside, else the hand should be opened with one of the major suit.

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

10.2 2♥ Reverse Roman

This is a reverse Roman bid and shows 11-15 points and exactly 4-6 shape with 4-card Hearts and 6-card Diamonds. Continuations are as follows: -

- 2♥ - 2♠ is a forcing relay to ascertain more about Opener's strength and distribution: -
 - 2NT shows a Club singleton, minimum range
 - 3♣ shows a Spade singleton, minimum range
 - 3♦ shows a void Club, minimum range
 - 3♥ shows a void Spade, minimum range
 - 3♠ shows a singleton Club, maximum range
 - 3NT shows a void Club, maximum range
 - 4♣ shows a singleton Spade, maximum range
 - 4♦ shows a void Spade, maximum range

Once a shortage has been shown, that suit can be used for Beta, but no Epsilons are permitted.

 - 2NT is Lebensohl, forcing Opener to bid 3♣ following which: -
 - 3♣ - 3♦ is to play
 - 3♥ is invitational, particularly wanting good trumps as well as an upper range hand
 - 3♠ is to play
 - 3NT is to play
 - 4♣ is invitational in Clubs
 - 4♦ is invitational in Diamonds, again wanting good trumps as well as an upper range hand
 - 3♣ is Eta in Hearts, agreeing that suit. Relay over the response is Beta and any other new suit bids are Epsilon.
 - 3♦ is Gamma in Diamonds, agreeing that suit. Relay over the response (excluding 3NT which would be to play) is Beta and any other new suit bids are Epsilon.
 - 3♥/4♦ are purely pre-emptive.

No other responses are permitted.

Over Intervention

Over intervention, double is Lebensohl, with the usual continuations, either to play or invitational. An immediate simple bid in either red suit is Eta/Gamma, but a jump raise in either red suit is purely pre-emptive, but may have good values if bid at game level. A hand which wishes to make a penalty double of the intervention must pass, and if Opener is going to reopen, they must do so with a double.

♠ Qx	♠ AJxx		Bidding	
♥ KJxx	♥ Axx	W		E
♦ AQT9xx	♦ Jx	2♥		2♠ ¹
♣ x	♣ QJTx	3♠ ²		3NT ³

1. Forcing Relay
2. Maximum, Club Singleton
3. Chooses the most obvious game. Even a Club Lead should present no problems.

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

10.3 2♠ Reverse Roman

This is a reverse Roman bid and shows 11-15 points and exactly 4-6 shape with 4-card Spades and 6-card Diamonds. Continuations are as follows: -

- 2♠ - 2NT is a forcing relay to ascertain more about Opener's strength and distribution:
 - 3♣ shows a void Heart and minimum range
 - 3♦ shows any minimum range hand not containing a void
 - 3♥ shows a void Club and minimum range
 - 3♠ shows a singleton Club and maximum range
 - 3NT shows a void Club and maximum range
 - 4♣ shows a singleton Heart and maximum range
 - 4♦ shows a void Heart and maximum range
- 3♣ is Lebensohl, forcing Opener to bid 3♦ following which Responder passes or makes a natural or invitational bid as follows: -
 - 3♦ - 3♥ is to play
 - 3♠ is invitational but needing good trumps as well as an upper range hand from Opener
 - 3NT is to play
 - 4♣ is invitational in Clubs
 - 4♦ is invitational but needing good trumps as well as an upper range hand from Opener
- 3♦ is Gamma in Diamonds. Relay over response (excluding 3NT) is Beta
- 3♥ is Eta in Spades. Relay over response is Beta.
- 3♠/4♦ are both pre-emptive.

No other responses are permitted

Over Intervention

See 10.2 above

♠ KQxx
♥ Ax
♦ KTxxxx
♣ x

♠ Ax
♥ xxxx
♦ Qxx
♣ Axxx

W
2♠
3♣²
No⁴

Bidding

E
2NT¹
4♦³

1. Forcing relay.
2. Forced
3. Invitational if Opener is max with good trumps
4. Unable to fulfill either of the above

♠ Kxxx
♥ Qx
♦ AKJxxx
♣ x

♠ JTx
♥ Axxx
♦ x
♣ ATxxx

W
2♠
3♦²

Bidding

E
2NT¹
No³

1. Forcing Relay
2. Minimum, no void
3. With a diamond misfit and no game in prospect, subsides in the safest resting place.

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

10.4 2NT Multi

This shows one of the following hands: -

- 5-9 points and at least 5-5 in the minors
- 11-15 points and exactly 5-5 in the majors.
- A 3 or 4-level Club Pre-empt

Responses are along the lines of responses to the Multi 2♦ Opening: -

- With a weak hand or one with game interest only opposite the Majors, Responder bids his better minor, giving preference to Clubs where possible. Opener passes with the minors or relays with the Majors. With a Club Pre-empt (Over 2NT-3♦) Opener bids 3NT and now Responder passes or converts to 4♣
- With an invitational hand, containing at least one major and tolerance for at least one minor, Responder bids his better Major. Opener passes, bids 3NT with the Club Pre-empt or converts to 4♣ or 5♣ with the Minors, and bids 4 of the major with an upper range hand with the Majors
- With a game-going balanced hand which wishes to play in 3NT opposite the minors or Clubs, or in at least game opposite the Majors, responder bids 3NT. Opener passes with the minors or Clubs and bids 4♣ with the Majors. Now 4♦ asks:

- 2NT - 3NT - 4♣ - 4♦ - 4♥ shows any minimum
 - 4♠ shows Max with a Diamond shortage (4NT is Beta)
 - 4NT shows Max with a Club shortage (5♣ is Beta)
 - 5♣ shows a Diamond void (5♦ is Beta)
 - 5♦ shows a Club void (no Beta permitted)
- 4♥/4♠ are both to play
- 4NT asks for cue bids

- With a strong distributional hand interested in game or slam opposite any hand type, Responder bids 4♣. Opener relays with 4♦ if he has the Majors or 4♥ if he has the Minors and 4NT with the Club Pre-empt.

2NT - 4♣ - 4♦ - 4NT is Gamma in Hearts and
 - 5♣ is Gamma in Spades. Asking bids are now established.
 All other bids over 4♦ are natural.

- 4♥ - 4♠ is Gamma in Clubs and
 - 4NT is Gamma in Diamonds. Asking bids are now established.
 All other bids over 4♥ are natural.
- 4NT All continuations are natural.

♠ -
 ♥ xx
 ♦ KT9xxx
 ♣ Kxxxxxx

♠ AJTxx
 ♥ Qxxx
 ♦ QJx
 ♣ A

Bidding

W	E
2NT	3♦ ¹
1. No Game interest opposite Minors.	

♠ KQxxx
 ♥ ATxxx
 ♦ Qx
 ♣ x

♠ A
 ♥ Qxxx
 ♦ KJTx
 ♣ AQxx

Bidding

W	E
2NT	3NT ¹
4♥ ²	No

1. Good enough for game opposite any. 2. Minimum.

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

10.5 3♣ Roman

This Opening shows 11-15 points, a 6-card Club suit and an unspecified 4-card major. It specifically denies having a void Diamond and a 3-card suit in the other major (Opened 2♣), but may have a void major and 3-card Diamonds. It is not used with a 7-card Club suit unless minimum range (a maximum range hand of such a type is normally opened 1♣). The Opening is non-forcing.

- 3♣ - 3♦ asks which 4-card major is held. Opener bids the suit. Now:
- 3♥/3♠ - 3NT is natural and to play
 - 4♣ is invitational to 5♣
 - 4♦ is Beta, usually agreeing Clubs, but no Epsilons are permitted, so Responder can sign off in a major over the response.
- 3♥ shows slam interest in Hearts
 - 3♠ shows 4-card Spades
 - 3NT is natural
 - 4♣ is Gamma in Clubs. Relay over response is Beta. Asking Bids are now established
 - 4♦ is Beta. Responder must set the contract after the response
 - 3NT upwards are Eta responses for Hearts, which are now agreed. A relay over the Eta response is Beta and Epsilons are now permitted elsewhere.
 - 3♠ shows slam interest in Spades, or possibly slam interest in either major.
 - 3NT shows 4-card Hearts
 - 4♣ is Gamma in Clubs. Relay over response is Beta. Asking Bids are now established
 - 4♦ is Beta. Responder must set the contract after the response
 - 4♥ is Eta in Hearts. Relay over response is Beta. Asking Bids are now established.
 - 4♣ upwards are Eta responses in Spades, which are now agreed. A relay over the Eta response is Beta and Epsilons are now permitted elsewhere.
 - 3NT is natural and 'to play', but Opener can bid on with an exceptionally distributional hand
 - 4♣ shows 4036 shape
 - 4♦ shows 0436 shape
 - 4♣ is Gamma in Clubs. A relay over the response is Beta and other side suit bids are Epsilon.

♠ Qx
♥ KQxx
♦ x
♣ AQxxxx

♠ KT9x
♥ Jx
♦ AQx
♣ Kxxx

Bidding

	W		E
	3♣		3♦ ¹
	3♥		3NT ²

1. Asking which Major 2. Safest spot

♠ x
♥ KJxx
♦ Ax
♣ KJTxxx

♠ AKx
♥ ATx
♦ xx
♣ AQxxx

Bidding

	W		E
	3♣		4♣ ¹
	4♠ ²		4NT ³
	5♥ ⁴		6♣ ⁵

1. Gamma in Clubs
4. 4 Controls

2. One Top Honour & Jack
3. Beta
5. Partner must have K♥ and A♦, but cannot afford to find out if they have Q♥, and so subsides in a small slam.

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

10.6 3♦ Multi

This Opening shows one of the following hand types: -

- A 3-level pre-empt in either Major, or
- A 4-level pre-empt in either minor, or
- 30-31 balanced

Responses are generally similar to Multi 2♦, in the sense that with no game interest, Responder bids the cheapest suit that he can't support at a higher level. The exception is the 3NT response (see below) eg:

- 3♦ - 3♥ shows a weak hand or one with no game ambitions opposite a 3-level Heart pre-empt
- 3♦ - 3♠ shows a hand with no game ambitions opposite a Spade pre-empt, but which wants to be in game opposite a Heart pre-empt, and possibly opposite a minor pre-empt
- 3♦ - 4♣ shows no ambitions if Opener has a Club pre-empt, but definite game or slam ambitions if Opener has either Major.
- 3♦ - 4♦ shows no interest opposite Diamonds, but definite interest opposite a 4-level Club pre-empt, and game or possible slam interest opposite either Major.
- 3♦ - 4♠ shows a hand with slam interest opposite a Heart pre-empt and possibly with a minor suit pre-empt, but no slam interest opposite a Spade pre-empt (but happy to play in game in Spades).

- 3NT shows a hand which is interested in playing in 3NT opposite a 4-level minor pre-empt, but in slam opposite a major pre-empt
 - No shows the 4-level pre-empt in a minor
 - 4♣ shows a 'good' 3-level pre-empt in Hearts
 - 4♦ asks if a minor suit shortage is held
 - 4♥ denies
 - 4♠ is Beta
 - 4♠ shows a Club shortage
 - 4NT shows a Diamond shortage.
 - Now the short suit can be bid as Beta
 - 4♥ is Gamma in Hearts. 7-card length assumed
 - 4♦ shows a 'good' -3-level pre-empt in Spades
 - 4♥ asks if a minor suit shortage is held
 - 4♠ denies
 - 4NT is Beta
 - 4NT shows a Club shortage
 - 5♣ shows a Diamond shortage
 - Now the short suit can be bid as Beta
 - 4♠ is Gamma in Spades. 7-card length assumed
 - 4♥ shows a 'poor' 3-level pre-empt in Hearts
 - 4NT is Gamma, 7-card length assumed.
 - A relay over response (not 5♥) is Beta.
 - 4♠ shows a 'poor' 3-level pre-empt in Spades
 - 4NT is Gamma, 7-card length assumed.
 - A relay over response (not 5♠) is Beta.
 - 4NT shows the strong balanced hand (see below) but this is very unlikely as the 3NT response normally shows a strong balanced hand.

A rebid in NT over the response to 3♦ shows the strong balanced hand. All continuations are as specified in section 5.3 above.

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

10.7 3♥ Opening

This opening shows 5-9 points and at least 5-5 in the Major suits. Responses are largely natural, with the following exceptions: -

- 3♥ - 4♣ is Gamma in Hearts, 5-card length assumed. A relay over the response is Beta and now any side suit bids are Epsilon.
- 4♦ is Gamma in Spades, 5-card length assumed. A relay over the response is Beta and now any side suit bids are Epsilon.
- Any immediate bids in a Major are either to play, or invitational at the 5-level, based more on trump quality and general playing value of the hand rather than point count as such.

☞ **Once again it should be stressed that HCP should be concentrated in the long suits with this Opening.**

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

10.8 3♠ Multi

This Opening shows one of the following hand types: -

- An Acol Gambling 3NT
- 5-9 points and at least 6-6 in the Minor suits
- 11-15 points and at least 6-6 in the Major suits
- 32-33 balanced

A relay of 3NT is forced, except in a few instants: -

- 3♠ - 3NT - No shows the Gambling 3NT
- 4♣ shows the minor suits
 - 4♥ is Gamma in Clubs, relay over response is Beta
 - 4♠ is Gamma in Diamonds, relay over response is Beta
- 4♦ shows the major suits
 - 5♣ is Gamma in Hearts, relay over response is Beta
 - 5♦ is Gamma in Spades, relay over response is Beta
- 4NT shows the strong balanced hand. Continuations as specified in 5.3

- 4♣ shows a hand which does not wish to play in 3NT Opposite a gambling 3NT. It usually shows a Spade shortage and no further ambitions in Clubs.
 - No/4♦ shows the Gambling 3NT hand
 - 4♥ shows both Majors
 - 4NT is a general slam try with equal length in the Majors.
 - 5♣ is Gamma in Hearts. Relay over Response is Beta
 - 5♦ is Gamma in Spades. Relay over Response is Beta
 - 4♠ shows both Minors. Continuations natural.
 - 4NT shows 32-23 balanced.

- 4♦ as 4♣ above, but with game or slam ambitions in Clubs and no further interest in Diamonds.
 - No/5♣ shows the Gambling 3NT hand
 - 4♥ shows both Majors
 - 4NT is a general slam try with equal length in the Majors.
 - 5♣ is Gamma in Hearts. Relay over Response is Beta
 - 5♦ is Gamma in Spades. Relay over Response is Beta
 - 4♠ shows both Minors. Continuations natural
 - 4NT shows 32-23 balanced.

- 4♥ shows a strong hand with Hearts and both minors
 - 4♠ shows the Majors. Now
 - 4NT is Epsilon in Spades (Hearts agreed)
 - 5♣ asks Opener to bid 6♥ with a Diamond void (5♥ otherwise)
 - 4NT shows the Minors
 - 5♣/5♦ show the Gambling 3NT hands

- 4♠ shows a strong hand with Hearts and both minors
 - 4NT shows the Minors. Continuations natural
 - 5♣ Shows the Gambling 3NT hand with Clubs. Continuations are natural but if Responder bids again it is a cue with Clubs agreed, and Opener is invited to cue a shortage if held
 - 5♦ Shows the Gambling 3NT hand with Diamonds. Continuations are natural but if Responder bids again it is a cue with Clubs agreed, and Opener is invited to cue a shortage if held.
 - 5♥ shows both Majors, upper range. Continuations natural
 - 5♠ shows both Majors, lower range. Continuations natural

Multi & Pre-emptive Openings

10.9 3NT Opening

This shows a classic Acol Gambling 3NT. It differs from the 3♠ Opening in that Opener *will* have a stop or half-stop outside their long suit. All continuations are natural.

10.10 4-level Pre-empts

- 4♣ is a South African Texas transfer to 4♥, showing a 'good' and constructive 4-level pre-empt, typically with 8 playing tricks but little or no defensive strength
 - 4♦ asks for any outside controls. Cue bids follow, with 4♥/4NT available as 'rolling' bids to deny a Spade/Club control and facilitate a cue in the missing suit by partner.
 - 4♥ is 'to play'.

- 4♦ is a South African Texas transfer to 4♠, showing a 'good' and constructive 4-level pre-empt, typically with 8 playing tricks but little or no defensive strength
 - 4♥ asks for any outside controls. Cue bids follow, with 4♠ available as a 'rolling' bid to deny a Club or Diamond control and 4NT available as a 'rolling' bid to promise a Diamond control but deny a Club control and facilitate a cue in the missing suit by partner.
 - 4♠ is 'to play'.

- 4♥ shows a normal 'obstructive' 4-level pre-empt in Hearts. Special continuations are as follows: -
 - 4♠ is a cue, asking partner to respond with any minor suit controls Opener may hold
 - 5♣ is a cue, promising Clubs **and** Spades controlled, but only 3rd round control of Diamonds.
 - 5♦ shows 1st round control of Diamonds
 - 5♥ shows no Control in Diamonds
 - 6♥ shows second round control of Diamonds
 - 5♦ shows both minor suits controlled, but only 3rd round control of Spades
 - 5♥ shows no Control in Spades
 - 5♠ shows 1st Round Control of Spades
 - 6♥ shows 2nd Round Control of Spades

- 4♠ shows a normal 'obstructive' 4-level pre-empt in Spades. Special continuations are as follows: -
 - 4NT is an invitation to cue bid, denying a Club control
 - 5♣ shows 1st round control of Clubs
 - 5♦ shows 1st round control of Diamonds and 2nd round control of Clubs
 - 5♥ shows 1st round control of Hearts and 2nd round control of Clubs
 - 5♠ denies any Club control
 - 5♣ is an invitation to cue-bid, showing Clubs controlled
 - 5♦ shows both minors controlled and asking partner for a Heart control
 - 5♥ shows 1st round control of Hearts
 - 5♠ denies any Heart control
 - 6♠ shows 2nd round control of Hearts.

- 5♣/5♦ are normal 5-level pre-empts in the minor bid (everyday stuff). All continuations are natural.

Defensive Bidding

11.1 Defensive Bidding

In general this is characterised by an aggressive style and use of Lebensohl or Transfer Lebensohl sequences (over take-out doubles) and unassuming cue-bids. Direct suit raises are largely pre-emptive in nature.

11.2 Simple Overcalls

These are natural and **constructive**, always showing a reasonable hand, the exception being in the protective position, and simple overcalls can be as strong as 15-16 HCP.

- **Simple raises:** Pre-emptive with 3-card support
- **Jump raises:** Pre-emptive with 4-card support
- **Simple Raises via 1NT/2NT Lebensohl:** Good pre-empt with 3-card support. (ie: invitational)
- **Jump raises via 1NT/2NT Lebensohl:** Good pre-empt with 4-card support. (ie: invitational)
- **Unassuming Cue-Bids:** These show **any** solid invitational or game-going raise in partner's suit, or **any** hand wishing to create a forcing sequence. Partner describes his hand further.
- **'Fast' new suit bids:** Show an essentially weak hand but a good suit and tolerance for partner's suit.
- **'Slow' new suit bids (via Lebensohl):** These show good suits, but without a tolerance for partner's suit.

☞ Continuations over the above are largely natural with the following proviso: -

- Where partner makes a direct raise, or a slow simple raise, and the overcaller has 2NT available as Lebensohl, then an immediate new suit bid is a short-suit trial bid in the suit above, and 'slow' new suit bids are long-suit trial bids in that suit.
- Any direct raises to the 3-level by the initial overcaller are pre-emptive, whereas 'slow' raises are genuinely invitational.
- Where partner raises in overcaller's suit via a UCB, then new suit bids are cue-bids. If partner agrees the overcaller's major suit at the 2 or 3-level after an unassuming cue bid, then a bid of 3NT by the overcaller is Beta.

11.3 Jump Overcalls

These are weak and obstructive except in 4th position when they are intermediate (about 5-7 playing tricks). When both opponents have shown values, then jump overcalls are still weak, but always showing a good long suit, albeit with little or nothing outside. Continuations are essentially identical to those described above for simple overcalls. New suit bids by partner are always weak but with support or at least tolerance for the jump-overcaller's suit.

Note:

A jump overcall in Clubs at the 3 or 4-level never relates to Clubs, but is Ghestem or Super-Ghestem, showing the 2 higher unbid suits. See the section under Defensive Bidding.

Defensive Bidding

11.4 Take-out doubles

Because simple overcalls are constructive, doubles are always essentially 3-suited take-outs, unlimited in strength, the only exception being very strong (18+) balanced hands which will rebid in NT's. Transfer Lebensohl is used in any sequences after a take-out double, as follows: -

- Simple overcalls at the same level are competitive only
- Lebensohl is the prelude to pre-emptive bids or competitive bids at the next level. In either case responder has no interest in continuing, although the doubler can make an invitation if very strong (via Lebensohl if at the 2-level). Direct raises by the doubler are pre-emptive if Lebensohl is available.
- Immediate bids at the **next** level (even at the 3-level if RHO bids) are transfers, and either invitational or forcing. If the doubler would accept an invitation in that suit he breaks the transfer by cue-bidding his cheapest control, otherwise he completes the transfer, and now responder bids on if his was more than an invitation.
- If RHO bids, then doubles are Responsive
- Cue-bids of the opponents' suit (ie: transferring into their suit) show values but no long suit and an inability to make a responsive double (ie: essentially balanced) or, where the opponents have opened a minor, it may be a hand with both majors **and** values (ie: negative). These are 'fast' cue-bids of the opponents' suit and generally will not be able to stop their suit.
- 'Slow' cue-bids of the opponents' suit (ie: via Lebensohl) show a similar hand but will contain a stop in the opponents' suit
- A 'slow' bid of 3NT is natural, showing a good holding in the opponents' suit. A 'fast' bid of 3NT is also natural but has exactly 1 stop in the opponents' suit and the doubler is free to remove it if they have no assistance in the suit.

11.5 1NT Overcall

This is always strong (15-17) in 2nd position and mini (11-14) in 4th position. Continuations and action over interference are exactly as over an Opening 1NT with the sole exception that if responder's strength is limited in any way (eg: passed hand) then 3-level jump-shifts show an invitational hand with a reasonable 6-card suit with little outside, rather than being Alpha with a 14+ hand.

11.6 Ghestem & Super-Ghestem

2-suited overcalls are handled thus: -

Ghestem

- 2NT is Unusual, showing the Lower 2 unbid suits
- Cue-bid shows the Extreme 2 unbid suits
- 3♣ shows the Higher 2 unbid suits

These are always distributional hands (at least 5-5) but need not be more than weak, since an invitation can always be made with a better hand after partner has set the suit. With a good fit and values, partner can make an unassuming cue-bid before agreeing the trump suit, in which case the Ghestem bidder shows extra length and/or strength in one of his suits, or shows his singleton by bidding his fragment.

Super-Ghestem

- 3NT shows the Lower 2 unbid suits
- Jump cue-bid shows the Extreme 2 unbid suits
- 4♣ shows the Higher 2 unbid suits

These are always good hands with at least 6-5 distribution and at least reasonable opening strength, with HCP concentrated in the long suits as responder must feel able to invite slam with comparatively slim values on the basis of a good fit. Responder either sets the suit or can show a 1st Round Control in one of the other suits (ie: not one of the overcaller's suit) with a good fit and interest in more than game.

Defences

12.1 Defence to Precision Club

12.1.1 At level or favourable vulnerability - CRO Panama

- **Simple Overcalls** are natural and constructive (Lebensohl sequences invite)
- **Double** shows a 2-suiter (Suits same Colour)
- **1NT** shows a 2-suiter (Suits same Rank)
- **2NT** shows a 2-suiter (Suits are Odd)
- **Jump overcalls** are either a weak jump in that suit, or a slightly stronger 3-suiter and show the other 3 suits. Responder always assumes the WJO. If this is doubled and the overcaller redoubles, then this shows the 3-suiter.

12.1.2 At Unfavourable vulnerability - Truscott

- **Simple Overcalls** show 2-suiters with that suit and the one above
- **Jump Overcalls** are weak in that suit (Lebensohl sequences invite)
- **Double** shows Clubs and Hearts
- **1NT** shows Diamonds and Spades.

The general style of bidding over Precision is obstructive with weak hands, as much expensive interference being made as possible. Good hands generally pass and come in later if the bidding dies at a low level.

12.2 To Weak No Trump - Modified Brozel

- **Double** is penalty-orientated, showing either a strong balanced hand or a strong single-suited hand
- **2♣** shows Clubs and Hearts, at least 5-4
- **2♦** shows Diamonds and Hearts, at least 5-4
- **2♥** shows Hearts and Spades, at least 5-4
- **2♠** shows Spades and a Minor, at least 5-4
- **2NT** shows Clubs and Diamonds, at least 5-5
- **Jump Overcalls** are intermediate (11-15)

12.2.1 Continuations after the Double

If Responder cannot stand the double or has a very distributional hand not suited to defense, then continuations are as follows (Bidding of all four hands shown):-

- 1NT - X - No
- **2♣** shows a weak single-suited hand. Partner bids **2♦** and the weak hand passes or signs off in another suit.
 - **2♦** shows a weak 2-suited hand. Partner initially chooses between the Majors, and the weak hand either passes, bids 2NT with both minors, or bids **3♣/3♦** with that minor and the other major. If the doubler bids **2♥** over **2♦**, then partner can bid **2♠** to show that suit and a minor (allowing the doubler to pass or bid 2NT to ask partner to show his minor)
 - **2♥** shows a game-going distributional 2-suiter without Spades. Responder relays with **2♠** and now partner bids 2NT with both Minors or a Minor with that suit and Hearts.
 - **2♠** shows a game-going distributional 2-suiter with Spades and another suit. The Doubler relays with 2NT and partner shows the second suit.

12.2.2 If RHO bids over partner's Double as Weak Take-out

1NT - X - Bid (as a weak take-out). Transfer Lebensohl is used, exactly as over interference over an Opening 1NT.

Defences

12.2.3 Continuations after the 2-suited hands have been shown

There is only one strong bid for responder in each sequence, all the others being natural and non-forcing:-

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ | - 2♥ shows 5-card Hearts, minimum |
| | - 2♠ shows 5-card Hearts, maximum, Diamond shortage |
| | - 2NT shows 4-card Hearts, minimum |
| | - 3♣ shows 4-card Hearts, maximum |
| | - 3♦ shows 5-card Hearts, maximum, Spade shortage |
| | - 3♥ shows 2524 exactly, maximum. |
| 1NT - 2♦ - 2♠ - 2NT | shows 4-card Hearts, minimum |
| | - 3♣ shows 5-card Hearts, maximum, Spade shortage |
| | - 3♦ shows 4-card Hearts, maximum |
| | - 3♥ shows 5-card Hearts, minimum |
| | - 3♠ shows 5-card Hearts, maximum, Club shortage |
| | - 3NT shows 2542 exactly, maximum |
| 1NT - 2♥ - 2NT | - 3♣ shows 5-5, minimum, Diamond shortage |
| | - 3♦ shows 5-5, minimum, Club shortage |
| | - 3♥ shows 5-card Hearts and 4-card Spades, minimum |
| | - 3♠ shows 4-card Hearts and 5-card Spades, minimum |
| | - 3NT shows 5-5, maximum, Club shortage |
| | - 4♣ shows 5-5, maximum, Diamond shortage |
| | - 4♦ 5-card Spades and 4-card Hearts, maximum |
| | - 4♥ 5-card Hearts and 4-card Spades, maximum |
| 1NT - 2♠ - 2NT | - 3♣ shows 4-card Spades and 5-card Clubs, any range |
| | - 3♦ shows 4-card Spades and 5-card Diamonds, any range |
| | - 3♥ shows 5-card Spades and 4-card Clubs, any range |
| | - 3♠ shows 5-card Spades and 4-card Clubs, any range |
| | - 3NT shows 5-5, Diamonds and Spades, minimum range |
| | - 4♣ shows 5-5, Clubs and Spades, minimum range |
| | - 4♦ shows 5-5, Diamonds and Spades, maximum range |
| | - 4♥ shows 5-5, Clubs and Spades, maximum range |
| | - 4♠ shows 6-card Spades and a 5-card Minor, Maximum |
| 1NT - 2NT - 3♥ | - 3♠ shows a minimum |
| | - 3NT shows a maximum |

12.3 To Defence to Strong No Trump - Brozel

This is identical to the defence played against the Weak No Trump as shown above, except that the double is no longer penalty orientated, and always shows a reasonably strong single-suited hand. Partner bids 2♣ and the doubler either passes or bids his suit. Exceptionally, with a good hand, partner may bid the cheapest suit which he is not prepared to support further. eg: 1NT - X - No - 2♥ shows no interest if partner has Hearts, but game interest if partner holds one of the Minors.

Defences

12.4 To Pre-empts - FILM-X

- **Double** is strictly for penalties
- **3NT** is 'to play'
- **Next suit up** is for takeout, but if it is a Major, then it shows a 4-card suit in the process, otherwise 4♣ is for take-out.
- **Double (4th-in-hand)** is for take-out. Other bids are natural
- **Cue-bid** shows a very strong 3-suited take-out, usually guaranteeing a singleton or void in their suit.
- **At 4-level** As above, but over 4♠, or 4♥ if 4-card Spades not held, 4NT is for take-out.

12.5 To Weak 2 Bids - Transfer Lebensohl

- All doubles are for take-out, although they may be passed for penalties.
- Over a double, 'Fast' bids at the 3-level are transfers, showing either invitational or forcing hands. The doubler should break the transfer if he would accept an invitation in that suit by cue-bidding his cheapest control.
- Over a double, 'Slow' bids (via 2NT) are merely competitive, but as with action over 1-level take-out doubles, if the doubler is very strong, then over 2NT he should bid 3♦ to show this and encourage partner to bid more strongly.
- 'Slow' and 'fast' cue-bids of opponents' suit, and bids of 3NT carry the same message as normal: eg: Slow and Fast bids of 3NT both show the values for 3NT, but a fast bid of 3NT shows a single stop at most, whereas a slow bid of 3NT shows a good holding in their suit.

12.6 To Transfer Pre-empts - Clarke Defence

- **By 2nd-in-Hand**
 - Double** shows a 3-suited take-out (Transfer Lebensohl available if at the 2-level)
 - Pass then Double** is strictly for penalties
 - Bid of Pre-empt suit** shows the other 2 suits
 - Bid of a new Suit** shows that suit and the transfer suit
 - Pass then bid** is natural and single-suited
- **By 4th-in-Hand**
 - Double** is for take-out, may be passed for penalties.
 - Anything else** is natural

12.7 To Multi 2 Diamonds - Dixon with Transfer Lebensohl

- **By 2nd-in-Hand**
 - Immediate Double** shows 11-15
 - Delayed Double** shows 16+
 - 2♥/2♠** A weak take-out double of the other Major
 - 2NT** shows 16+, natural, but usually based on a running Minor
 - 3x** shows a jump-rebiddable suit
- **By 4th-in-Hand**
 - Double** shows 11-15
 - Anything else** is as above for 2nd-in-hand
- **Transfer Lebensohl** Where either player doubles in the above scheme, then, if the bidding is still at the 2-level, Transfer Lebensohl is used exactly as over weak 2 bids in 12.5 above.

Defences

12.8 To 2-suited overcalls - Bergin

Against overcalls such as Ghestem, Super-Ghestem, Michaels, Unusual 2NT etc, the following defence is used: -

12.8.1 If the overcall has specified 2 Suits

- **Double** shows values, mainly for defence, & no fit for opener's suit.
- **Cheapest cue-bid** shows a limit or forcing raise in Opener's suit.
- **Other cue-bid** shows an invitational raise in Opener's suit or, more commonly a forcing bid in the 4th suit (see Lebensohl, below)
- **Bid in 4th Suit** Competitive
- **Direct raises** Competitive

12.8.2 If the overcall has specified only one suit

- As above, but the cue of the known suit is the limit/forcing raise in Opener's suit.

12.8.2 Lebensohl

Where the 2-suited overcall is made below the level of 2NT (eg: Michaels), then 2NT is available as Lebensohl, thus: -

- Fast raises are competitive or pre-emptive
- Slow raises are invitational
- Fast bids of the 4th suit are competitive
- Slow bids of the 4th suit are to play or invitational
- Cheapest/Other cue-bids refer to the 4th suit or Opener's suit (as in 12.8.1 and 12.8.2 above), and in general fast cue-bids set up a forcing sequence whilst slow cue-bids are invitational, but responder has to take into account firstly the availability of other means of showing an invitational hand, and whether or not the cue-bid suit (ie: the opponents' suit) is higher or lower ranking than the suit to which the cue-bid refers, eg: -

- 1♥-2♥ (Spades and Diamonds)
 - 3♥ is competitive in Hearts
 - 2NT-2♣-3♥ is mildly invitational
 - 2♠ is strongly invitational in Hearts
 - 2NT-3♣-3♠ is forcing in Hearts
 - 4♥ is pre-emptive
 - 3♣ is competitive in Clubs
 - 2NT-3♣-3♦ is invitational in Clubs
 - 3♦ is forcing in Clubs

- 1♠-2♠ (Hearts and a Minor) - 3♠ is competitive in Spades
 - 2NT-3♣-3♠ is mildly invitational in Spades
 - 2NT-3♣-3♥ is strongly invitational in Spades
 - 3♥ is forcing in Spades
 - 3♣ is forcing in Clubs
 - 3♦ is forcing in Diamonds
 - 2NT-3♣-No is competitive
 - 2NT-3♣-3♦ is invitational in Diamonds

- 1♥-2NT (Minors)
 - 3♣ is a forcing raise in Hearts
 - 3♥ is competitive
 - 3♠ is forcing in Spades
 - 3♦ is competitive in Spades (Note the reversal of the usual meanings, as otherwise the competitive raise would be more expensive)
 - Double shows values, mainly for defence. May have 4-card Spades.

Doubles

13.1 Doubles and Redoubles

13.1.1 Sputnik (Negative) Doubles

In principle, negative doubles are played over Openings of 1♥, 1♠ and 2♣ up to a level of 3♠. Where a negative double is available it shows 8+ (unlimited in principle) and is either a 'classic' sputnik double showing values and length in the unbid suits and no good fit for partner's suit, or may be merely a strong hand which wishes to create a forcing sequence. The availability of Lebensohl in many competitive situations, however, does affect the meaning of the doubles. Where a negative double is available then a disturbed bid is always weak and non-forcing. If, however, 2NT is available as Lebensohl, then the immediate bid may be forcing or competitive depending on the exact sequence, and the slow bid is usually invitational.

13.1.2 Competitive Doubles

Used up to the level of 3♥ where the opponents have agreed a suit, to show an invitational raise in Opener's suit, when the interference has made an invitational raise of the suit impossible

13.1.3 Responsive Doubles

Used up to the level of 3♠

13.1.4 Count-showing Doubles (and redoubles)

Used over the 1♣ and 1♦ openings and immediate interference. Usually show 4-7 points if 1♣ opened, or 11-13 points if 1♦ opened.

13.1.5 Asking Bid Doubles (Redoubles and Passes)

Used in Asking Bid sequences with interference to Ask 'backwards' in order to regain some lost space

13.1.6 Non-penalty Slam Doubles

Where it is the opponent's hand and we are considering whether or not to sacrifice over a high-level contract by the opponents (ie: at the 6-level) or to double them, the following format is used: -

- **2nd-in-hand** passes with 1 or more defensive tricks
doubles with no defensive tricks
- **4th-in-hand** (1) If partner passes: passes with 1 or more defensive tricks
doubles with no defensive tricks
(2) If partner doubles: passes with 2 or more defensive tricks
bids with only 1 or no defensive tricks

13.1.7 Control showing Pass/Double

Where it essentially *our* hand and the opponents have sacrificed over a high-level contract of ours, in a sequence in which 2nd-in-hand is not the Captain of the hand (or if there is no Captain as such) and whether we bid one more or not is a matter of controlling their suit (and controls in their suit have not been shown in the bidding by a cue-bid or Asking Bid), then: -

- **2nd-in-hand** passes with 1st Round Control of their suit (or if at the 5-level with 1st or 2nd Round Control)
doubles with no such holding
- **4th-in-hand** passes, doubles or bids accordingly

13.1.8 3rd Suit Doubles

Where three suits have been bid naturally, a double of the 3rd suit shows the unbid suit except where this would clash with other agreements as above.

Carding

14.1 Carding Methods

14.1.1 Leads

Journalist throughout

Against Suits: - Journalist, 3rd & 5th, M-U-D
Against NT's: - Roman, Attitude, Top of Nothing

14.1.2 Signals

On Partner's Lead: - High-Low shows an even number
Low-High shows an odd number
An odd card encourages
An even card discourages and is a McKinney signal

14.1.3 Discards

An odd card encourages in that suit
An even card discourages and is a McKinney (Lavinthal) signal