

# System Notes

James Sundstrom  
Nathan Savir

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## Notation Legend

<b>M</b>	Either Major. If used multiple times, it always refers to the same major. For example, 1M-2♣-2M means either the auction 1♥-2♣-2♥ or 1♠-2♣-2♠, no other auction.
<b>m</b>	Either minor. As per M.
<b>OM</b>	Other major. This is only used after 'M', such as 1m-1M-2NT-3OM.
<b>om</b>	Other minor. As per OM.
<b>R</b>	Raise. Used in some of the step based system to mean a simple raise, such as 1♥-2♥.
<b>DR</b>	Double Raise.
<b>Q</b>	Cuebid.

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**Part I**

**Non-Competitive Auctions**

## General Principles

- 2 over 1 is absolutely game-forcing.
- Jump shifts are strong.
- By a passed hand or in competition, jump shifts are fit-showing.
- Cuebidding shows first-round control, then second.

# Chapter 1

## Opening Bid Summary

1♣/♦

A 1♣/♦ opening shows 3 or more cards and denies the ability to open 1NT. A 1♦ opening is usually based on a 4-card diamond suit.

1♥/♠

A 1♥/♠ opening shows 5 or more cards in the suit, though it may be only 4 in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> seat.

1NT

We play a 15-17 NT. This bid usually does not include a 5-card major.

2♣

Our 2♣ opening is strong and artificial. It is game-forcing unless opener rebids 2NT.

2♦-♠

Weak 2s.

2NT

20-21 balanced. Can include a 5-card major.

3♣-♠

7 card suit (sometimes 6 if the bid is 3♣).

3NT

Gambling, showing a solid minor suit (at least AKQxxxx) and at most one side suit controlled.

4♣-♠

Natural preempts.

# Chapter 2

## Minor Suit Auctions

### 2.1 Minor-Major

#### 2.1.1 Suit Bypassing Agreements

After a  $1\clubsuit$  opening, we generally bypass the diamond suit in order to show a major.

#### 2.1.2 New Minor Forcing

We play New Minor Forcing over both 1NT and 2NT rebids. After  $1m-1M-1NT$ ,  $2om$  is artificial and forcing, promising at least 10 points. Over  $1m-1M-2NT$ ,  $3om$  is artificial and game-forcing. (After  $1\heartsuit-1\spadesuit-1NT$ ,  $2\clubsuit$  is NMF whereas  $2\diamondsuit$  is natural.)

After  $1m-1M-1NT-2om$ , opener's priorities are to:

1. Show 3 card support for the original major.
2. Show 4 cards in the other major.
3. Rebid the minor with 5 cards in the minor.
4. Rebid NT.

#### Other rebids after $1m-1M-1NT$ :

$2\heartsuit/\spadesuit$  is natural and non-forcing.

2NT is natural and invitational.

$3om$  shows a 6+ card suit with a minimum hand.

$3OM$  or  $3m$  shows at least 5-5 in the two suits, game-forcing. (Conceivably only 4-5 or 4-6 if the suit being bid is the original minor and the hand is very suit oriented.)  $1m-1\spadesuit-1NT-3\heartsuit$  is 5-5 in the majors whereas  $1m-1\heartsuit-1NT-3\spadesuit$  is 4-5 in the majors.

$3M$  shows an invitational hand with a 6+ card suit.



### 2.1.3 Reverses

After a reverse, we play a Lebensohl slowdown style. The cheaper of 4<sup>th</sup> suit and 2NT initiates the potential for a weak auction. When the 4<sup>th</sup> suit is above 2NT, it is a general waiting bid. (The 4<sup>th</sup> suit can be used in this manner when it is below 2NT as well, so long as responder can show a good hand. Example: 1♣-1♠-2♦-2♥-2NT-3NT) An immediate rebid of the major is forcing for one round. Any call other than the Lebensohl bid or 2M establishes a game force.

A reverse after a 2/1 bid shows extras, though not necessarily the full values usually promised by a reverse. For obvious reasons, Lebensohl does not apply.

## 2.2 Minor Oriented Auctions

We use an inverted minor raise structure. 1m-2m shows 10+ with 5+ card support (sometimes only 4-card support, especially if the suit is diamonds). 1m-3m shows 6-9 with 5+ card support.

After 1♣-1M-2♣, 2♦ is NMF, 2♥ is non-forcing, even if it is a new suit. After 1♦-1M-2♦, all new suits are forcing, with 3♣ possibly artificial/waiting in nature.

## 2.3 NT Oriented auctions

1m-1NT denies a 4-card major and shows 6-10 HCP.

1m-2NT shows 10-12, balanced, generally no 4-card major.

1m-3NT shows 13-15, balanced, generally no 4-card major.

## 2.4 Passed Hand Bidding

1♣-1♦ can contain a 4-card major and minimal values.

A single jump shift is a fit jump, at least 5-4 in the suits, game invitational.

# Chapter 3

## Major Suit Auctions

### 3.1 1 over 1 Auctions

We play a forcing NT response to our major suit openings.  $1\heartsuit$ -1NT denies 4+ spades, forcing for one round.  $1\spadesuit$ -1NT is forcing for one round.

Opener's rebids are natural, with 2m possibly based on a 3 card suit. Rebidding the major promises 6 cards in the major.  $1\spadesuit$ -1NT- $2\heartsuit$  promises 4 hearts.

### 3.2 Major Suit Raise Structure

#### 3.2.1 Direct Raises

Our single raises show 6-9 points with 3+ card support. After 1M-2M, opener can bid a new suit as a help suit game try, or bid 3M as a general game try.

1M-3M is preemptive, showing 4-card support and less than constructive values.

1M-4M is preemptive, showing 5-card support and a weak hand.

#### 3.2.2 Bergen

We play standard Bergen raises.  $3\clubsuit$  shows 7-9 with 4 trumps;  $3\diamondsuit$  shows 10-12 with 4 trumps. After a Bergen raise, opener can return to 3M with no game interest, or bid an intervening step as a general game try. Bids above 3M are cuebids. Either partner may bid 3NT as an offer to play there, despite the known 9-card fit, because we do not wish to add more complicated agreements now.

#### 3.2.3 Jacoby 2NT

1M-2NT is a GF raise with at least 4 trumps. After Jacoby, opener bids a good 5-card side suit on the four level if he has one. If he has a singleton or void, he bids it on the three level. Without any singletons or voids, opener rebids 4M with a minimum. With better than a minimum and 5 trumps, opener rebids 3NT. With better than a minimum and extra trumps, opener rebids 3M.

### 3.2.4 3NT

1M-3NT offers a choice of games, showing 13-15 points, exactly 3-card support, and a balanced hand. It suggests playing in 3NT despite the known 8-card fit.

### 3.2.5 Splinters

All double jump shifts promise a game-forcing hand with 4+ trumps and a singleton or void in the suit bid.

## 3.3 Passed Hand

### 3.3.1 Drury

We play reverse Drury. The auction P-1M-2♣ shows a limit raise (or better) with at least three trumps. Opener rebids 2M with less than a full opening bid. This does not promise extra length; it can still be a 4-card suit. Opener can rebid 2♦ as a waiting action with a full opening bid. Other bids are natural and positive. (2NT is game-forcing, but suggests only four trumps.) P-1M-2♣-3M is game-forcing and initiates cuebidding.

### 3.3.2 Other Passed Hand Responses

Jump shifts are fit-showing, showing 5 good cards in the suit bid and 4 in opener's major, game invitational.

# Chapter 4

## NT Auctions

Our 1NT opening is strong, showing 15-17. We try not to have a 5-card major.

### 4.1 1NT

Direct responses to 1NT:

- 2♣:** Stayman, does not necessarily promise a 4-card major. Usually shows 8+ points, unless responder plans to sign off on the 2 level.
- 2♦:** Transfer to hearts.
- 2♥:** Transfer to spades.
- 2♠:** Transfer to 3♣. Opener bids 3♣ with Qxx or better of clubs, and 2NT without.
- 2NT:** Transfer to 3♦. Opener bids 3♦ with Qxx or better of diamonds, and 3♣ without.
- 3NT:** To play.
- 4♣:** Gerber
- 4♦:** Transfer to hearts, showing 6+ hearts and a game-forcing hand.
- 4♥:** Transfer to spades, showing 6+ spades and a game-forcing hand.
- 4NT:** Invites 6NT. New suit bids are natural.
- 5m:** To play
- 5NT:** Forcing to the 6 level, invites 7. New suit bids are natural.
- 6NT:** To play.

### 4.1.1 Extended Auctions after Stayman

Over a 2♦ rebid:

- 2♥/♠: At least 5-4 in the majors, trying to play on the 2 level.
- 2NT: Invitational, 8-9 points, does not promise a 4-card major.
- 3♥: Game-forcing with 45xx distribution.
- 3♠: Game-forcing with 54xx distribution.
- 4♣: Gerber
- 4♦/♥: Delayed Texas Transfer, shows 6-4 in the majors, generally without slam interest.

Over a 2♥ rebid:

- 2NT: Invitational; does not promise 4 spades.
- 3m: Natural, 5+ cards in the minor with 4 spades, game-forcing.
- 3♥: Invitational with 4 hearts.
- 3NT: Game-forcing hand with 4 spades.
- 4♣: Gerber.
- 4♥: To play

Over a 2♠ rebid:

- 2NT: Invitational, does not promise 4 hearts.
- 3m: Natural, 5+ cards in the minor with 4 hearts, game-forcing.
- 3♠: Invitational with 4 spades.
- 3NT: Game-forcing hand with 4 hearts.
- 4♣: Gerber.
- 4♠: To play

### 4.1.2 Superaccepts

Opener's rebids after a 2M-1 Jacoby Transfer:

- 2M: Denies 4-card support, unless minimum with no doubleton.
- 2NT: Maximum with 4-card support and no doubleton.
- NS: Maximum with 4-card support and a doubleton in the suit bid.
- 3M: Minimum with 4-card support and a doubleton.

## 4.2 2NT

Our 2NT opener shows 20-21 balanced. The auction  $2\clubsuit$ - $2\diamond$ -2NT shows 22-23 balanced, and  $2\clubsuit$ - $2\diamond$ - $2\heartsuit$ - $2\spadesuit$ -2NT shows 24+ balanced. We play the following system after both of these auctions:

- $3\clubsuit$ : Puppet Stayman
- $3\diamond/\heartsuit$ : Jacoby Transfers
- $3\spadesuit$ : Minor Suit Stayman. Opener rebids 4m with Qxx or better and 4M with both minors and a major suit control.
- 3NT: To play.
- $4\clubsuit$ : Gerber
- $4\diamond$ : Texas Transfer.
- $4\heartsuit$ : Texas Transfer.
- 4NT: Invitational to 6NT. New suits are natural.
- 5m: To play.
- 5NT: Forcing to the 6 level, invitational to 7.
- 6NT: To play.

### 4.2.1 Extended Auctions after Stayman

Over a  $3\diamond$  rebid by opener showing a 4-card major, 3NT by responder denies a 4-card major, 3M shows 4 cards in the *other* major,  $4\clubsuit$  shows both majors with slam interest, and  $4\diamond$  shows both majors without slam interest.

Over a 3NT rebid by opener denying majors,  $4\clubsuit$  is Gerber and  $4\diamond/\heartsuit$  are delayed Texas.

# Chapter 5

## 2♣ Auctions

Our 2♣ opening is artificial and absolutely game forcing unless opener rebids 2NT. Responder will almost always bid 2♦ as an artificial waiting bid, not promising any strength. Other bids are natural and game-forcing, with at least five cards in the suit bid and two of the top three honors.

### 5.1 After 2♦ Response

Opener's rebids after the waiting 2♦ response:

- 2♥: Relay to 2♠, either with hearts or 24+ balanced. With 24+ balanced, opener's next bid is 2NT. All other bids show a hand with hearts.
- 2♠/3m: Natural, game forcing.
- 2NT: 22-24 balanced.

# Chapter 6

## Slam Bidding

### 6.1 1430

Our Blackwood bids use 1430 responses. After a  $5\clubsuit$  or  $5\diamondsuit$  response, the asker can bid the next non-trump step to ask about the queen of trumps. Partner bids trump at the lowest level to deny the queen. With the queen, he cuebids a side king. With no side king, he jumps in the trump suit to show the queen. After the ace ask, a 5NT bid asks for specific kings.

### 6.2 Gerber

Our Gerber bids use standard Gerber responses, after which  $5\clubsuit$  asks for kings with standard responses.

### 6.3 Exclusion

After a suit has been agreed (or in obvious situations), a jump to 5 of an unbid side suit asks for keycards excluding the ace of that suit. (1430 responses) After the response, the lowest available non-trump bid asks for specific kings.

### 6.4 Interference after Ace-Asking Bids

We use DOPI to deal with interference.



# Chapter 7

## Preempts

### 7.1 Natural Preempts

2♦-2♠ are all weak 2s, showing a 6-card suit. and 5-10 points. A 2NT response asks opener to cuebid a feature (ace or king) if he has one. A new suit by responder is forcing. Any raise is to play. (For example, 2♠-3♠ is merely increasing the preempt, not inviting opener to bid again.)

3♣-3♠ are natural preempts.

### 7.2 Gambling 3NT

A 3NT opening shows a solid 7+ card minor with at most one side suit controlled.

#### 7.2.1 Responses to 3NT

After 3NT, responder bids as follows:

- Pass:** Desire to play 3NT, with stoppers in at least two suits
- 4♣:** Asks opener to pass or correct to 4♦
- 4♦:** Asks opener to show shortness (further description below)
- 4M:** To play

#### 7.2.2 Rebids after 4♦

Opener shows shortness by bidding:

- 4M:** Singleton or void in the bid suit
- 4NT:** No singleton or void, 22(72) distribution
- 5m:** Singleton or void in the *other* minor

# Part II

## Competitive Auctions

## General Principles

- Raises are competitive or preemptive.
- Cuebids are limit raises or better.
- Jump shifts are fit-showing.

# Chapter 8

## vs. Our Openers

### 8.1 Our 1m Openers

#### 8.1.1 vs. Takeout Doubles

- NS:** A new suit on the 1 level is forcing.  $1\spadesuit-(X)-2\clubsuit$  is not forcing.
- JS:** Fit-showing, limit raise or better. Promises 5+ good cards in suit bid and 4+ cards in partner's suit.
- 2m:** Competitive.
- 3m:** Preemptive with 5+ card support. No strength promised.
- XX:** 10+ points. Creates a forcing pass.
- 2NT:** 10+ points, 5+ card support. Forcing one round.

#### 8.1.2 vs. Simple Overcalls

- NS:** One round force.
- 2m:** Competitive.
- 3m:** Preemptive with 5+ card support. No strength promised.
- X:** Negative, showing 4 cards in an unbid major.
- Q:** A cuebid is the only strong raise, showing 10+ points and 5+ cards in the minor.

#### 8.1.3 vs. Two-suited Bids

We play Unusual vs. Unusual if both suits are known. Bidding the higher suit promises a limit raise or better of the higher-ranking other suit, and bidding the lower shows the same for the lower-ranking other suit. If only one suit is known, bidding it shows a limit raise or better of partner's suit, and bidding a new suit is natural.

### 8.1.4 vs. Sandwich Overcalls

After a sandwich overcall, we play support doubles through 2♠. Support doubles apply even if responder's suit is a minor. Double shows exactly 3-card support for responder's suit. Even with 3-card support, opener is not required to double if a more descriptive call is available.

## 8.2 Our 1M Openers

### 8.2.1 vs. Takeout Doubles

- OM:** One round force.
- 2m:** Nonforcing, 5+ card suit.
- R:** Competitive.
- DR:** Preemptive, 4+ card support. No strength promised.
- JS:** Fit-showing. Promises 5 good cards in suit bid and 4+ cards in M.
- XX:** 10+ points, at most 3 cards in the suit. Creates a forcing pass.
- 2NT:** 10+ points, 4+ cards in the suit.

### 8.2.2 vs. Simple Overcalls

- NS:** One round force. Over this, we play support doubles and redoubles through 2♠.
- R:** Competitive.
- DR:** Preemptive with 4+ card support. No strength promised.
- X:** Negative.
- Q:** A cuebid is the only strong raise, showing 10+ points and 3+ cards in the major.

### 8.2.3 vs. Two-suited Bids

Same as after a minor suit opening.

### 8.2.4 vs. Sandwich Overcalls

After a sandwich overcall, we play support doubles through 2♠. Support doubles apply even if responder's suit is a minor. Double shows exactly 3-card support for responder's suit. Even with 3-card support, opener is not required to double if a more descriptive call is available.

## 8.2.5 Passed Hand

If there is interference over a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> seat opening, Drury does not apply. Over a double, the same agreements apply as after a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> seat opening.

## 8.3 Our 1NT Openers

### 8.3.1 Systems On

We ignore doubles of our NT and nebulous 2♣ overcalls. Double of a nebulous 2♣ bid is Stayman. Responder may pass over 2♣, and then use our Lebensohl agreements once overcaller's suit is known.

### 8.3.2 Systems Off

After other 2 level overcalls, we play Lebensohl in a “fast denies” style. Texas Transfers still apply.

Over a 3 level overcall, double is negative and new suits below game are natural and forcing.

# Chapter 9

## vs. Opponent's Openers

### 9.1 vs. 1 of a Suit

#### 9.1.1 Simple Overcall

Generally shows 8+ points and 5+ cards in the suit bid. A new suit response is a one round force. A cuebid shows a limit raise or better. A double raise is preemptive.

#### 9.1.2 Double

Takeout. Advancer chooses a suit at the lowest available level with 0-9 points, jumps with 10-12 points. With a stronger hand, advancer can simply bid a game, or cuebid to establish a game force if he needs more information.

If the doubler bids his own suit after opener makes a nonforcing response, that shows 17+ points.

#### 9.1.3 1NT

In direct seat, a 1NT overcall shows 15-18 HCP. In balancing seat, it shows 11-14. We play the same system after a 1NT overcall as we do after a 1NT opening.

#### 9.1.4 Jump Overcalls

Preemptive.

#### 9.1.5 Two-suited Overcalls

A cuebid of the opponents' suit shows a two-suited hand, at least 5-5 in the majors if the opponents bid a minor, or the other major and a minor if the opponents bid a major. (Advancer can bid 2NT to ask for partner's minor.) An overcall of 2NT promises at least 5-5 in the two lowest unbid suits.

In sandwich seat, a 1NT overcall also shows both unbid suits. A 1NT overcall shows a distributional hand, since a takeout double is also available. (Of course, a 2NT

overall still shows the unbid suits, and is even more distributional than 1NT.) A bid of an opponent's suit is natural, since it is no longer needed to show a two-suited hand.

## 9.2 vs. NT Openers

We play Reverse Cappelletti against a natural NT opening. This applies in all seats.

### Reverse Cappelletti:

- 2♣:** Shows either a single-suited diamond hand or a major-minor hand.
- P:** Clubs and no desire to get any higher.
- 2♦:** Default action. Asks overcaller to pass with just ♦, or bid the major with a major-minor hand. ...-2M-2NT asks for the minor.
- 2M:** Advancer has his own suit and no interest in doubler's suit(s).
- 2NT:** Game interest opposite diamond hand. Overcaller bids 3♣ with ♣+M (after which 3♦ asks for the major), 3♦ with just diamonds and a minimum, 3M with diamonds and that M, or 3NT with a good diamond one-suiter.
- 2♦:** Both majors
- 2M:** Natural
- 2NT:** Both minors
- X:** Penalty

## 9.3 vs. Preempts

Double is takeout through 4♥. The higher the level of the double, the more likely advancer is to convert for penalties.

### 9.3.1 vs. Natural weak twos

Over the opponents' natural weak 2 bids, we play natural simple overcalls with 2NT showing 16-18 or so. After a major suit overcall, a cuebid below 3M shows a limit raise or better. A jump cuebid below game is a splinter and a slam try. If their responder bids something which makes the cuebid below 3M unavailable, then the cuebid below 4M is a game raise which sets up a forcing pass, whereas a 4M bid is a game raise which does not set up a forcing pass (may even be an advance sacrifice against their game).

After a 2NT overcall, advancer has the following options:



- 3♣:** Stayman, with delayed Texas after a 3♦ response. After a 3M response, a cuebid is a general slam try with a fit.
- 3♦/♥:** Jacoby transfers. Overcaller may superaccept. If a transfer to the enemy suit, asks overcaller about the quality of his stoppers. If overcaller has only one stopper, he should not bid 3NT. Accepting the transfer shows a holding that will be two stoppers opposite the J (KTx, ATx, A9xx, etc). Other bids show only one stopper, and are as natural as possible.
- 3♠:** Minor suit stayman. Usually a slam try.
- 3NT:** To play.
- 4♣:** Gerber.
- 4♦/♥:** Texas transfer. Undefined if to enemy suit.
- 4NT:** Quantitative.

After a takeout double of a weak 2 by an unpassed hand, we play Lebensohl by advancer. New suits at the 2 level are to play. New suits at the 3 level below the opened suit are forcing one round. New suits at the 3 level above the opened suit are GF and 5+ cards. 2NT relays 3♣ (doubler may break relay with serious extras) after which new suits on the three level are to play below opened suit or invitational above. 3NT is to play. 2NT followed by a cuebid in response to a double of a weak 2 shows game forcing values, and one stopper (usually Qx(x) or Kx) in the enemy major (allows doubler to bid 3NT when he has Ax(x) or Kx(x)). A direct cuebid by advancer shows a GF hand with at least one unbid 4-card major. Examples: (2♥)-X-3♥ shows a GF with exactly 4 spades, but (2♥)-X-3♠ promises 5 spades. (2♦)-X-3♦ shows one or both majors. Doubler will generally bid 3♥ with 4+ hearts or 3♠ with spades and not hearts. Advancer can now bid 3NT with stoppers and no known fit, bid 3♠ over 3♥ with spades but not hearts, or bid a game (or cuebid again with forward interest) if doubler chose wisely. If advancer has hearts, doubler bids 3♠, and advancer has no stopper, he will generally bid 4♣ with some clubs or pick a Moysian to play in at the four level depending on his diamond length.

A direct cuebid of the weak 2 is Western, after which 3NT by advancer shows a stopper, the next non-3NT step artificially denies a stopper, and all other bids are natural, constructive, and strongly tend to deny a stopper.

A jump to 3M is strong, usually a 5 loser hand with a robust suit (needing two working cards from partner to make game). A jump to 4M is usually a 4 loser hand. A double jump to 4M is *always* a 4-loser hand.

A jump to 4m is a strong 2-suiter, with this suit and an unbid major. After 2♦-4♣, the major is unknown, so advancer can bid 4♦ to ask for the major.

Over a 2♦ opening, a 4♦ overcall shows both majors. This is a shape hand, not a high-card hand.

Over a 2M opening, 4M shows both minors. This is a shape hand, not a high-card hand.

# Part III

## Defensive Carding

## Leads

Length leads are 4<sup>th</sup> best against NT. We lead 3<sup>rd</sup> from even and low from odd against suit contracts.

We lead Rusinow (lead of an honor promises the next higher honor or shortness), except in partner's suit. A suit belongs to the first member of the partnership to show that suit. To establish ownership, a call must promise at least four cards - for instance, 1M-1NT-2♣ does not establish ownership of clubs. The only exception to this rule is a 1m opening bid, which does establish ownership. Doubles generally do not establish suit ownership, though in some cases a negative double can. For example, 1♣-(1♥)-X establishes ownership of spades.

## Signals

We use upside-down count and attitude. Our primary signal is attitude.