

2009

Dragon Weak NT



Inexorably, advantage accrues to our side, not because the opponents do not understand our bids, but because they were unfortunately not using those bids.

Alvin Roth (1953)



Credits

This system of conventional responses to a weak no trump opening would not be possible without the prior work presented in the Polish Club (WJ2005) and the Kokish Weak NT.

I give full credit to the originators of these systems for providing the solid base upon which the Dragon Weak No Trump is founded.

WJ2005 Relay Stayman
 3-1-(5-4) and 1-3-(5-4) Conventions
 Principles of a relay systems
 Slam Bidding Principles

Kokish Weak NT All other responses

Both of these systems are complete and stand on their own merits. I had to introduce some modifications to remove duplicate bids and to clarify some situations.

Other Notes

The bidding diagrams are color-coded to indicate alertable bids, in accordance with the General Convention Chart (GCC). This should only be considered a guideline since the GCC is subject to change at the discretion of the ACBL.

The colour of each bid indicates its alert status:

Black	No alert
Blue	Announce
Red	Alert
Brown	Post-alert

Dragon 1NT Overview

In Dragon, a one no trump opening bid promises 11-14 hcp and a balanced or semi-balanced hand with one of the following hand patterns:

- (4-3-3-3)
- (4-4-3-2)
- (5-3-3-2), with a 5-card minor
- (6-3-2-2), with a 6-card minor
- 2-2-4-5
- 2-2-5-4
- (4-2)-5-2, but opener must pretend it is (4-2)-4-3. Optionally, this could be opened 1♦
- (4-2)-2-5, but opener must pretend it is (4-2)-3-4. Optionally, this could be opened 2♣ (or 1♣ if not playing Dragon)

Note: You cannot open 1NT with a 5-card major. There is no way to disclose a 5-card major in this system.

The Dragon weak no trump uses a hybrid system developed by combining the Polish Club (WJ2005) responses with those suggested in the Kokish Weak NT. I have also added a few tweaks of my own.

Interesting features include multiple meanings for a single bid, as well as the ability to determine opener's exact distribution through asking bids after Stayman.

1 NT	11-14 hcp, bal
2♣	Stayman
2♦	Transfer to ♥ (or GF x-x-5-5)
2♥	Transfer to ♠
2♠	Transfer to ♣ (or raise to 2NT)
2NT	Transfer to ♦ (or x-x-5-5, weak)
3♣	x-x-5-5, Invitational
3♦	Bal. Quantitative Slam Try. Asks for Controls (3+)
3♥	3-1-(5-4), GF, No Slam Interest
3♠	1-3-(5-4), GF, No Slam Interest
3NT	To Play
4♣	Gerber
4♦	Texas Transfer
4♥	Texas Transfer
4♠	Quantitative NT Raise w/ 6+ clubs to 3 of top 5
4NT	Quantitative NT Raise w/ 6+ diamonds to 3 of top 5
5♣	To Play
5♦	To Play

Figure: 1 NT Overview (part 1 of 1)

1 NT - 2♣ (Stayman)

Overview: Stayman asks opener to further describe their hand. Dragon has extended this to include a modified version of the asking bids as presented in the Polish Club (WJ2005).

Strength: Any

Note: Almost all slam-interest hands use Stayman. The only exceptions are single-suited minors or slammish hands with 5-5 in the minors.

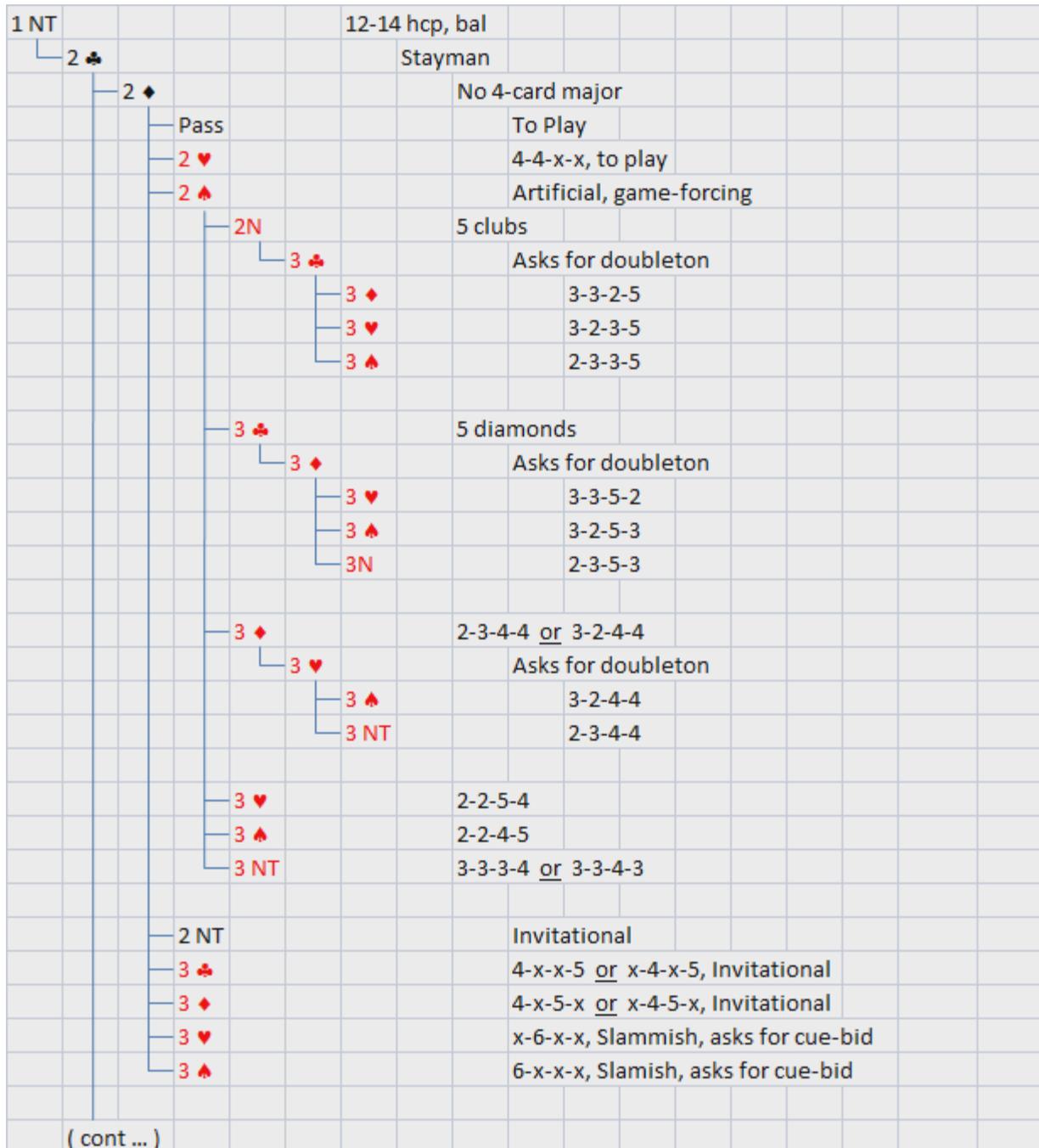


Figure: 1 NT-2♣ (part 1 of 3)

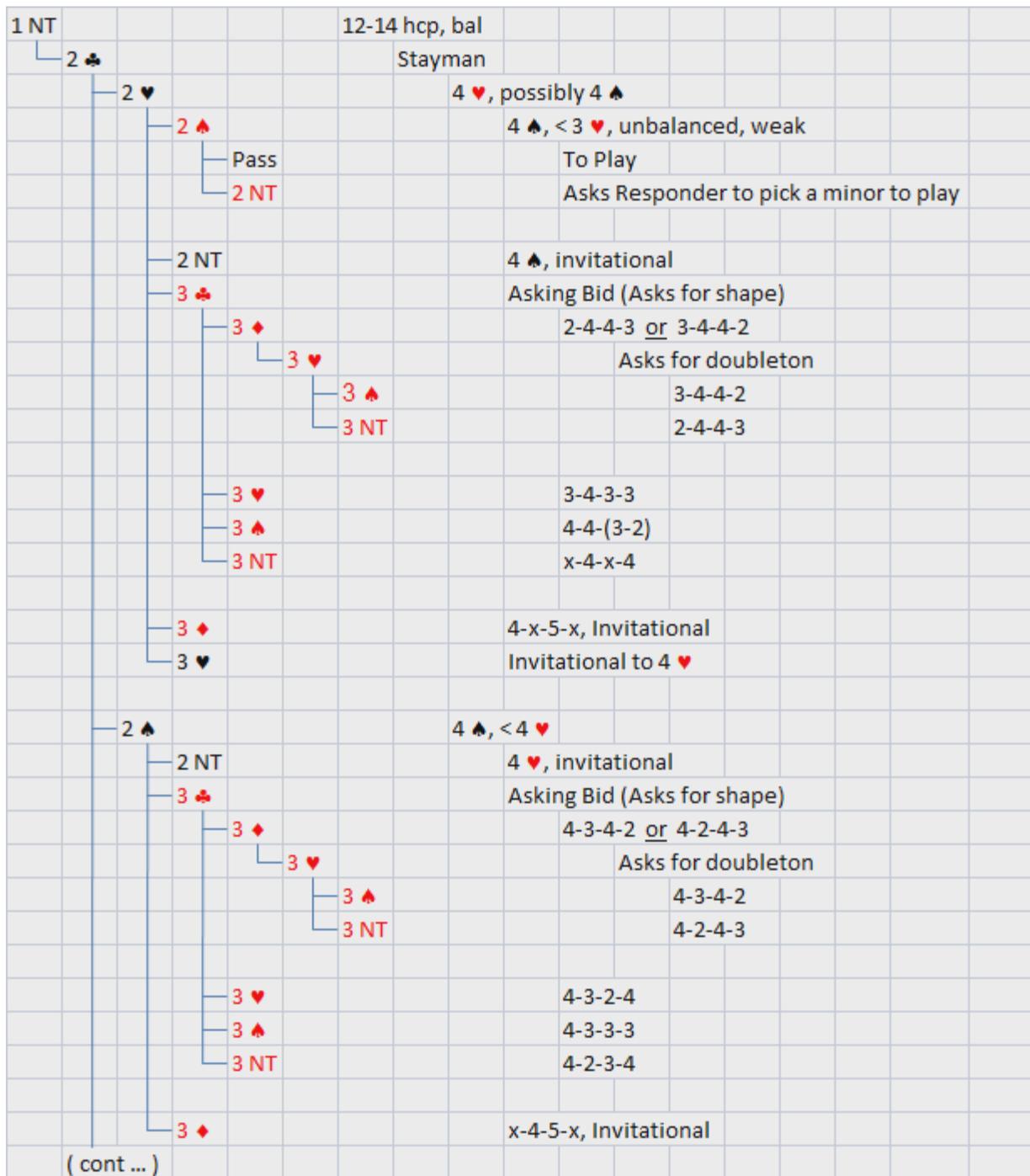


Figure: 1 NT-2♣ (part 2 of 3)

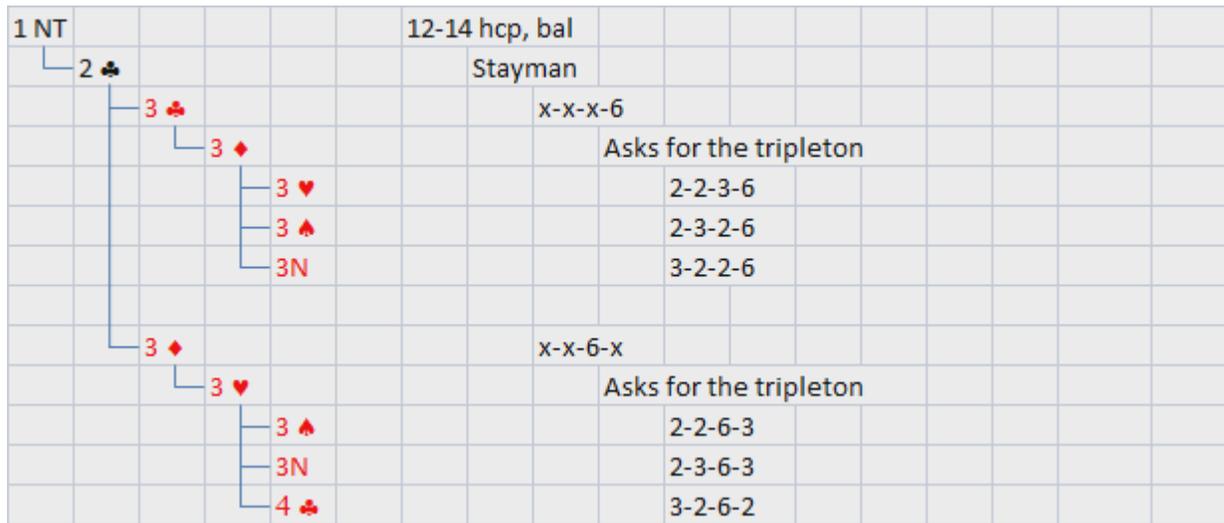


Figure: 1 NT-2♣ (part 3 of 3)

1 NT - 2♦ (Transfer to ♥ or Game-forcing with x-x-5-5)

Overview: This is an unconditional transfer to hearts; opener must take the transfer. Responder will clarify with their next bid.

Strength: Game or slam interest if both minors. Otherwise, denies slam interest.

Notes: A transfer followed by a new suit is invitational. Traditional game-forcing major transfer-style hands must use Stayman. Opener cannot super-accept.

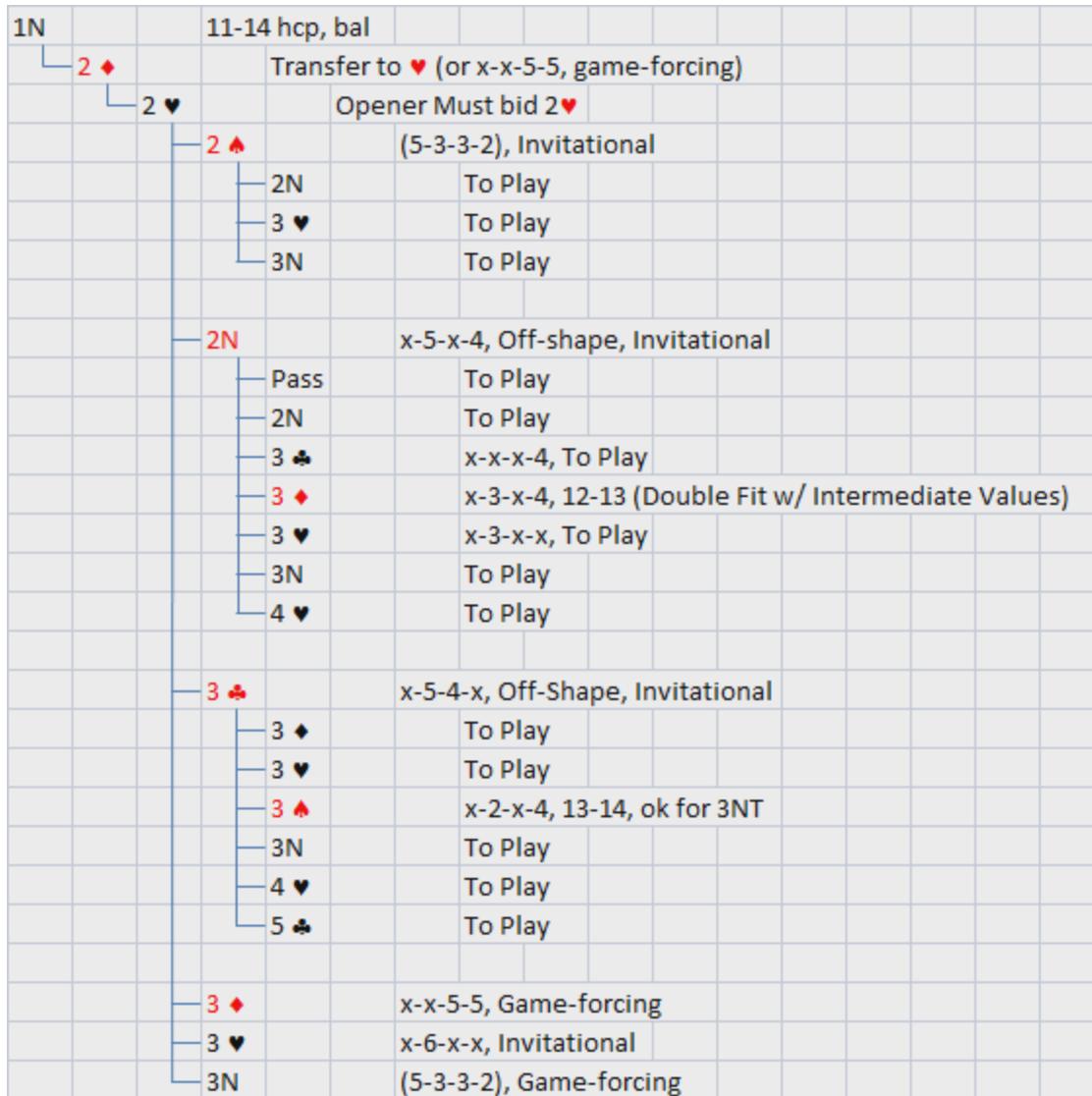


Figure: 1 NT-2♦ (part 1 of 1)

1 NT - 2♥ (Transfer to ♠)

Overview: This is an unconditional transfer to spades and always promises spades.

Strength: No slam interest

Notes: Traditional game-forcing major transfer-style hands must use Stayman. Opener cannot super-accept.

1 NT					12-14 hcp, bal									
	2♥				Transfer to ♠									
		2♠			Opener Must bid 2♠									
			2N		(5-3-3-2) bal, invitational									
			3♣		5-x-x-4, off-shape, invitational									
			3♦		5-x-4-x, off-shape, invitational									
			3♠		6-x-x-x, Invitational									

Figure: 1 NT-2♥ (part 1 of 1)

1 NT - 2♠ (Transfer to ♣ or Invitational Balanced)

Overview: This bid shows an invitational balanced hand or a transfer to clubs.

Strength: Invitational if semi-balanced. Weak or slammish if clubs.

1 NT		12-14 hcp, bal
	2♠	Transfer to ♣ (or raise to 2NT)
	2 NT	11-12 hcp, says nothing about club fit
	Pass	Balanced invitational
	3♣	To Play
	3♦	x-x-4-6, GF
	3♥	x-1-x-6, GF
	3♠	1-x-x-6, GF
	3 NT	x-x-1-6, NF
	4♣	Minorwood for clubs
	4♦	x-x-1-6, slammish
	4♥	Exclusion 0314 against hearts
	4♠	Exclusion 0314 against spades
	4 NT	x-x-x-6, quantitative raise w/out 3 of top 5
	5♣	Asks opener to raise 1 level for each A or K of trump
	5♦	Exclusion 0314 against diamonds
	5♥	Grand Slam Force for clubs (Up the line: cheap to strong)
	5 NT	Choice of slams (6♣ or 6N)
	3♣	13-14 hcp, says nothing about club fit
	Pass	To Play
	3♦	x-x-4-6, GF
	3♥	x-1-x-6, GF
	3♠	1-x-x-6, GF
	3 NT	To Play (responder had bal. invite)
	4♣	Minor wood for clubs
	4♦	x-x-1-6, slammish
	4♥	Exclusion 0314 against hearts
	4♠	Exclusion 0314 against spades
	4 NT	x-x-x-6, quantitative raise w/out 3 of top 5
	5♣	Asks opened to raise 1 level for each A or K of trump
	5♦	Exclusion 0314 against diamonds
	5♥	Grand Slam Force for clubs (Up the line: cheap to strong)
	5 NT	Choice of slams (6♣ or 6N)

Figure: 1 NT-2♠ (part 1 of 1)

1 NT – 2 NT (Transfer to ♦ or x-x-5-5 weak)

Overview: This bid promises a transfer to diamonds or a weak hand with both minors.

Strength: Weak if 5-5 in the minors. Weak or slammish if diamonds.

Notes: If responder shows a game-forcing diamond hand, they must be slammish or they would not have shown their suit

1 NT		12-14 hcp, bal
	2 NT	Transfer to ♦ (or x-x-5-5, weak)
	3 ♣	I would pass an invitational 3 diamonds
	Pass	x-x-5-5, weak
	3 ♦	To Play (weak w/ diamonds)
	3 ♥	x-1-6-x, GF
	3 ♠	1-x-6-x, GF
	3 NT	x-x-6-1, NF
	4 ♣	x-x-6-4, GF
	4 ♦	Minor wood for diamonds
	4 ♥	Exclusion 0314 for hearts
	4 ♠	Exclusion 0314 for spades
	4 NT	x-x-x-6, quantitative w/out 3 of top 5
	5 ♣	x-x-6-1, slammish
	5 ♦	Raise one level for each A or K of trumps
	5 ♥	Exclusion 0314 for diamonds
	5 ♠	Grand Slam Force for diamonds
	5 NT	Choice of slams (6♦ or 6N)
	3 ♦	Good for game opposite one-suited diamond invitation
	Pass	To Play (weak w/ diamonds or both minors)
	3 ♥	x-1-6-x, GF
	3 ♠	1-x-6-x, GF
	3 NT	x-x-6-1, NF
	4 ♣	x-x-6-4, GF
	4 ♦	Minor wood for diamonds
	4 ♥	Exclusion 0314 against hearts
	4 ♠	Exclusion 0314 against spades
	4 NT	x-x-x-6, quantitative w/out 3 of top 5
	5 ♣	x-x-6-1, slammish
	5 ♦	Raise one level for each A or K of trumps
	5 ♥	Exclusion 0314 against diamonds
	5 ♠	Grand Slam Force for diamonds
	5 NT	Choice of slams (6♦ or 6N)

Figure: 1 NT-2 NT (part 1 of 1)

1 NT - 3♣ (Invitational with x-x-5-5)

Overview: Promises an invitational hand with 5-5 in the minors.

Strength: Invitational

1 NT		12-14 hcp, bal																	
	3♣		x-x-5-5, Invitational																
		Pass	To Play																
		3♦	To Play																
		3♥	Game possible if responder is short in hearts																
		3♠	Game possible if responder is short in spades																

Figure: 1 NT-3♣ (part 1 of 1)

1 NT - 3♦ (Quantitative No Trump Slam-try)

Overview: Promises a 17+ hcp, balanced or semi-balanced hand.

Strength: 17+ hcp

Notes: This bid replaces the traditional 1NT – 4NT auction. Responder is able to determine controls and can accurately place the contract.

1 NT		12-14 hcp, bal																	
	3♦		Bal. Quantitative Slam Try. Asks for Controls (3+)																
		3♥	3 Controls																
		3♠	4 Controls																
		3 NT	5 Controls																
		4♣	6 Controls (AKAK)																

Figure: 1 NT-3♦ (part 1 of 1)

1 NT - 3♥ (3-1-5-4 or 3-1-4-5, Game-forcing)

Overview: Unlike the original 5431 convention, this version promises 3-1-(5-4) distribution. With more extreme distributions, responder must use Stayman and follow up with an asking bid to determine opener's exact distribution.

Strength: Game-forcing

1 NT			12-14 hcp, bal
3♥			3-1-(5-4)
3♠			4-5 spades, suggesting moysian fit
3 NT			To Play
4♣			Clubs are trump
4♦			Diamonds are trump
4♥			x-x-4-4, maximum, no wastage in hearts
4 NT			x-x-4-4, wrong for 3N and weaker than 4H

Figure: 1NT - 3♥ (part 1 of 1)

1 NT - 3♠ (1-3-5-4 or 1-3-4-5, Game-forcing)

Overview: Unlike the original 5431 convention, this version promises 1-3-(5-4) distribution. With more extreme distributions, responder must use Stayman and follow up with an asking bid to determine opener's exact distribution.

Strength: Game-forcing

1 NT			12-14 hcp, bal
3♠			1-3-(5-4)
3 NT			To Play
4♣			Clubs are trump
4♦			Diamonds are trump
4♥			4-5 hearts, suggesting moysian
4♠			x-x-4-4, maximum, no wastage in spades
4 NT			x-x-4-4, wrong for 3N and weaker than 4♠

Figure: 1NT - 3♠ (part 1 of 1)

1 NT Slam Bidding

The Dragon Weak No Trump opening has several ways to explore for slam, as follows:

- Gerber
- Quantitative Raise
- Minor Suit Transfer Slam Tries
- Minor Suit Quantitative Slam Tries
- Stayman Slam Tries

Gerber (1NT - 4♣)

This is the standard implementation of the Gerber convention. It only applies immediately after a no trump opening.

E.g.: 1NT – 4♣

Quantitative Raise (1NT - 3♦)

A response of 3♦ is a quantitative no trump slam try. This bid replaces the more normal auction of 1N – 4N. Opener shows how many controls they have and responder places the contract.

E.g.:

<u>North</u>		<u>South</u>	
1N	11-14	3♦	Quantitative No Trump Raise
3♠	4 controls	6NT	

Minors Suit Transfer Slam Tries (1NT - 2♠... or 1NT - 3♣)

When responder has a single suited minor or both minors with 6-4 shape, the preferred method to explore for game and slam is to transfer to the minor and follow up with a bid that shows the other minor.

Minors Suit Quantitative Slam Tries (1NT - 4♠... or 1N - 4NT...)

Responder can make a quantitative slam try in a minor with 3 of the top 5 honours by bidding as follows:

1NT - 4♠	(Quantitative raise 6+ Clubs with 3 of the top 5 honours)
1NT – 4NT	(Quantitative raise 6+ Diamonds with 3 of the top 5 honours)

Stayman Slam Tries

Most slam tries will begin with Stayman, regardless of whether responder has a 4-card major. Responder is able to determine opener's exact distribution and determine the location of a fit prior to looking for slam.

Stayman without artificial asking bids, followed by 4NT

This sequence would start a typical 1430 or RKC auction.

Stayman with asking bids, followed by a 4♦ bid from responder

This is an unconditional sign-off. Opener is obliged to bid 4♥ and responder will place the contract.

Stayman with asking bids followed by a game-bid from responder

Responder can make a mild slam try after asking for opener's distribution by simply bidding game. If responder had wanted to sign-off, they would have bid 4♦ first.

Stayman with asking bids, followed by a 4♣ bid from responder

This is a control ask from responder. Responses are up-the-line: 0-3, 4, 5 ...