

GNATS Opening Bids

As posted by Mr. David Stevenson

Posted: July 21, 2007, 10:54pm by Mr. David Stevenson, the Forum Host and who resides in Liverpool, the United Kingdom.

As stated in the short post and quoted here in first person:

GNATS is a system permitted at Level 4 in England/Wales, so I thought I would just tell you the basics. I only play it for fun, not because I think it theoretically better, but some parts of it are interesting.

*GNATS was a name conceded to me by Barry Rigal, first used in Cambridge University for some long forgotten system many years ago. It stands for G*d, Not Another Transfer System.*

The guidelines for the opening bids in this version by Mr. David Stevenson follow. The student of the game of bridge must remember that this version represents the fundamental system for opening bids, presumably originating with Mr. David Stevenson, and not the version of GNATS as published by Mr. Barry J. Rigal in The Bridge World magazine October 1996, and which is an invention of Mr. Tom G. Townsend.

The following is a direct quote of the posting by Mr. Barry Rigal to this thread of the topic, also in first person, and which is archived in Newsgroups.derkeller.com.

GNATS is already a system. But it is so incredibly appropriate I'm prepared to let DWS have it...

I wrote about transfer jump responses to a take-out double in BW circa 1990 I think. And also about transfer fourth-suit forcing (an idea poached from Crouch/Hobson). I'm not sure but i think the second of these was called GNATS.

It was never discussed in BW but the reason why it was so named was..."GOD! Not Another Transfer System!"

Barry Rigal

Guidelines as posted in the message by Mr. David Stevenson:

1 ♣	shows 14+, balanced or clubs or diamonds
1 ♦	shows 11+, five+ hearts
1 ♥	shows 11+, five+ spades
1 ♠	shows 11-14, unbalanced, clubs or diamonds
1 NT	10-13 [1st/2nd] 11-14 [3rd/4th], natural
2 any suit =	weak suit
2 NT	weak, 5/5, minors
3 suit	weak

By "11+" I mean normal opening, i.e. less with suitable distribution.

1♣ /♦ /♥ are forcing, and unlimited upwards, so all strong hands are opened one of these.

We found that 4-4-4-1s are a problem [as many other system buffs have found!] especially in the range 10-13. The solutions are to open 1NT with a singleton honour, to open 1S with the minor being a bit short!, or to pass. I suppose you could even show a five-card major if you have a very strong four-card one. They do not turn up very often.

We have not really got a good set of responses to 1♣. Over 1♦, 1♥ shows a hand that would have passed a natural 1 opening, so now if opener rebids he shows a very powerful hand. Similarly over 1♥. Over 1♠, 1 NT is to play, 2♣ pass or correct, 2♦ game try+ enquiry, 2♥ /♠ natural, 5+ cards, game try+, 2 NT minor-oriented, game try+.

Note: The BridgeGuys have not changed or altered these guidelines and the contributions to the Forums in any manner. This information is, as noted by the contributors, incomplete and does not mention any information about continuances. Perhaps these can be found on this Forum and/or other Forums at a later date, at which time they shall be added.