

## Professor Roy Kerr's SYMMETRIC RELAY SYSTEM

(Modified by Richard Hills – November 2000)

### Index

1.	Summary of Opening Bids	Page 2
1.1	Openings in fourth seat	Page 2
2.	1C opening (15+ hcp [could be less with extreme shape], any)	Page 2
2.1	Continuations after positive responses to 1C	Page 2
2.2	Single suited relay structure (5+ suit)	Page 2
2.3	Two suited relay structure	Page 3
2.4	Three suited relay structure	Page 5
2.5	Balanced relay structure	Page 5
2.6	Controls and relay points	Page 6
2.7	Denial cue bidding	Page 6
2.8	The weak relay	Page 7
2.9	Continuations after 1D negative response to 1C	Page 7
3.	1D opening (10-14 hcp, 2 or 3 suits, could be 5/5 majors 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Page 9
3.1	Continuations with 2 or 3 suiters with at least one major	Page 10
3.2	Continuations with 2 suiters with both minors	Page 10
3.3	Continuations with 5/5 shapes	Page 11
4.	1H opening (10-14 hcp, 5+ hearts)	Page 11
5.	1S opening (10-14 hcp, 5+ spades)	Page 12
6.	1NT opening (11-14 hcp, balanced)	Page 12
6.1	Stayman sequences	Page 13
6.2	Transfer sequences	Page 13
6.3	Range probe sequences	Page 14
6.4	Slam try sequences	Page 14
7.	2C opening (10-14 hcp, 6+ clubs)	Page 14
8.	2D opening (10-14 hcp, 6+ diamonds)	Page 15
9.	Bidding after interference over our openings	Page 15
9.1	Interference in game-force relay auctions	Page 15
9.2	Interference after 1C opening	Page 16
9.3	Interference after 1D opening	Page 16
9.4	Interference after 1H or 1S openings	Page 17
9.5	Interference after 1NT opening	Page 17
9.6	Interference after 2C or 2D openings	Page 18
10.	Pre-emptive openings	Page 18
10.1	RCO Twos (2H, 2S or 2NT openings)	Page 18
10.2	3NT opening (Any solid 7 or 8 card suit)	Page 18
11.	Bidding when we interfere over their openings	Page 19
11.1	They open one of a suit	Page 19
11.2	They open 1NT	Page 19
11.3	They open a weak or multi-two	Page 19
12.	Competitive bidding philosophy	Page 20
	Appendix A - Example hands	Page 21
	Appendix B - Leads, Signals and Discards	Page 22
	Appendix C - Relay Diagram (positive rebids after 1C opening)	Page 23

## 1. Summary of Opening Bids

1C	15+ hcp [could be less with extreme shape], any, 3+ controls
1D	10-14 hcp, 2 or 3 suits, not balanced, 2+ controls (could be 5/5 majors 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> )
1H	10-14 hcp, 5+ hearts, 0-4 spades, 2+ controls
1S	10-14 hcp, 5+ spades, 0-4 hearts in 1st or 2nd seat, 2+ controls
1NT	11-14 hcp, balanced (4333, 4432, or 5332 with five card minor), 2+ controls
2C	10-14 hcp, 6+ clubs with no other suit (except 4 weak diamonds), 2+ controls
2D	10-14 hcp, 6+ diamonds with no other suit, 2+ controls
2H	5-9 hcp, 5+/5+ majors OR minors
2S	5-9 hcp, 5+/5+ blacks OR reds
2NT	5-9 hcp, 5+/5+ pointed OR rounded
3suit	natural pre-empt
3NT	any solid 7 or 8 card suit, no outside A or K
4suit	natural pre-empt
4NT	Acól Blackwood

### 1.1 Openings in fourth seat

Hands which have less than 15 Pearson points (high card points + number of spades) should either be passed in, or alternatively opened 2H or higher. A fourth seat opening from 2H to 3S inclusive remains the same shape(s) as normal, but is now 10-14 hcp.

## 2. 1C opening (15+ hcp, any shape)

### Responses summary

1D	negative, either 0-7 hcp unbalanced, 0-8 hcp balanced OR less than 2 controls
1H	4+ hearts, 8+ hcp and 2+ controls
1S	4+ spades, 8+ hcp and 2+ controls, 0-3 hearts
1NT	any 4333 or 4432, 9+ hcp and 2+ controls
2C	4+ clubs, 8+ hcp and 2+ controls
2D	5+ diamonds, 8+ hcp and 2+ controls, no other suit
2H+	both minors, 8+ hcp and 2+ controls

### 2.1 Continuations after positive responses to 1C

The 1C opener will almost always make the cheapest call, which is a relay whose only meaning is "tell me more". Eventually the 1C opener will break the relay sequence to name the final contract. NOTE: 3NT is never a relay. When 3NT is the cheapest call, 4C is the relay.

### 2.2 Single suited relay structure (5+ suit)

STEP 1 Give positive response in the single suit (1H, 1S, 2C, 2D)

STEP 2 After relay by 1C opener, rebid 2S or higher as indicated below:

2S High shortage - at most 2 cards in highest ranking outside suit, eg after 1C-1H-1S-2S shows a spade shortage and heart suit

2NT Middle shortage - at most 2 cards in middle ranking outside suit, ie diamond shortage if a major is the long suit, heart shortage if a minor is the long suit. Eg 1C-1S-1NT-2NT shows spades and a diamond shortage; and 1C-2C-2D-2NT shows clubs and a heart shortage.

3C Even shortage - showing 2 or 3 doubletons. If 3C is bid directly, eg 1C-1H-1S-3C this shows either 3-6-2-2 (ie two low doubletons) or 2-7-2-2. If 3C is bid indirectly (via 2S - high shortage) eg 1C-1H-1S-2S-2NT-3C, this shows a high doubleton and one other doubleton 2-6-3-2 or 2-6-2-3. See continuations below.

3D 5332 shape. If 3D is reached directly (ie not via 2S or 2NT) then this shows a low shortage by implication.

3H 6331 shape, etc.

3S 7330 shape, etc.

3NT 7321 or 7231 shape (only identity of 7 card suit and singleton known) AND 2 controls

4C 7321 or 7231 shape AND 3 controls, etc

### Continuations after 3C direct/indirect response

a) Indirect, via 2S (high shortage), 2NT (relay), 3C (even shortage)

(3D relay)

3H 2 high doubletons (ie 2-2-3 residue)

3S 1 high and 1 low doubleton (ie 2-3-2 residue) AND 2 controls

3NT 1 high and 1 low doubleton (ie 2-3-2 residue) AND 3 controls, etc

b) Direct 3C (even shortage)

(3D relay)

3H seven carder (ie 2-2-2 residue)

3S six carder (ie 3-2-2 residue) AND 2 controls

3NT six carder (ie 3-2-2 residue) AND 3 controls, etc

### **2.3 Two suited relay structure**

STEP 1 Responder bids their major (1H when holding both majors). See below for responding with both minors.

STEP 2 After bidding major, rebid:

1NT spades

2C clubs

2D diamonds (and 5+ major)

2H reverser (if bid directly, shows 4 card major and 5+ diamonds)

STEP 3 After both suits have been shown, rerebid 2H or higher

2H reverser - higher ranking suit is exactly 4 cards and other suit is 5+ cards

2S both suits are 5+ cards

2NT high shortage (if bid directly, shows lower ranking suit is exactly 4 cards)

3C even shortage, 5422 or 7411

(3D relay)

3H 7411

3S 5422 AND 2 controls

3NT 5422 AND 3 controls

4C+ etc

3D 5431 shape

3H 6421 shape

3S 7420 shape

3NT 6430 shape AND 2 controls  
4C 6430 shape AND 3 controls, etc

Note: any bid of 3D upwards directly shows the lower ranking suit is 4 cards exactly, the higher ranking suit is longer and a low shortage by implication.

Continuations after 2S rerebid (showing 5/5)

(2NT relay)

3C high shortage  
3D even shortage (6511, 5611 shape)  
(3H relay)  
3S high shortage (5611)  
3NT low shortage (6511) AND 2 controls  
4C low shortage (6511) AND 3 controls, etc  
3H 5521 shape  
3S 5530 shape  
3NT 5620 shape (high shortage)  
4C 6520 shape AND 2 controls  
4D 6520 shape AND 3 controls, etc

Note: any bid of 3H upwards directly (ie not via 3C/3D) shows a low shortage by implication.

Rebids when holding both minors

Initial positive response to 1C is 2H or higher as follows:

2H reverser (ie 4 diamonds and 5+ clubs)  
2S 5+ diamonds and 5+ clubs  
2NT high shortage (if bid directly shows 4 clubs, 5+ diamonds and a spade shortage. If bid indirectly via 2H, shows 4 diamonds, 5+ clubs and a spade shortage).  
3C+ etc, as in other two-suited auctions

Note: to show longer clubs, bid 2H first. To show longer diamonds, make a bid from 2NT upwards directly. With a spade shortage, bid via 2NT; with a heart shortage bid directly from 3D upwards depending on hand shape.

**2.4 Three suited relay structure**

a) Three suited with both majors

1C 1H (positive with hearts)  
1S 1NT (and spades)  
2C 2D (and a minor)

b) Three suited with both minors

1C 2C (positive with clubs)  
2D 2H (and diamonds and a major - NB: this is not the reverser since minor 2 suiters start at 2H)

After a 3 suiter has been established, step responses follow:

1st step high shortage

2nd step	4441 (low shortage by implication)
3rd step	4450
4th step	4540
5th step	5440 AND 2 controls
6th step	5440 AND 3 controls, etc

## 2.5 Balanced relay structure

1C	1NT - shows 9+ hcp, 4333 or 4432 and 2+ controls. CRASH (Colour, RAnk, SHape) relay structure used here. (2C relay)
2D	two four card suits of the same colour OR 4333 with a four card major
2H	two four card suits of the same rank
2S	4333 (bid directly shows a four card minor; bid via 2D shows a four card major) (2NT relay)
	3C high shortage (ie 4 hearts or 4 clubs)
	3D low shortage (ie 4 spades or 4 diamonds) AND 2 controls
	3H low shortage AND 3 controls
	3S+ etc
2NT	doubleton spade
3C	doubleton club
3D	doubleton diamond
3H	doubleton heart AND 2 controls
3S	doubleton heart AND 3 controls, etc

Note: two four card suits of the same shape are shown by implication with an immediate response of 2NT or higher.

### Reverse relay

Note: Reverse relay does not apply when the opponents have intervened. When the 1NT responder is a passed hand, reverse relay also does not apply (and 2D is Stayman).

In auctions beginning 1C - 1NT, if opener rebids 2C as a relay, this denies 15-17 hcp and 4333 or 4432 shape. When holding these two hand types (and only these two), opener is required to rebid a reverse relay of 2D or higher on the same basis as the CRASH structure employed by responder after the normal 2C relay.

## 2.6 Controls and relay points

In most relay auctions (except relays after a semi-positive), after exact shape has been shown, next relay asks for controls (A=2, K=1). Singleton kings are not counted.

1st step	2 controls
2nd step	3 controls, etc

In relay auctions involving semi-positive hands (1C-1D-1H-1NT+), instead of showing controls, responder is required to show relay points (A=3, K=2, Q=1). Singleton kings or queens are not counted.

1st step	2 relay points
2nd step	3 relay points, etc

In reverse relay auctions (1C-1NT-2D+):

1st step	3 controls
2nd step	4 controls, etc

## 2.7 Denial cue bidding

After controls have been shown, next relay starts denial cue bidding. Relayee looks at longest suit, then next longest suit. When ties in suit length occur, look at highest ranking suit first. Singletons (including singleton honours) are not looked at in denial cue bidding. Doubletons are looked at once. Tripletons are looked at twice (on the second time round queens are investigated). Longer suits are looked at three times. On the first look at a suit, it is inspected for an ace or king. On the second look, it is inspected for an additional top honour (usually a queen, unless the suit has AK) and on the third look, jacks are checked. If the first suit looked at does not have the required honour, the relayee denies it by making the cheapest bid. If the relayee holds a required honour in the longest suit but not in the second longest suit, then they call the second cheapest bid. Future relays continue from where you left off.

1st step no ace or king in longest suit

2nd step ace or king in longest suit, and no ace or king in second longest suit

3rd step ace or king in longest suit, ace or king in second longest suit, and no ace or king in third longest suit, etc

### Six card or longer suits

When first looking at a 6+ card suit, a denial does not say "no ace or king". Rather, a denial says "no two of top three honours". To bypass a 6+ suit on first round of denial cue bidding, you need either AK, AQ or KQ. After a denial on the first round, a further denial says no ace, king or queen in the suit, while a show would promise one of the top three.

### Special gimmick

When holding AKQ in a suit of five cards or less (ie does not apply to 6+ card suits), basic denial cue bidding would frequently have insufficient bidding space to safely locate the queen. Therefore, denying at the first look at a suit either denies holding ace or king or promises a holding of AKQ. Given the three control difference between the two meanings, relayee should be able to pick which it is, especially after subsequent looks at the other suits.

## **2.8 The weak relay**

There are a number of situations where the 1C opener fears that an auction is getting too high where responder might have only 3 or 4 controls. In these situations, the 1C opener bids 3NT as a weak relay. Responder is usually required to pass with fewer than 5 controls (exception, see 4NT bid below) but with more bids as follows:

4C	5 controls
4D	6 controls
4H	7 controls
4S	8 controls
4NT	only 4 controls but lots of queens and jacks

Exception: if 3NT weak relay has been made when relayee has shown 5422/7411, or 6322/7222, then:

4C	7411 or 7222, 2+ controls
4D	5422 or 6322, 5 controls
4H	5422 or 6322, 6 controls
4S	5422 or 6322, 7 controls
4NT	5422 or 6322, only 4 controls but lots of queens and jacks

On rare occasions the 1C opener will stop in 4H/4S without control asking. Then:

1st step	5 controls
2nd step	6 controls, etc

## **2.9 Continuations after 1D negative response to 1C**

After 1C-1D

1H	19+ hcp, any shape
1S, 1NT, 2C, 2D, 2H	natural, 15-18 hcp
2S, and higher suit bids	natural, 15-18 hcp, good suit and playing strength
2NT	5/5 minors, 15-18 hcp
3NT	to play, based on running suit and stoppers, 15-18 hcp

After 1C-1D-1H

1S	second negative, usually 0-4 hcp (could be up to 6 hcp if no more than one queen), denies an ace
----	--

- 1NT 5+ hcp, 4+ hearts, 2+ relay points
- 2C 5+ hcp, 4+ spades, 0-3 hearts, 2+ relay points
- 2D 5+ hcp, any 4333 or 4432, 2+ relay points
- 2H 5+ hcp, 4+ clubs, 2+ relay points
- 2S 5+ hcp, 5+ diamonds, no other suit, 2+ relay points
- 2NT+ 5+ hcp, both minors, 2+ relay points

Note: the full relay structure is used as normal but shifted up two steps.

After 1C-1D-1H-1S

- 1NT 19-20 balanced
- 2C 23+, any shape
- 2D, 2H, 2S, 3C natural, non-forcing
- 2NT 21-22 balanced
- 3NT to play, based on running suit and stoppers

After 1C-1D-1H-1S-2C

- 2D any 4333 or 4432 (and now 2NT rebid = 23-24 balanced)
- 2H 4+ hearts
- 2S 4+ spades, 0-3 hearts
- 2NT both minors
- 3C 5+ clubs or minor three suiter
- 3D 5+ diamonds
- 3H,3S good six card suit, QJ9xxx or better
- 3NT good six card minor, QJ9xxx or better
- 4C,4D,4H,4S good seven card suit, Q109xxxx or better

Relays after 1C-1D-1H-1S-2C

Complete shape showing not possible (except for balanced hands) so residues are ignored. Eg:

- 1C 1D
- 1H 1S
- 2C 2H hearts
- 2S 2NT and spades
- 3C 3H reverser, ie 4 spades and 5+ hearts
- 3S 3NT 4 spades and 5 hearts
- 4C 4 spades and 6 hearts
- 4D 4 spades and 7 hearts

1C	1D	
1H	1S	
2C	2S	spades
2NT	3S	5 spades and no other suit
	3NT	6 (bad) spades and no other suit
	4C	7 (bad) spades and no other suit

Continuations after 1C-1D-1H-1S-2NT (21-22 balanced) or 1C-1D-1H-1S-2C-2D-2NT (23-24 balanced)

3C	Puppet Stayman	3D	1 or 2 four card majors
		3H	5 hearts
		3S	5 spades
		3NT	no 4 or 5 card major

After 3C-3D

3H	4 spades
3S	4 hearts
3NT	no major
4C	signoff
4D	both majors

3D	transfer to hearts
3H	transfer to spades
3S	forcing, 5 spades and 4 hearts
3NT	signoff
4C	forcing, 6 or 7 clubs
4D	forcing, 6 or 7 diamonds
4H	signoff
4S	signoff

### 3. 1D opening (10-14 hcp, 2 or 3 suits, could be 5/5 majors 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> seat)

#### Responses summary

1H	either artificial game-force relay, or natural in hearts
1S	natural, non-forcing, may be invitational
1NT	natural, non-forcing, denies a 4 card major
2C,2D	natural, invitational
2H,2S,3C,3D	weak 2, six card suit
2NT	natural, invitational, denies a 4 card major

#### After 1D-1H

1S	4 spades or 3 suiter with both black suits
1NT	4 hearts or 3 suiter with both red suits
2C	5+ clubs and 4 diamonds
2D	5+ diamonds and 4 clubs
2H	5+/5+ majors
2S	5+/5+ minors
2NT+	not permitted

### 3.1 Continuations with 2 or 3 suiters with at least one major

After 1D-1H-1S (ie 4 spades or black 3 suiter)

1NT natural, non-forcing, 4 or 5 hearts  
 2C artificial game-force relay  
 2D natural, non-forcing, hearts + diamonds  
 2H natural, invitational, 5 or 6 hearts  
 2S natural, non-forcing, hearts + spades  
 2NT natural, invitational, 4 hearts

After 1D-1H-1NT (ie 4 hearts or red 3 suiter)

2C artificial game-force relay  
 2D, 2S, 2NT, 3C trial bids in hearts  
 2H, 3H non-forcing

After 1D-1H-1S/1NT-2C

2D 3 suiter with both minors  
 2H 5+ clubs  
 2S 3 suiter with both majors  
 2NT+ 5+ diamonds

Then revert to standard relay structure.

After 1D-1H-1S/1NT-2C-2D (ie minor 3 suiter)

(2H relay)

2S 4144 or 1444 shape  
 2NT 4045 or 0445 shape (ie longer clubs)  
 3C 4054 or 0454 shape (ie longer diamonds) AND 2 controls  
 3D 4054 or 0454 shape AND 3 controls  
 3H+ etc

After 1D-1H-1S/1NT-2C-2S (ie major 3 suiter)

(2NT relay)

3C 4414 or 4441 shape  
 3D 4405 or 4450 shape AND 2 controls  
 3H 4405 or 4450 shape AND 3 controls  
 3S+ etc

### 3.2 Continuations with 2 suiters with both minors

After 1D-1H-2C (ie 5+ clubs, 4 diamonds)

2D non-forcing  
 2H invitational, 5 or 6 hearts  
 2S artificial game-force relay  
 2NT natural, invitational, 4 hearts  
 3C,3D non-forcing

After 1D-1H-2D (ie 5+ diamonds, 4 clubs)

2H invitational, 5 or 6 hearts  
 2S artificial game-force relay  
 2NT natural, invitational, 4 hearts

3C, 3D non-forcing

Following 2S artificial game-force relay, revert to standard relay structure.

### 3.3 Continuations with 5/5 shapes

After 1D-1H-2H (5+/5+ majors)

2S	invitational, support for both majors
2NT	artificial game-force relay, revert to standard relay structure
3C, 3D	invitational in hearts, long suit trial bid
3H	pre-emptive raise

After 1D-1H-2S (ie 5+/5+ minors)

2NT	artificial game-force relay, revert to standard relay structure
3C,3D	non-forcing
3H	invitational, 6 hearts

## 4. 1H opening (10-14 hcp, 5+ hearts)

### Responses summary

Pass	0-11 hcp (if 5-11 hcp, has less than 3 hearts) <sup>1</sup>
1S	natural (4+), non-forcing, may be invitational
1NT	artificial game-force relay - natural, non-forcing by passed hand
2C	natural (5+), non-forcing, may be invitational
2D	natural (5+), non-forcing, may be invitational
2H	natural, 5-10 hcp, 3 hearts (or 4 hearts if 3-4-3-3), long suit trials apply
2S,3C,3D	fit-showing jumps, invitational in hearts, suit bid could be 3 cards if 3-4-3-3
2NT	4 hearts (not 3-4-3-3), 7-10 hcp, long suit trials apply
3H	pre-emptive raise, 0-6 hcp, 4 hearts (not 3-4-3-3)
3S,4C,4D	fit-showing jumps, game forcing in hearts
3NT	signoff

---

<sup>1</sup> There is no longer a method of showing a balanced invitational hand with a doubleton in partner's major. The choice is between underbidding (with 11 points) and Passing - hoping no game is on, or that an opponent balances; or overbidding (with 12 points) and using the INT game force relay.

### Relays after 1H-1NT

2C clubs, or 5440 with an unspecified void  
2D diamonds  
2H exactly 4 spades  
2S+ normal one-suited relay structure applies

1H-1NT-2C-2D-2H (5440 with an unspecified void)

(2S relay)

2NT 0544 shape  
3C 4504 shape  
3D 4540 shape AND 2 controls  
3H 4540 shape AND 3 controls  
3S+ etc

### **5. 1S opening (10-14 hcp, 5+ spades)**

Continuations are the same as for the 1H opening, with appropriate changes to raises and fit-showing jumps.  
EXCEPTIONS: A 2H response to 1S shows 5+ hearts, and a 4H response to 1S is a signoff.

Relays after 1S-1NT

As for 1H-1NT, except that 2H rebid shows exactly 4 hearts.

### **6. 1NT opening (11-14 hcp, balanced)**

Note: The same responses are also used after 1C-1D-1NT, 1C-1D-1H-1S-1NT, and a 1NT overcall.

### Responses summary

2C simple Stayman  
2D transfer to hearts  
2H transfer to spades  
2S range probe  
2NT transfer to clubs  
3C transfer to diamonds  
3D game-force, 5+ diamonds and 4+ clubs  
3H natural slam try  
3S natural slam try  
3NT signoff  
4C pre-emptive transfer to hearts  
4D pre-emptive transfer to spades  
4H signoff  
4S signoff  
4NT simple Blackwood

## 6.1 Stayman sequences

Responder's use of Stayman guarantees a four card major.

1NT	2C	
2D	2H	signoff, 5 hearts and 4 spades
	2S	signoff, 5 spades and 4 hearts
	2NT	natural invitation
	3C	5+ clubs (& major), invitational
	3D	5+ diamonds (& major), invitational
	3H	invitation, 5 hearts and 4 spades
	3S	invitation, 5 spades and 4 hearts

1NT	2C	
2H	2S	<b>non systemic</b>
	2NT	natural invitation, 4 spades
	3C	5+ clubs, 4 spades, invitational
	3D	5+ diamonds, 4 spades, invitational
	3H	natural invitation
	3S	<b>non systemic</b>
	3NT	natural, 4 spades
	4C	<b>non systemic</b>
	4D	<b>non systemic</b>

1NT	2C	
2S	2NT	natural invitation, 4 hearts
	3C	5+ clubs, 4 hearts, invitational
	3D	5+ diamonds, 4 hearts, invitational
	3H	<b>non systemic</b>
	3S	natural invitation
	3NT	natural, 4 hearts
	4C	<b>non systemic</b>
	4D	<b>non systemic</b>
	4H	signoff

## 6.2 Transfer sequences

After a transfer, if responder makes a simple rebid of a new suit, that is natural and game-forcing. If responder jumps in a new suit, that is natural and **not** a slam try. If responder transfers to a major, then raises to three, that is game invitational. If responder transfers to a minor, then raises to four, that is a shapely game invitation, with no interest in 3NT.

### Super accepts after a transfer to a major

Simple acceptance of a transfer to a major denies four card support. With four cards, the 1NT opener bids three of the major with a minimum. With a maximum, the other four card suit is bid, or 2NT if 4333.

### 6.3 Range probe sequences

The 2S range probe is used with these four types of hands:

- invitational to slam in notrumps
- invitational to slam with a good six card minor
- invitational to game, without a four card major
- 4333 with a weak four-card major, game invitational (with a strong four-card major, Stayman is used instead)

Other types of hands should use either a Stayman or a transfer sequence.

1NT	-	2S (range probe)
2NT		minimum, no 5 card minor
3C		minimum, 5 clubs
3D		minimum, 5 diamonds
3H		<b>non systemic</b>
3S		<b>non systemic</b>
3NT		any maximum
1NT	-	2S
2NT	-	3C originally invitational, 5+ clubs
		3D originally invitational, 5+ diamonds
		3H <b>non systemic</b>
		3S <b>non systemic</b>
		3NT signoff

After bidding the 2S range probe, a rebid of 4C is a slam try, setting clubs as trumps; and a rebid of 4D is a slam try, setting diamonds as trumps.

### 6.4 Slam try sequences

1NT - 3H or 3S and 1NT - 2S - any - 4C or 1NT - 2S - any - 4D set that suit as trumps. When a suit is set as trumps, cuebid your cheapest first or second round control (A or void is 1st round control, K or singleton is 2nd round control). 3NT (if available) cuebids the A or K of trumps. 4NT is Keycard Blackwood.

1NT - 4NT is simple Blackwood. 1NT - 2D - 2H - 4NT is invitational to 6H or 6NT, since hearts have not been "set" as trumps with an immediate 3H response.

## 7. 2C opening (10-14 hcp, 6+ clubs)

On rare occasions 2C could be opened with only 5 clubs, provided the club suit contains 100 honours.

### Responses summary

2D	artificial game-force relay - natural, non-forcing by passed hand
2H,2S	natural, non-forcing, could be invitational
2NT	natural, invitational, 2+ clubs
3C	non-forcing
3D,3H,3S	fit-showing, clubs and suit bid, invitational
3NT	signoff

### Relays after 2C-2D

2H four weak diamonds

2S+ standard single-suited relay structure is used

### **8. 2D opening (10-14 hcp, 6+ diamonds)**

On rare occasions 2D could be opened with only 5 diamonds, provided the diamond suit contains 100 honours.

#### Responses summary

2H	artificial game-force relay - natural, non-forcing by passed hand
2S,3C	natural, non-forcing, could be invitational
2NT	natural, invitational, 2+ diamonds
3D	non-forcing
3H,3S,4C	fit-showing, diamonds and suit bid, invitational
3NT	signoff

#### Relays after 2D-2H

Standard single-suited relay structure is used.

### **9. Bidding after interference over our openings**

A double is penalty if the partner of the doubler has shown a suit, bid notrumps, or made a takeout double. Also, if a game-force relay auction is broken by a jump, a double by either partner is penalty, and a pass is a forcing waiting call.

#### **9.1 Interference in game-force relay auctions**

If the opponents interfere after a game-forcing relay auction has already started, then they need to make a jump overcall to break the relay. After a simple overcall or double, the relays continue with step responses:

Pass	1st step
X (or XX)	2nd step
cheapest bid	3rd step, etc

If it is the relayer's turn to call, then Pass continues the relay, and double (or redouble) is for penalty.

## 9.2 Interference after 1C opening

### Immediate interference at one level:

Pass	negative
X (or XX)	positive in hearts
cheapest bid	positive in spades, etc

Standard relays are used, possibly with steps gained or lost depending on the magnitude of the interference.

### Immediate interference at two level:

Double by responder is takeout, 5+ hcp (if the overcall is multi-meaning with no anchor suit, then double is 5+ hcp with general values, and subsequent doubles by either partner are penalties). Responder's suit bids at the two level are semi-positive (circa 5-7 hcp). 2NT is lebensohl. Higher bids are game-forcing. If responder passes, then double by the 1C opener is either takeout with 15-18 hcp, or any 19+ hcp hand.

### Immediate interference at higher levels:

Responder's bids are game-forcing. Doubles by either partner are takeout.

### Interference after negative response to 1C:

1C-(Pass)-1D-(interference at one level)

X (or XX)	19+ hcp, with step responses
Other bids	15-18 hcp, natural

1C-(Pass)-1D-(interference at higher levels)

Pass	15-18 hcp, balanced or trap pass
X	15-18 hcp takeout, or 19+ hcp any shape
Suit bids	15-18 hcp natural
2NT	21-22 hcp natural

(NB A delayed interference at the two level before a game force has been established also breaks the relay.)

## 9.3 Interference after 1D opening

### Immediate interference:

XX	unspecified game force, not a relay
X	either takeout, or unspecified game force
1 or 2 level bids negative	free bids, invitational values or less
2NT	natural, invitational, promises stopper
3 level bids	game forcing
Cue bid	game force, asks for stopper (opener bids long suit with none)

### 1D-(Pass)-1H-(Interference):

1D opener assumes that the 1H responder is weak in hearts (rather than an artificial game-force), and raises with 3 or 4 hearts, passes with nothing to say, bids own suit, or doubles for penalties. If opener bids 2S, that is natural but shows a maximum.

Showing 5/5 majors after opening 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> seat 1D, and subsequent interference:

Cuebid of opponent's suit would show 5/5 majors. For example, 1D-(2C)-X-(3C)-4C would show 5/5 majors, while 1D-(2C)-X-(3C)-4S would show a maximum with 4 spades and probably 6 diamonds.

**9.4 Interference after 1H or 1S openings**

X (or XX)	penalty oriented
1NT	artificial game force relay
Cuebid	cue raise
2NT	7-10, 4 card support, not 4333, long suit trials apply
Raise to 3	0-6, 4 card support, not 4333

If a 1NT bid is not available, then new suits are natural and forcing for one round. Jumps in new suits remain fit-showing.

**9.5 Interference after 1NT opening**

After immediate Double:

Pass	forces redouble, either to play or weak with two touching suits (bid lower of two suits next round; with spades and clubs bid 2S)
XX	forces 2C, shows unspecified 5+ suit and weak hand
2C	clubs and hearts, weak
2D	diamonds and spades, weak
2H,2S	natural, willing to compete to three level opposite support
2NT	strong 6/5 shape
3 bids	pre-emptive

After 1NT-Pass-Pass-Double:

XX by 1NT opener	promises a five card suit (partner's 2C is correctable)
Pass by 1NT opener	no five card suit, then:
Pass	either values, or 4333 type shape, weak
XX	forces 2C, shows unspecified 5+ minor, weak
2C	clubs and another suit, weak
2D	diamonds and a major, weak
2H	hearts and spades, weak

After 2 level overcall:

X	penalty (after a multi-meaning overcall, double shows penalty interest in at least one of their possible suits, and subsequent doubles by either partner are for penalties)
2 suit	non-forcing
2NT	lebensohl
3 bids	game-forcing

After higher overcalls:

X	penalty
Other bids	game-forcing

**9.6 Interference after 2C or 2D openings**

XX	penalty oriented, opener can make penalty double with strong 3 card holding
X	penalty
2NT	natural, invitational, 2+ cards in partner's minor
New suit	natural, forcing for one round

## 10. Pre-emptive openings

### 10.1 RCO Twos (2H, 2S or 2NT openings)

After an RCO Two, responder's bids are normally "pass or correct". If responder wishes to play in their own suit, they must first make a forcing enquiry. (After a double, redouble is the forcing enquiry.)

2H	-	2NT (forcing enquiry)
3C		min, minors
3D		max, minors
3H		min, majors
3S		max, majors

2S	-	2NT (forcing enquiry)
3C		min, blacks
3D		min, reds
3H		max, reds
3S		max, blacks

2NT	-	3C (forcing enquiry)
3D		min, pointed
3H		min, rounded
3S		max, pointed
3NT		max, rounded

### 10.2 3NT opening (Any solid 7 or 8 card suit, no outside A or K)

4C, 4D	pass or correct
4H, 4S	signoff
4NT	bid singleton (bid long suit if 7222)

## 11. Bidding when we interfere over their openings

### 11.1 They open one of a suit

If we overcall their suit, a cuebid or a fit-showing jump shows 3+ card support and invitational (or better strength) with high cards. An immediate raise is based on the Law of Total Tricks. A 2NT response is natural and invitational, guarantees a stopper in the opponents' suit(s), and has 2+ cards in partner's overcalled suit. A new suit is forcing for one round.

All doubles after they open are normal takeout doubles, or a hand too strong to overcall (17+ points).

In balancing seat, after two passes, a 1NT overcall shows 11-14 balanced. All other 1NT overcalls show 15-18 balanced. 1NT overcalls do not promise a stopper.

Michaels cuebids and unusual 2NT overcalls always show at least 5/5 shape, and always show less than opening values.

If they have bid two suits, an overcall in either is natural. Double promises 10+ hcp with at least 4 cards in both unbid suits, or a hand too strong to overcall (17+ points). 1NT remains 15-18 balanced. 2NT shows 5/5 in the unbid suits with about 5-9 hcp.

### 11.2 They open 1NT

X	penalty, usually 15+	(if doubler's partner bids, lebensohl applies)
2C	unspecified single-suiter 2D	non-forcing relay 2H, 2S natural, constructive 2NT artificial game force
2D	both majors	2NT artificial game force
2H	hearts and minor	2NT artificial game force 3C pass or correct
2S	spades and minor	2NT artificial game force 3C pass or correct
2NT	both minors	

### 11.3 They open a weak or multi-two

X	15+ any shape, with lebensohl responses
2NT	17-20 balanced (includes stopper in promised suit(s)), with Puppet Stayman and transfers
Overcalls	10-14 natural
Cuebid of promised suit	Game-forcing Michaels
Pass, then double	10-14 takeout
Jump overcalls	Good hands with lots of playing strength

## 12. Competitive bidding philosophy

- With support, we raise to at least the Total Trick level.
- If our suit is supported by partner, and we hold at least 5/5 shape, and we intend to bid game, we do **not** merely jump to game. Instead, we rebid our second suit at the highest possible level (but below the level of game in our supported original suit). This allows our partner to judge what to do if an opponent bids on.
- If our previous bid was descriptive (for example a 1NT opening or overcall), and the opponents sacrifice; a subsequent penalty double by us guarantees honour(s) in their suit, while a forcing Pass of their sacrifice shows no wasted values in their suit.
- If an opponent opens a strong NT (defined as a 1NT opening which may have 16 or more points), doubles of Stayman or transfers are lead-directing.
- If an opponent opens a weak NT (defined as a 1NT opening which **cannot possibly** hold more than 15 points), doubles of Stayman or transfers are identical to a penalty double of 1NT.

## Appendix A - Example hands

WEST	EAST	WEST	EAST
Q97643	void	1♣(15+)	1 (8+ hcp, 4+ hearts)
K8	AQT753	1	2♣(& 4+ clubs)
KQ6	AT8	2	2NT(5+ hearts, 4 clubs, high shortage)
♠AK	♠QJ96	3♣	4 (0-6-3-4 & 4 controls)
		4	4NT(Two of top three honours in hearts, no ace or king of clubs)
		5♣	5 (Ace or king of diamonds, not AKQ in hearts)
		5	6♣(Queen of clubs, no second top honour in diamonds)
		7	Pass

WEST	EAST	WEST	EAST
A94	JT87	1♣(15+)	1 (8+ hcp, 4+ hearts)
A	K954	1	1NT(& 4+ spades)
AQJ94	KT82	2♣	2 (3 suiter with both majors)
♠K973 ♠A		2	2NT(4-4-4-1)
		3♣	3 (4 controls)
		4♣	4 (No ace or king of spades)
		4	5♣(Ace or king of hearts, ace or king of diamonds, no queen of spades)
		5	5 (No second top honour in hearts)
		6	Pass

WEST	EAST	WEST	EAST
void	AQT6	1♣(15+)	1 (8+ hcp, 4+ spades)
AQ74	KT	1NT	2♣(& 4+ clubs)
AKT873	64	2	2 (reverser, 4 spades, 5+ clubs)
♠KQT	♠J9854	2	3♣(even shortage)
		3	3NT(4-2-2-5, 3 controls)
		4♣	4 (No ace or king of clubs)
		4	5♣(Ace or king of spades, ace or king of hearts, no ace or king of diamonds)
		6♣	Pass

WEST	EAST	WEST	EAST
AQ	8		Pass
A7	KQ42	1♣(15+)	2♣(8-10 hcp, 4+ clubs)
AQ9653	KJT8	2	2 (3 suiter with both minors)
♠J72	♠T964	2	2NT(high shortage)
		3♣	3 (1-4-4-4)
		3	3 (2 controls)
		3NT	Pass

## Appendix B - Leads, Signals and Discards

### Leads and Signals versus Notrumps

A	-	asks for unblock of K, Q or J; otherwise give natural count
K	-	promises A or Q, asks for natural attitude
Q	-	asks for unblock of J, either top of sequence or from KQ10
J	-	denies a higher honour
10	-	promises an interior sequence
9	-	promises ten, but denies a higher honour
pip	-	low pip lead is encouraging, high pip lead is discouraging.

We overlead (except AK) partner's suit. When an opponent has promised a long suit before reaching 3NT, the opening lead of an Ace asks for natural attitude (not unblock or count).

In notrump contracts our signals are primarily natural attitude on partner's leads. We sometimes give natural count when declarer plays a suit. When we give false count, low-high with an even number is more likely than high-low with an odd number.

### Leads and Signals versus Suit Contracts

In suit contracts we underlead touching honours at trick one. On subsequent tricks (or in partner's suit at trick one) we overlead, except for AK.

When leading from length in suit contracts, we lead the lowest card from an odd number, and the third highest from an even number (top from doubleton). Subsequent leads from length are attitude (low pip encourage, high pip discourage).

Our signals in suit contracts are natural present count. Exception: if partner leads a winner and dummy has a singleton, an odd pip asks partner to punch dummy, while an even pip is suit preference.

### Discards

First discard in notrump or suit contracts: odd pip encouraging, even pip suit preference. Discard of an A, K, Q or J meaningless. Also, second and subsequent discards meaningless.