

Bhagat-Parker System manual 20 May 2008

Section 1 - our uncontested bidding.

Section 2 - we open the bidding and they bid too.

Section 3 - they open the bidding.

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Section 1 - uncontested system.

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1.1 Opening bid

1.1.1 one of a suit

An opening bid of 1 of a suit is generally 12-19 points, and any hand in this range must be opened this way unless it is suitable for 1NT (12-14 bal) or 2♣ (18-19 points 8PT or 4 Losers)

Additionally 10-11 point hands with a 6+ card suit may be opened 1.

1 of a suit is never as few as 9 or as many as 20 points.

If one suit is longer than all the others, open it.

If 2 suits are of the same (longest) length

With 4 cards open the first of ♥ ♦ ♣ ♠

With 5+ cards open the highest ranking.

With three 4 card suits, open the middle of touching suits, or the suit below the singleton if they're not touching.

It follows that an opening of 1♠ is 5 cards long unless 4333, in which case a bid of NT is planned for the next round.

1.1.2 Other opening bids

1NT	12-14 balanced (4333, 4432, 5332 5 card minor)
2♣	the strongest bid - see section 1.5
2♦2♥2♠	weak twos. They are always 5-10 and 5+ card suit, with further restrictions depending on seat and vulnerability.
2NT	20-22

Higher bids pre-emptive in the suit named.

1.2 Opening balanced hands (4333, 4432 5332 5 card minor)

12-14	1NT.
20-22	2NT.
23+	2♣ .
15-19	1 of a suit.

If response is 1 of a suit **1NT** 15-17, **2NT** 18-19
 If response is 2 of a suit **2NT** 15-19
 In both the above cases, after 2NT, the 2NT system of 1.4 applies.

If response is 1NT **pass** 15-16, **2NT** (NF) 17-18, **3NT** 19
 After 2NT, bidding is natural, NOT 1.4-style.

1.3 1NT system

1.3.1 situations (response structure below applies to all of these)

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1NT                                      (12-14 maximum is 14, or 13 not 4333)
1NT in passout seat                   (11-15, maximum is 14-15)
1X 1Y 1NT                              (15-17, maximum is 17, or 16 not 4333)
1NT overcall                           (15-17 maximum is 17 or 16 not 4333)
1NT overcall protective (10-14 maximum is 13-14)
  
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In 1X 1Y 1NT, previous bidding is ignored, except that . . .

1. invitational sequences may use knowledge of previous bidding
2. transfers into partner suit shows 3
3. Stayman showing partners major shows 3
4. After Baron 2S, bids of X or Y show 1 more/1 fewer.

1.3.2 response structure in detail

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2♣    F1 puppet to 2♦

--2♦ NF Forced response.
---- pass Weak hand with ♦
---- 2♥ ♠    NF invitational with 4+ in named suit.  2♥ may be 5+♥ , 4♠
              (use 2♦ 2♥ 2♠ with equal or longer ♠)
              ---- --pass 3+ support and minimum
              ---- --2♠ NF minimum with 2♥ and 4♠
              ---- --2NT NF minimum and no support
              ---- --3♥ /♠ FG maximum, 3 card support
              ---- --3♠ FG (over 2♥ ) maximum, no support, 4♠
---- 3♣ ♦ NF invitational good 5+ card suit (2 top 3 honours).

2♦    F1 Transfer to ♥    (Special case).

--2♥ NF Forced response
---- 2♠ NF invitational both majors, ♠ not shorter.
---- --pass minimum, at least 3 ♠.
---- --2NT TP minimum, 2 ♠ 3 ♥
---- ---- 3♥ TP 5-5 in majors
---- --3♥ TP minimum, to play 2 ♠ 4 ♥
---- --3♠ FG maximum, 3 ♠ at most 3 ♥
---- --3NT TP maximum, 2 ♠ 3 ♥
---- ---- 4♥ 5-5 in majors.
2♦ ♥ F1 Transfer to ♥ /Spades (General case)
--2♥ ♠ Forced response
---- pass Weak hand with 5+ major
---- All other bids are FG (except 2♦ 2♥ 2♠ considered above).
2♠ F1 Baron Are you minimum or maximum
---- 2NT NF minimum (continuation if any 4 card suits FG)
---- 3♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ FG maximum lowest 4+card suit
2NT F1 Transfer to ♣
--3♣ NF Forced response
---- pass weak with 6+ ♣
---- FG All other responses
  
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1.3.3 1NT - how to respond

Weak hands - pass, or use transfer and then pass.

Invitational hands

1NT 2♦ 2♥ 2♠ with both majors 4+, ♠ at least as long

1NT 2♣ 2♦ 2♥ with ♥ 4+ (and possibly ♠ shorter)

1NT 2♣ 2♦ 2♠ with ♠ 4+ only

1NT 2♣ 2♦ 3♣ /♦ with 5+ minor

1NT 2♠ with no suit interest

Game strength hands

1NT 2♠ 4 card suits upwards with 4 card major.

Transfer then bid 3NT with 5 card major

Slam invitation hands

1NT Transfer (4 suits) then 4♣ /♦ General Swiss 6 card suit

1NT 2♠. . . then agree suit with 4♣ /4♦ General Swiss,

. . . or bid 4NT Quantitative

1.4 2NT System

1.4.1 Situations where it applies

2NT (20-22) NF

2♣ 2♦ 2NT (23-24) NF

1X 1Y 2NT (18-19) FG

1X 2Y 2NT (15+) FG

1.4.2 Requirements and Generalities

Opening 2NT should be 4432, 4333 or 5332 5 card minor - with a 5 card major it is better to open 2♣ and bid 2 of the major over 2♦ .

Nevertheless, responses to 3♣ are 5-card Stayman for coherence and also to enable responder to show ♦ .

After a 2♣ opener, opener may have a 5 card major.

After 1X 1Y or 1X 2Y, opener may have a 5 card major, but only in X.

Opener may have a 4 card fit for a minor suit Y, but not a major suit Y

There are no invitational situations after 2NT. If responder wishes to play in a part score, either pass 2NT or transfer to major and pass.

Previous bidding is ignored except that

1. Transfers into partner's suit shows 3.
2. Stayman showing partner's major shows 3.

1.4.3 Detailed responses

3♣ F1 5-card Stayman. Responder has no 5 card major.

--3♦ No 5 card Major but at least one 4 card major

---- 3♥ shows 4

---- 3♠ shows 4

---- 3NT no 4 card major

--3♥ 5 card ♥ heart suit

---- 3NT doubleton heart (no-one is interested in ♠!)

--3♠ 5 card spade suit

--3NT not even a 4 card major.

3♦ F1 transfer to ♥ . Shows 5+ (or 3 if partner bid it)

3♥ F1 transfer to Spades. Shows 5+ (or 3 if partner bid it)

1.5 2♣ opening

1.5.1 When to open 2♣

2♣ opening - all strong hands. 2NT is 20-22 Balanced so 2♣ is

1. 23+ any distribution
2. 20-22 not balanced including 5332 5 card Major
3. 18/19 with 4 Losers or 8 PT (playing tricks)

With a 4441 20+ hand, it is probably best to open at the one level and hope somebody bids. With both majors 23+, 2♣ (2♦ 2NT) is possible.

1.5.2 Generalities on responses

As long as the opening hand is kept as strong as in 1.5.1, most **4-point** responding hands will be worth **game**, and under those circumstances, game means 4 of a major if there is an 8 card fit, and 3NT otherwise.

If a fit is found, a slam is quite likely with as few as 6 points, and usually General Swiss should be relied on to decide this issue.

Responses are therefore to bid 2♦ relay unless 4+ points and a 5 card major is held. If responder holds a 5+♠ suit there are some special conventional responses, but in general bids up to 3♦ show a 5card suit agreed using Swiss (with an adjustment of 2) and 3♥/♠ show a 4 card suit.

Responder should neither show nor support a minor suit unless he holds at least 6 points.

1.5.3 2♦ response

This response is a relay, asking partner to describe his hand. Although usually the correct response with a weak hand, it is also often the correct response with a stronger one, and should be described as a relay where no response is forcing.

2♣	2♦	
2♥♠		5+ card suit at most 8 playing tricks . To agree the suit and proceed, responder may raise to 3 (not forcing), bid 4 of the suit or use General Swiss. Other bids deny 3 card support and show a 5 card suit. 2NT shows 4+ points but no 5+ suit to show, continuation natural (NOT 1.4.3!). Note that this 2NT may be quite unbalanced if 4-5 points held, since hand is not strong enough to bid a minor suit. Note also that 2♣ 2♦ 2♠ 3♥ shows 5.
2SA		23-24 Balanced continuation as 2NT opening
3♣♦		5+ card suit with strength not so closely defined. A major suit at the 3-level is 4 card suit denying a fit except 3♦ shows 5. To agree the suit use General Swiss
3♥♠		5 and probably 6 card suit, 9 Playing Tricks Responder should raise with any reasonable hope of a trick. 3♠ over 3♥ shows 4 card suit "on the way" to 3NT
4♣♦		Undefined for now

1.5.4 2♥ response

2♣ 2♥ shows 4+ points and 5+♥, and all such hands respond 2♥ Forcing to Game

Continuation is as for 2♦ except

2♣	2♥
?	

- * 4♣♦ is General Swiss, **agreeing ♥**
(If response to 2♦ was to be in ♥, use Swiss instead)
There is no need to bid above 3♦, since situation is **FG** therefore
- * 3♥♠ show a **7 card** suit.

1.5.5 ♠ responses.

With 4+ points and 5+♠ responder shows ♠ but chooses the bid depending on how many ♥ he holds.

2♠	5+ ♠ at most 2♥
2NT	5+ ♠ exactly 3♥
3♣	5+ ♠ exactly 4♥
3♦	5+ ♠ 5+♥

In every case, General Swiss agrees ♠.

To agree ♥, bid 3♥.

after 2♣ 2♠, 3♥ shows 6.

after 2♣ Responder 2NT-3♣-3♦, 3♥ shows 8 card fit and sets the trumps for Swiss.

1.5.6 Coping with intervention

Since the responses to 2♣ are so compressed, intervention by opponents can be quite effective, particularly if interjected immediately after the 2♣ bid itself, and it is important to make use of the information provided by the opponents.

1.5.6.1 After 2♣ (bid)

Pass shows 0-3 points provided the opponents bid up to 3♠ or lower, though it may be necessary to pass on a stronger hand if the opponents pre-empt to a higher level. More generally pass shows insufficient values to compete at the current level.

Double (or redouble if the opponents have doubled) has a meaning that depends critically on the meaning of the **intervening bid**.

- a 1-suited intervention

In this case, the double or redouble shows at least 3 cards in each of the remaining three suits and at least four high-card points. This is forcing to game, and it is expected that partner will have 5 cards in one of these suits, and provided he gets a chance, will mention it at the lowest level. If this allows the use of Swiss, so much the better.

- a 2-suited intervention

In this case, double or redouble shows at least 3 cards in each of the remaining two suits and at least 4 high card points. This is similarly forcing to game.

- a forcing intervention

If a player makes a forcing bid that does not guarantee any particular suits, a double shows 4+ points and that the natural bid is no longer available. All other bids retain their uncontested meaning.

1.6 General Swiss convention

1.6.1 Applicability

In an uncontested auction, 4♣-4♦ are almost always General Swiss. The exceptions are

- * As an opening bid, 4♣-4♦ show a high-level pre-empt
- * If partner opens 2♦, 3♣ or 3♦, responder's raise in that suit is a raise of the pre-empt. The other minor retains its Swiss meaning.

Over 2♦, it is possible to use General Swiss by using the Jacoby 2NT first.

See later section for further clarification of 4♣♦ in competitive auctions.

1.6.2 Control Points (CPs)

The theory is that

- **small slam** in partner's suit needs **11 CPs** and a
- **grand slam** needs **13 CPs**

An **Ace=2**, a **King=1**, the **Queen of trumps=1** and a **singleton=1**, except that the partnership may not count 1 for both the King and for a singleton in the same suit.

It often happens that 6NT (or 7NT) is the correct contract at pairs, and this needs basically that no singleton is necessary as a control, and that ruffing is not needed to generate a trick - usually the 12th.

1.6.3 Strong/Weak Adjustment

If one hand is known to be very strong and/or the other weak, there is an adjustment of 2 CPs to be made to the values shown by Swiss. These apply so that the **strong hand needs 2 more CPs** for each bid, and the **weak hand 2 fewer**. This applies specifically . . .

- * After a 2NT or 2♣ opening, or 1X 1Y 2NT
- * After a Weak 2 or pre-emptive opening
- * After a Take-Out Double by an unpassed hand.

In all other circumstances there is no adjustment.

1.6.4 Requirements and Generalities

4♣-4♦ shows a game forcing hand, support for partner's suit and at least a mild slam try. With a void, General Swiss may still be used but it is not so good.

Subject to an adjustment (see 1.6.3) the system is

- 4♣ shows 4 or 6 or possibly 8 CPs
- 4♦ shows 5 or 7 CPs, or possibly 9 if ♥s are not the agreed suit.

Without 4-8(9) CPs do not use General Swiss.

1.6.5 Detailed responses

After 4♣ , responder may . . .

- (0-4) Sign off (1.6.6) if 6 CPs is not enough
Responder may bid on to show 8 (see 1.6.7)
- (5-6) Bid 4♦ if 6 CPs is enough but 4 is not
Responder then signs off with 4 and cooperates with 6
With 8, responder cooperates and raises 1 level at the end
- (7) Cooperate (lowest K/Singleton or bid at 5 level) if 4 is enough
Responder raises 1 level at the end to show 6.
- (8) Proceed to slam, and leave it to partner to bid the grand with 6
- (9) Cooperate and then bid 7 if no duplication is found
- (10+) Bid 7.

After 4♦ , If agreed suit is ♥, responder may . . .

- (0-5) Sign off if 5 CPs is not enough
Responder bids on to show 7
- (6) Cooperate (lowest K/Singleton or bid at 5 level) if 5 is enough
- (7) Proceed to slam.
- (8) Cooperate and then bid 7 if no duplication is found
- (9+) Bid 7.

After 4♦ , If agreed suit is not ♥, responder may . . .

- (0-3) Sign off if 7 CPs is not enough
Responder bids on to show 9
- (4-5) Bid 4♥ if 7 CPs is enough but 5 is not
Responder then signs off with 5 and cooperates with 7
With 9, responder cooperates and raises 1 level at the end
- (6) Cooperate (lowest K/Singleton or bid at 5 level) if 5 is enough
- (7) Proceed to slam.
- (8) Cooperate and then bid 7 if no duplication is found
- (9+) Bid 7.

1.6.6 Signing off

A bid of the agreed suit/Notrumps at the lowest possible level are signoff bids. All others bids are not signing off.

1.6.7 Co-operation.

Once it is established that there is a raw combined 11 CPs available, the next phase is to check for duplication - has one player counted 1 CP for a King and the other for a singleton in the same suit?
If a player knows that there are 12 CPs available he should proceed to slam (1.6.6)
If there are 13, grand can be investigated by bidding as though 11 are held to look for duplication (K/Sing).

If ♥ is agreed, 4♠5♣ 5♦ are the duplication bids
From 4♥ -5♦ , bids other than 4NT and the agreed suit show a King or Singleton has been counted in that suit and that either 11 or 13 CPs are there.

If partner has also counted 1 for K/S in that suit he should sign off. Otherwise his lowest K/S is bid until no more available. He should then proceed to a slam (1.6.9).

It should be noticed that bidding 5♦ takes the partnership beyond 5♣ if ♣ are the agreed suit. Some thought must therefore be given to using General Swiss if you have a singleton ♦ or the King. Options are to not count it, or to count it if you still feel that 5NT will be a safe contract. In general it is best not to count a singleton ♦ as a CP if ♣ are agreed.

Cooperating is the process of using the bids that are not 4NT or game in the agreed suit to show K or singleton. These are those of 4♥ 4♠5♣ 5♦ that are not the agreed suit. Bidding continues until no further such suits remain, after which the player who first runs out of suits proceeds to the slam (1.6.9). Sometimes a player wishes to show co-operation and has no K or singleton to show, in which case he proceeds directly to the slam.

1.6.8 Bidding on

Once partner has signed off, if partner has 2 more CPs than he has so far shown, he may bid on. This happens if 8 or 7 CPs are held. "Bidding on" consists of using the bids between the signoff bid and one level up from it, excluding notrumps and the agreed suit, to show singletons and Kings.

It can also happen that 6 CPs are held but partner co-operates showing 7 CPs, and then signs off once duplication is detected. In this case the holder of 6CPs can proceed to the slam, since it is now known that the partnership holds 12 CPs.

1.6.9 Proceeding to slam

Once either partner knows that 11 are held but 13 are not, he can proceed to the slam. This consists of selecting between three possible bids - 6 of the agreed suit, 6NT, or the suit immediately below 6 of the agreed suit to give partner the choice.

It can happen that the suit immediately below 6 of the agreed suit is needed to show a King/Singleton if the 4♣-♦ bidder has 7 or 8 controls. In the case of 5♠(where ♣ are agreed) the bid shows the K/Singleton since 5NT is still available as a signoff. Over a signoff of 5♦, there is no point using 6♣ to show a K/singleton since the partnership is already committed to the small slam, so it is the Notrump Probe.

The suit immediately below 7 of the agreed suit (including 6♠if ♣ are agreed) gives partner the choice between 7NT and 7 of the agreed suit.

1.7 General Jacoby 2NT

1.7.1 Applicability and requirements

2NT is General Jacoby only if
Partner's first bid (he may have passed before) was 1 or 2 of a suit
It was entirely natural
You have not had a chance to bid since.
You have not bid (you may have passed) before.

Hence it applies in direct response to an opening or overcall of 1 of a suit, a weak 2, a weak jump overcall at the 2-level or partners intervention over a weak no trump. This remains true whatever RHO does, provided only that 2NT remains a legal bid.

It shows that our side has the balance of points, and either

- a) Primary support for partner and an invitational hand
- b) Secondary support at least and game-going values.

In general the idea is to agree opener's suit and bid to game or slam. In some cases responder is 1 card short of full support and if opener is also "short" the bidding should die at 3NT. 4NT is always quantitative and non-forcing. If a response is made, however, it should presume that the "agreed suit" is indeed the one opened, and treat the K and Q of that suit as trumps, even though it is almost certainly a 7 card fit and the final contract will be in No Trumps.

1.7.2 Responses to General Jacoby

The original suit bidder first classifies his hand into one of three strengths and one of two lengths. In fact the weaker/short combinations should not really occur, though some allowance for it is made.

The strength levels are

- a) Weak. If partner has an invitational hand, you will decline
- b) Midrange - game opposite a good invitation only
- c) Strong. Worth game opposite any invitational hand
- d) Maximum. Top of the range for the bid.

The length levels are short and full-length

Rebidding the suit is always "weak" and "should" be full-length. 3♣ always shows midrange. If the opened suit is ♣, 3♣ is bid on both weak and midrange hands.

The lowest remaining 3-level suit is strong/short

The next lowest remaining 3-level suit is strong/full-length

3NT shows short/maximum

4♣ /♦ (Swiss) shows full-length maximum if you have 4-8 CPs
(otherwise treat your hand as strong)

in detail,

1/2♣ 2NT -3♣ (weak or midrange) -3♦ (strong, short) -3♥ (strong, full)
-3♠(not defined) -3NT (max, short) -4♣ /♦ max, full)
1/2♦ 2NT -3♣ (midrange) -3♦ (weak) -3♥ (strong, short)
-3♠(strong, full) -3NT (max, short) -4♣ /♦ max, full)
1/2♥ 2NT -3♣ (midrange) -3♦ (strong, short) -3♥ (weak)
-3♠(strong, full) -3NT (max, short) -4♣ /♦ max, full)
1/2♠2NT -3♣ (midrange) -3♦ (strong, short) -3♥ (strong, full)
-3♠(weak) -3NT (max, short) -4♣ /♦ max, full)

1.7.3 Continuation after opener replies to the relay.

3NT, Swiss and all game and slam bids are clear.

3 of the agreed suit is sign-off.

The lowest remaining 3-level bid is a further enquiry about length and strength, with replies (in increasing order as available)

3 of agreed suit

any spare 3-level suit bids upwards.

3NT

Swiss

If length has not yet been shown, 3NT shows short, all others show full. If agreed suit is a major and opener is full length, correct 3NT to 4 of the agreed major, since partner has guaranteed an 8 card fit if opener is full-length.

In detail,

1/2♣ 2NT 3♣ 3♦ (3♥ weak 5, 3♠mid 5, 3NT 4, 4♣ /♦ top midrange 5)
3♦ 3♥ (3♠min, 3NT mid, 4♣ /♦ max)
3♥ 3♠(3NT min, 4♣ /♦ max)
1/2♦ 2NT 3♣ 3♥ (3♠min full, 3NT short, 4♣ /♠max full)
3♦ 3♥ (3♠min full, 3NT short, 4♣ ,♠max full)
3♥ 3♠(3NT min, 4♣ /♦ max)
1/2♥ 2NT 3♣ 3♦ (3♥ min full, 3♠mid full, 3NT short, 4♣ /♦ max full)
3♦ 3♠(3NT min, 4♣ /♦ max)
3♥ 3♠(3NT short, 4♣ /♦ full)
1/2♠2NT 3♣ 2♦ (3♠min full, 3♥ mid full, 3NT short, 4♣ /♦ max full)
3♦ 3♥ (3♠min, 3NT mid, 4♣ /♦ max)

Section 2 - we open the bidding and they bid too.

2.1 They make an overcall

2.1.1 Generalities.

As a rule, since partner has opened the bidding and opponents have only overcalled, the balance of points is likely to be in our favour. To ensure that overzealous action by the opponents gets duly punished, it is important that bids in general in this position retain their constructive meaning - based more on point count than Losing Tricks.

Since the overcaller has given partner another chance to speak anyway if he has a super-strong hand, responses tend to be 1 point stronger than in an uncontested auction.

With a fit for partner, all the raises and the conventional 2NT are available. Both 2 and 3 level direct raises of a major can be made on 3 card support, with 2 level raises showing 7-11 points and 3 level raises tending to be 8 losers but ill-defined (and probably low) point count. Raises of a minor need 4 card support, but - particularly on a weakish hand - may be made in preference to a change of suit since, now the auction looks competitive, it is best to stick with a known fit rather than chase the butterflies of a possible better one. Again 2-level raise shows 7-11 and 3 level is 8 losers and undefined point count.

Change of suit by responder is forcing under all circumstances, showing 6+ points at the 1 level, 10+ points at the 2 level, and 12+ at the 3 level.

1NT shows 7-10 points, but needs in addition some sort of stopper in the enemy suit.

The jump-shift shows, as usual, 16+ points but is very rare.

The immediate cue-bid is 11+. It does not deny a stop in the enemy suit, and usually has one, but partner is expected first to show a stop, particularly Qxx or the like, that makes him keen to play a NT contract from his side of the table. If partner bids 2NT (12-13) or rebids his opening suit, these bids are not forcing. All others are forcing to game.

The meaning of a double depends on what level the overcall is made.

2.1.2 "Sputnik" double after a 1 level overcall.

A 1 level overcall deprives us of very little bidding space, so the sputnik double can be made on 6+ points, and acts very much as an additional 1-level forcing bid.

1♣ (1♦) X at least 4 cards in each major.

1♣-♦ (1♥) X precisely 4 ♠ (and 1♠ shows at least 5).

1♣-♦ (1S) X 4+♥. In this case it behaves exactly like a 1♥ bid.

1♥ (1S) X at least 4 cards in each minor and at most 3 ♥.

If responder makes a minimum bid in a suit indicated by the sputnik doubler, this shows a minimum, and at the 1 level suggests more than the usual 7 losers. Hence opener should jump to 2 of a major with a full-value opening hand.

2.1.3 "Negative" double after a 2-level overcall.

As the overcall enables partner to bid again with a big hand, there is no need to bid on a poor hand, and - unless you have a fit for partner - it is best to pass with 0-7 points.

After a 2-level overcall, the negative double says three things

1. I cannot bid anything else
2. I have 8+ points
3. All future bidding except cue bid, Swiss and Blackwood will be non-forcing.

Furthermore, since the negative double denies a fit for opener's suit, it tends to suggest a misfit hand. Both sides are urged to bid with caution, and be ready to defend.

Hence if responder has a long suit and wishes to compete, he should double first to warn partner that he has little of interest - a bit like Lebensohl in that respect.

2.1.4 "negative" double over higher level overcalls and pre-empts.

In principle we play unlimited negative doubles, though the extent to which they are really negative gets more tenuous.

After any overcall at the three level, double shows a lack of fit and at least 10+ high card points. At the four level, 12+, at the five level 14+ and so on. At the higher levels the bid is not compulsory, and becomes more penalty oriented.

2.1.5 Bidding after a negative double.

If a major suit was opened, it is encouraged to rebid it with a 6 card suit - doubler may well have two. Of course a rebid at the lowest level may be necessary on only 5 cards in the suit. If a minor suit was opened, the focus is on the unbid major suit(s), or - failing that - to bid 2NT to show a stop in opponents suit.

If advancer (overcaller's partner) bids, it is usually correct for opener to pass unless he has something worthwhile to say. The hand is likely to be a misfit.

2.1.6 Bidding again with a big hand

If the auction starts with 1 of a suit, an overcall and two passes, the best way to keep the bidding alive is with a take-out double. This shows extra values (15+) and invites partner to compete, or indeed to make a penalty pass with a suitable hand.

Other bids should be kept to 17+. Partner may well be extremely weak, and the hands may not fit well, so beware. Rebid of opener's suit shows a 6 card suit and not much short of an Acol 2.

2.2 Defence to 1N doubled.

Responder passes to play 1N doubled.

Responder bids a suit to show 2 places to play. Opener passes with 3 cards or bids lowest 4 card suit.

Responder redoubles to show one place to play. Opener bids 2♣, pass or correct.

2.3 Defence to 1N (2x)

Note defense does not depend on whether 2x is natural or not

1N (2x) DBL	game force (could use this for penalties)
1N (2x) 2N, 3♣, pass	weak with ♣
1N (2x) 2N, 3♣, 3y	weak
1N (2x) 2y	weak
1N (2x) 3y	invitational but not forcing

Section 3 - they open the bidding.

3.1 They open a natural 1 of a suit

3.1.1 Generalities.

If they open the bidding with 1 of a suit, the likelihood is that they have the balance of points, so the majority of bids in this position are primarily destructive in intent. 1NT (15-17 bal) is constructive, but apart from that the only strong bid in this position is the take-out double. Since this is often made on strong hands of very varied shape, it is a prime target for destructive meaningless bidding from the next hand, making the take-out double the hardest part of the defensive bidding.

Playing simple overcalls, weak jump overcalls and pre-emptive bidding gives prominence to the one-suited hand. This is pretty silly.

3.2 Lebensohl over a weak 2

Bidding a suit is intermediate and 6 cards

2N show 16 to 18 balanced

DBL shows 15+, or 13+ protective. Then 2N is a relay to 3♣.

Weak: 0 to 6 opposite 15+, 0 to 8 opposite 13+

(2♥) X, 2N, 3♣ , pass weak with ♣
(2♥) X, 2N, (not 3♣) doubler breaks transfer with 19+
(2♥) X, 2N, 3♣ , 3♦ weak with ♦
(2♥) X, 2N, 3♣ , 3♠ weak with ♠
(2♥) X, 2♠ weak with ♠ (available in ♠ but not ♥)

Medium: 7 to 9 opposite 15+, 9 to 11 opposite 13+

(2♥) X, 3♣ 7 to 9 with ♣
(2♥) X, 3♦ 7 to 9 with ♦
(2♥) X, 3♠ 7 to 9 with ♠

Strong: 10+ opposite 15+, 12+ opposite 13+
(direct denies stop, 3♥ shows 4 of other major)

(2♥) X, 2N, 3♣ , 3♥=4♠ heart stop
(2♥) X, 2N, 3♣ , 3NT=heart stop
(2♥) X, 3♥=4♠ no heart stop
(2♥) X, 3NT=no heart stop

3.3 Modified Truscott.

Over a very strong bid (precision 1♣ , Benj 2♣ , 2♦ etc.) where the opening bid shows nothing, or very little, apart from strength, next seat can very usefully disrupt the bidding by overcalling using Truscott on tram tickets. The system is that the next four suit bids up show that suit and the next suit up at least 4-4, double shows the next suit up and the non touching suit and notrumps at the lowest level shows the other two suits. All higher-level bids are weak jump overcalls.

Furthermore, overcaller's partner should pre-empt to the maximum possible extent before opener gets any chance to describe his hand.

Hence, over a precision club

X shows ♦ and ♠
1♦ shows ♦ and ♥
1♥ shows ♥ and ♠
1♠ shows ♠ and ♣
1NT shows ♣ and ♥
2♣ shows ♣ and ♦
2♦-♥-♠ is a weak jump overcall in the suit named
2NT is unusual (♣ and ♦)
Higher level bids are similarly pre-emptive.

Over a Benjamin 2♣ , the bids are much the same but one level higher.

Over Benjamin 2♦ X shows ♥ and ♣ , 2NT shows ♦ and S, 2♥ 2♠3♣ 3♦ are all the suit and the next suit up, and 3♥ up is the a jump overcall.

Over 1♣ - 1♦ I suggest we also play Truscott. It is not too late to make a mess of their bidding system.

Section 4 - Play - defense

4.1 Discards.

McK discards on first discard. Always play and watch these signals. Doesn't necessarily mean the indicated suit needs to be led (a strong signal does ask for lead) - might just show a stop in NT. Watch other cards played by partner. Second discard can often be used to clarify the signal.

4.2 Signals

Defenders first lead of a suit:
K for count. Anything else for attitude
Standard(ish) leads - 2 from rubbish, lowest from an honour (not 10) top of sequences, internal sequences. 9 always guarantees at most 2. Lead 10 from 10,9,x

On first lead: if there are no further losers in the led suit in dummy, then partner will signal McK.

Second round of partners suit in NT: play low from 4, highest from 3.

On declarers lead, signal original count if it looks helpful, particularly when partner needs to judge how many times to hold up a stop.

When leading for a ruff, the card led is suit preference. If partner wins trick in second hand, fourth hand shows McK suit preference.

Section 5 - ideas and miscellaneous suggestions

Can we weaken weak 2 for 1st and 3rd hands: Eg:

1 st and 3 rd	non-vul or equal, min = 4 pts, (5+ cards non vul)
1 st and 3 rd	unfavourable, min = 6 pts, 6 cards
2 nd	min = 6pts, 6 cards
4 th	min = 8 (9?) pts, 5+ cards
1 st and 2 nd	max = 10
3 rd and 4 th	max = 14

***Also suggest clarifying the strength/length of pre-empts (!) :

Strong preempts are	7+cards with 1 honour, or 6+cards with 2 honours
Weak preempts are	7+cards jack high or 6+cards 1 honour.

For pairs, suggest weak at the 3 level for the following:

1 st and 3 rd	non-vul or equal
2 nd	favourable
4 th	any - where sensible