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August 11, 2006

1 General overview and style

Our system is pretty standard, 2/1 game forcing, with a 15-17 no-trump. It contains a fair number of gadgets and treatments, however, which comprise the majority of the description in these notes.

Our style is to open light basically on some combination of the following three things: 1) we have no rebid problem, 2) the seat/colors are right, and 3) we will have trouble describing the hand later. Often this means opening quite light in 3rd seat; we are also aggressive about opening weak twos white in 1st seat, and distributional hands in general. Light here means that we would probably open any decent not-flat 10-count with no rebid problem (e.g. 1m, would pass 1M) in 3rd seat.

In competitive bidding, we're pretty normal: normal overcall style, normal responding style (i.e. stretching to bid 1M over 1m instead of passing), etc.. We occasionally open 1NT with a five-card major, and we occasionally open 1NT and frequently 2NT with a six-card minor.

1.1 General principles

Some principles come up frequently. The 3NT jump bid showing 15-17 balanced, doubleton in partner's suit. When you have only one way to force, it's just a general try (e.g. cuebidding as the only way to agree a suit in a forcing manner, or having only 3M-1 below 3M with agreed M fit, which is a generic game try.) When we have an agreed fit, x is penalty unless it's maximal; this does not apply when the "fit" is only a support double, where x is generic takeout.

We basically never penalize the opponents at the 1- or 2-level, unless it's "obvious" or in a couple of other specific situations (such as partner made a takeout double and they bid a new suit, or we make a double which implies a previous trap pass, such as (1♥)-(1NT); (2♥) - x.)

Sometimes we have to bid 3NT when there isn't enough room. In these cases it only guarantees stoppers you can't show, though ideally you have all.

Whenever we ask for shortness, we respond HML. In all other cases (including showing shortness) we use the substitution method. If we were in an auction where we were about to give step responses (for instance, we asked for shortness, or are in a keycard auction), and the opponents interfere, and we don't lose any room by doing so, we play pass is the 1st step, double is the second step, and so on.

2 General treatments and conventions

2.1 Jump shifts

We play jump shifts as follows. In constructive auctions by an unpassed hand:

- 3-level jump shifts are natural and invitational (something like ♠ xx ♥ xx ♦ Kxx ♣ AQJxxx for 1♠ - 3♣)
- 2-level jump shifts: 2♦ over 1♣ (5-4) and 2♠ over 1♥ (6-3) are fit. All other jump shifts are in the 1m - 2M family, which are raises (2♥ limit, 2♠ game-forcing.)

2.1.1 Fit jumps

In competitive auctions, and 3-level by a passed hand, jump shifts are fit-showing. You should have a pure hand for this, with honor concentration in the two suits in question. They are constructive, showing four-card support with five cards in the new suit (could sometimes be 6 in new, 3 in old); minimum would be something like KQxxx Kxxx in the two suits. Note that this includes auctions like $(1\heartsuit) - 1\spadesuit - (P) - 3\clubsuit$, and $1\heartsuit - (X) - 3\clubsuit$ as well as the usual $1\heartsuit - (1\spadesuit) - 3\clubsuit$. These only apply when the jump-shifter is making their first bid, so something like $1\diamondsuit - (X) - 1\heartsuit - (P) - 3\clubsuit$ is not a fit-showing jump shift, but rather a strong minor two-suiter.

If the fit jump is fitting a major, it agrees that suit (for purposes of keycard/nonserious 3NT); if it's fitting a minor, it agrees the suit for purposes of keycard, but of course we can still play in NT. In either case, if partner raises the suit we jumped in (e.g. $1\diamondsuit - (1\heartsuit) - 2\spadesuit - 3\spadesuit$), we have a 6key auction.

Something like $1\heartsuit - (1\spadesuit) - 3\spadesuit$ is of course a splinter, not a fit bid. $(1\diamondsuit) - 1\spadesuit - (X) - 3\diamondsuit$ is a mixed raise.

2.2 Splinters

We play splinters whenever possible. The general rule is that the lowest undefined bid in a suit is a splinter.

The classic splinter auction is something like $1\spadesuit - 4\diamondsuit$, but there are others. For instance, $\begin{matrix} 1\clubsuit & - & 1\heartsuit \\ & & 3\diamondsuit \end{matrix}$

is a diamond splinter in support of hearts. $3\diamondsuit \dots 4\diamondsuit$ shows a void.

Here "splinter" means "singleton or void with four-card trump support." Over major-suit openings, we play 3-tiered splinters: $3M+1$ is a concealed 10-12 HCP splinter ($3M+2$ relays, HML responses), $16+$ HCP splinters bid 2NT, while the remainders (including 3NT over $1\heartsuit$ for spades) are 13-15 splinters.

All splinters are game-forcing, except for $1x - 1y - 3z$ where $x < z < y$. Bidding $3z \dots 4z$ shows a void, bidding $4z$ when $3z$ is available specifically shows a game-forcing hand with exactly one card in z .

2.3 Mystery cues

In some situations, the only forcing way to agree a suit is to cuebid, and there is only one cuebid. In this case, the cuebid doesn't mean anything, but is merely a strong way to agree the suit (which is almost always the last bid suit.) If we have multiple mystery cues, then they can be matching cues (if we can't agree either of two of partner's suits in a forcing manner), or, more commonly, both agree the last bid suit and show controls there.

2.4 Ace-asking bids

2.4.1 RKC 1430

We play Roman Keycard 1430 in most situations. In other words, with an agreed trump suit (sometimes agreed by the 4NT bid itself), 4NT asks for keycards. There are five keycards: the four aces and the king of trumps. $5\clubsuit$ shows 1 or 4, $5\diamondsuit$ shows 0 or 3, $5\heartsuit$ shows two without the queen of trumps, and $5\spadesuit$ shows two with the queen of trumps.

After any non-queen-showing response, the cheapest bid not in the trump suit asks for the queen of trumps. Responses are to return to the cheapest level of the trump suit without it, to jump in the trump suit or bid 5NT with the queen but no kings, and otherwise to bid one's cheapest king (sometimes suppressed if it would require going beyond six of the trump suit and this is deemed unwise.)

If the response shows 3, and the trump suit is hearts, $5\heartsuit$ is a non-forcing queen ask (pass with 0, or 3 and no queen, bid a king or $6\heartsuit$ with 3 and the queen), while $5\spadesuit$ is a forcing queen ask ($5NT =$ queen and no kings.)

After any response to 1430, 5NT guarantees all keycards and asks for specific kings. The response is to bid your cheapest king, or to return to six of the trump suit with no kings. A specific suit bid looks for help in that suit; partner bids 6 of the trump suit with no help, an intervening bid if available with shortness help, and 6NT with an honor (uncued K, or Q.)

As previously mentioned, in a keycard auction, we play pass = 1st step, double/redouble = 2nd step if they interfere, so pass shows the first step (1 or 4), double shows the second step (0 or 3), etc.. If the step responses take up too much room (i.e. interference is 5♥ or higher), pass shows an odd number of keycards, double shows an even number.

If you have a void, you can choose to show it as follows: 5NT shows an even number of keycards with a void, while 6x shows a void in x (or if x is trumps, a void in a higher suit) with an odd number of keycards. You can choose to suppress it. Usually you show it if 1) it's not getting us too high on any reasonable layout, and/or 2) partner can figure out from the rest of the bidding where it is. After these, if there's a bid before 6T, the cheapest bid is a queen ask, all others being semi-generic grand tries.

2.4.2 When is 4NT not keycard?

The general rule is that when the 4NT bid is needed to show a natural quantitative invite, that's what it is. In cases where you must have another bid with that invite, or 4NT natural is not very reasonable (e.g. opponents have been bidding and raising, or something), 4NT is keycard for the last bid suit (or possibly takeout for the minors, or 2 places to play, or ...) Watch for 4NT natural if we have bid three suits. We seem to play 4NT natural more than most people.

2.4.3 Minorwood

When we have a minor-suit fit, 4m+1 is keycard, except if this is hearts and could conceivably be to play (which basically includes whenever partner showed that suit), in which case 4♠ is keycard. After any response, 4NT is to play, whether NT was previously bid or not. The cheapest non-4NT, non-5m bid asks for the trump queen, and the second cheapest such bid asks for kings. With no kings, or no trump queen, simply return to the cheapest level of the trump suit.

With a void and an even number, bid the next step (which is 5m.) With a void and an odd number, do something intelligent (I guess bidding your void between 5m and 6m if you think it's good.)

2.4.4 6 keycard situations

In some auctions, we play 6 keycard (actually 7 keycard.) There are six keycards (AK of two suits, and the other two aces), as well as two relevant queens, which count as half a keycard each. After obtaining your keycard number, you bid the first step if it is 1(.5), 4(.5), or 7(.5), the second step if it is 0(.5), 3(.5), or 6(.5), the third step if it is 2 or 5, and the fourth step if it is 2.5 or 5.5. After one of the first two steps, the next step asks for the queen. 6 keycard can be 4m+1 if it's right.

Situations where we play this are when we have a double fit (including partial fit, i.e. via support double), or when we open NT and responder bids two suits. Another situation is when responder splinters in support of opener's second suit (he can hardly have shortness in opener's first suit.)

2.4.5 Gerber

We play Roman Keycard Gerber only directly over a 1NT or 2NT opening. 4♣ asks for aces; 4♦ shows 1 or 4, 4♥ shows 0 or 3, 4♠ shows 2 with max, 4NT shows 2 with min.

2.4.6 Miscellany

After 1m - 1x - 2NT, a direct 4m is keycard in that minor. 3♣ (Wolff) followed by 4m agrees the minor but is not keycard.

2.4.7 4NT opening

A 4NT opening asks for specific aces. Responses are:

- 5♣ : no aces
- 5♦ : diamond ace only

- 5♥ : heart ace only
- 5♠ : spade ace only
- 5NT: club ace only
- 6♣+: 2+ aces, bid the cheapest one.

2.4.8 4♣ keycard

4♣ is often keycard. Some cases: after Stayman and a 2M response, 4♣ is normal keycard. After partner opens a weak two-bid or three-bid, 4♣ is keycard, with responses 0, 1 without the queen, 1 with the queen, 2 without the queen, 2 with the queen. 4♦ is keycard over a club preempt.

2.4.9 Exclusion Blackwood

We play Exclusion Blackwood if and only if partner can figure it out at the table. Exclusion Blackwood is always 0314.

2.5 Cuebids

With an agreed major-suit fit, we cuebid first- or second-round control, except for shortness control in partner's suit. Bypassing a cuebid denies it (bid up-the-line, even with a "better cuebid" (e.g. AK instead of second-round control) in a higher suit, unless you want to claim to deny the lower cuebid.)

Our cuebids in opponent's suit are limit raises, general strong bids, or whichever of Western and Eastern is stopper-asking, as appropriate. If there is one unbid suit, a cuebid asks (generally in inverted minor auctions); if there are two, a cuebid tells.

We cuebid fragments when we've denied stoppers and below 3NT. In practice we seem to be able to figure out bid or implied fragments pretty well.

2.6 1X - 1Y - 1nt auctions

One structure which comes up frequently is 1X - 1Y - 1NT, where X and Y are suits with Y obviously outranking X. X and Y can both be minors, both be majors, or (most frequently by far) X can be a minor and Y can be a major. In all of these situations we play the same structure, which is tricked-out Both Minors Forcing (or 2-way NMF if you prefer.)

A 2♣ bid is almost always an invitational hand of some sort, the only exception being a diamond signoff. Opener is forced to bid 2♦. After this, responder will pass with the diamond signoff; any other bid is natural and invitational. Most commonly this is rebidding Y, which shows a fifth card. A bid of 3Y would show six cards.

A 2♦ bid is game-forcing and artificial. Opener makes the cheapest descriptive bid, with life continuing naturally. (In other words, if 2♥ and 2♠ show three-card support and a new four-card suit, bid 2♥.)

A 2Y bid or a 3♣ bid is a weak signoff; also, 2♥ is a weak signoff if Y = ♠. A 2NT bid is natural and invitational. A 3Y bid is natural and game-forcing, showing a six-card suit; it sets trumps unless opener responds 3NT. 3NT is obviously to play.

There are some subtleties / ambiguities which we choose to use as follows.

1♣ - 1♥	versus	1♣ - 1♥	versus	1♣ - 1♥	:	We agree that the first sequence
1NT - 2♣		1NT - 2NT		1NT - 2♣		
2♦ - 2NT				2♦ - 3♣		

shows support for clubs (4+ clubs) as well as a notrumpy hand. Accordingly, the second sequence sort of denies support for clubs, while the third sequence suggests a non-notrumpy hand (5+ clubs.)

1♣ - 1♠ : We agree that this sequence is weak, showing 5-4 in the majors. With an invitational hand you would go through 2♣ - 2♦ first.

$1\clubsuit - 1\heartsuit$
 $1NT - 2\clubsuit$ versus $1\clubsuit - 1\heartsuit$
 $2\diamond - 2\spadesuit$ $1NT - 2\spadesuit$: We agree that the first sequence shows 4-5 in the majors

while the second sequence shows 4-4 in the majors. Both are invitational (with GF either, go through 2D.)

$1\heartsuit - 1\spadesuit$
 $1NT - 2\clubsuit$: No one should be surprised that this is a normal limit raise in hearts (with some
 $2\diamond - 2\heartsuit$

spades to boot.)

$1\clubsuit - 1\diamond$ versus $1\clubsuit - 1\diamond$
 $1NT - 2\heartsuit$ $1NT - 2\diamond$: Both of these auctions are forcing to game. We agree that
 the first auction shows four hearts and 5+ diamonds, while the second auction could be a slamish hand
 with four in a major and four diamonds, trying to find any 4-4 fit (or it could be a diamond-club hand.)

$1\clubsuit - 1\spadesuit$ and $1\heartsuit - 1\spadesuit$
 $1NT - 3\spadesuit$ $1NT - 3\heartsuit$: These auctions are both game-forcing.

In some cases, opener is systemically supposed to rebid 1NT with a stiff in partner's suit; see Section 3.3.1. These "death hands" are revealed in various ways.

$1\diamond - 1\spadesuit$
 $1NT - 2\diamond$
 $2\heartsuit - 2\spadesuit$: Opener is 1453 or 1444.
 $3\clubsuit$
 $1\diamond - 1\spadesuit$
 $1NT - 2\diamond$
 $2\heartsuit - 2\spadesuit$: Opener is 1453 with bad clubs or 2452. These last two auctions and explanations also
 $3\diamond$

apply switching clubs and diamonds.

$1\clubsuit - 1\spadesuit$
 $1NT - 2\diamond$: Opener is 1345 or 2245 with bad hearts (?).
 $3\diamond$
 $1\clubsuit - 1\spadesuit$
 $1NT - 2\diamond$: Can opener have a stiff (presumably 1345) on this auction?
 $2NT$

The auction $1\clubsuit - 1\spadesuit$
 $1NT - 2\diamond$ does not set spades as trumps. Opener can rebid 3NT with a stiff; any
 $2NT - 3\spadesuit$
 other bid shows at least two spades and is a cuebid. No nonserious 3NT.

The auction $1\clubsuit - 1\spadesuit$
 $1NT - 3\spadesuit$ does set spades as trumps, even if opener has a stiff. Opener cuebids, or
 nonserious 3NT.

2.7 Reverses

Let's take a standard reverse auction, such as $1\diamond - 1\spadesuit$
 $2\heartsuit$. We have the following treatment: the only non-game-forcing bids are the cheaper of the fourth suit and 2NT, which is non-forcing, and the suit rebid ($2\spadesuit$ here), which shows five spades and is a one-round force. Everything else is pretty much as you would expect; $3\diamond$ and $3\heartsuit$ are game-forcing raises. 3NT shows a minimum game-force with an unslammish hand and no fit. The more expensive of 2NT and the 4th suit shows extras (beyond GF) and is encouraging. The weird thing is that the 4th suit, unless it is the cheapest rebid, denies a fit, and denies a 5th card in your suit, so it is actually natural.

Reverses over 1NT have the same thing. The cheapest bid (necessarily an unbid suit or 2NT) is artificial and non-gf, all other bids are natural and gf.

2.8 Fourth-suit forcing to game

The cheapest bid of the fourth suit (except, obviously, in cuebidding situations) is artificial and forcing to game except for a couple of situations: when it comes up as the cheapest bid in a reverse (Section 2.7),

when we are already forced to game, or in the specific auction $\begin{array}{c} 1\clubsuit - 1\diamond \\ 1\heartsuit - 1\spadesuit \end{array}$, which is natural. The bid

of $2\spadesuit$ in $\begin{array}{c} 1\clubsuit - 1\diamond \\ 1\heartsuit - 2\spadesuit \end{array}$ is artificial and game-forcing. (In general a jump in the fourth suit is natural.) If

opener has nothing to say (no stopper in the 4th suit, no extra shape, no partial support for responder's first suit), he makes the default rebid. If his cheapest rebid is in the higher-ranking suit, that's the default rebid; otherwise, the suit he opened is the default rebid. For instance,

$\begin{array}{c} 1\clubsuit - 1\heartsuit \\ 1\spadesuit - 2\diamond \end{array}$: $2\spadesuit$ is the default rebid ($3\spadesuit$ would show 5-6, $3\clubsuit$ would show 4-6, $2\heartsuit$ would show three hearts, $2NT$ would be a diamond stopper, $3\diamond$ would be pattern, probably 4135.)

$\begin{array}{c} 1\diamond - 1\spadesuit \\ 2\clubsuit - 2\heartsuit \end{array}$: $3\diamond$ is the default rebid. $2NT$ would be a heart stopper, $2\spadesuit$ would be 3 spades, $3\clubsuit$ would show 5-5.

2.9 The non-serious 3NT

In auctions where we have discovered a major-suit fit below 3NT, and thus are in a cue-bidding situation, we play the "non-serious 3NT." This means that bypassing 3NT to cuebid shows a serious slam try; without a serious slam try, and out of bids below 3NT, 3NT is the bid. All this bid means is "I don't have a serious slam try." On a ridiculously unslammish hand, you can skip 3NT and cuebids altogether and go straight to 4M, although this is generally deprecated. (If partner is limited, this isn't at all deprecated, of course.)

Here are the rules as to how we play 3NT. Assume we have established an 8-card major suit fit.

- If both partners are limited, 3NT is to play.
- If 3NT bidder is unlimited, but partner is limited, 3NT requests a cuebid.
- If 3NT bidder is limited, but partner is unlimited, 3NT shows a bad hand in context, essentially nonserious.
- If both partners are unlimited, 3NT is nonserious.

If we bid 3M+1 when we could have bid 3M (with M already agreed), it is serious, requesting a cue from partner; 3M is the nonserious bid. If we bid 3M, this is nonserious, and if partner bids 3M+1 over this he is requesting a cue.

3 Major-suit openings

We play five-card majors, opening fairly aggressively on such hands. The structure after a 1M opening is fairly normal 2/1 with a forcing notrump. Perhaps a list is in order. Over a $1\spadesuit$ opening:

- 1NT is forcing by an unpassed hand, and shows any hand not accounted for otherwise.
- $2\clubsuit$, $2\diamond$, and $2\heartsuit$ are natural and game-forcing, showing 4, 4, and 5 cards in their suits respectively (or $2\clubsuit$, $2\diamond$ are 2-way reverse Drury by a passed hand, showing a limit raise with three or four trumps respectively.) If you have 3433 you probably bid $2\clubsuit$ over $1\spadesuit$.
- $2\spadesuit$ is the usual spade raise, except that we bid trashy raises by an unpassed hand by bidding 1NT first and then correcting opener's rebid to $2\spadesuit$. This goes up to maybe a flat 6. Two-way game tries are in effect.
- 2NT shows a limit-plus raise in spades (or is an invitational hand in clubs by a passed hand.) See Section 3.1.

- 3♣, 3♦, and 3♥ are natural and invitational (fit by passed hand.) The 3♥ bid in particular shows 0-1 spades, and the 3♦ bid denies 4 hearts. Note that with any suit other than clubs, a passed hand with a natural, invitational diamond or heart bid will have typically opened a weak two-bid.
- 3♠ is preemptive.
- 3NT is a concealed splinter, 10-12 HCP with a splinter somewhere. 4♣ asks, responses HML.
- 4♣, 4♦, 4♥ are 13-15 HCP splinters.
- 4♠ is to play (the usual 4♠ bid.)
- 4NT is 1430.

The structure over hearts is mostly identical. One gadget we play is the impossible 2♠ bid; in an auction like

1♥	-	1NT
2♣	-	2♠

the 2♠ bid is clearly impossible (since with any such natural hand, responder would have bid 1♠ instead of 1NT), so we play that this sequence shows a strong club raise (generally five cards with 10 or so HCP.)

The auction

1♥	-	1NT
2♥	-	2♠

shows a very minor-suited hand, like 10 HCP with 5-5 in the minors.

3.1 1M - 2NT auctions

We play 2NT as a limit raise plus in the major with four or more trumps. Opener rebids:

- 3♣ with any balanced hand worth at least an invite opposite a limit raise. 3♦ by responder is a range ask, showing extras; 3M shows minimum (13-14), 3oM shows balanced 6M, 3N shows 15-17, anything else is 18-19. 3M by responder is a minimum balanced GF; 3N is an offer to play; others are strong splinters. 4M is a 5-card limit raise, min bal.
- 3M rejects the limit raise; after that 3M+1 by responder is serious, requesting cue.
- 3♦, 3oM, and 3NT show shortness. After this normal nonserious 3NT applies as both are unlimited.
- 4x is a good 5-5.

3.2 1M - 1NT auctions

Our 1M - 1NT auctions are basically standard 2/1 except that our 2♣ rebid is clubs or balanced (shorter than standard clubs with 5332, or conceivably with 4531), and we play Bart over that. If opener rebids 2 of a suit less than M which is not clubs, responder:

- Passes or bids 2M with a weak hand.
- Bids a new suit at the cheapest level with a weak one-suited hand (this is almost always passed by opener)
- Raises to 3 of the new suit with a decent hand (9+ HCP or equivalent) and support (generally five-card support for a minor, which is often 3)
- Bids 3M with a three-card limit raise in M
- Bids 2NT, natural and invitational (10-12 or so)
- Bids 3H over 2D with six hearts and two spades and invitational values

Opener's ensuing third bid is natural.

Opener's rebid of 3M shows a good six-card suit and a very good hand. Responder passes, bids 3NT, or bids anything else as a cuebid. Any other reverse/jump by opener is game-forcing. Sometimes this is faked (i.e. 3-card) for lack of any other reasonable bid. After this, responder's 4M shows the limit raise.

3.2.1 1M - 1NT - 2NT

Opener's rebid of 2NT shows roughly 17-19 balanced and is natural and invitational. Over this, we play transfers, which can be signoff (opener should only break the transfer with a very good hand, and even then very rarely), or preliminary (the usual) – e.g.

1♥ - 1NT
 2NT - 3♣
 3♦ - 3♥

is a heart limit raise with diamond values. If responder bids anything after completing the transfer we are in a game force. Note that with the super-trashy raise you can drop partner in 3M, while with the limit you can transfer to 3M and then bid. If partner tries to transfer into 3M you usually don't break this. I mean you may think your hand rules, but partner's hand is really really bad if he's about to drop you. We should talk about these hand types more, but whatever.

3.2.2 Bart

After 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣, showing clubs or a balanced hand, we play Bart. Then 2♦ is an artificial relay to 2♥. Opener should bid whatever he would bid over a normal 2♥ hand (e.g. show good 6-4 by bidding 2♠, raise, etc.), but would usually bid 2♥. The hand types here for responder are (after 2♥ rebid by opener):

- Pass: Unilateral heart signoff
- 2♠: good 2-card spade raise
- 2NT: 2NT rebid with four clubs
- 3♣: Good (five-card) club raise
- 3♦: 6 diamonds, 4 hearts, invitational
- 3♥: 6 hearts, 3 spades, invitational
- 3♠: Doesn't particularly exist.

This obviously affects other immediate rebids by responder:

- 2♥: Heart signoff with spade or club tolerance, tends to be exactly 5 hearts with exactly 2 spades, but could be 5 hearts 4 clubs or 6 bad hearts 2 decent spades, or what have you.
- 2♠: Bad preference
- 2NT: 2NT rebid without four clubs
- 3♣: Courtesy (five-card) club raise
- 3♦: Diamond signoff
- 3♥: 6 hearts, 2 spades, invitational
- 3♠: Limit raise in spades

3.2.3 2/1 auctions

The auction where opener bids 1M and responder bids 2X is game-forcing (where X is less than M.) A bid of 2X promises four cards, or five if X is hearts. Any bid above 2M by opener shows extras, except 2NT, a heart raise, or 2♠ after a 1♥ opening (more on this later), and is natural, showing either any 5-5 or 5-4 with extras (enough to handle a minor-suit raise); any bid below 2M is natural (four-card suit) and neither shows nor denies extras (extras are defined as slam interest.) Raising a 2/1 minor should be mildly encouraging to 5m or 6m.

3M shows 16+ and a good six-card suit, so bidding 2M and then 3M shows a minimum-ish hand. Responder is obligated to cue (with support) over 3M, so cueing over 2M - [bid] - 3M shows serious slam interest. Opener's cue is not entirely obligatory though.

2NT shows 12-14 or 18-19 balanced. With 15-17 balanced, both side suits stopped, and typically 2 in the raised minor (or 3 and not worried about minor fit), bid 3NT. Similarly, responder bidding 3NT after opener's rebid shows 15-17 (unless it's not a jump.)

If you have none of these, bid 2M. After this, the auction continues naturally until 3NT is reached or a major-suit fit is established. Jumps tend to be fast arrival-ish, picture bids or splinters; for instance after $\begin{matrix} 1\spadesuit & - & 2\clubsuit \\ 2\spadesuit & - & \end{matrix}$, a $4\spadesuit$ bid shows 5 clubs and 4 spades and a minimum game force; a $4\clubsuit$ bid shows 6 clubs and 3 spades and a minimum game force. Both tend to have all their honors in the blacks. The former tends to be 2-2 in the reds. Here, 4 of a red suit is a splinter in spades, tending to be 4(13)5, but again tends to be a minimum, and tends to be specifically looking for a club card (i.e. why you didn't splinter or bid 2NT initially.) The same thing holds if partner rebid 2NT. If partner rebid 2 of a red suit, the $4\spadesuit$ bid is the same; I'm not sure what other bids are.

If we find a major-suit fit, 3M+1 is nonserious. In some continuations, opener patterns out. 1M - 2X - 2Y - 2M is one of these. 1M - 2X - 2Y - 2N is another. With 4 spades and 5 or 6 hearts, we rebid $2\spadesuit$ with 4-6 and $2\heartsuit$ with 4-5. This is useful for timing issues.

If the opponents interfere in our 2/1 auctions, we double them and get 800.

3.2.4 1M - 2M auctions

In 1M - 2M auctions, we play Cheetah (a.k.a. 2-way) game tries. They're very simple:

- 2M+1 is an unspecified short-suit game try. Responder bids the cheapest short-suit game try they would accept. Opener either knows what to do or bids their short suit (if more expensive than responder's bid.)
- Anything else between 2M and 3M is a long-suit game try in that suit. Responder bids 3M when rejecting the game try (or an intervening bid with a max but no help), or 3M+1 when accepting the game try. If 3M+1, asker bids 3M+2 to ask for the type of help; responder bids 3M+3 with one honor, 3M+4 with two, and $4M = 3M+5$ with shortness help (singleton or void). Any other rebid above 3M means forgot system + cuebid, except 4M, which shows a doubleton and a general strength/extra trump accept.

If the suit is hearts, no-trump stands in for spades; thus $\begin{matrix} 1\heartsuit & - & 2\heartsuit \\ 2NT & & \end{matrix}$ is a long-suit game try in spades, and $\begin{matrix} 1\heartsuit & - & 2\heartsuit \\ 2\spadesuit & - & 2NT \end{matrix}$ says you'd accept a short-suit game try in spades (and says nothing about what you would do opposite a short-suit game try in clubs or diamonds.)

These are called Cheetah game tries as a mnemonic: the long-suit game tries are the fast ones, while the short-suit game tries are the delayed ones. Cheetahs are long and fast. We play them only in these two situations (e.g. not in 1x - 1M - 2M auctions.) We also play them with competition involved, such as $1\heartsuit - (1\spadesuit) - 2\heartsuit - (P)$.

3.2.5 1M - Drury auctions

Drury is off after a double.

After a 1M opening followed by Drury, we play 2-way game tries immediately. So, as usual:

$\begin{matrix} 1\spadesuit & - & 2\clubsuit \\ 2NT & & \end{matrix}$ is an unspecified short suit game try, $\begin{matrix} 1\spadesuit & - & 2\diamond \\ 3\clubsuit & & \end{matrix}$ is a long-suit game try in clubs, etc..

If you choose not to make such a game try, 2M is signoff. P - $1\heartsuit - 2\clubsuit - 2\diamond$ and P - $1\spadesuit - 2\diamond - 2\heartsuit$ are temporizing, asking for more info; responder should bid 2M with a min and anything else with a max. In the specific auction $1\spadesuit - 2\clubsuit$, $2\diamond$ is temporizing (and $2\heartsuit$ is an artificial response showing a max), and $2\heartsuit$ is natural and non-forcing.

After these temporizing bids, 2-way game tries are off.

3.3 Minor-suit openings

Our auctions after minor-suit openings are mostly normal. Opposite $1\clubsuit$, we frequently bypass four-card or longer diamond suits for four-card majors, essentially with all hands not worth an invite opposite a 1nt rebid. After $1m - 1X$, we almost always bypass a four-card major or majors to rebid 1NT or 2NT; the official party line is that we never rebid 1M over $1\clubsuit - 1\diamond$ with a balanced hand, and we rebid $1\spadesuit$ over $1m - 1\heartsuit$ with a balanced hand “only in extraordinary circumstances.” We raise major-suit responses on three frequently, with an outside weakness of Jx or worse. With (6331) hands, the raise is optional.

Notrump ranges:

- 1NT over $1\clubsuit$: 8-10 (with fewer, fake a $1\diamond$ response, or pass)
- 2NT: 11-12
- 3NT: 13-15

Ways to raise partner:

- 2m: Standard single raise, about 6-9 hcp.
- $2\heartsuit$: limit raise. If opener bids 2N or 3m this is dead-min, passable, everything else is probing. If either partner bids 2N or 3m this is always passable, but responder can of course have a pseudo-game-force and bid on.
- $2\spadesuit$: game-forcing raise. We bid naturally.
- 3m: Preemptive.

In GCC events: 1m-2M are fit jumps, 1m-2m is inverted.

Recall the $1x - 1y - 1NT$ structure (Section 2.6), which comes up very frequently in these auctions.

3.3.1 $1m - 1M - ???$

We’ve decided to impose a structure such that a 2m rebid in this sequence always promises six. This means that with certain patterns, we are rebidding 1NT with a stiff in partner’s suit. We agree to do this with 15 (note that this is usually a misfit 15), or even a bad 16 (with better hands, we would reverse.) The hand patterns where we do this are: 3145, 1345, 1435, 1444, and 1453. The death hand is 0445. Right now we have no agreement on this; partner lies either by opening $1\diamond$ and rebidding $2\clubsuit$, or by opening $1\clubsuit$ and rebidding $2\clubsuit$. With a 24(25) 15-17 count we would typically open 1NT.

3.3.2 $1m - 1M - 2m$

After $1\clubsuit - 1\spadesuit$, $2\diamond$ is seminatural and forcing through 2N, $2\heartsuit$ is weak signoff (opener might could raise to $3\heartsuit$ in extraordinary circumstances.) After $1\diamond - 1\spadesuit$, $2\heartsuit$ is forcing. It could be completely artificial if you have a diamond raise. If opener rebids $2\spadesuit$, this is forcing one round. It could also be a five-spade invite (though you can’t pass $2\spadesuit$), or a heart suit, or just heart values.

After $1\diamond - 1\heartsuit$, $2\spadesuit$ is game forcing. You could have a forcing diamond raise in which case $2\spadesuit$ turns out to be artificial. $2\spadesuit$ becomes seminatural if you bid NT or raise 2NT to 3NT. Opener can bid 2NT with a club stopper even with 3 hearts (responder can check back with $3\clubsuit$.) $3\clubsuit$ is also game-forcing, but always seminatural; opener’s first responsibility is to bid $3\heartsuit$ with 3 hearts, and responder tends to not have diamonds. After $1\clubsuit - 1\heartsuit$, $2\spadesuit$ is invitational and non-forcing, because game-forcing hands would start with an artificial $2\diamond$.

3.3.3 1m - 1M - 2M

For concreteness's sake, we will discuss the auction $\begin{matrix} 1\heartsuit \\ 2\heartsuit \end{matrix} - 1\heartsuit$; the other auctions in the 1m - 1M - 2M family are similar. Our treatment is mostly stolen from Adam Meyerson.

- 2NT: 4 hearts, natural and invitational. Opener's responses are as you expect, except that 3NT guarantees stoppers in the unbid suits. (Note that this is impossible.) With 3 trumps, a max, and missing a stopper, opener makes a descriptive rebid (usually the stopper they have.)
- 3♥: 5 hearts, natural and invitational
- 2♠: This could be 4 spades, or could be spade values looking for club values for NT. Opener's 3♠ is a real raise on 4 and implies 3 hearts, but obviously doesn't set trumps (although responder may choose to play in the 4-3 spade fit instead of the 4-3 heart fit if they want to, of course.)
- 3♣: natural and game-forcing, could be many shapes, tends to be concentration (need only be 3 cards.) Opener bids 3♥ with any hand with four hearts, and 3NT (or 2NT over 2♠) with stoppers in all unbid suits. If none of these things apply, opener makes a generally descriptive bid, such as rebidding his minor, bidding a fragment in the unbid suit, or splintering (does this imply 3 trumps or 4 trumps?).
- 3♦: natural and invitational, 4+ diamonds.
- 3NT: 4 hearts, guarantees stoppers in the unbid suits.
- 3♠, 4♣, 4♦: splinters
- 4♥: to play

3.3.4 1m - 1M - 3m

After 1m - 1M - 3m, 3M is forcing, 5 cards, usually 6, and definitely 6 if there's any intervening bid available (i.e. unless $m = \heartsuit$ and $M = \heartsuit$.) Bids below 3M are seminatural checkback / asking for stopper in the unbid suit. Bids above 3M deny 5 cards in the major and show stoppers. If pressed for space, 3NT may only guarantee stoppers you can't show.

3.3.5 1X - 1Y - 2NT

Over the auction $\begin{matrix} 1X \\ 2NT \end{matrix} - 1Y$ we play Wolff signoff: 3♣ relays to 3♦ for either passing, signing off in 3♥ or 3♠, or bidding 3NT, which is a mild slam try in X. 3♦ is checkback, asking for hitherto unshown support in a major. 3M is natural and game-forcing (bids by opener are cuebids.) Going through the Wolff relay and bidding 4m sets trumps but is not keycard, while bidding 4m (regardless of X) is keycard (and obviously sets trumps.)

3.3.6 1♦ - 2♣ auctions

Auctions that start 1♦ - 2♣ are game-forcing, but are a bit different from 2/1 auctions over 1M. Opener's rebids are as follows:

- 2M: 4 in the major, 5 diamonds, with extra shape or strength
- 3♣: four clubs, with substantial slam interest
- 3NT: 18-19, no 4cM or (optionally) four clubs
- 2NT: 12-14, no 4cM or (optionally) four clubs
- 3♦: standard American, good 6-card suit, good hand

- 3M: Splinter for clubs
- 2♦ : all other hands

After a non-2♦ response, things proceed pretty naturally. After 2♦ , 2M is a suit, 2NT is temporizing, asking for more information (e.g. club support, major-suit stopper, more diamonds.) 3♣ and 3♦ both highly suggest playing in the suit, although the partnership expects to furiously use up the remaining bids (of which, sadly, there are very few) in an effort to reach 3NT. 3M is, uh, a splinter in support of diamonds. Note that 2♦ by no means guarantees or even suggests a real diamond suit; indeed, you would bid it with the least diamondy hand of all, 4432.

In practice this system seems to work quite well.

3.3.7 1m - 2M auctions

After 1m - 2♥ , 2♠ shows 3 cards in the opened minor (generally a transfer to 2NT.) All other bids confirm 4 in the opened minor; if either partner bids 2NT or 3m, this is non-forcing. Everything else is natural, ostensibly stopper showing or advance cue.

2♠ is an absolute game-force, bids tend to be stopper showing, could be advance cue.

3.4 1NT openings

The range is the usual 15-17, with five-card majors not infrequent (especially with 16+-17.) Over 1NT, we play a few gadgets. We start with the list of bids:

- 2♣ : Stayman
- 2♦ , 2♥ : transfers (opener can super-accept)
- 2♠ : Either clubs, any strength, or a diamond invite. Opener rebids 3♣ with a hand which would accept a club-based invite to 3NT and 2NT otherwise. Responder's 3♦ bid is a diamond invite; any other bid confirms clubs. Next bid by responder is shortness.
- 2NT: Natural. Seriously.
- 3♣ : Diamonds, either signoff or game-forcing. Opener bids 3♦ . Next bid by responder is shortness. 3NT is a mild slam try in diamonds.
- 3♦ : 5-5 in the majors, game-forcing
- 3♥ : 31(54) game-force.
- 3♠ : 13(54) game-force.
- 3NT: to play
- 4♣ : Gerber
- 4♦ , 4♥ : transfers
- 4♠ : Kantar-Kleinman slam force at IMPs, 17-point quant invite at matchpoints
- 4NT: natural and invitational (16-17 at IMPs, 16 at matchpoints)
- 5NT: pick 6NT or 7NT

Most of this stuff is pretty self-explanatory; see below for some other stuff.

3.4.1 KK slam force

We play 1NT - 4♠ as the Kantar-Kleinman slam force. Despite its name, it is not forcing to slam. Opener, with a minimum, rebids 4NT; responder can of course keep bidding. Other bids are 6-card suits at the 6-level, or 4- or 5-card suits at the 5 level (rebidding at the 6 level shows a fifth card.) 5NT is not forcing. We only play this convention at IMPs; at matchpoints 4♠ is simply a strong quant (17, with 4NT being 16.)

3.4.2 Superaccepts

After a transfer, with four-card support, opener can super-accept (and will usually do so unless 4333.) Bidding 3M shows four-card support and a non-max. With a max, if you have a side four-card suit with honor concentration (typically something like KQxx), bid it; if not, bid 2M+1. Then transferrer's 2M+2 asks for doubleton with replacement principle, i.e. 2M+3 and 2M+4 show doubletons there, while 2M+5=3M shows the remaining doubleton.

The cheapest bid in M-1 by responder is always a retransfer. On this sequence, since opener is limited, 3NT is temporizing, asking for a cuebid.

3.4.3 Bidding over Stayman and transfers

Suppose that the auction starts $\begin{matrix} 1NT & - & 2x \\ & & 2M \end{matrix}$, i.e. with Stayman or a transfer. Then 4♣ is keycard agreeing the suit, and 4♦ shows a balanced slam try; both of these agree trumps. If it was Stayman, 3♠ is a shortness slam try, with 3♠+1 relaying for shortness (HML); if it was a transfer to hearts, 3♠ is a shortness slam try (2♠ is 4-5 invitational), while if it was a transfer to spades, 3♥ is needed for 5-5 invitational, so there is no shortness slam try.

After something like $\begin{matrix} 1NT & - & 2♦ \\ 2♥ & - & 3♣ \end{matrix}$, 3♥ promises three trumps and says nothing about slam interest, 3NT is non-forcing and slam-discouraging, and other bids agree clubs and are cuebids either with slam interest, or with a desire not to play 3NT. After a transfer, jumps are splinters.

$\begin{matrix} 1NT & - & 2♦ \\ 2♥ & - & 2♠ \end{matrix}$ is 4-5 in the majors, invitational; $\begin{matrix} 1NT & - & 2♥ \\ 2♠ & - & 3♥ \end{matrix}$ is 5-5 invitational.

After the auction $\begin{matrix} 1NT & - & 2♣ \\ & & 2♦ \end{matrix}$, bidding 4♦ or 4♥ is delayed Texas (6-4 in majors), bidding 3♣ or 3♦ is as usual, 3♥ and 3♠ show 5-4 majors with 5 in the other major (Smolen). Bidding 2NT here is natural and invitational, and does not guarantee a four-card major.

3.4.4 Five spades, invitational

With five spades and an invitational hand, we have options. With a balanced hand, transfer to spades and bid 2NT. With an unbalanced hand, bid 2♣, and then bid 2♠ over the response, unless it's spades (you know what to do), or it's hearts and your second suit is hearts (ditto). Opener can rebid 2NT to ask for your other suit.

3.4.5 A major-suit primer

Here's how to bid various major-suit distributions:

- 4-5 weak: 2♣, followed by 2♥ over 2♦
- 5-4 weak: usually transfer to spades, but maybe 2♣ ... 2♥ if hearts much better
- 5-5 weak: 2♣, followed by 2♥ over 2♦
- 4-5 invitational: transfer to hearts, followed by 2♠
- 5-4 invitational: 2♣, followed by 2♠ over 2♦. Note that this does not show hearts, but merely an unbalanced spade invite.

- 5-5 invitational: $2\heartsuit$, followed by $3\heartsuit$.
- 4-5 or 5-4 game-forcing: $2\clubsuit$, followed by three of your four-card suit over $2\diamond$ (Smolen)
- 5-5 game-forcing: $3\diamond$
- 6-4 or 4-6 slam try: bid Smolen and then bid 4 of your six-card major minus one (to transfer) after 3NT
- 6-4 or 4-6 game-forcing: $2\clubsuit$, followed by a Texas transfer
- 6-4 or 4-6 invitational: suppress the 4-card major (or with 6-4, you can bid $2\clubsuit$, $2\spadesuit$ over $2\diamond$, and, why not, $3\spadesuit$ over 2NT.)

3.4.6 Over interference

When the opponents interfere: if the bid is an artificial double or $2\clubsuit$ not for the majors (if $2\clubsuit$ for majors, we play Unusual versus Unusual; see Section 4.5.1), we ignore it (X over $2\clubsuit$ is Stayman); xx of an artificial x is penalty-oriented, tending to show a good balanced hand with at least invitational values (opener can't drop responder in 2NT, but responder can drop opener there.) Double of interference tends to be takeout; double of balancing interference tends to show values (without values, you can takeout by bidding, as opener is not going to misread your distribution.)

Over $2\diamond$ we play ordinary Lebensohl: 2M is signoff, 2NT relays to $3\clubsuit$ for weak clubs or GF 5-card major, Stayman, or 3NT with a stopper, $3\clubsuit$ is GF with clubs, $3\diamond$ is Stayman with no stopper, 3M is GF 5 cards no stopper, 3NT has no stopper.

We play funnysohl over interference of 2M which is seminatural. Here is the scheme; in the case of 2M interference, "our major" is the one they didn't bid.

- 2M is a weak signoff.
- 2NT transfers to $3\clubsuit$. $3\diamond$ asks for holding in the other major over 2M (over $2\diamond$, ordinary Stayman), and shows a stopper. 3NT is a normal 3NT bid with a stopper. These bids do not show clubs; everything else shows clubs. 3 of our major shows 5 clubs and 4 in our major with no stopper or with a hand with sufficient strength to pull 3NT; opener bids 3NT with a stopper and no major fit, $4\clubsuit$ with no stopper and no major fit, or anything else with a major fit. (You are often 6-4 to bid this way.) 3 of their major is a single-suited slam try, either with a stopper or prepared to pull 3NT.
- $3\clubsuit$ transfers to $3\diamond$. This always has diamonds. The 3M rebids are as in the $3\clubsuit$ structure. 3NT is... something. I guess you'd probably have diamonds.
- A direct $3\diamond$ asks for holding in our major and denies a stopper. Anything above 3NT shows 4 cards. 3 of our major shows 3 cards. 3NT shows 2 cards and a stopper. 3 of their major shows 2 cards and at most half a stopper. After 2NT - $3\clubsuit$ - $3\diamond$, it's the same, except that 3 of their major is undefined. If bidding continues, double shows 2 cards in our major, pass shows 3, bid shows 4.
- 3 of their major shows 6 in our major, game forcing.
- 3 of our major shows 6 in our major, invitational.
- 3NT shows 3NT without a stopper.
- Texas into our major is still on. There are 3 other 4-level bids. $4\spadesuit$ shows the minors; the other two show 2-suiters with $4\clubsuit$ showing clubs and our major.
- If you have a weak hand with hearts, double and then bid $3\heartsuit$.

After they double us for business, we play inverted DONT runouts. Redouble shows clubs or two non-club suits (opener bids $2\clubsuit$), $2\clubsuit$ shows clubs and a higher suit, other 2X shows that suit. Pass forces redouble to play or bid $2\clubsuit$ with any 4333.

If they double our Stayman bid, pass forces redouble. This shows either a unilateral desire to play $2\clubsuit$ redoubled (responder only breaks with garbage hand), or a normal bid with a club stopper. Redouble is cooperative, something like KTxx; responder's $3\clubsuit$ is restayman. If you have none of these, bid your normal Stayman response, which denies a club stopper.

3.5 2NT openings

The range is 20-21 HCP, with a five-card major no obstacle. Here are responder's immediate bids:

- $3\clubsuit$ is Super Muppet Stayman.
- $3\diamond$, $3\heartsuit$, $4\diamond$, $4\heartsuit$ are transfers.
- $3\spadesuit$ is minor-suit Stayman.
- 3NT is to play, 4NT is natural and invitational.
- $4\clubsuit$ is Gerber.
- $4\spadesuit$ is the Kantar-Kleinman slam force (see Section 3.4.1.)

Perhaps we should explain a couple of these things.

3.5.1 Super Muppet Stayman

Super Muppet Stayman is like Puppet Stayman, except with a name a thousand times cooler and better by one deal in 10,000 or so. (We have never had the Super part of Super Muppet come up.)

After 2NT - $3\clubsuit$, $3\spadesuit$ shows five spades, 3NT shows five hearts, $3\diamond$ denies a five-card major and shows at least one four-card major, $3\heartsuit$ denies a four-card major. In all continuations, bids of 4m are natural, except for over 3NT, where $4\diamond$ is a transfer to $4\heartsuit$ and $4\heartsuit$ shows diamonds.

After the expected $3\diamond$ response, $3\heartsuit$ shows four spades and denies four hearts, $3\spadesuit$ shows four hearts and may also have four spades, 3NT is to play, $4\clubsuit$ is natural, $4\diamond$ is natural. If you bid a minor when the major check fails, it's natural. These minor bids need only show five cards; responder can cuebid or bid 4NT natural. After $\begin{matrix} 2NT & - & 3\clubsuit \\ 3\diamond & - & 3\heartsuit \end{matrix}$, a bid of $3\spadesuit$ shows exactly three spades (responder may have three hearts and five spades), a bid of 3NT shows two spades, and any other bid is a cuebid and shows four spades. If opener responds $3\spadesuit$, $4\spadesuit$ is to play and $4\heartsuit$ is a mystery cue agreeing spades. With both majors, bid $3\spadesuit$ and then bid $4\spadesuit$ over 3NT. If you bid $3\spadesuit$ and $4\heartsuit$ over 3NT, this is also a mystery cue agreeing spades.

After a $3\heartsuit$ response, $3\spadesuit$ shows five spades, while 3NT denies five spades (and implies three hearts). Minor bids are suits. No delayed texas.

After a $3\spadesuit$ response, $4\clubsuit$ and $4\diamond$ are keycard, $4\heartsuit$ is an artificial cuebid agreeing spades and showing some slam interest.

After a 3NT response, showing hearts, $4\clubsuit$ is natural, $4\diamond$ is a retransfer, $4\heartsuit$ shows diamonds (this is the super part of super muppet.)

Muppet instead of Puppet means switching the $3\heartsuit$ and 3NT responses, because if responder is 5-3 (game-forcing) in the majors, he can then bid over $3\heartsuit$. Super Muppet means switching the intuitive meanings of $4\diamond$ and $4\heartsuit$ over 3NT (to right-side $4\heartsuit$, so that $4\diamond$ is a puppet and $4\heartsuit$ is diamonds.)

3.5.2 Minor-suit Stayman

$3\spadesuit$ is minor-suit Stayman. Responder usually has a very strong slam try; it could have one minor or two. Opener can bid 3NT if his hand is inappropriate for a minor-suit slam, or $4\clubsuit$ or $4\diamond$ with a fit in those suits. After $4\clubsuit$, $4\diamond$ shows the one-suited diamond slam try hand, and opener can get out in 4NT, everything else again being a cuebid. After $4\diamond$, 4NT is to play (with the one-suited club hand), everything else still being a cuebid.

We say "slam try," but at matchpoints opener going past 3NT generally commits to a slam except for the previously mentioned 4NT escape. (Maybe we should play this differently at MPs and IMPs?) This means that responder should be wary of making the try. Opener is pretty limited, so responder should be willing to go to slam opposite four-card support and any reasonable hand.

3.5.3 Transfer and bid 6NT

We have the agreement that when we do this, we either do want or don't want the defense to lead the suit.

3.6 The 2♣ opening

After 2♣, we play 2♦ waiting (could be bust), and over that we play 2♥ Kokish: responder is forced to bid 2♠, then opener rebids 2NT with a game-forcing notrump hand. Anything else shows hearts and that suit (3♥ is not forcing, all other bids are, but only through 3♥.)

After 2♣ - 2♦, 2NT is 22-24 (non-forcing.) After all other bids, we have an artificial double negative bid: this is 3♣ over 2♠, 3♦ over 3♣, 3NT over 3♦. Opener's rebid of 3♥ is forcing because of Kokish. After the 3♣ over 2♠, opener's 3♠ is non-forcing, all other bids are forcing.

As for other bids, we play "transfers" to right-side things: 2♥ is a positive in spades, 2♠ is a positive in hearts, 3♣ is a positive in diamonds, and 3♦ is a positive in hearts. In a major, a positive means 2 of the top 3 honors and 9 HCP. In a minor, it promises a 6-bagger with 2 of the top 3 and at least 3 controls.

Over interference at the 2 or 3 level, x is takeout (and game-forcing), any bid is GF (but shows no extras beyond this), pass is the usual action. Over interference at the 4-level or higher, x denies offensive values, everything else shows offensive values. We play unusual versus unusual (see Section 4.5.1) if opponents make a 2-suited bid. If they make a one-suited bid (that isn't the bid they bid), x suggests penalty, bidding it is takeout (game forcing but no extra values).

3.7 Weak two-bids

We play standard weak openings of 2♦, 2♥, 2♠, with a HCP range of 5-10 or 11 (no gap between 2x and 1x.) We preempt frequently on five-card suits when non-vulnerable. Vulnerable, 2NT is Bogust: after 2x - 2NT, we have:

- 3♣ = bad suit, bad hand. 3♦ reasks, 3M very bad, 3oM not very bad.
- 3♦ = good suit, bad hand
- 3♥ = bad suit, good hand
- 3♠ = good suit, good hand

Non-vulnerable, 2NT is Jogust: after 2x - 2NT, we have:

- 3♣ = 5-card suit, any strength. 3♦ reasks, 3M bad, 3oM good.
- 3♦ = 6-card suit, bad hand
- 3♥ = 6-card suit, medium hand
- 3♠ = 6-card suit, good hand

All new suit bids are constructive and forcing for one-round. If they bid, however (and this includes x), new suit bids are very, very not forcing and tend to be destructive. Jumps are fit-showing unless they're game, in which case they're to play. 4♣ is keycard, 01122; see Section 2.4.8.

3.8 Weak three-bids

Normal. New suit is forcing and constructive (unless it's game.) Jumps are to play. 4♣ is keycard as in Section 2.4.8.

4 Competitive bidding

We have various competitive bidding gadgets for various situations.

4.1 Overcalls

1-level overcalls are 8-17ish HCP; 2-level overcalls are opening count through 17 or so. After an overcall, the cuebid shows limit plus values; new suits are non-forcing constructive opposite a 1-level overcall, and forcing opposite a 2-level overcall. Opposite a 1-level overcall, with a game-forcing forcing hand, cuebid and then bid something (so a cuebid need not be a raise.)

Our 1NT overcall is 15-18, except balancing, where it is 11-14 over a minor and 11-16 over a major. We play usual systems on over the 15-18 and 11-14. Over the 11-16...

4.1.1 1M p p 1NT

After we balance with 1NT over 1M (ostensibly 11-16, although we have done it with 10 and with 18), we play some kind of system.

- $2\clubsuit$ is range Stayman. Then by 1NT bidder, 2NT shows 15-16, 2 of oM is 11-14 with 4 cards in oM, $2\heartsuit$ is 11-14 without 4 cards in oM. After either of these bids, 2 of oM is signoff (you had 5 oM and were interested in game opp 15-16 only) as is 2NT (you were interested in game but have no major fit.) 3m is also signoff. 3NT shows a game force with 4 in our major as you would think. 2 of their major shows 4 in our major with a longer minor, GF. Over 2NT by responder, we can restayman, or we can transfer into our major, or we can bid 3NT.
- If you want to be in game opposite the 13-14 hand as well, act as follows. With 5 in the other major, transfer and bid 2NT. With 4 in the other major, transfer into their suit (NOT forcing - 2NT, pass, and 3 of our major show 11-12, otherwise 3NT or 4 of our major.) With no interest in the other major, just bid 2NT.
- Other bids, such as transferring into a minor, are as usual. NT bidder should accept with 14-16 type hands.

4.1.2 Bidding after overcalls

A new major suit after (1x) - 1y shows five if y is a major, and 4 if y is a minor. A new minor suit always shows five. (1x) - 1y - 1NT shows constructive values, maybe 8 to 10+. On the auction (1x) - ky - (nz), double is snapdragon, bidding x shows a good raise, bidding y is mostly preemptive, and bidding the fourth suit is natural and denies a fit for overcaller.

The auction (1x) - 2y - 2x tends to be looking for a stopper for NT, often with y support. It is forcing to at least 3y. Overcaller's first priority is to bid 2N with a stopper.

Something like (1 \clubsuit) - 1 \heartsuit - (possible bid) - 3 \clubsuit is a mixed raise.

4.1.3 2NT overcall

If we make a natural 2NT overcall of an opponent's 2x bid, we play transfers. Over clubs or diamonds, 3 \clubsuit is Stayman, 3 \heartsuit is hearts, 3 \spadesuit is spades, 3 \heartsuit is the other minor. Over hearts, 3 \clubsuit is diamonds, 3 \heartsuit is Stayman, 3 \spadesuit is spades, 3 \heartsuit is clubs. Over spades, 3 \clubsuit is diamonds, 3 \heartsuit is hearts, 3 \spadesuit is clubs, and 3 \heartsuit is Stayman.

4.2 Fourth seat 2+ openings / jump balancing

In fourth seat, 2x shows something like 13-15, good six-card suit. Doubling and then bidding tends to show a better hand with a five-card suit. 3x in fourth seat shows exactly 8 tricks.

A jump balance like 1 \heartsuit - (2 \heartsuit) - p - (p) - 3 \heartsuit shows a hand which would rebid 3 \heartsuit over a 1NT response from partner; x ... 3 \heartsuit would show a hand which would rebid 4 \heartsuit over a 1NT from partner.

4.3 Doubles

We play negative doubles through $4\heartsuit$, except for the auction $1m - 1\heartsuit$, where a double shows four or more spades, and a bid of $1\spadesuit$ denies four spades and tends to either have an antipositional heart stopper or no heart stopper (in either case the goal is to get partner to declare notrump.)

We play responsive doubles through $3\spadesuit$, and support doubles (which are not obligatory) through $2\heartsuit$, plus the support redouble. Doubles of opponents' pre-empts are for takeout through $4\heartsuit$, with $4NT$ over $4\spadesuit$ a 2-3 suited takeout bid. We play maximal doubles; i.e. if their suit is one under ours, a double of 3 of their suit is a game try (but can be passed with the right hand.)

We play snapdragon doubles on auctions that start with three different suits being bid. This means that doubling shows the fourth suit, 5 cards (conceivably 4 if the fourth suit is a major and we're at the 1-level), and at least a partial fit for overcaller.

After $1m - (1\spadesuit) - x - (p)$, $2\heartsuit$ is just any hand which would raise on 3 – we treat it as if the auction had gone $1m - 1\heartsuit$.

Basically, all low-level doubles are takeout. Here's an example: $1m - 1\heartsuit - (1\spadesuit) - x - (2\spadesuit) - x$ is takeout, probably something like 2443 pattern. Probably the only exceptions are when we double their notrump overcall.

When we cannot possibly have a strong hand, we play equal level conversion, so that a double only promises the top two suits (in cyclic order.) When they preempt and bid a new suit, double is penalty (psych guard.)

4.3.1 Support doubles

There are all sorts of weird competitive situations with support doubles. In these, as long as we are below 2 of our suit (not including 2 of our suit – there x shows any hand which would have raised to 2), x is support, unless they bid 1nt (in which case x is cards), or they bid your suit artificially (in which case x shows a real suit.) Thus:

- $1\diamond - (1\spadesuit) - x - (2\diamond)$ artificial: x shows diamonds.
- $1\diamond - (1\spadesuit) - x - (2\diamond)$ natural: x is support.
- $1\diamond - (1\spadesuit) - x - (2\clubsuit)$: x is support.
- $1\diamond - (1\spadesuit) - x - (2\heartsuit)$: x shows a hand which would have bid $2\heartsuit$ without interference.
- $1\diamond - 1\heartsuit - (1\spadesuit)$: x is support.
- $1\diamond - 1\heartsuit - (1NT)$: x is cards, regardless of whether 1NT is natural or sandwich
- $1\diamond - 1\heartsuit - (2\diamond)$ natural: x is support.
- $1\diamond - 1\heartsuit - (x)$: xx is support.

4.3.2 Bidding after takeout doubles

$(1x) - x - 1NT$ is 7-10 over a major and 8-11 over a minor, or so.

$(1x) - x - 3y$ with $y < x$ tends to be 9-11 or so.

$(1x) - x - 2x$ is game-forcing and usually has exactly four cards in at least one unbid major.

Something like $(1\heartsuit) - x - 2\spadesuit - 3\heartsuit$ is often (always?) three-card support, choice of games. (Is $3\spadesuit$ forcing?)

4.4 Against their gambling 3NT, or 1m 1N auction

Suppose that either a) they open a gambling 3NT, or b) they open 1m and rebid 1NT. Then a bid of $2c/4c$ by us shows both majors with longer hearts or equal length (tends to be 5-5), while a bid of $2d/4d$ by us shows both majors with longer spades. After the $2c/4c$ bid, a $2d/4d$ response asks overcaller to bid hearts with more hearts or spades with equal length. A double is a hand with 4-4 in the majors but cards, so you shouldn't mind leaving it in too much. Jumping in a minor is natural and tends to show a very good hand.

4.5 Defense to specific conventions of theirs

4.5.1 Unusual versus unusual

We play unusual versus unusual. If an opponent makes a 2-suited overcall, they have two suits and we have two suits. Bidding our suits is weak. Bidding their suits at the cheapest possible level is strong. The lower-ranking of their suits codes for the lower-ranking of our suits. So if it goes say $1\clubsuit - (2\clubsuit)$, bidding $2\heartsuit$ is a weak diamond hand, bidding $2\spadesuit$ is a strong club raise, bidding $2\heartsuit$ is a strong diamond hand, (2NT is natural), bidding $3\clubsuit$ is weak, etc.. Double shows a desire to double them in at least one of their suits.

4.6 Defense against 1NT

Against an opponent's 1NT opening, we play Meyerson:

- Double shows a minor and a major, 5-4 or longer either way.
- $2\clubsuit$ shows the majors.
- $2\heartsuit$, $2\spadesuit$, $3\clubsuit$ are all natural.
- 2NT shows the minors.
- Anything higher is natural and generally preemptive.

After the double, a bid by responder of 2M is to play. $2\clubsuit$ asks responder to bid their five-card suit (or pass with clubs), $2\heartsuit$ asks for partner's major. 2NT is a game-force; partner will bid their five-card suit. After $2\heartsuit$, bidding 2NT asks for partner's minor and strength; $3\clubsuit$ is min with clubs, $3\heartsuit$ is min with diamonds, $3\spadesuit$ is max with clubs, $3\spadesuit$ is max with diamonds. After $2\clubsuit$ and response, bidding 2NT is pick your minor, while 3m is signoff. After $2\heartsuit$, bidding 3m is natural and invitational.

If there is a bid after the Meyerson x, anything which could be pass or correct is. If it goes (1NT) - x - xx, pass asks for your minor, everything else is as if the xx didn't happen ($2\clubsuit$ asks for 5-card suit, $2\heartsuit$ asks for major, 2M to play.) After p - $2\clubsuit$, $2\heartsuit$ is to play.

We try to have actual values (an opener for most of these bids, $2\clubsuit$ could be a bit lighter) in direct seat, could be light in balancing seat especially white.

Against a weak NT (defined to have a maximum count of 15 or less), we play Landy:

- Double shows an additional king beyond (the top of?) their NT range.
- $2\clubsuit$ shows the majors.
- 2NT shows the minors.
- Anything else is natural.

We tend to have a good opening hand for these bids, a bit less in balancing seat. Bidding 2NT in response to partner's overcall shows a limit raise or better in partner's suit.

After a Meyerson or Landy $2\clubsuit$ is doubled, pass shows clubs, $2\heartsuit$ is natural, xx is pick a major, overcaller can re-punt with $2\heartsuit$.

4.7 Defense against a strong $1\clubsuit$ or $1\heartsuit$ opening

Against any strong artificial opening, we play suction vulnerable and psycho-suction non-vulnerable. This applies after a strong $1\clubsuit$, $1\heartsuit$, or $2\clubsuit$ opening, as well as after the negative responses to these openings.

Suction means the following: a bid in suit X, counting double, shows either suit X+1 or suits X+2 and X+3, with the four suits in cyclic order. Responder bids X+1, or bids anything else naturally. Any NT bid shows two non-touching suits, pass or correct continuations. Psycho-suction is the same, except you bid one more than with suction - X shows X, or X+1 and X+2.

4.8 Defense against opposing pre-empts

After a double of a weak two-bid, we play Lebensohl, with the fast response again denying a stopper (identical to the structure in Section 3.4.6.)

Over an opponent's weak two-bid in a major, we play Leaping Michaels: (2M) - 4m shows five in that minor and five in the other major; it is non-forcing. We also play that (2M) - 3M shows a four-card major and a longer minor (generally 6 cards); subsequent bids may reveal the truth (e.g. bidding the other major with no encouragement naturally shows a fifth card, usually 5-6, could conceivably be 5-5 and too strong for Leaping Michaels.) Jump-shifting into the other major is natural and strong. Over opponent's 2♦ opening, we just play normally. We do these same things after (1M) - p - (2M).

4.9 Defense against Flannery

Against a Flannery 2♦ opening, x is 15+ balanced, 2♥ is takeout of hearts, 2NT is minors (not necessarily a good hand), everything else is natural.

4.10 Defense against mini-Roman 2♦

Against a 2♦ opening showing a 3-suiter short in diamonds, x is 15+ balanced. Our actual defense is to double and lead trumps.

4.11 Defense against multi 2♦

Against a multi 2♦ opening, in direct seat we treat this like a 2♠ opening. Thus double is takeout of spades, 2♥ is natural with hearts, 2♠ is Michaels, 2NT is 15+-18+ balanced with spades stopped, 3m is natural, etc.. If it goes (2♦) - p - (2♥), we treat this like a 2♥ opening. Thus 2♠ is natural, double is takeout of hearts, 2NT is 15+-18+ with hearts stopped, etc.. If it goes (2♦) - p - (2♥) - p - (2♠), double is penalty, 2N is probably a competitive hand with minors, etc.. If it goes (2♦) - p - (2♥) - p - (2♠) - p - (p), double is takeout. If it goes (2♦) - p - (2♥) - p - (p), double is takeout.

Basically our agreement is that whenever they make a non-forcing artificial bid which may be passed, we pretend they bid it naturally.

4.12 Various agreements

4.12.1 1M - (x)

2NT system on. Jumps are fit. Drury is off.

4.12.2 Gambling 3NT

Our 3NT opening shows a solid minor suit with nothing outside in first or second seat. The minor is always exactly seven cards long. Minor bids are all pass or correct, other bids undiscussed, this should be improved.

4.12.3 Two-suited bids

A jump to 2NT (or 4NT) shows the two lowest unbid suits, almost always 5-5. Immediate cuebids over 1-level bids are Michaels. Something like (1♥) - 3♥ asks for a heart stopper for notrump.

If the opponents have bid two suits, bidding their suits is natural, double or NT shows the unbid suits. Over an opponent's preempt, we play Leaping Michaels; see Section 4.8.

4.13 Unusual NT bids

In various cases, 2NT may be 2 places to play. This usually ends up being the minors, but need not be. Some examples: (1♠) - P - (2♠) - x - 2NT, (1♠) - P - (2♠) - 2NT (both typically the minors but could be 2 places to play), 1♦ - (1♠) - P - (2♠) - P - (P) - 2NT. Basically it's 2 places to play (assuming no jump) if we haven't mentioned a suit yet and minors otherwise.

A jump to 2NT shows the two lowest unbid suits. We play the sandwich NT, even by an unpassed hand; in other words (1x) - P - (1y) - 1NT shows the other two suits, at least 5-4, either not good enough or too much shape to double.

4.14 Good/bad 2NT

We play the good/bad 2NT in exactly one situation: when it's opener's second bid, he is forced to bid what he wants to bid at the three-level, and the opponents have had a fit auction (either bid and raised a suit, or takeout doubled and bid a suit.) In these cases, 2NT shows a hand which wants to compete to the 3-level but has no extras; responder bids what he would bid over opener's cheapest 3-level signoff (usually 3♣.) Bidding at the 3-level directly shows full values (e.g. rebidding your suit shows a normal constructive 3x rebid, raising partner's major shows a 3M rebid (maybe a bit lighter than that), etc..)

4.15 Michaels advances

After (1♠) - 2♠, 2NT asks partner to bid their minor and shows constructive values; partner responds 3♥ or 3♠ with a good hand and the corresponding minor. 2NT followed by 3♥ is a strong heart raise. 3♣ and 3♦ are both pass or correct (obviously 3♣ ... 3♥ is weak) and 3♥ is weak. After (1♥) - 2♥, 2NT asks partner to bid their minor and shows constructive values, 3♣ is pass or correct, 3♥ is a strong spade raise, 3♦ does not exist. Over 2NT partner bids 3♣ or 3♦ with a min and that minor, 3♥ or 3♠ with a max and the corresponding 2-down minor.

5 Carding agreements

We play upside-down everything (attitude, count, discards) except suit preference. We give a lot of suit preference – we give suit preference whenever attitude and count don't matter, such as when declarer is drawing trumps or playing on a suit at NT where partner doesn't need to know count, or when partner is following to a suit where his attitude is known.

5.1 Leads

Our opening leads are as follows:

- Our supported small-card opening leads are third-from-even, low-from-odd against suits and fourth-best against NT.
- Our honor leads are standard against suits; we lead A from AK except against trump contracts at the five-level or higher, where A asks for attitude and K asks for count. Against notrump, our honor leads are standard, A is power lead (count or unblock).
- We lead high from three small and top of four small (or second if top looks bad) against NT.

During a hand, we generally lead attitude (high card discourages). If we are leading a low spot, we generally lead 3rd/low against both NT and suits, unless this is a useful spot or is hard to read for some reason.

5.2 Other stuff

When we split honors, we tend to split high, but are permitted to split low if partner knows we don't have shortness, or to confuse declarer, or whatever.

We play flexible leads from a suit like KQxx against no-trump, KT9x, or even KQJx. Sometimes you have to lead low from KQJx(x), while we would often lead high from KQxx. From KT9x we might lead the ten, or we might lead low. It all depends on the auction, etc..

5.3 Obvious shift

We may or may not be playing this. Ask.