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1 General overview

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.

2 General treatments and conventions

2.1 Jump shifts

We play jump shifts as follows. In constructive auctions:

- 3-level jump shifts are natural and invitational (something like $\spadesuit x \heartsuit xx \diamond Kxx \clubsuit AQJxxxx$ for $1\spadesuit - 3\clubsuit$)
- 2-level jump shifts are strong, i.e. game-forcing. There are three hand types: either a one-suited hand which is conveyed by rebidding the suit ($\spadesuit AKQJxxx \heartsuit Ax \diamond xxx \clubsuit x$ for $1\clubsuit - 2\spadesuit$), a big balanced hand (18+) which is conveyed by rebidding the cheapest NT ($\spadesuit AKx \heartsuit KQx \diamond AQxxx \clubsuit Jx$ for $1\clubsuit - 2\diamond$), or a two-suited hand (my suit and yours) which is conveyed by any other bid ($\spadesuit AQxxx \heartsuit Qx \diamond A \clubsuit KQJxx$ for $1\clubsuit - 2\spadesuit$).

In competitive auctions, all jump shifts are fit-showing. 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 are game-forcing, and show four-card support with five cards in the newly bid suit. These only apply when the jump-shifter is making their first bid, so something like $1\diamond - X - 1\heartsuit - P - 3\clubsuit$ is not a fit-showing jump shift, but rather a strong minor two-suiter.

Something like $1\heartsuit - 1\spadesuit - 3\spadesuit$ is of course a splinter, not a fit bid. Speaking of which...

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 $1\spadesuit - 4\diamond$, but there are others. For instance, $\begin{matrix} 1NT & - & 2\clubsuit \\ 2\heartsuit & - & 4\clubsuit \end{matrix}$

is a club splinter in support of hearts, while $\begin{matrix} 1\clubsuit & - & 1\heartsuit \\ 3\diamond & & \end{matrix}$ is a diamond splinter in support of hearts.

Here “splinter” means “singleton or void with four-card trump support.” Over major-suit openings, we play a gadget: 3M+1 (i.e. $3\spadesuit$ over $1\heartsuit$ or 3NT over $1\spadesuit$) shows an unspecified void, while all other splinter-type bids show singletons (including 3NT over $1\heartsuit$, which shows a spade singleton.)

Over the 3M+1 bid, 3M+2 asks for the void’s location. 3M+3 and 3M+4 show voids in those suits, while 3M+5 = 4M shows a void in the fourth suit.

All splinters are game-forcing (no mini-splinters.)

2.3 Ace-asking bids

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♣ shows 1 or 4, 5♦ shows 0 or 3, 5♥ shows two without the queen of trumps, and 5♠ shows two with the queen of trumps.

After any non-queen-showing response, the cheapest bid asks for the queen of trumps, unless responder has shown 0 or 1, in which case the cheapest bid not in the trump suit asks for the queen of trumps. (Translation: in a heart contract, if 5♦ shows three, then 5♥ asks for the queen; if 5♦ shows zero, it does not.) Responses are to return to the cheapest level of the trump suit without it, to 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.)

After any response to 1430, 5NT guarantees all keycards and asks for specific kings. The response is to bid 6NT with all three, bid your cheapest king with one or two, or to return to six of the trump suit with none. 4NT is almost always ace-asking, except when it is obviously not (e.g. immediately following a natural NT bid.) Exceptions will be noted.

Bidding six of another suit asks for third-round control in that suit. With third-round control, bid above six of the trump suit. I forget what we decided the bids mean (I guess unseen kings.) When a minor suit has already been bid and raised, a bid of 4m+1 is keycard-asking, with the same step responses as over 4NT. After a response, 4NT asks for kings, while the cheapest non-4NT bid asks for the trump queen.

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 board, and 2) partner can figure out from the rest of the bidding where it is.

We play Gerber only directly over a 1NT or 2NT opening. A 4NT opening asks for specific aces (bid cheapest ace, or 5C with no aces.) We don't play Exclusion Blackwood, unless partner can figure it out at the table.

2.4 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.

2.5 1X - 1Y - 1NT auctions

One structure which comes up frequently is $\begin{matrix} 1X \\ 1NT \end{matrix} - 1Y$, where X and Y are suits with Y obviously outranking X. We play the auction 1♣ - 1♦ - 1NT as follows: 2♣ and 2♦ are natural and forcing, 3♣ and 3♦ are signoff, everything else is natural.

In all other 1X - 1Y - 1NT auctions, 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 2♦ bid is game-forcing and artificial. Opener makes the cheapest descriptive bid.

A 2Y bid or a 3X bid is a weak signoff. A 2NT bid is natural and invitational. A 3Y bid is natural and game-forcing, showing a six-card suit. 3NT is obviously to play.

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

1♣ - 1♥		1♣ - 1♥		1♣ - 1♥
1NT - 2♣	versus	1NT - 2NT	versus	1NT - 2♣
2♦ - 2NT				2♦ - 3♣

: We agree that the first sequence

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.)

$$\begin{array}{l} 1\clubsuit - 1\spadesuit \\ 1NT - 2\heartsuit \end{array} : \text{We agree that this sequence is weak, showing 5-4 in the majors. With an invitational hand you would go through } 2\clubsuit - 2\diamondsuit \text{ first.}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} 1\clubsuit - 1\heartsuit \\ 1NT - 2\clubsuit \\ 2\diamondsuit - 2\spadesuit \end{array} \text{ versus } \begin{array}{l} 1\clubsuit - 1\heartsuit \\ 1NT - 2\spadesuit \end{array} : \text{The first sequence shows 4-4 in the majors while the second sequence shows 5-5 in the majors (?? - you said some sequence should show 4-4, I forget which, but tell me what you think these sequences show. Also, what sequence if any shows 4-5? Just - } 2\clubsuit - 2\diamondsuit - 2\heartsuit \text{, with opener bidding } 2\spadesuit \text{ with spades?) Both are invitational (with GF either, go through 2D.)}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} 1\heartsuit - 1\spadesuit \\ 1NT - 2\clubsuit \\ 2\diamondsuit - 2\heartsuit \end{array} : \text{No one should be surprised that this is a normal limit raise in hearts (with some spades to boot.)}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} 1\clubsuit - 1\spadesuit \\ 1NT - 3\spadesuit \end{array} \text{ and } \begin{array}{l} 1\heartsuit - 1\spadesuit \\ 1NT - 3\heartsuit \end{array} : \text{These auctions are both game-forcing.}$$

2.6 1X - 1Y - 2NT

Over the auction $\begin{array}{l} 1X - 1Y \\ 2NT \end{array}$ we play Wolff signoff: $3\clubsuit$ relays to $3\diamondsuit$ for either passing, signing off in $3\heartsuit$ or $3\spadesuit$, or bidding $3NT$, which is a mild slam try in X. All other bids are natural and game-forcing.

2.7 Reverses

Let's take a standard reverse auction, such as $\begin{array}{l} 1\diamondsuit - 1\spadesuit \\ 2\heartsuit \end{array}$. 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). Everything else is pretty much as you would expect; $3\diamondsuit$ and $3\heartsuit$ are game-forcing raises, $3NT$ is to play, the more expensive of $2NT$ and the fourth suit is a general forcing bid (almost always leading to $3NT$.)

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), or in the specific auction $\begin{array}{l} 1\clubsuit - 1\diamondsuit \\ 1\heartsuit - 1\spadesuit \end{array}$, which is natural. The bid of $2\spadesuit$ in $\begin{array}{l} 1\clubsuit - 1\diamondsuit \\ 1\heartsuit - 2\spadesuit \end{array}$ is artificial and game-forcing. (In general a jump in the fourth suit is natural.)

2.9 The non-serious 3NT

In auctions which are game-forced with a major-suit fit below $3NT$, and thus 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.

This usually happens in 2/1 auctions, although there are others (e.g. fit-showing jump-shift in competition, the rare below- $3NT$ splinter, via $1x - 1y - 1nt - 2d$, etc..)

If there is an agreed major-suit fit, but we are not forced to game before the $3NT$ bid, then it is NOT a non-serious $3NT$ situation.

3 Constructive bidding

3.1 Major-suit openings

We play five-card majors, opening fairly aggressively on such hands. We will almost always open 15-17 hands with a five-card major 1NT. The structure after a 1M opening is fairly normal 2/1 with a semi-forcing notrump. Perhaps a list is in order. Over a 1♠ opening:

- 1NT is semi-forcing by an unpassed hand, non-forcing by a passed hand, and shows any hand not accounted for otherwise.
- By an unpassed hand, 2♣, 2♦, and 2♥ are natural and game-forcing, showing 4, 4, and 5 cards in their suits respectively. By a passed hand, 2♣ is reverse Drury, showing a limit raise (any non-2♠ bid by opener is forward-going), while 2♦ and 2♥ are natural and invitational. (This differs from 3♦, 3♥ by virtue of being more balanced, right?)
- 2♠ is the usual spade raise. Cheetah game tries (Section 3.1.3) are in effect.
- By an unpassed hand, 2NT is Jacoby, showing a game-forcing four-card spade raise, which is usually balanced but is occasionally made with a hand which is too strong to splinter. Responder bids 3♠, 3NT, or 4♠ with a balanced hand in decreasing order of strength, bids 3x with shortness in x, or bids 4x with a good side suit (usually 5 cards) in x. By a passed hand, 2NT is an invitational hand with clubs.
- 3♣, 3♦, and 3♥ are natural and invitational.
- 3♠ is a limit raise with four-card trump support.
- 3NT is an unspecified void. 4♣ asks for the void's location, with 4♦ showing a diamond void, 4♥ showing a heart void, and 4♠ showing a club void.
- 4♣, 4♦, 4♥ are singletons in the indicated suit with four-card trump support.
- 4♠ is to play (the usual 4♠ bid.)
- 4NT is 1430.

The structure over hearts is mostly identical, 3♠ showing an unspecified void and 3NT showing a spade singleton. 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.)

3.1.1 1M - 1NT auctions

Our 1M - 1NT auctions are basically standard. Opener can pass this with 12-14 balanced (and by a passed hand, this is explicitly non-forcing.) If opener rebids 2 of a suit less than M, which generally promises four, responder:

- Passes or bids 2M with a weak hand.
- Bids a new suit 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)
- Does anything else, which is exceedingly rare but is a splinter in support of the second suit if it happens.

Opener's ensuing third bid is natural.

Opener's rebid of 2NT shows the 18-19 balanced hand. (Wolff signoff; see Section 2.6.) Opener's rebid of 3M shows a very good suit, something like AQJxxx at least, 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.

3.1.2 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, not counting 2NT, by opener shows mild extras (14+.) (Does this include raising X?) 2NT shows a balanced hand with stoppers in the unbid suits (any range?).

Any bid below 2M is natural (four-card suit) and neither shows nor denies extras. 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.

In the major-suit fit case, non-serious 3NT is on. Jumps are generally splinters.

3.1.3 Cheetah game tries

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, or 3M if accepting none, or any bid above 3M if accepting all. 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 no honors (shortness help), 3M+4 with one (not counting the jack), and 4M = 3M+5 with two (counting the jack.)

If the suit is hearts, no-trump stands in for spades; thus $\begin{matrix} 1\heartsuit \\ 2\text{NT} \end{matrix} - \begin{matrix} 2\heartsuit \\ 2\heartsuit \end{matrix}$ is a long-suit game try in spades, and $\begin{matrix} 1\heartsuit \\ 2\spadesuit \end{matrix} - \begin{matrix} 2\heartsuit \\ 2\text{NT} \end{matrix}$ 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 this situation, and in Drury situations (e.g. not in 1X - 1M - 2M auctions.)

3.2 Minor-suit openings

Our auctions after minor-suit openings are essentially normal, with inverted minors. We bypass four-card or longer diamond suits for four-card majors, generally with all non-GF hands. We agree that opener rebids 1NT instead of a four-card major with any balanced hand. We raise on three fairly frequently. Some quick comments:

- 1NT: 7-10
- 2NT: 11-12
- 3NT: 13-15
- 3m: weak raise (inverted minors – something like 5-7 with five-card support, with 1NT often the bid with notrumpy hands.)

Recall the 1X - 1Y - 1NT structure (Section 2.5), which comes up very frequently in these auctions. Over 1X - 1Y - 2NT we play normal NMF with 3x a forward-going bid.

3.2.1 1m - 2m auctions

We play 1m - 2m as a strong raise (inverted minors.) Our ensuing structure is pretty straightforward

- 2NT: balanced minimum (12-14)
- 3m: unbalanced minimum
- 3NT: 18-19 balanced (I guess)
- Generally we just bid stoppers up the line, though, with going past 3m game-forcing.

After opener's rebid, things pretty much proceed naturally (usually bidding stoppers.)

3.2.2 1♦ - 2♣ auctions

Auctions that start 1♦ - 2♣ are game-forcing. 2♦ promises five diamonds and says nothing else. Otherwise, 2M shows an unbalanced hand, 2NT shows 12-14 balanced, 3NT shows 18-19 balanced, etc.. We explicitly make the 2♣ bid with four-card majors (very frequently, in fact.)

3.3 1NT openings

The range is the usual 15-17. We routinely open 1NT with a five-card major. Over 1NT, we play a few gadgets. We start with the list of bids:

- 2♣: Stayman
- 2♦, 2♥: transfers (opener can super-accept and choose to show a doubleton in the process)
- 2♠: shows clubs. Opener's 3♣ indicates a fit, while 2NT denies one.
- 2NT: shows either clubs and diamonds or just diamonds. Opener's 3♦ indicates a diamond fit, while 3♣ denies one.
- 3♣: We overload the 3♣ bid. Opener bids a five-card major if they have one, 3♦ otherwise. Responder then bids 3NT or their shortness. So we make this bid when we're forcing to game and want to know if opener has a 5-card major, or when we've got a three-suited (game-forcing) hand with major-suit shortness.
- 3♦: 5-5 in the majors, game-forcing
- 3♥: 5-5 in the majors, invitational
- 3♠: 5-5 in the minors, game-forcing
- 3NT: to play
- 4♣: Gerber
- 4♦, 4♥: transfers
- 4NT: natural and invitational
- 5NT: pick 6NT or 7NT

Most of this stuff is pretty self-explanatory.

3.3.1 1NT - 2♣ - 2M

After Stayman and a non-2♦ response, most bids are standard, with a few exceptions, all of which agree trumps. Bidding three of the other major shows a slam try with shortness; the next cheaper bid asks for the shortness with the natural responses. Bidding 4♣ is 1430. Bidding 4♦ is a generic balanced slam try.

3.3.2 A major-suit primer

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

- 4-5 weak: $2\clubsuit$, followed by $2\heartsuit$ over $2\diamondsuit$
- 5-4 weak: transfer to spades
- 5-5 weak: $2\clubsuit$, followed by $2\heartsuit$ over $2\diamondsuit$ (or transfer to spades if you really want)
- 4-5 invitational: transfer to hearts, followed by $2\spadesuit$
- 5-4 invitational: $2\clubsuit$, followed by $2\spadesuit$ over $2\diamondsuit$
- 5-5 invitational: $3\heartsuit$
- 4-5 or 5-4 game-forcing: $2\clubsuit$, followed by three of your four-card suit over $2\diamondsuit$ (Smolen)
- 5-5 game-forcing: $3\diamondsuit$

I'm not sure what transferring to spades and then bidding $3\heartsuit$ is. This should probably be remedied. Do we play the 1NT - $2\clubsuit$ - 2M structure over transfers too (showing a sixth card, obviously), i.e. 3oM = shortness, $4\clubsuit$ = keycards, $4\diamondsuit$ = balanced slam try?

3.3.3 Over interference

When the opponents interfere: if the bid is an artificial double or $2\clubsuit$, we ignore it (a double of $2\clubsuit$ is Stayman.) Otherwise, we play takeout doubles against all natural interference. We play Lebensohl, with direct bids denying a stopper. For instance, after 1NT - $2\heartsuit$:

- $2\spadesuit$ is a weak signoff.
- 2NT forces $3\clubsuit$. After this, $3\diamondsuit$ is weak, $3\heartsuit$ is Stayman with a heart stopper, $3\spadesuit$ shows exactly five spades with a heart stopper (right?) and is forcing.
- $3\clubsuit$, $3\diamondsuit$ are invitational (saying nothing about having a heart stopper.)
- $3\heartsuit$ is Stayman without a heart stopper.
- $3\spadesuit$ shows exactly five spades without a heart stopper.
- 3NT is to play.

This applies as long as the bid shows that suit (possibly with other suits.) If the bid shows no specific suits, I guess bids are pretty natural. If the bid shows a specific suit which is not the suit bid, I suppose that we pretend that the bid was that indicated suit at the specific level. And so forth.

After 1NT is doubled for business, we have the following runout: pass is to play, redouble shows either clubs or two non-club suits (opener bids $2\clubsuit$), $2\clubsuit$ shows clubs and a higher suit, and everything else is natural. (Note: can't we do better by having pass force XX?)

3.4 2NT openings

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

- $3\clubsuit$ is Muppet Stayman.
- $3\diamondsuit$, $3\heartsuit$, $4\diamondsuit$, $4\heartsuit$ are transfers.
- $3\spadesuit$ is minor-suit Stayman.
- 3NT is to play, 4NT is natural and invitational.
- $4\clubsuit$ is Gerber.

Perhaps we should explain a couple of these things.

3.4.1 Muppet Stayman

Our Muppet Stayman structure is like Puppet Stayman, except that the 3♥ and 3NT responses are switched. So after 2NT - 3♣, 3♠ shows five spades, 3NT shows five hearts, 3♦ denies a five-card major and shows at least one four-card major, 3♥ denies a four-card major. The benefit is that with 5-4 in the majors, after 3♥, responder can bid 3♠ to show this hand. (With 4-5 in the majors, you can transfer to 3♥ and bid 3♠.)

After the expected 3♦ response, 3♥ shows four spades and denies four hearts, 3♠ shows four hearts and denies four spades, 3NT is to play, 4♥ shows both four hearts and four spades. 4♣ and 4♦ are natural slam tries, and everything other than 4NT is a cuebid (is 4m+1 keycard?). 4NT is natural and represents the partnership's last chance to play there.

After any other bid, all bids are natural, including 4NT (?).

3.4.2 Minor-suit Stayman

3♠ is minor-suit Stayman. Responder has a substantial slam try with both minors, at least 5-4. Opener can bid 3NT if his hand is inappropriate for a minor-suit slam, or 4♣ or 4♦ with a fit in those suits. Bidding either basically commits the partnership to a slam.

We say "slam try," but at matchpoints opener going past 3NT generally commits to a slam. (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 The 2♣ opening

After 2♣, we play step responses for controls (A = 2 controls, K = 1 control):

- 2♦ : 0-1 controls
- 2♥ : 2 controls
- 2♠ : 3 controls, etc..

Over interference, we play DOPI-style, so double is 0-1 controls, pass is 2 controls, etc., through 4♥, and bust doubles (double shows crap, everything else, usually pass, shows some values) above 4♥.

2♥ and above are all game-forcing. Opener should rebid 2NT with a balanced hand of any strength after this (?? - this is what I typically play.)

3.6 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.) 2NT is Bogust (3♣ = bad suit, bad hand; 3♦ = good suit, bad hand; 3♥ = bad suit, good hand; 3♠ = good suit, good hand. The "B" means that in the auction

2M	-	2NT
3♣	-	3♦

, 3♦ asks "no, really, how bad?", with 3M saying "really bad" and anything else saying "not really bad.")

All new suit bids are constructive and forcing for one-round.

We are very aggressive pre-empting in third seat; expect frequent five-card suits (also occasionally, in other seats, especially at favorable vulnerability.) Jumps are fit-showing unless they're game, in which case they're to play (??).

3.6.1 Keycard after pre-empts

We play 4♣ after a weak two-bid or weak three-bid as keycard: 4♦ shows zero, 4♥ shows one without the queen, 4♠ shows one with the queen, 4NT shows two without the queen, 5♣ shows two with the queen. Over a club bid, 4♦ is the keycard bid.

3.7 Weak three-bids

Normal. New suit is forcing and constructive (?). Jumps are to play. 4♣ is keycard as in Section 3.6.1.

4 Competitive bidding

We have various competitive bidding gadgets for various situations.

4.1 Overcalls

1-level overcalls are 8-15 HCP (or equivalent); 2-level overcalls are opening count through 16 or so. Assuming the next hand passes, the cuebid shows some sort of strong hand (typically a good raise or asking for a stopper.) A new suit is forcing by an unpassed hand and non-forcing constructive by a passed hand. Jumps are fit-showing (except for opponent's suit, which is a splinter.)

Our 1NT overcall is 15-18, except balancing, where it is 11-14 over a minor and 11-16 over a major. We play systems on over the 15-18 (what about the 11-14?.) Over the 11-16, we play range Stayman: $2\clubsuit$, with responses of $2\diamond$, $2\heartsuit$, and $2\spadesuit$ showing a four-card major with 11-14, and a response of 2NT showing any 15-16 ($3\clubsuit$ repeats the Stayman inquiry.)

4.2 Doubles

We generally play negative doubles through $4\heartsuit$, responsive doubles through $4\diamond$, and support doubles through 2 of the suit being doubled for (I forget whether this includes 2 of our suit or not? I think not?), plus the support redouble. Doubles of opponents' pre-empts are for takeout through $5\diamond$, with 4NT over $4\spadesuit$ showing a two-suiter. We also play maximal doubles.

We do NOT play negative doubles in the auction 1m - 1H - X. Here, $1\spadesuit$ promises four (or more), while double shows a good hand (9+) with nothing in particular to bid, and tends to deny a heart stopper.

The sequence 1X - X - P - 2X is game-forcing by an unpassed hand (this came up, and we decided this, right?)

4.3 Two-suited bids

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

After Michaels, we play pass-or-correct responses. These are as follows: after $1\spadesuit$ - $2\spadesuit$ - P, 2NT asks for the minor and is forward-going, $3\clubsuit$ is pass-or-correct signoff, $3\diamond$ is an invitational heart raise, and $3\heartsuit$ is signoff.

If the opponents have bid two suits, a bit of either suit is natural, while 2NT is the other two suits. We don't play the sandwich NT.

4.4 Defense against 1NT

Our defense against 1NT is as follows. Versus a strong NT, we play Woolsey:

- Double shows an exactly four-card major and a longer minor.
- $2\clubsuit$ shows the majors.
- $2\diamond$ shows an unspecified major.
- $2\heartsuit$ shows five hearts and a minor.
- $2\spadesuit$ shows five spades and a minor.

After the double... I've forgotten this entirely, what I would guess is that $2\clubsuit$, $2\diamond$, and $2\heartsuit$ are all pass-or-correct, but I think you said this isn't right.

After anything else, things are as you would expect. 2NT is always a strong bid.

Against a weak NT, $2\clubsuit$ shows the majors, double is for penalty (showing a strong NT hand), everything else is natural.

4.5 Defense against gadgets

4.5.1 Flannery

Against Flannery, X shows a strong no-trump, $2\heartsuit$ is takeout of hearts, $2\spadesuit$ is natural, 2NT shows the minors.

4.6 Defense against a strong $1\clubsuit$ or $1\diamondsuit$ opening

Against any strong artificial opening, we play suction. This applies after a strong $1\clubsuit$, $1\diamondsuit$, or $2\clubsuit$ opening, and also applies after $1\clubsuit$ - P - $1\diamondsuit$ (assuming $1\diamondsuit$ is a minimum response.) It does not apply after $2\clubsuit$ - P - $2\diamondsuit$.

Here's the system: a bid in suit X (at any level) 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. 1NT shows the pointy suits (\spadesuit and \diamondsuit), while 2NT shows the round suits (\clubsuit and \heartsuit). Note that 2 is round while 1 is pointy. Over $2\clubsuit$, 2NT shows either the rounds or the pointies.

4.7 Defense against opposing pre-empt

Generally natural, with two notes: a jump shows a semisolid one-suited hand with strength equivalent to doubling and bidding again, fixing trumps (any response is a cuebid, or 4NT is keycard - I forget if you agreed to this?) Also, 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 3.3.3.)

5 Defensive carding

We play upside-down count, attitude, and discards.

5.1 Leads

Our leads are as follows:

- Our supported small-card leads are third-from-even, low-from-odd against suits and fourth-best against NT.
- Our honor leads are standard; 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.
- I don't think we ever discussed what we lead from three or four or more small against NT.
- These guidelines all apply to leads during the hand as well, except that they're infused with some attitude (e.g. often high from three small.)

5.2 Signals

Our primary signal is attitude (upside-down.) Of course, we give suit-preference when a switch is called for.