

**The Revision Club System**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Ed. © 2009 by John Montgomery**

**PART VIII - Preemptive Openings**

In Revision, opening bids of two of a major or three of a minor are natural preempts. We do not play Multi 2D, or any sort of artificial or transfer preempts (except our 3NT opening). Does this put us behind the times? Are we missing out on the latest ways to win IMPs? Well, maybe, but then again, maybe not.

It would be possible to play that a 2D opening shows a weak two in either major, with 2H replacing 2D as the Precision three-suited opening, short in diamonds. This frees up an extra opening bid of 2S, which can be used to show something else. Whether this is a good idea or not is an open question. Rodwell and Meckstroth used to think it was a good idea, since they used to play it this way, although they don't anymore. Many other top players also don't use Multi and its corollary treatments. I know of no way to prove what is best, but there are certainly some disadvantages to arranging your two-level openings the way R-M used to do. One of the best things about natural weak twos is that when your LHO has a good hand, he must act immediately or else risk seeing the auction come to an end. The Multi (or Wagner, as it is more properly called when there is not a strong option) 2D opening does not have this attribute, since LHO can pass and more or less count on a second chance to bid. LHO can also double 2D, a contract that is not likely to be playable for opener's side. The 2D opening also makes it difficult for responder to raise preemptively on some hands, since he does not yet know for sure which major suit opener has. These are all little things, but they add up. What you get in return is the extra 2S bid. If used as an artificial preempt in some suit or other (as R-M once used it), the opponents also get extra bids they can use, as compared to having to make an immediate decision at a higher level (when a natural three-bid is opened). Of course the 2S opening does not have to be wholly artificial. For example, some people use it to show a weak 5-5, with spades and a minor. While I suppose this is a nice bid to have when it comes up, I have not heard of anyone getting rich by playing it. All in all, I think the artificial preemptive style works best for people who have a wild-man approach to preempting. They preempt a lot, and they can use the extra bids. For people who are going to use a sounder preempting style, like us, it is better to use the natural bids that put the most pressure on the opponents.

You may notice that all of the references to Meckwell in the above paragraph are voiced in the past tense. They were in the present tense when I first wrote it. But more recently, it has come to light that Meckwell have abandoned the artificial approach and

gone back to natural weak two-bids. Meckstroth has been quoted as saying that natural weak twos actually cause the opponents more problems than an artificial 2D opening, because the artificial bid gives the enemy more options. I find it gratifying that after I dared to disagree with them years ago about the right way to play two-level openings in a Precision-style system, they have recently decided I was right all along. (Of course my views, of which they are almost certainly unaware, had nothing to do with their decision to change back to a more conventional approach.) It suggests that my gut instincts about system-design decisions are actually pretty good.

I should add here that the continuing debate over constructive versus destructive preempting styles is by no means close to being resolved. While ultra-aggressive preempts have been fashionable in North America for a long time, it is worth noting that the current Italian team of many-time world champions has a relatively non-crazy preempting style. The same was true of the French team that dominated European bridge before the recent Italian renaissance. Refusing to bid on garbage all the time does *not* automatically place you at any sort of a disadvantage, at least not when you are preparing to play IMPs at a high level. (Preparing to play matchpoint events against weak competition may very well call for different methods.) I am willing to admit that this part of my preferred methods may be influenced by personal prejudices more than by objective evidence, but there is something about the wild preempting style that has always seemed bogus to me. If it were really true that all you have to do to win is to bid a lot on junky hands, then anyone could do it. Winning bridge just can't be that easy. There is nothing difficult about making up your mind to be a maniac. Lots of players do (and few of them ever win anything important). I think it is worth noting that most of the serious players who win serious events use a relatively sane preempting style.

**TWO HEARTS:** A more or less normal weak two bid. In first and second seats, it is approximately 7 to 11 HCP. The main difference between us and most other people is that our weak twos in first and second seat are relatively constructive, showing hands just below opening strength. This means we do *not* open 6322 six counts (these hands are not strong enough in our style). Ours are no more than an ace weaker than a hand that would have opened a (sound) one-bid. (We open 2M on some hands with 10-11 HCP where the modern style would call for a one-bid by most.) To give a couple of examples, Qx/KQxxxx/xxx/xx is not a 2H bid in first seat, but xx/AQxxxx/Axx/xx is.

Some people would probably object on the grounds that by playing this style, you have to pass certain weakish hands instead of opening them, and that therefore you are not going to open the bidding as often as you might. I used to think this way too. Experience taught me a couple of things. One is that hands in the HCP range of 8-11 are actually much more common than hands with 5-8 HCP; it is, after all, true that the average hand contains a ten count. And the stronger hands are actually *more* important

to show accurately, because game for our side is much more likely. Looking for excuses to bid as often as possible with weak hands is kid stuff. It may be more fun to play that way, but I don't find that it helps you win. Our way, we are going to have a whole lot of auctions that go 2M-4M, because responder does not have to go easy with his good hands, in fear that opener has a junky six count (or even worse than that, as some people play).

We do not worry too much about suit quality. If the overall strength is right, we open 2M even with a pretty weak suit, like Kxxxxx. The good things that happen from finding your fit right away, when you have one, outweigh the bad things that happen when partner is short.

2M is in principle allowed to be five cards in third seat only (although I might make an exception in first or second seat for a hand like KQJ109/xx/xxx/Kxx, where there is a huge incentive to play in spades). The strength requirement is relaxed in third seat, where you can indeed have the junky six-count that is forbidden in first and second. In fourth seat, of course, it is not likely that you would open a five- or six-count. There, the point range is once again more like 9-11.

Responses:

2H- 2S: Nonforcing, natural. Can be weak with 6+ spades and heart shortness, and can also be invitational strength with five or more spades and heart shortness. The RONF (raise only non-force) people play this as forcing, which is a waste. Nonforcing hands are much more common; it takes a moose to be able to force to game with a misfit for hearts. Those hands can afford to bid at the three level. 2S asks partner to raise with a fit, so it easily takes care of all invitational hands, and is also fine for hands that are not strong enough to invite; if partner raises, that can't be bad. Opener raises to three with a fit and an ordinary hand, or can bid four if he likes. New suits at the three level show a partial fit (Hx) and a maximum. Opener doesn't need to bid notrump here, I don't think.

2H- 2NT: This is a puppet to 3C. It is the first bid in our structure of transfer responses to the 2H opening. However, while the other bids are true transfers (they show something in the suit transferred to), the 2NT bid is a puppet, not a transfer. This means responder cannot use the 2NT bid to show an invitational club hand, since opener's next bid will not say whether he could accept the invitation or not. The 2NT bid does not say anything about clubs at first, since it can be a heart raise.

2H-2NT, 3C: As ordered.

2H-2NT, 3C- Pass: Responder had a signoff hand in clubs.

2H-2NT, 3C- 3D: Artificial, asking opener for a shortness, if he has one. Forcing. Shows heart support. This is typically a slam-try auction.

2H-2NT, 3C-3D, 3H: No shortness, minimum. We do not use the ascending numeric response scheme here as opener hasn't guaranteed a shortness.

2H-2NT, 3C-3D, 3S: Singleton or void spade. Continuations are control-bids, etc.

2H-2NT, 3C-3D, 3NT: No shortness, maximum.

2H-2NT, 3C-3D, 4C: Club shortness.

2H-2NT, 3C-3D, 4D: Diamond shortness.

2H-2NT, 3C-3D, 4H: One-loser hearts, no shortness.

2H-2NT, 3C- 3H: Game try in hearts, with club values.

2H-2NT, 3C- 3S: Natural, clubs and spades. Usually five spades to bid this way, since responder assumes opener doesn't have four. Responder will also have at least five clubs for this auction.

2H-2NT, 3C- 3NT: Heart support, but with willingness to play in 3NT. This bid cancels the message about clubs.

2H-2NT, 3C- 4C: Natural, forcing, a slam try in clubs.

2H-2NT, 3C- 4D: Natural, forcing, clubs and diamonds with clubs longer.

2H-2NT, 3C- 4H: This is a delayed splinter raise of hearts, showing short *spades*.

2H- 3C: This is a true transfer to 3D. It always shows something in diamonds, although the diamonds do not have to be all that long if responder is going to return to hearts. Opener assumes that responder has invitational values. He can and will bid past 3D if he has a good hand. The basic pattern for opener is: with a diamond fit, a spade stopper, and a good hand, bid 3S. With a diamond fit, club stopper, and good hand, bid 3NT. (Presumably you can't have a club stopper, spade stopper, diamond fit, and decent hearts, all within a 2H opener.) With a

bad hand and good hearts (KQJ10xx and out) that doesn't want to be dropped in 3D, bid 3H. Raise to 4D with a hand that has a fit and nothing much in the black suits. Bid 4H with self-sufficient hearts. 4C would, I suppose, be a club feature for slam (singleton, probably).

2H- 3D: This is a transfer to hearts. It is at least invitational to game in hearts.

2H- 3H: Not invitational. However, it does show some values. Opener is allowed to bid game now with extreme shape, like 6-5. (Our philosophy, borrowed from Roth and Zia, is that with a hand like x/A109xxx/KJxxx/x you shouldn't pass, but also shouldn't open 1H; we open 2H and bid aggressively thereafter.)

2H- 3S: Natural, game forcing. Normally this would be a six-card suit, although it might be done with five very good ones. FSJ by PH.

2H- 3NT: Noncorrectable.

2H- 4C, 4D: Splinters in support of hearts. FSJ by PH.

2H- 4H: Normal.

2H- 4S: To play. DNEBAPH.

2H- 4NT: Regular Blackwood. To create an RKC auction in hearts, bid 3D first (or a splinter raise), then 4S (Kickback).

TWO SPADES: A normal weak two bid. Point ranges similar to those for 2H. Can be five cards in third seat only (usually).

2S- 2NT: This is a puppet to 3C. It is the first bid in our structure of transfer responses to the 2S opening. However, while the other bids are true transfers (they show the suit transferred to), the 2NT bid is a puppet, not a transfer. This means responder cannot use the 2NT bid to show an invitational club hand, since opener's next bid will not say whether he could accept the invitation or not. The 2NT bid does not say anything about clubs at first, since it can be a spade raise.

2S-2NT, 3C: As ordered.

2S-2NT, 3C- Pass: Responder had a signoff hand in clubs.

- 2S-2NT, 3C- 3D: Artificial, asking opener for shortness. Shows spade support. This is typically a slam-try auction.
- 2S-2NT, 3C-3D, 3H: Short hearts.
- 2S-2NT, 3C-3D, 3S: No shortness, minimum.
- 2S-2NT, 3C-3D, 3NT: No shortness, maximum.
- 2S-2NT, 3C-3D, 4C: Short clubs.
- 2S-2NT, 3C-3D, 4D: Short diamonds.
- 2S-2NT, 3C-3D, 4H: Void heart.
- 2S-2NT, 3C-3D, 4S: No shortness, one-loser spades.
- 2S-2NT, 3C- 3H: Natural, forcing, shows clubs and hearts. Responder will usually have *five* hearts to bid this way, since he assumes opener does not have four. Responder also needs at least five clubs for this auction.
- 2S-2NT, 3C- 3S: Game try in spades, with club values.
- 2S-2NT, 3C- 3NT: Offers opener a choice between 3NT and 4S.
- 2S-2NT, 3C- 4C: Natural, forcing, a slam try in clubs.
- 2S-2NT, 3C- 4D: Natural, forcing, clubs and diamonds with clubs longer.
- 2S-2NT, 3C- 4H: This is a delayed splinter raise of spades, showing short hearts. The bid is not needed to show clubs and hearts, since responder bids 3H here with that, and a bid is needed to show a splinter in hearts, since 2S-4H is natural. So, this is the way to show heart shortness.
- 2S- 3C: This is a transfer to 3D. It always shows something in diamonds, although the diamonds do not have to be all that long if responder is going to return to spades. Opener assumes that responder has invitational values. He can and will bid past 3D if he has a good hand. However, the mere fact that opener “assumes” responder has invitational values does not mean that responder actually does. Responder can try to sign off in 4D if opener says he likes diamonds. (If

responder was willing to play 3D opposite no fit, he can't be unhappy to get to 4D facing a fit.) Opener's rebids are analogous to those in the auction 2H-3C.

- 2S- 3D: This is a transfer to hearts. Again, opener assumes responder has invitational strength, although here responder is primarily inviting in hearts, and may not be interested in notrump. Consequently, whether opener bids past 3H or not will mostly depend on how good his heart fit is. Since responder cannot have fewer than six good hearts to bid this, and will usually have seven, there is no harm in having opener force to 4H when he has a fit.
- 2S- 3H: Invites game in spades.
- 2S- 3S: Not invitational. But will have some working values.
- 2S- 3NT: Noncorrectable.
- 2S- 4C, 4D: Splinters in support of spades.
- 2S- 4H: To play. By a PH, it would be a FSJ.
- 2S- 4S: Normal.
- 2S- 4NT: Regular Blackwood. To create an RKC auction in spades, bid 3H first, then 4NT.

### **Competitive Auctions After A Weak Two Opening**

If the opening is doubled, 2NT and all higher bids up to 3NT mean exactly the same thing they would mean if there had been no double. However, bids of four of a lower suit that would have been splinters without the intervening double become fit-showing; this is because splinter responses are used to look for slam, and if an opponent has a direct takeout double of a weak two, it is very unlikely that our side can have a slam, so splinter responses are not needed in these auctions. (2S-(X), 4H continues to be to play by a UPH.) If responder passes the double, it means nothing special, just that he sees nothing better than to stay in 2MX for the moment. If he redoubles, he claims ownership of the hand, and we must play it or they play it doubled. If he passes and then doubles whatever they bid, that is penalty.

If the opening is overcalled at the three level (or 2S over a 2H opening), doubles by responder are penalty. However, if 2M is passed around and the three-level bid comes as a balance, opener can double for takeout. This applies to 2S over 2H as well.

In the specific case of a 2S overcall of a 2H opening, we play “system on” for bids of 2NT through 3H by responder. That is, a 2NT bid transfers to clubs, etc. A cuebid of 3S would ask for a stopper for notrump. Four-level responses in minors would be fit-showing.

If there is a natural overcall at the three level of either a 2H or a 2S opening, new suits at a minimum level by responder are natural and forcing by an unpassed hand.

THREE CLUBS, THREE DIAMONDS, THREE HEARTS, THREE SPADES:

Normal preempts in the majors, constructive preempts in the minors, in first and second seat. Frequently a good six-card suit, if a minor. This is somewhat contrary to the general trend of preemptive bidding these days. The woods are full of creatures who love to open three of a minor with Qxxxxxx. Some don't wait for the seventh card. This works sometimes, but I want to try something different. 3m in first or second seat should show a good suit, willing to hear partner bid 3NT with some kind of fit and stoppers, preferably aces, on the side. This means that we treat KQJ10xx and KQJ10xxx exactly the same. This may seem strange, but when you have a good suit, the seventh card is not often that important in a 3NT contract. You need to run the suit, and because you also need to have a stopper (a trick) in each other suit,  $6+1+1+1 = 9$ . The seventh card does make a difference sometimes when the suit runs, you have two side aces, and there is a stopper but not a quick trick in the other suit. Too bad; you can't have everything. The rule for opening 3m in first or second seat is that the suit must run (given normal breaks) for no more than one loser facing Hx, or no more than two top losers if there is an entry (A or K) in a side suit. Thus, AK109xx, KQ109xx, and KJ109xx all qualify, but the latter two need a side entry. You can also open on QJ109xx if there is a side entry. (You are assuming that you will not be so unlucky as to have your side entry knocked out on the opening lead.) One of the keys is the presence or absence of the ace of the long suit. With a good suit headed by the ace, you can do without the side entry if, facing Hx, running the suit depends on a finesse. If you are missing the ace and another honor in the suit, don't open three unless you have the side entry. You want to avoid opening three on KQ109xx and out and having partner bid 3NT with Jx and plenty of stuff in the other suits. He will be very disappointed to take only one trick in your suit. On the other hand, if you have KQJ10xx, you can open, because the only fit partner can have is Ax(x), and the suit will run.

This style does away with all the junky seven-card preempts. This may seem as though it means we do not get to open 3m nearly as often as other people, but this isn't so. We are opening on many six-card suits, and six-card suits are several times as



common as seven-card ones. We will preempt less often than some people, true, but at least we will have some idea what we are doing when responder has a good hand.

For opening bids of three of a major, I do not advocate any change from a normal style. Since these bids are much more directed at game in a major than in notrump, it is not as necessary to have a good suit; if partner has a fit and sufficient values, game will play even if an opponent has Axx of trumps.

3C- 3D: Forcing, promises a five-card major, asks opener for *three*-card major. Opener bids the one he *does not* have at the three-level (so that responder, the stronger hand, can declare), or if holding both, bids 4D (diamond void) or 4H (diamond singleton) (opener's shapes can only be 3=3=1=6 and 3=3=0=7 to have both majors). Responder continues naturally from there. If opener does not have a three-card major, he usually bids 3NT.

3C- 3H, 3S: Forcing. But shows a *six*-card suit, because with only five, responder would have bid 3D here. By a PH, the 3D, 3H, and 3S responses are all FNJs.

3C- 3NT: Natural, to play. But of course responder bears in mind our rules about suit quality and outside entries.

3C- 4C: Normal.

3C- 4D: Shortness asking. Opener shows his shortness naturally, bidding 4H for short hearts, 4S for short spades, 4NT with short diamonds (a substitute bid), and 5C with no shortness (responder can pass this). Clubs are the agreed suit for now, but if responder bids six of another suit, that is to play. Although 4D asks for "shortness," opener can show a second-round control of the king of a suit, *if* he has no shortness to show and his hand is otherwise good. With something like xx/Kx/xx/AJ109xxx you are not ashamed of your hand, so you can show a heart "shortness." Partner will like your "shortness" if he has the ace, and presumably it will not be a disappointment to him to find that you have Kx instead.

3C- 4H, 4S, 5C, 5D: To play.

3C- 4NT: Regular RKC (0314 responses, not 1430) in clubs. This should be an acceptable way to ask for keycards given our suit-quality rules. But responder should bear in mind that he will often be facing only one keycard, and perhaps zero (Kx/xx/xx/QJ109xxx). That's why we don't play 1430 here; we need to be able to stop in 5C with zero keys. So, don't bid 4NT here unless you are willing to get to slam facing a one-keycard response.

- 3D- 3H, 3S: Forcing. Could be only five.
- 3D- 3NT: Natural, to play. But of course responder bears in mind our rules about suit quality and outside entries.
- 3D- 4C: Shortness asking. Opener bids 4D with no shortness, and otherwise shows his shortness naturally, bidding 4H for short hearts, 4S with short spades, 4NT with short clubs (or 5C to show a void club). Please note that responder can bid 4C here with long clubs, to find out whether or not opener has support; for this reason, later club bids by responder are natural.
- 3D- 4D: Normal.
- 3D- 4H, 4S, 5C: To play. FSJs by a PH.
- 3D- 4NT: RKC 1430 in diamonds.
- 3H- 3S: Natural, forcing. But FNJ by PH.
- 3H- 3NT: Natural.
- 3H- 4C: Shortness asking. Opener bids 4H with no shortness, otherwise shows his shortness naturally with bids other than 4H; this means that 4D is short diamonds, 4S is short spades, 4NT is singleton club, 5C is void club. FNJBPH.
- 3H- 4D: Natural, forcing.
- 3H- 4H: Normal.
- 3H- 4S: To play. DNEBAPH.
- 3H- 4NT: RKC 1430 in hearts.
- 3H- 5C, 5D: To play.
- 3S- 3NT: Normal.
- 3S- 4C: Shortness asking. Opener shows shortness naturally, or bids 4S with no shortness; therefore, bids of 4D = short diamonds, 4H = short hearts, and 4NT = singleton club, 5C = void club.

- 3S- 4D: Natural, forcing.
- 3S- 4H: Natural, nonforcing.
- 3S- 4S: Normal.
- 3S- 4NT: RKC 1430 in spades.
- 3S- 5C, 5D: Natural.

### **Competitive Auctions After A Three-Level Preemptive Opening**

If an opening bid of three of a suit is doubled in direct seat, we assume that the advancer will not make a penalty pass, and also assume that there is no better place to play than opener's suit. Accordingly, new suits at a minimum level are lead-directing, showing some kind of support for opener's suit. The assumption is that advancer is going to bid something, and this is likely to be responder's last chance to indicate a lead. If responder redoubles, he simply says that we are going plus.

The situation is somewhat more complicated if the three-bid is passed around and reopened with a double. If that comes around to responder, he is obviously running if he bids a new suit now. A redouble indicates a desire to run, but with two places to play (presumably at least 6-5, perhaps 6-6, in two of the other suits).

Doubles by either partner of any suit they bid over three of our suit, whether their bid is an overcall or a response to a takeout double, are for penalty. If there is direct overcall, a new suit by responder at a minimum level is natural and forcing by an unpassed hand, unless it is a game bid. For example, if the bidding goes 3D-(3S), 4C by responder, the 4C bid is forcing, but if it goes 3D-(3S), 4H by responder, that is a game bid and hence nonforcing.

If responder bids 3NT over a double, it indicates an interest in saving when and if the opponents bid game in a suit of their own. The same thing is true of any 3NT bid by a passed hand responder. A direct raise does not indicate the same interest. Example: One of us opens 3H, and the next opponent doubles. Now, if responder bids 4H, he is not asking opener to consider bidding 5H (responder may be doubling 4S, if the opponents bid it). But if responder bids 3NT over the double, opener is allowed to bid 5H. If the opponent had overcalled 3S, and responder had bid 3NT as a passed hand, that also invites a save in 5H. These save-inviting 3NT bids usually mean that responder has a weak enough hand that he is in no doubt that the opponents can make a

game; what responder is not sure of is whether a save will be profitable. Accordingly, opener tends to save with good shape and trumps, or pass with dull shape.

THREE NOTRUMP: This requires some discussion. For many years, I played that this was a “broken-minor preempt.” The bid was supposed to show a suit eight long, headed by the ace or king but not both, substituting for a regular four-of-a-minor preempt. It never came up once. I also have not seen it come up in any world championship books. The bid supposedly allows you to play in 3NT if responder has a good hand with Ax or Kx opposite to run the suit. I have never seen or heard of anyone bidding and making 3NT this way. Accordingly, I now believe it is better to open 4m when you have a minor preempt that has too much playing strength to bid only three. This puts a lot of pressure on LHO, who will always worry about being jobbed out of a game if he has a major suit and some cards. The 3NT opening allows good opponents to distinguish their hand types, as for example by bidding a major directly as opposed to doubling first and then bidding. They can also pass, “knowing” that we will pull to four of our minor, and then balance, showing a weaker hand than a direct bid. A Ripstra or both-majors overcall at the four-level is also possible, if the opponents have made arrangements. It is foolish to let them have all these extra bids to solve their problems. The natural preempt creates more pressure. When we open 4m and they get to 4M, the auction frequently results in a profitable penalty double by the partner of the 4m opener.

The other reason for the minor-suit 3NT opening is that it allows you to play NAMYATS. I played this also for years, and rarely saw it come up and never saw it accomplish anything that could not have been accomplished by opening either one or four in the long major. NAMYATS also allows the opponents additional options, compared to opening four of the suit naturally. I now believe it is better to open 4M with a classic preempt, and usually open one (or 1C, if holding enough high cards) if the hand is too strong for that. Accordingly, our 3NT opening is available for some special purpose. I suggest the Kantar treatment.

3NT: Solid seven- or eight-card major, with at most one king outside. Playing this way, openings of 4H and 4S deny solidity, and responder knows opener needs trump help for slam. With a solid suit and more than one king outside, open one of the major (or 1C). This is not a mandatory opening. With AKQJxxx and out, just open one of the suit. You need the eighth card or a side feature to be strong enough for 3NT.

3NT- Pass: Certainly allowable. With stoppers outside and a card in partner’s suit to get across, this could be the only game.

3NT- 4C: Conventional, shape-asking. Slam try. If he uses this bid, responder is presumed to be able to tell by looking at his hand which major opener holds. Opener now bids a singleton or void if he has one (4NT substitutes for clubs), four of his own suit without. After this, 4NT by responder is the second stage of Blackwood – opener is known to have all the keycards in his suit, and no outside aces – asking for an outside king. Opener would bid the suit in which his king lay, or rebid his suit lacking an outside king. If opener has bid 4NT to show club shortness, 5C is the king-ask.

3NT- 4D: Asks opener to bid his suit. This could be a slam try on a hand where responder does not know initially which suit opener has. If responder bids again, the next step (4S over 4H, 4NT over 4S) is the king ask. Again, notrump substitutes for the unshowable suit; e.g., 3NT-4D, 4H-4S (king ask), 4NT (king of spades, not wanting to bid 5S to show it). A new suit by responder after opener shows his major (4NT substituting for spades when opener has bid 4H) would be a control-asking bid (CAB) in that suit. Responses to CAB are as follows: Return to your suit with no control; bid six with second-round control; cuebid the CAB suit with first-round control (which must be a void in this auction; you can't have the ace).

3NT- 4M: "I can tell by looking at my hand that this is your suit, and I want to play it from my side."

In competition, responder can make any of the bids described above, if there is room for them, e.g., if the opponents overcall 4H and responder bids 4S, that means "I can tell that your suit is spades" etc. If the interference is a double, the system is on, and responder can also redouble for penalty. He can also double any overcall for penalties.

FOUR CLUBS, FOUR DIAMONDS: Normal preempts. Natural responses, except 4D to a 4C opening and 5C to a 4D opening. (New suits are fit-showing by a PH.) The auction 4C-4D asks for shortness, which is shown in ascending-numeric style (4H = short spades, 4S = short hearts, 4NT = stiff diamond, 5C = void diamond; an opening bid of 4m must have a shortness somewhere, and if you have two of them, pick one and show it). If the opening bid is 4D, a 5C response is a generic slam try in diamonds, asking for general values. A 4NT response to either a 4C or a 4D opening is RKC with normal replies (responder is probably already in six and is just trying to locate keycards for seven).

FOUR HEARTS, FOUR SPADES: Normal preempts, but not solid suits. The classic four-level opener is KQJTxxxx and out, but could be a bit weaker at favorable vulnerability.

FOUR NOTRUMP: Both minors, extreme shape. 6-5 at least. But please note that according to the General Convention Chart, the bid must contain at least 10 HCP.

FIVE CLUBS, FIVE DIAMONDS: Normal preempts.

Competitive methods in any auctions initiated by these high-level preempts are standard.