

The Revision Club System
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PART IV– The Two Notrump Opening

Our opening bid of 2NT shows 19-20 balanced, or the equivalent (meaning sometimes it will be an 18 count). It is not particularly desirable to open 2NT on these hands, as opposed to using a method that allows hands with this strength to rebid 1NT (after a 1C opening). However, it fits in well with the rest of the system. There are actually some advantages to playing this way. The number of auctions that go 1NT-3NT or 2NT-3NT is increased, since all balanced hands with 16 to 20 points bid notrump first. Also, it avoids certain nasty competitive decisions: with Ax/AQJxx/Kxx/AQx, you do not really want to open 1C and hear a jump overcall of 2S on your left, passed around. What now? 2NT and 3H are the obvious actions, and you could also double, but there is no guarantee that any of these choices will turn out well. You would probably be happier to open 2NT, since partner will now know to bid game with six or so points, and LHO is unlikely to be willing to overcall 3S. The “preemptive” power of the 2NT opening is even greater on auctions where, if you had opened 1C, RHO would have been able to throw in a cheap overcall to tell partner what to lead. In fact, I have almost convinced myself that reducing the point range so that 2NT is a “weak notrump” is a winning strategy, earning more IMPS through quick, uninformative game auctions than it loses through raising the level on potential slam hands. Perhaps that is why R-M Precision opens 2NT on 19 point hands (and some 18’s). It should also be noted that a significant number of pairs nowadays, including some of the world champion Italians, play variants of the Mexican 2D opening, showing a strong balanced hand (point ranges vary, but some play that it starts as low as 17). These pairs also are more or less forced to get at least as high as 2NT with most responding hands, so it can’t be that bad.

Obviously, it would be better to be able to show 19-point hands (or 20-, or 21-point hands) by means of a bid or rebid of 1NT, allowing responder to get out at a lower level with a complete bust. After looking for a way to do it, I have decided it isn’t worth it. The only way to put a “super-strong” 1NT bid into the system is to play that after 1C-1D, 1H is artificial, and 1S over that is a relay asking for further description. This puts a very considerable burden on the 1H rebid, and it makes constructive bidding more difficult for all the unbalanced hands that have hearts as their primary suit – a set that is much larger than any set of giant balanced hands that might be shown this way. 19-20 for 2NT is really only one point lower than the 20-21 played by most standard bidders. Since it is generally considered that opening 2NT with a 20 count is perfectly OK, we are not losing anything compared to the rest of the world on those hands. One point can’t make all that much of a difference. I am not going to change large parts of the rest

of the system just so that we can have better auctions with balanced 19 counts. Building your system around a weak notrump opening, KS-style, makes some sense; building your system around the handling of balanced 19 counts is misguided, to say the least. So, as with the possible 10-12 1NT opener, the 1H relay is out. You can't play everything.

2NT- 3C: Stayman, but does not guarantee or imply a four-card major. Responder can do this with a three-card major if he wants to find five in opener's hand. We have methods to find all 4-4 or 5-3 (either way) major fits without going past 3NT if there is no fit. It might seem inconsistent that we concentrate on finding all eight-card major fits after a 2NT opening, when this is not considered imperative after a 1NT opening. There are a couple of reasons for this. When the distribution of high cards is uneven between the two hands, entries to the weaker hand are frequently a problem. If there is a trump suit, the weak hand (regardless of whether it has the five-card suit, or whether it has three-card support for opener's five, with a side doubleton) can be entered more easily; this means that a 5-3 fit often plays better than 3NT, even though both hands are balanced. And of course, responder will sometimes have a 5431 type with a three-card major fragment; when this happens, it is essential that responder find out whether opener has three opposite his five (when his five-card suit is the other major), or five opposite his three.

Opener rebids:

2NT-3C, 3D: No five-card major, not four hearts, could have four spades.

2NT-3C, 3D- 3H: Responder shows four spades, and asks opener if he has four spades too. Opener bids 3NT if he doesn't, 3S if he does. Over opener's 3S bid, responder can simply raise to four, or control-bid, or bid a serious 3NT (this is a Fred auction, because 3NT cannot be to play; responder would not ask about opener's spades unless he wanted to play in the suit if opener had four, and responder will not have 4333 shape, since he raises to 3NT with that).

2NT-3C, 3D- 3S: Responder has five or more spades, and bid 3C because he has hearts also. Opener bids 3NT with two spades, 4S with three or more and an undistinguished hand, and can superaccept (if he has four-card support and a good hand) by bidding a suit at the four level to show a source of tricks or concentration of values. If responder bids 4H over 3NT, he is 5-5 in the majors and has some slam interest (transfer to spades and bid 4H with a weaker hand). If

he has 5-5 in the majors and is too strong to bid 3S followed by 4H, he bids 4H now (see below).

2NT-3C, 3D-

4C: Natural. Often a (3-1)=4=5 hand that was checking for a five-card major opposite the three-card fragment. Could also be a 4441 or 4450 hand with clubs. Over 4C, opener bids 4D without four-card support but with four or more diamonds (responder might be 4-4 in the minors), and with club support, he raises to 5C or makes a control-bid. Note that opener could also have specifically 4=3=3=3 shape on this auction, in which case he would bid 4NT to express lack of interest in either minor.

In this and similar auctions where opener has just made a bid expressing interest in responder's minor, the next step by responder (other than five of that minor) is Redwood. For example, here the auction could go 2NT-3C, 3D-4C, 4H-4S, or 2NT-3C, 3D-4C, 4S-4NT. In both of these auctions, opener control-bid to show that he liked clubs, and responder's bid of the next step is Redwood. Our general principle is that opener can only show that he likes responder's suit; it is up to responder to ask for keycards if he likes. If responder wants to continue control-bidding, a substitute bid may be available for the Redwood suit. 2NT-3C, 3D-4C, 4H-4NT. Opener said he liked clubs and had the ace of hearts; for whatever reason, responder did not want to use Redwood over that, and shows a spade control via 4NT, which is a substitute control-bid for spades, which is the Redwood suit.

2NT-3C, 3D-

4D: Natural. Often a (3-1)=5=4 hand that was checking for a five-card major opposite the three-card fragment. Could also be a 1=4=5=3 type. Note that this specific 4D bid will always show a five-card suit; responder will not have four spades (he checks for a spade fit by bidding 3H over 3D if he does), will not be balanced with only four diamonds (his normal bid with a balanced slam try shaped 4432 is 4NT, natural and invitational, as soon as he determines that there is not a fit in a major), and will not be 1=4=4=4 (he bids 4C now with that). If responder's first bid at the four level is 4D, not 4C, he usually denies holding clubs and is looking for a fit in diamonds only. He could also have five diamonds and four clubs and wish to bid his suits in natural order; when he does this, he intends to bid clubs later, unless opener raises diamonds first.

Over this 4D bid, opener's options with diamond support are to control-bid 4H, 4S, or 5C if he likes his hand, and to raise to 5D if he doesn't. If he does not have diamond support (4=3=2=4 or 3=3=2=5 shape) he bids 4NT now, over which responder may bid some number of clubs naturally if he wishes.

2NT-3C, 3D-

4H: Shows 5-5 in the majors, and is *forcing*. Responder has too strong a hand to rebid 3S now and follow with 4H, which shows the same shape with a slam try, but is not forcing. This 4H bid is not needed for anything else. With long hearts and no other suit, responder would always start with a transfer. With long hearts and four spades, he transfers to hearts and then bids 3S, natural and forcing. So, this bid is available for other special purposes, and this is the one we assign to it. (Of course it is possible that opener will actually bid 3H, 3S, or 3NT over the 3C response, but in that case responder will know immediately of a major-suit fit, and can continue appropriately.)

This is not going to be a very common auction, so we will try to make the further continuations relatively simple. First, if opener fits spades, he bids 4S now, which is forcing. (Responder does not consider it important to get out at the four level here; if he did want to get out in four facing a less-than-ideal hand, he would have adopted a sequence in which 4H was nonforcing.) Responder continues as he likes over this, but in practice, his most common continuation undoubtedly will be 4NT, which is RKC for spades. If he does not want to use RKC because he has a void in a minor, he shows his void at the five level (by bidding it). Second, if opener does not like either major suit (meaning he is 2-2 in the majors), he bids 4NT now, which is not forcing. Responder can pass now, or bid his minor-suit fragment with a 5530 hand type (this can lead to slam in the minor), or bid 5M to show a 6-5 shape (this is not forcing), or can bid some slam himself. And third, if opener fits hearts, he pretends that responder has bid RKC in hearts and shows his keycards at the five level, with a 5C bid now being 1 or 4, etc. This scheme may not be ideal, but it should work well enough.

2NT-3C, 3H: Four or five hearts. Not four spades also.

- 2NT-3C, 3H- 3S: Artificial, to ask how many hearts. Although responder seemingly has only three hearts, or else he would not need to ask this question, he can also do it with four, when he has a slam try. In that case, he is planning on going back to 4H if opener bids 3NT next. Or if his hand is too strong to merely invite slam by going back to 4H, he can follow with 4S, Kickback. Opener bids 3NT with four, 4H with five hearts and an undistinguished hand, 4m with five hearts and a good hand for slam. If opener does bid 3NT over 3S, responder can follow with 4m, which is natural and forcing. This suggests something like a 1=3=(5-4) shape; responder checked for a 5-3 heart fit, and decided to show his minor suit next when it turned out that opener only had four hearts. Responder could also be 4=3=(5-1) for this bidding; he bid 3C to look for a fit in either major, then he bid 3S to check for 5-3 in hearts, and now he is showing his minor. In these auctions, the way for opener to reject the minor is to bid 4NT; anything else shows a fit for the minor (the major suits have already been excluded as possible contracts, so bids of 4M are control bids; 4D over a 4C bid is also a control-bid). We also follow the principle here that after opener's initial control-bid, expressing liking for responder's minor suit, the next step by responder is Redwood.
- 2NT-3C, 3H- 3NT: Probably four spades, but is not interested in hearts (else bid 3S now). A bid of 4NT instead of 3NT would be natural and slam-invitational here, showing a hand too strong to bid 3NT.
- 2NT-3C, 3H- 4C. Natural. Slam interest with four spades and a second suit of clubs. Denies three hearts, else 3S now to check for the 5-3 fit. Too strong to bid only 3NT. This 4C bid could be only a four-card suit. Over 4C, opener will bid always bid 5C or control-bid a major with four-card support, or bid 4D with four or five diamonds. (Responder might be 4-4 in the minors.) 4NT by opener over 4C denies interest in either minor, which is possible (opener could be 3=5=3=2 here, for example).
- 2NT-3C, 3H- 4D: Natural. Slam interest, four spades and a second suit of diamonds. Denies three hearts, else 3S first to check. If responder's first bid at the four level is 4D, not 4C, he usually denies holding clubs and is looking for a fit in diamonds only. He could also have five diamonds and four clubs and wish to bid his suits in natural order; when he does this, he intends to bid clubs

later, unless opener raises diamonds first. This 4D bid must be at least five cards (responder has at most four spades, does not have three hearts, and would bid 4C with 4=1=4=4 shape, or 4NT with 4=2=4=3 shape), but opener can have 2=4=2=5 shape, and so can reject with 4NT now. Bids of 4H, 4S, and 5C by opener now would be control-bids for diamonds, with the next step by responder after that (other than 5D) being Redwood.

2NT-3C, 3H- 4NT: Natural and invitational.

2NT-3C, 3S: Five spades. Bidding continues naturally, but if responder bids 4H now, that is an artificial spade raise, slam try. Responder would not bid 3C with 5+ hearts unless he had 4+ spades also, so the 4H bid is not needed as natural. Over 3S, bids of 4m by responder are natural, but can be on only four cards (so 4NT by opener over 4m is rejectance).

2NT-3C, 3NT: 4-4 in the majors. Responder now bids 4C to show diamonds, 4D and 4H as transfers to the major he wants to play in, or 4S to show clubs. (This arrangement was devised by George Rosenkranz.) It is necessary to have some artificial bids here to show the minors because transferring to the majors takes priority; in other auctions, where opener does not bid 3NT over 3C, responder's bids of four of a minor are natural. The 4D and 4S bids show at least five cards in the minor suit that is being shown; responder can't have any 4441 type, because then he would know of a fit in a major. So, over both bids, opener must bid 4NT to reject the minor, and anything else shows a fit.

2NT- 3D: Natural transfer to hearts, i.e., responder always has hearts here; we do not play any methods where responder "cancels" the transfer later to show that he doesn't really have the suit.

2NT-3D, 3H: Three hearts, or a doubleton heart without five spades. With three hearts, opener will go back to hearts later. Responder can now bid 3S naturally; this is his normal auction with four spades and five hearts. If opener bids 3NT over that, responder can continue with 4m, showing a three-suiter. Responder can raise 3H to four to show a heart slam try, or bid a minor naturally over 3H; this is his normal sequence with a 5-5 hand or a 5431 hand with five hearts. If responder bids a minor, opener first confirms the major-suit fit if he has three of them; otherwise, he must show a fit for the minor if he has four-card support. 4NT by opener over 4D denies interest in diamonds and hearts; opener would typically be

4=2=3=4 or 4=2=2=5 to bid 4NT. Similarly, over a 4C bid, opener could bid 4NT to show 4=2=4=3 or 4=2=5=2.

If opener likes one suit or the other, he follows an artificial scheme: Make the cheapest bid in one of responder's shortnesses to show a fit for the major, and the next shortness to show a fit for the minor. Thus, in the auction 2NT-3D, 3H-4D, opener would bid 4S to show that he likes hearts (but you need a pretty good hand to do this, since responder may have only a minimum game forcing 5-5, and has not shown a real slam try yet), and 5C to show that he likes diamonds. If the auction had been 2NT-3D, 3H-4C, he could show a liking for either suit at the four level, with 4D for hearts and 4S for clubs. (If responder is specifically 0=5=4=4 with slam interest, he transfers to hearts, bids *diamonds* next, and then follows with 5C. This auction is guaranteed to find a fit, because the only shape with which opener does not have a three-card fit for hearts or a four-card fit for a minor is 5=2=3=3, and with that he bids 3S over 3D.)

- 2NT-3D, 4H: Superaccept. Four (or five) hearts, side doubleton. (Opener bids 3NT with 3=4=3=3.)

- 2NT-3D, 4m: Superaccept with a source of tricks in the minor. Opener would like to have a 5422 shape to do this, but can also do it with 4432 and good values in the minor. If the superaccept bid is 4D, responder will have to bid 4H to play game from his side; tough.

- 2NT-3D, 3S: Five spades and a doubleton heart. For this reason, when holding three spades and five hearts, responder does not need to bid 3C over 2NT to find out if opener has five spades. He can transfer to hearts and will still find out about the spade fit, unless there is a heart fit anyway. Over 3S, responder can bid 4m, as usual, to show a heart-minor two-suiter; in this particular auction, he knows opener has a three-card fit for his minor, because the 3S rebid shows exactly 5=2=3=3 shape. Opener does not need to show support now (responder already knows he has it), so he control-bids something if he likes his hand, and then as usual, the next step is Redwood. If responder bids 4H over 3S, he is still showing the slam try in hearts that he would have shown via the auction 2NT-3D, 3H-4H, so this 4H bid is nonforcing. Responder can also raise to 4S, of course; if his hand has suddenly become worth a slam try in spades, he has to bid 5S, I think (4NT over 3S would be a natural slam try, the same as in the auction 2NT-3D, 3H-4NT).

2NT-3D, 3NT: 3=4=3=3 shape exactly (superaccepting at the four-level shows a side doubleton somewhere). Over this, 4D would be a retransfer, to place the declaration in opener's hand, and anything else would be a slam try in hearts (including a bid of 4H by responder, which would be a nonforcing slam try).

2NT- 3H: Natural transfer to spades.

2NT-3H, 3S: Three spades, or two spades without five hearts. With three spades, opener will go back to spades. If responder now follows with 4H, responder is showing 5-5 in the majors without slam ambition, NF. (With 5-5 majors and slam interest, start with Stayman, then 3S over 3D, then 4H; or 4H, forcing, over 3D.) However, a 4C or 4D bid now by responder would typically show a 5-5 (or a 5431) hand with mild slam interest. Opener rejects with 4M or 4NT. 4NT typically shows a 5422 type with opener having the wrong doubletons. If opener likes one suit or the other, he follows an artificial scheme: Make the cheapest bid in one of responder's shortnesses to show a fit for the major, and in the next shortness to show a fit for the minor. Thus, in the auction 2NT-3H, 3S-4D, opener would bid 4H to show that he likes spades, and 5C to show that he likes diamonds. If the auction had been 2NT-3H, 3S-4C, he could show a liking for either suit at the four level, with 4D for spades and 4H for clubs. In both of these auctions, opener could bid 4NT over 4m to show 2=4=(4-3) or 2=4=(5-2) with no fit for the minor.

If responder happens to have 5=0=4=4 shape, he transfers to spades, bids four *diamonds* next, and then follows with clubs (assuming he wants to show his entire shape and try for slam). A fit is guaranteed, since with 2=5=3=3 shape, opener would bid 3NT over 3H.

2NT-3H, 3NT: Five hearts, only two spades. Thus, responder can transfer with five spades and three hearts, with no fear of missing a 5-3 heart fit. (Yes, this does risk getting too high when responder is 5-2 in the majors and really wanted to stop in 3S.) The 3NT bid guarantees 2=5=3=3 shape, so if responder bids a minor suit next (which he will only do if he has five of them), he knows he is finding a fit, and opener control-bids next, etc.

2NT-3H, 4S: Superaccept.

2NT-3H, 4m: Superaccept with a side trick source/concentration of values. Over this, 4H would be a retransfer to spades.

2NT-3H, 4H: Superaccept with a side trick source/concentration of values. Opener will presumably be 4-4 in the majors to do this. Responder will have to play 4S from the “wrong” side if he is only interested in game, which is just too bad.

In all of the above auctions, if the bidding has gotten no higher than 3NT and no major fit has come to light, responder may wish to check for a minor fit. 3C especially is often bid over 2NT with three-suited or quasi-three-suited hands. Any 4441 or 5440 type normally bids 3C, or a transfer (if there are five hearts). Also, with 5431 types that have a three-card major and both minors, responder normally bids 3C first to check if opener has five in his major fragment. So, a delayed 4C bid by responder is natural, showing clubs. Over this, opener must show a four-card fit if he has one, by bidding 5C or control-bidding a major (but if responder has shown a five-card major, and it is still possible that opener has a three-card fit there, the bid of 4M shows three; an example auction is 2NT-3D, 3H-4C, 4H; this shows real heart support). If opener does not have four clubs, he always bids 4D if he has four or five diamonds, since responder can bid 4C with 4-4 in the minors (but again, opener can show three-card support for a major and suppress the diamonds).

Example 1: With x/Qxx/Kxxx/KQxxx facing Axx/AKJx/QJTx/Axx, the bidding goes 2NT-3C, 3H (I have hearts)-3S (how many?), 3NT (only four)-4C (I have clubs), 4D (I have diamonds)-5D (good diamond support, nothing to cuebid), 6D (I have great controls and you have shown some high cards, which must be in the right places). 4NT by opener over 4C denies interest in either minor, if this is possible. On some auctions, though, opener is known to have four in at least one minor.

Example 2: After 2NT-3C, 3D (fewer than four hearts, may have spades)-3H (do you have spades?), 3NT (no), opener has denied having four cards in either major, so if responder now bids 4C, he can expect opener to either bid 4D, showing diamonds, or anything else, showing clubs. 4NT over 4C would show clubs, but not slammish. If responder’s first bid at the four level is 4D, not 4C, he usually denies holding clubs and is looking for a fit in diamonds only. He could also have five diamonds and four clubs and wish to bid his suits in natural order; when he does this, he intends to bid clubs later, unless opener raises diamonds first.

With a two-suited (5-5+) hand that wants to explore slam in both suits, the normal move is (with both majors) Stayman, then 3S if no major fit has been found, then 4H. With a major and a minor, transfer to the major, then bid four of the minor. This is a fairly mild slam try, since there are not two ways to show the major-minor two-suiter (with both majors, you can either transfer to spades, then bid hearts, or Stayman, then bid both). Opener rejects with 4NT or 4M. If he likes one suit or the other, he follows

an artificial scheme: Make the cheapest bid in one of responder's shortnesses to show a fit for the major, and the next shortness to show a fit for the minor. Thus, in the auction 2NT-3H, 3S-4D, opener would bid 4H to show that he likes spades, and 5C to show that he likes diamonds. If the auction had been 2NT-3H, 3S-4C, he could show a liking for either suit at the four level, with 4D for spades and 4H for clubs. (In these auctions, an immediate 4NT rebid by opener over responder's four-level effort always rejects both suits, typically showing a 5422 type with the wrong doubletons.) Opener can also raise the minor to five, with good trumps but poor side controls. The transfer to a major followed by 4m could be only four cards in the minor, but will usually be five there.

Generally, an unnecessary jump by responder into a new suit is either a self-splinter of responder's own suit, or a splinter of a suit opener has shown. Context will make it obvious. E.g., 2NT-3H, 3S-5D is AQJxxx/xxx/x/QJx. Opener goes with no diamond wastage, but gets out at 5S with Kx/AKQJ/KJx/Kxx. Or 2NT-3C, 3S-5D is a splinter in support of opener's five-card spade suit.

A three-level transfer followed by 4NT, or Stayman shape-asking followed by 4NT, is a natural, nonforcing slam try. E.g., 2NT-3C, 3H-4NT means responder was looking for spades and didn't find them. Bid the other major (2NT-3C, 3S-4H or 2NT-3C, 3H-3S) with a slam try in the major opener just bid.

2NT- 3S: Both minor suits, could be 5-5 or 6-4 either way. Game-forcing. Allows for 3NT, but responder could also be planning to pull even if opener bids 3NT now.

2NT-3S, 3NT: Opener's first priority is to look at his majors. With lots of major stoppers and not much in the minors, he bids 3NT now (responder might have a relatively weak 5-5 minor hand, and 3NT could be the spot). Responder can now show his longer suit, or bid his major shortness with 5+ in both.

With majors that look suitable for playing in a minor suit (weak or aces), opener bids as follows:

2NT-3S, 4C: Good for slam in clubs, not so good for diamonds (responder can now bid 4D over 4C to show extra diamond length, which could lead opener to reevaluate; responder should not use Redwood on this auction, which is why 4D is natural over 4C in this auction, and 4M over 4C would be a control-bid). After responder control-bids in this auction, the cheapest bid by opener (other than five of the agreed suit) is Redwood. If responder bids 4D over 4C, 4H by opener would accept diamonds and be Redwood for diamonds.

- 2NT-3S, 4D: Good for diamonds, not so good for clubs. The next bid by responder is a control-bid, and opener can use Redwood after that.
- 2NT-3S, 4H or 4S: As in a similar auction after a 1NT opening, opener is showing that he has a strong five-card major, weakness in the other major, and no more than three cards in either minor. Not forcing.
- 2NT-3S, 4NT: Opener wants responder to pick a minor at the five level (or higher, if responder has a good hand). Opener will typically have a hand with 3-3 in the minors, good controls, and weakness in one of the majors. An example hand might be AKxx/Axx/KJx/KJx. Opener has no idea which minor suit to play in, but he knows that 3NT looks like a bad bet on a heart lead.

Again, this 3S response is not mandatory; if responder wants to play 3NT opposite the vast majority of opener's possible hands and slam is remote, just bid 3NT. But beware of doing so with weakness in both majors; it is not a sin to bid and play five of a minor at IMPs.

2NT- 3NT: Game.

2NT- 4C: Non-Gerber! This is a slam try, following the Rosenkranz method that was described earlier. It shows diamonds, and there could be only five of them. Opener control-bids, rejects with 4NT, or bids 4D to show a diamond fit and interest in hearing a control-bid (or a Redwood 4H) from responder.

2NT- 4D: Texas, shows hearts. May follow with 4S, Kickback 1430.

2NT- 4H: Texas, spades.

2NT- 4S: Substitute bid for clubs, one-suiter (but could be 5332 type). 4NT rejects.

2NT- 4NT: Balanced or semibalanced slam try, could be 5422 type with 5-4 either way in minors (but with this shape and a good five-card minor suit, showing it as a one-suiter is an option, so use your judgment). Could also be 4333 shape with a four-card minor. Opener bids minor suits if accepting. 4NT does deny a real major suit, so opener will know to look for a minor fit if he is going on. It is also possible that opener has a 5332 shape with a major, and he can bid 5M to show this if he has acceptance values. However, when opener bids five of a suit to (temporarily) accept, it is still possible for the auction to die at 5NT if responder doesn't like the suit opener bids now.

2NT- 5C: Super Gerber (responses are 1-4, 0-3, 2). I am not sure what hand you would have to bid this, but it is there if you need it. There is no followup to ask for kings after this Gerber bid.

2NT- 5NT: Balanced or semibalanced slam force; bid suits to try for seven.

Competitive Auctions After A 2NT Opening

It is rare to have to worry about competition here. Usually, the most you will get is a three-level overcall, which is almost always natural. Then, a double by responder is negative, the equivalent of Stayman. New suits below game are forcing.

Occasionally, we will run into opponents who play that either a double of 2NT, or a 3C overcall, shows the majors. If they double 2NT showing majors, redouble by responder simply shows game values and creates a force; a bid of 3C or 3D is nonforcing, and a cuebid of one of the majors is a stopper. After a 3C overcall showing majors, double shows clubs, 3D is natural and forcing, pass is nothing to say, and a cuebid of one of the majors shows a stopper.

If the opponents overcall 3C natural, or 3D, 3H, or 3S natural, double is negative.

If the next opponent bids 3NT or higher over 2NT, doubles show cards and bids are commonsense (NF if game, F if not).

Sometimes we will respond 3C to 2NT and the next player will double for the lead. Now the scheme is: Bid a major if you have one and it seems like a good idea; redouble if you want to play 3CXX; pass if you can stand to play 3CX when responder has some clubs (here, he just passes if he wants to play; XX is for rescue); bid 3D with no interest in clubs and no major. If they make a natural bid over a 3C response, opener's doubles are for penalty, of course.

It is also possible that the opponents will double a transfer response of 3D or 3H. Then, the scheme is analogous to that used when they double a two-level transfer response to a 1NT opening: Opener redoubles to say play it here; accepts or superaccepts with support; passes with a doubleton. When opener passes, responder redoubles to retransfer, or bids 3M to play.