

INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE

LESSON 1

NO TRUMP BIDDING

General Considerations:

- a. Strength - High cards points only (never distribution) are counted. The presence of a 5-card suit is worth one point, and the presence of tens can also be taken into account. The system is based upon 26 HCP's = Game, 34 HCP's = Small Slam, and 37 HCP's = Grand Slam.
- b. Distribution - Only balanced hands; i.e., no voids, no singletons, and not more than one doubleton, qualify. (Examples: 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, 5-3-3-2)
 - (1) The 5-card suit is rarely a Major suit.
 - (2) Distributional exception: (5-4-2-2) Where the two doubletons are Major suits headed by an Ace or a King (Example: KX AX KJXX AQXXX).
- c. Location Of Strength - The concentration of honors, presence of any tenaces (AQ, KJ, etc.),
or the holding of a worthless doubleton are rarely considered.

OPENING NO TRUMP BIDS

- a. 0-12 HCP's - Pass
- b. 13-14 HCP's - Bid one of a preferred Minor and rebid 1NT
- c. 15-17 HCP's - Bid 1NT
- d. 18-20 HCP's - Open one of a Minor and jump to 2NT with 18 or 19 HCP's & 3NT with 20 HCP's
- e. 21-22 HCP's - Open 2NT
- f. 23-24 HCP's - Open "2C" (Strong, Artificial, and Forcing) and rebid 2NT
- g. 25-27 HCP's - Open "2C" (Strong, Artificial, and Forcing) and jump to 3NT
- h. Gambling "3NT" - Holding a 7-Card **self-sufficient Minor suit** (Example: AKQXXXX)
If partner has stoppers in both Majors and two (2) quick tricks or better, he/she passes. Alternatively, he/she bids "4C" (The pre-arranged escape) and opener either passes or bids "4D" to escape the doomed 3NT gamble.

RESPONSES TO OPENING 1 NT WITH DESIRE TO REMAIN IN NO TRUMP

- a. 0-8 HCP's - Pass
- b. 9-10 HCP's - Bid 2NT - Invites Partner to Pass with a minimum (15 HCP's) or to bid 3NT with a maximum (16 or 17 HCP's)
- c. 11-15 HCP's - Bid 3NT
- d. 16-17 HCP's - Bid "4NT" (Quantitative) Invites partner to Pass with a minimum (15 HCP's), or to bid 6NT with a maximum (16-17 HCP's) Note: "4NT" is not Blackwood in this sequence. Must use Gerber ("4C") to ask for Aces.
- e. 18-19 HCP's - Bid 6NT
- f. 20-21 HCP's - Bid "5NT" (Quantitative) Requesting partner to bid 6NT with a minimum of (15 HCP's) and to bid 7NT with a maximum of (16-17 HCP's)
- g. 22-23 HCP's - Bid 7NT

RESPONSES TO OPENING 1 NT WITH DESIRE TO DEVIATE FROM NO TRUMP

- a. "2C" - Stayman Convention asking for a 4-Card Major. ("3C" over a 2NT opening)
- b. "2D", "2H", "2S", or "3C" - Jacoby Transfer (Alertable) bids. ("3D", etc. over a 2NT opening)
- c. "3D" - An invitational bid (Seeking 3NT) with a 6-Card Minor suit headed by two of the top three honors and fewer points than would normally elicit game.
- d. 3H or 3S - A game force bid holding a 5-Card Heart or Spade suit, respectively.
- e. "4C" - The Gerber Convention, an artificial system, asking for Aces.
- f. 4H or 4S - A close-out bid with a 6-Card suit. (Opener can have no fewer than two)
- g. 5C or 5D - A close-out bid with a freak hand holding a long broken Minor suit, probably seven or eight cards in length, with little additional outside honor strength.

A ONE NO TRUMP OVERCALL

- (1) In the direct position. (2nd position relative to the opponent's opening bid of one of a suit) - Shows an equivalent hand to a 1NT opening bid with the added feature of at least one, and preferably two, stoppers in the opponent's opening previously bid suit.
- (2) In the balancing position (4th position relative to opponent's opening bid of one of a suit) - Shows about 10-13 HCP's with at least one stopper in the opponent's opening suit.

A TWO NO TRUMP OVERCALL

- (1) Over a 1H, 1S, or 1NT opening bid - Shows a Minor two-suited hand with at least a 5-5 distribution ("**UNUSUAL NT**"). The minimum strength may vary according to the vulnerability. At favorable vulnerability, a 7-8 HCP hand would be considered adequate. At unfavorable vulnerability, both the hand and the suits should be distinctly stronger.
- (2) Over a pre-emptive opening 2-Bid - Shows an opening 1NT (15-17 HCP) hand with at least one, and preferably two, stoppers in opener's pre-emptive bid suit.

A ONE NO TRUMP RESPONSE TO AN OPENING OF ONE OF A SUIT

6-10 HCP's - No support for partner's suit and no 4-Card Major suit having been by-passed. This bid is of great pre-emptive value by prohibiting the fourth player from bidding at the one-level.

A TWO NO TRUMP RESPONSE TO AN OPENING BID OF ONE OF A SUIT

- (1) Over a Minor suit opening bid - Shows 11-12 HCP's - An invitational bid which can be passed. It denies holding a 4-card or better suit in either Major.
- (2) Over a Major suit opening bid - Shows 13-15 HCP's - Denies support for partner's suit.

A THREE NO TRUMP RESPONSE TO AN OPENING BID OF ONE OF A SUIT

- (1) Over a Minor suit opening bid - Shows 13 -15 HCP's which denies a 4-Card or better suit in either Major.
- (2) Over a Major suit opening bid - Shows 16-18 HCP's and denies support for partner's suit.

INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 3
PRE-EMPTIVE BIDDING

- A. **DEFINITION:** An opening bid of two or more with a hand containing both a long suit and a sub-minimum high-card strength (5-11 HCP's) The bid is usually defensive in purpose. The pre-emptive bidder hopes that the hand belongs to the opponents with the stronger hands and that they find it difficult to bid accurately when the auction has started at a higher level with one or more bidding levels have been previously consumed by the pre-emptive bid.

B. **POSITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

The third player seat in the auction is in the best position to make an opening pre-empt. He/she knows that such a bid cannot pre-empt the first position player since that partner has already limited his/her hand by passing. The fourth player is almost sure to have the best hand at the table. Since partner's initial pass makes game unlikely, a sub-minimum pre-empt is often very effective.

Next to third chair, pre-emptive bids by the dealer are the most attractive. Although they may present difficulty to partner, there are two opponents who may have good hands, and the odds favor that the hand belongs to the opponents.

Second chair is least desirable for opening a pre-emptive bid. One opponent has already passed; therefore, the odds are no longer two to one in favor of the opponents having a good hand. Hence, marginal pre-empts should always be avoided in second position; i.e., they should be slightly stronger than pre-empts by the dealer and by the third positioned player.

When opening a pre-empt in fourth chair, one obviously expects to get a plus score, otherwise one would simply pass the deal out for no score to either side. Therefore, fourth chair "pre-empts" generally suggest the values of a minimum opening one-bid both offensively and defensively.

C. **INFLUENCING FACTORS:**

- (1) **LENGTH OF SUIT** - A pre-emptive or weak 2-bid is usually with a 6-card suit, a weak 3-bid is with a 7-card suit, and an opening 4-bid is usually with an 8-card suit.
- (2) **POSITION AT THE TABLE** - Already discussed.
- (3) **STRENGTH OF SUIT** - The best pre-empts have a concentration of honor strength in the bid suit. This automatically increases his/her playing strength, decreases the danger of suffering a substantial penalty, and decreases the chance of a successful defense against an the opponent's presumed contract. Weak 2-Bids usually have

HCP's in strength; weak 3-Bids have about 6-10 HCP's.

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- (4) **VULNERABILITY** - With favorable vulnerability; i.e., when not vulnerable against vulnerable, the pre-emptive bid should be within three tricks of the bid within one's hand. With equal or unfavorable vulnerability, the bid should be within two tricks of the call. The best way to count winners in pre-emptive type hands is by counting losers and subtracting them from thirteen.

D. RESPONSES TO A WEAK 2-BID:

- (1) **"RONF"**: ("Raise-Only-Non-Force") - A raise of partner's pre-empt bid by one or more levels. Such a bid is not forcing, but rather an attempt to further the obstruction of the opponents who are seen to have the preponderance of points. It obviously guarantees two or more pieces in partner's pre-empt suit.
- (2) **"2NT"**: (An artificial and forcing convention asking for a further description of partner's hand.) The invoking 2-NT bidder must have better than an opening hand since the pre-empting partner has evidenced a weaker than opening strength. The responses to same are all artificial and declare the following in their responses:
- a. "3C" = 5-7 HCP's and **1** of the top three honors.
 - b. "3D" = 5-7 HCP's and **2** of the top three honors.
 - c. "3H" = 8-11 HCP's and **1** of the top three honors.
 - d. "3S" = 8-11 HCP's and **2** of the top three honors.
 - e. "3NT" = 8-11 HCP's and **3** of the top three honors.
- (3) **The Bid Of Any New Suit:** (A strong forcing bid of a better than opening hand with at least a 5-card suit in the newly-mentioned suit) Such a bid asks for one of the following three responses, and no other response:
- a. Raise the responder's suit one level with three pieces.
 - b. Bid cheapest NT with two of responder's suit.
 - c. Re-bid opener's suit with one or none of responder's suit.

Responder will then place the contract based upon opener's answers to either (2) or (3) above.

E. RESPONSES TO A WEAK 3-BID: - Responder should bend over backwards to play in opener's suit, for if one elects to play the contract elsewhere, the dummy is unlikely to be very useful.

- (1) **3NT:** - A Sign-off. (Opener **MUST** pass)
- (2) **A Raise To Game** in the pre-empt suit is either pre-emptive in of itself, or made with game-going values.
- (3) **Game Bids In a New Suit** are a Sign-off. (Opener **MUST** pass)

- (4) **Jumps to Five of Opener's Suit** (Majors only) are slam tries asking about the quality of opener's trump suit. (With no more than one likely loser in trumps, opener accepts and proceeds to Slam, else passes.

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INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 4
THE DRURY CONVENTION

A. BACKGROUND: After two previous passes at the table, the third player may sometimes opt to open the bidding relatively freely; i.e., with several HCP's less than that normally required. This is partly because of the negation of the responsibility of a rebid (partner has already passed), partly because the bid made may inconvenience the fourth player who has yet to have the opportunity to open the bidding (the player who is likely to have the best hand at the table), and partly because partner may utilize the information for lead directing significance should that team ultimately become defenders of an eventual contract by the opponents.

In third seat, after two successive passes, one may open with any holding which would otherwise be good enough to be a sound overcall (even as low as 8-9 HCP's). If the answer to the question, "IF MY RIGHT-HAND OPPONENT WOULD HAVE OPENED 1-CLUB, USING THE SUIT QUALITY TEST, WITH THIS HOLDING, WOULD I HAVE WANTED TO OVERCALL?", is yes, one should open the hand in third seat.

SUIT QUALITY TEST - A suit is strong enough for an overcall if- **THE LENGTH IN THE SUIT + THE NUMBER OF HONORS IN THAT SUIT (THE JACK AND TEN ARE COUNTED AS HONORS IF HIGHER HONORS ARE ALSO HELD) = THE NUMBER OF TRICKS TO BE BID.** Thus, if the suit quality = seven (7), the hand would qualify for a super-light third seat opening bid at the one-level.

<u>EXAMPLES :</u>	XX AK10XX	(a) QXX XXX	AQXXX KIOX	(b) XX QXX	AKQX XXX XXX QXXX	(c)
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In third seat, players who use a 5-card major system are likely to open 1H with (a), and 1S with (b & c). Their reasons are simple. They want to direct the lead if they become defenders, and their opening pre-empts most of the bids at the 1-level from their opponents. In addition, they are not afraid of being raised on 3-card support with the 5-card holding as in (a) or (b) above, or even such a fine 4-card suit as in (c).

In fourth seat, after three successive passes, the same principal of opening with a less than sound opening also applies, especially, when the RULE OF 15 (Lesson 15), is employed.

NOW LET US TURN OUR ATTENTION TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TABLE.

B. PURPOSE: After passing, the responder to a third or fourth-chair opening bid faces two special problems in describing his/her hand:

- (1) A simple change of suit is no longer forcing (opener knows responder has less than

- opening values), so responder cannot make a temporizing bid; opener may pass.
- (2) The opener may well have opened the bidding on a sub-minimum hand so that a jump response by responder could easily get the partnership too high.

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Suppose you pick up (JXX AXX KQXXX JX) and after passing, partner opens 1S in third or fourth chair. What response do you make? Does partner have a full opening count or perhaps a third-position sub-minimum 10-12 HCP's? If you just raise to 2S it is an underbid, and if partner has a 14-15 point true opening bid, opener would pass and you could be playing in a final inferior part-score contract. If, on the other hand, you bid 3S, and opener has a hand as in (b) or (c) above (a sub-minimum opening), 3S is likely to be too high. In short, responder does not have a good bid available which will describe the maximum previously-passed hand with support for opener's suit. Determining the nature (full or sub-minimum) of partner's third or fourth seat opening is crucial in finding the best level of the final contract. Utilizing the **Drury Convention** enables responder to show his/her fit and values WITHOUT jumping to the 3-level.

C. REQUIREMENTS: To use the Drury Convention, the responder must have both:

- a. A previously passing 10-12 point hand (one just short of the values needed for a minimum opening bid) and:
- b. Either:
 - (1) A fit for opener's Major suit third or fourth-seat opening bid or,
 - (2) A good 6-card Club suit that responder expects to rebid irrespective of opener's response to the Drury Convention.

D. INVOKING THE CONVENTION: Responder bids an Artificial "2C" in response to a third or fourth chair opening bid. This 2-Club response does NOT say anything about responder's Club holding (unless Clubs are subsequently rebid by responder); but simply asks opener whether or not he/she has a full opening bid.

E. RESPONSE BY OPENER: Opener's primary obligation is to inform responder as to whether or not a full opening bid is present. The Rebid by the responder are as follows:

1. "2D" - An Artificial response denying a full opening bid thus evidencing a sub-minimum opener. This bid, being artificial, says nothing about opener's Diamond suit.
2. 2H or 2S - A repeat of opener's suit evidencing a full opening count.
3. 3C or 3D - A natural rebid with more than full values for the original 1H or 1S opening.
4. 3H or 3S - A game-force and slam-interest opening hand with.

F. RESPONSE BY RESPONDER: Responder, knowing the sub-minimum, normal, or slam interest value of opener's hand, now takes control and either bids:

1. 2H or 2S - in response to the artificial "2D" response by opener denying a full opener.
2. 3C - A drop dead 6-card Club suit with no support for partner's stated Major suit.
3. 3H or 3S - Invitational to game
4. 4H or 4S - A sign-off in response to opener's full opening bid.

G. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESPONDER'S BID OTHER THAN "2D": Since responder is a previously-passed hand, his/her bid is not forcing and can be passed. opener is, therefore, relieved of his/her normal obligation of an opening bidder to keep the bidding open by rebidding something.

H. OPENER'S RESPONSE TO "2C" AFTER INTERFERENCE BY THE OPPONENTS:
A pass should signify a sub-minimum opening and anything else signifies a full normal opening bid.

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INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 5
THE "MICHAEL'S CUE-BID" CONVENTION

A. BACKGROUND: Two-suited hands are generally difficult to describe after the bidding has been opened by the opponents, especially if the hand is very weak. Often, the opponents bid too much too soon for both of the suits to be safely shown, or the bidding dies too soon for both suits to be introduced. The Michael's Cue-Bid describes such a two-suited hand by means of a simple artificial cue-bid overcall. It is both a defensive obstructive call, either in an attempt to pre-empt the opponent's bidding space, or to lead to a profitable sacrifice against their eventual contract, or else an offensive weapon used to seek the best suit for a sought-after makeable contract by the invoking partnership. The Michael's Cue-bid Convention serves as a valuable weapon in one's competitive bidding arsenal.

B. DEFINITION: The Michael's Cue-bid uses a direct cue-bid of the opponent's suit as a two-suited take-out bid. It promises at least a 5-5 or better distribution in each of two suits (With a 6-4 distribution, one is best advised against invoking Michael's).

1. 1C "2C" = BOTH MAJORS (At least 5-H and 5-S, or better)
2. 1D "2D" = BOTH MAJORS (At least 5-H and 5-S, or better)
3. 1H "2H" = THE OTHER MAJOR + AN UNSPECIFIED MINOR (Either 5-S and 5-C, or 5-S and 5-D, or better)
4. 1S "2S" = THE OTHER MAJOR + AN UNSPECIFIED MINOR (Either 5-H and 5-C, or 5-H and 5-D, or better)
5. 1H "2NT" = BOTH MINORS (At least 5C-5D, or better) (The "**Unusual NT**" Convention; i.e., **the two lower un-bid suits**)
6. 1S "2NT" = BOTH MINORS (At least 5C-5D, or better) (The "**Unusual NT**" Convention, i.e., **the two lower un-bid suits**)

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7. 1C "2NT" = **THE TWO LOWER UN-BID SUITS**, in this case Diamonds and Hearts, 5-5 or better)
8. 1D "2NT" = **THE TWO LOWER UN-BID SUITS**, in this case Clubs and Hearts, 5-5 or better)

C: REQUIREMENTS:

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1. Distribution: - At least a 5-card or better holding in each of two unbid suits.
2. Strength - The strength of the hand when Michael's cue-bid is used falls into one of two types. Either one that is very weak, 0-10 HCP's; else one that is very strong, 16 HCP's or more. When the hand is of moderate value, 11-15 HCP's, one should bid the higher-ranking suit first, followed by a rebid of the lower-ranking suit on the next bidding turn. In this way, responder can differentiate the point count of the invoking Michael's cue-bid user.
(See **(E.)** Below)

Examples: The opponents have opened 1C and you hold the following:

QJ109X	KXXXX	XX	X	(bid "2C" and then pass partner's 2H or 2S response)
AK109X	AKJXX	KX	X	(bid "2C" and then "3C" over partner's 2H or 2S response)
AQ109X	KJXXX	AX	X	(bid 1S and then rebid 2H at your next bidding opportunity)

3. Vulnerability and Level - The more adverse these conditions, the more desirable are either a greater strength and/or a longer distributional holding.

D. RESPONSES TO MICHAEL'S CUE-BID: The partner of the Michael's Cue-bid should, if

at all possible, when the bidding permits, take a preference for one of the suits shown by the cue-bidder. Since partner will have as few as five in each of his/her suits, a 3-card support is more than adequate. **A preference on a doubleton, however, will sometimes be necessary, unless responding partner has a 6-card or better fourth suit.**

Examples:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|----|------|---|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (a) | 1C | "2C" | P | 2H | (A preference for Hearts) |
| (b) | 1D | "2D" | P | 2S | (A preference for Spades) |
| (c) | 1H | "2H" | P | 2S | (A preference for Spades) |
| (d) | 1S | "2S" | P | 3H | (A preference for Hearts) |
| (e) | 1H | "2H" | P | "2NT" | (A preference for the as-yet-unspecified Minor as opposed to the alternate Major) |

- P **3C/3D** (The unspecified Minor is revealed)
- (f) 1S "2NT" P **3C/3D** (A Minor suit preference is chosen)
- (g) 1S "2NT" P **3H** (Responder denies request to choose Clubs or Diamonds and, instead chooses his/her 6-card Heart suit.)

E. REBIDS BY CUE-BIDDER:

- (a) (With 0-10 HCP's) - Pass Chosen Suit by Responder
- (b) (With 16+ HCP's) - Cue-Bid Opponent's Suit Once Again!

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INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 6
RESPONSES TO PARTNER'S TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

(Refer to Lesson 6 - Last Year)
 (For Collateral Information)

A. CIRCUMSTANCE: The opponents have opened with one (1) of a suit. Your partner says: "DOUBLE". Your partner thereby evidences an equivalent or better hand in comparison to the opening bidder. Since you have not yet made a call, your partner's double is for a take-out. The partner of the opener passes, and it is your turn to bid. What are the appropriate bids in response to your partner's take-out double and what do they signify to the doubler? Can the responder to the doubler pass, and if so, under what conditions? What if there is an intervening bid by the partner of the opening bidder? Does this mitigate the need for doubler's partner to act?

B. DEFINITION: A TAKE-OUT DOUBLE IS A DEMAND ONE ROUND FORCE ON PARTNER UNLESS THERE IS AN INTERVENTING BID BY THE OPPONENTS. IF NO INTERVENING BID OCCURS, THE DOUBLER'S PARTNER **MUST** BID (One Exception, later noted in [3(f)]), EVEN IF, WORST CASE SCENARIO, HE/SHE HAS AS LITTLE AS 0 HCP'S.

C. TYPES OF RESPONSE: There are basically three (3) types of responses to take-out doubles: 1) NEGATIVE (**weak**); (2) POSITIVE (**constructive**); and (3) GAME-FORCING or GAME-INVTTATIONAL (**strong**).

(1) **NEGATIVE (WEAK):** (0-8 HCP's) - Mention one's best (usually longest) suit amongst those requested with preference given to the unbid Major(s).

- (a) 0-5 HCP's - Responder **must** bid in the absence of an intervening bid by the partner of the opening bidder, else may pass.

	Axxx	xxx	xxxx	xxx (2D)	xx
(1H Db1. P ???)	xxx (1S)	xxx	x (1S)	Jxxx	Jxxxx
	xxx	xx (2C)	xx	Kxxxx	axx

XXX QXXX QJXXXX XX XXX (2C)

(b) 6-8 HCP's - Responder should bid even if there is an intervening bid by the opponent.

If there is an intervening bid by doubler's partner's RHO (opener's partner), and if responder to the double has 0-5 HCP's, it removes the obligation of doubler's partner to respond. Therefore, if, in the presence of an intervening response by opener's partner, doubler's partner DOES bid, it is because he/she WANTS TO, not because he/she MUST do so. In bridge terminology, this is called a "free bid".

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(1C	Dbl.	1D	???)	XXXX	XX (1H)	XXXX
				AQX (1S)	KJXXX	XXXX (Pass)
				XXX	QJXX	AXX
				XXX	XX	XX

(2) **POSITIVE (CONSTRUCTIVE):** (9-12 HCP's): - A Jump bid into one's best (usually longest) suit amongst those requested with preference given to the unbid Major(s).

1H Dbl. P ???

(a) A single jump bid (9-12 HCP's) in either Major.

	AXXX
	KXX (2S)
	QXX
	KXX

(b) A single jump bid (9-12 HCP's) in either Minor (Denies the alternate Major suit).

XXX	
X	(3D)
AKQXX	
QXXX	

(c) A 1NT response (8-10 HCP's) - Evidences a relatively balanced hand, a stopper in the opponent's bid suit, and denies four cards in the unbid Major(s).

1S	Dbl.	P	???)	KXXX
				XX (INT)
				AXXX
				KXX

(3) **GAME-INVITATIONAL OR GAME-FORCING (STRONG):**

(a) A Jump shift in an unbid suit (9-11 HCP's) - Game invitational

AKXX (2S)

INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 7
RESPONSES OVER THE OPPONENT'S TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

- A. **CIRCUMSTANCE:** Your partner has opened the bidding with one (1) of a suit and your right hand opponent (RHO) has bid a take-out double. What should be your response, and what are the various meanings of that which you might call?
- B. **TYPES OF RESPONSES:** Basically there are **three types of responses** necessary under these circumstances; i.e., the ability to show (1) **a weak pre-emptive holding**, (2) **a mildly constructive competitive holding**, and (3) **a strong, invitational or better holding**.
- C. **CONDITIONS:** Two conditions need be examined under which the three previous responses (weak, mildly competitive, and strong) need be exercised; (1) **with trump support for partner**, and (2) **without trump support for partner**.

With Trump Support

(1) **WEAK OR PRE-EMPTIVE:** - (0-5 HCP's)

- (A). **A Single Raise of Partner's Suit** with slightly weaker values necessary without the opponent's intervening double; i.e., 0-5 HCP's.

(Note: **Minimum Primary Support; i.e. three pieces of a Major or five of a**

Minor

KJX	1S	Db1.	2S
XXX			
XX			
XXXX			
XXX			
QXX			
QXXXX	1D	Db1.	2D
XX			

- (B). **A Double Raise (or greater) of Partner's Suit** showing longer than primary support for partner's suit – This bid is pre-emptive and should comply

with the “**LAW OF TOTAL TRICKS**” in terms of the total number of trumps held cumulatively by the partnership.

A	X	X	X				
X	X	X		1S	Dbl.	3S	(Nine Trumps)
X	X						
X	X	X	X				
X	X						
J	X	X	X	1H	Dbl.	4H	(Ten Trumps)
X	X						
X	X	X	X				

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(2) **MILDLY CONSTRUCTIVE: - (6-9 HCP's)**

An Initial Pass followed by a Bid on the subsequent round. Shows a hand with good defensive strength and stronger values than an immediate support of partner's suit as above.

A	X	X					
Q	X	X	X	1S	Dbl.	P	2H
Q	X	X	X	P	P	2S	
X	X						

(3) **STRONG: (10 or More HCP's – A Limit Raise or Better)**

A Immediate Conventional Bid of “2NT” (“JORDAN”) is employed here to show primary support or longer of partner's suit with at least invitational strength (Eight Losers or fewer).

K	J	X	X	1S	Dbl.	“2NT”	
X	X	X					
Q	X						
A	Q	X	X				

Without Trump Support

(1) **WEAK OR PRE-EMPTIVE: - (0-9 HCP's)**

(A) **A Suit Response** - a non-forcing response with a 5-card suit at the one (1) level or a 6-card suit at the two (2) level.

K	X	X					
X							
K	Q	X	X	1C	Dbl.	1D	
X	X	X	X				

X
 XXX
 KXX
 AXXXXX 1S Db1. **2C**

XX
 AQXXX 1D Db1. **1H** (Is especially important to
 XXX evidence a 5-card Major)
 XXX

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(B) **A Jump-Shift Response** - pre-emptive with (0-5 HCP's), no support for partner, but holding a 6-card suit or better, and is a "drop dead" implication.

X
 XXX 1S Db1. **3D**
 KQXXXX
 XXX

(C) **A 1NT Response** - A lack of support for partner's bid suit, no particular suit of one's own, and 7-9 HCP's.

QXX
 JXXX
 QXXX 1C Db1. **1NT**
 AX

(2) STRONG: (10 or More HCP's)

A Redouble By Responder - shows any strong hand with a point count of 10 HCP's or greater. Opener, unless he/she has a distributional hand unsuitable for defense, will pass on the next round of bidding thereby allowing the re-doubler to have the opportunity to double for penalties, else to bid on. Responder will make that subjective decision based upon whether the vulnerability is suitable to allow scoring to exceed that which would have been achieved if, alternatively, the hand were to be played by their partnership instead.

1S Db1. **RDb1.** P A
 P 2H Db1. AJXX (Note: Hand satisfies
 KXX rules of 10 & 12)
 XXXXX

1H Db1. **RDb1.** P AJX
 P 1S **2NT** XX

INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 7
RESPONSES OVER THE OPPONENT'S TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

Comparison of Responses to Partner's Opening Bid of One of A Suit
Holding Trump Support for Partner

(All Principles Below Are for Minor or Major Suit Openings by Partner)

Without Interference After Intervening Overcall After Intervening Take-out Double

1H Pass ????	1H 1S ????	1H Double ????
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<u>PRE-EMPTIVE</u>	4H	3H or 4H	2H or 3H or 4H
	Shows 4-8 HCP's And <u>5-Card or Greater</u> Support (A Distributional) (Pre-Emptive Bid)	Shows 3-6 HCP's and 4-Card or 5-Card Support Respectively Losing Trick Count 10 or More	Shows 4-6 HCP's and a 3-Card, 4-Card, or 5-Card Support Respectively Losing Trick Count 10 or More

<u>Constructive</u>		Pass on First Bidding Opportunity, Then Bid 2H on Second Bid
(or)	2H	2H
<u>Competitive</u>	Shows 6-10 HCP's With Support for Partner's Suit (At Least 3 Pieces) (Losing Trick Count = 8½-9)	Shows 6-10 HCP's Support for Partner Losing Trick Count = 9
		7-9 HCP's with Support for Partner's Suit

<u>Invitational</u>		
(or)	3H	"2S"
		"2NT"

Better

Shows 11-12 HCP's
Support for Partner
Losing Trick Count = 8

Shows 11 HCP's or More
Support for Partner
Losing Trick Count = 8 or Fewer
(Is NOT Alertable)

Shows 10 HCP's or More
Support for Partner
and A Losing Trick
Count of 8 or Fewer
(Called "JORDAN")
(IS Alertable)

INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 8
BALANCING

A. DEFINITION: - The bidding of partner's cards in the reopening position, (The so-called "PASS-OUT SEAT", or 4th seat relative to the last previous call or bid other than a pass) is commonly called "BALANCING". It is called this because the bidding presumes that the partner has the **balance** of strength. This presumption is based upon the the opponent's bidding (or, in this case, the lack thereof) and the points the player in the forth chair is NOT looking at in his/her own hand.

Example- (1C/1D/1H/1S) P P ???

The use of balancing bids will be a source of considerable profit to a partnership when used properly in situations in which the opposing bidding has stopped at a low level and where the bidding would otherwise cease. In order to balance effectively, however, it is extremely necessary to make and understand adjustments in the meaning of such competitive tools such as doubles, overcalls, no-trump bids. cue-bids, and jump-overcalls. Such tools all have altered meanings when used in the balancing position.

B. BALANCING DOUBLES: - A balancing double does not promise the same strength and distribution as does a direct take-out double. One may make a balancing double with as few as 8-9 HCP's along with any reasonable holding and support for the unbid suits.

Suppose, for example, a 1H bid is passed around to you in the fourth seat (balancing chair), and you hold any of the following hands: In all three examples, one should "DOUBLE".

- (a) KJIOX X K1OXX AQXX
 - (b) KX XX AKQJX J1OXX
 - (c) AXX X K1OXXX Q1OXX
- and

NOTE: - If 1H were bid to your immediate right, one would have doubled with (a), overcalled 2D with (b), and passed with example (c). In the balancing seat, however, one should double with (a),(b),and (c),

then clarifying exactly which of the three one holds via the rebid. Thus, if partner does not convert your double to a penalty double by passing; i.e., if partner had previously "TRAP-PASSED", but instead, for example, alternatively bids 1S, you would respond as follows: With

- (a) you will raise to 2S suggesting values for any direct take-out double.
- (b) you will rebid 2D indicating that you had a good 2D overcall but elected to double in case partner was "TRAPPING".
- (c) Pass since you have a minimum balancing double.

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C. RESPONSES TO BALANCING DOUBLES: - The response to a balancing double requires better judgment than does bidding over partner's direct take-out double. Remember, partner may have made a balancing double on a much wider range of hands; i.e., he/she may **not** have good support for ail of the unbid suits, and the strength of his/her hand may be considerably below the values required for a direct take-out double.

- (1) A bid of any unbid suit at the cheapest level = 7-11 HCP's.
- (2) Any jump response = a hand with opening strength, previously passed.
- (3) A jump to 2NT = A good opening bid with opener's suit well-stopped.
- (4) A jump to 3NT = values for a strong 1NT opening with opener's suit under control.

D. BALANCING OVERCALLS: - A constructive alternative to the balancing double is a **balancing overcall**. As with a balancing double, a **balancing overcall does not require the same strength and suit quality that is necessary for a direct overcall.**

1H P P ???

Examples: (a) JXXXX XX AJ10X Q10 (b) J10 XXX KXXXXX A10 (c) X XX Q10XX AQXXXX

Note: None of these hands meet the standard requirements for a direct (2D) overcall, but **all** are appropriate balancing overcalls

Frequently, one, will be forced to balance at the one-level **even** with a 4-card suit.

1D P P ???

Examples: (a) KJXX QX XXX QXXX (1S) (b) X AXXX JXXX AXXX (1H)

When one balances with an overcall, partner should not get overly enthusiastic. Balancing overcalls are usually the weakest of the actions one may exercise in the balancing chair, and, as noted above, can even be done with a weak hand, a poor suit quality, and even with a 4-card suit. Even if the previously-passed partner holds a good hand, game is highly unlikely unless in addition to his/her good hand, he/she holds a fit for the balancing partner's suit.

E. BALANCING JUMP OVERCALLS: - Weak jump overcalls designed to consume enemy bidding space are no longer needed, since one could simply pass to accomplish this same objective. Thus, a balancing jump-overcall should show usually a one-suited hand, with at least a 6-card suit, and the approximate strength of a sound opening bid.

Example:

1H P P ??? AKJXXX XX AXX KX (2S)

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F. BALANCING NO TRUMPS: - The requirements for a balancing no trump bid differ from a

direct no trump overcall as do all other balancing bids. A balancing no trump bid should have the following conditions:

1. 8-10 HCP's (or more) (Subject to a Flexible Partnership Understanding)
2. A balanced or semi-balanced distribution (Two doubletons allowed)
3. Usually a stopper in the enemy's bid suit, but not guaranteed
4. denial of distributional requirements for a good take-out double

1D P P ??? (a) KX QIOX Q10M QXXX (1NT)
 (b) AX AQX XXXX KXXX (1NT)

G. BALANCING CUE-BIDS: - Shows a highly distributional hand, usually 2-suited. The strength shown is somewhat ambiguous and may vary. The cue-bidder may hold a strong offensive hand unsuitable for a take-out double; or a weak distributional hand that has little or no defensive values and thus cannot stand to have partner pass a take-out double should partner have "trap-passed". Examples: 1C P P ???

(a) KQJXXX AQJXX - KX ("2C") (b) QXXXX JXXXX X X ("2C")

H. PASSING IN THE BALANCING CHAIR: - There are only two (2) reasons one should pass in the balancing chair. They include:

1. You have both length and strength in the enemy suit, making it most unlikely that partner has trap-passed. Thus, permitting your opponents to play the contract that has been passed around to you might well result in your side's optimum score on that deal.

2. You have such a weak hand, that any bid you might make is likely to produce an unmakeable contract, even in the unlikely possibility of finding partner with a reasonable strength. The hand probably belongs to the enemy anyhow, and, if partner had trap-passed, the opponents are likely to have a much better contract than the one they are forced to play should you have passed.

Examples: 1H P P ??? (a) XX AJIOXX QJX JXX (Pass) (#1-above)
 (b) QXX JXX XXXX QXX (Pass) (#2-above)

I. SUMMATION: - Infrequently, and usually against inexperienced or poor bidders, balancing

will infrequently allow your opponents to bid and make game or achieve a better part-score either of which they might never have reached if balancing had not occurred. On still other infrequent occasions one may get doubled and go for a considerable set because partner does not hold the necessary values that the auction suggests, or your side does not have a good fit despite your opponent's fit. **ACCEPT THESE LOSSES.** They will be rare and they will be more than compensated by the points earned by balancing. The use of balancing bids should, in general, be a source of considerable profit and gratification.

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INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 9

INFERENCES AND DEDUCTIONS

A **deduction** is a conclusion based upon known fact. For example, when a defender shows out in a suit, declarer can count the holding in that suit in the hand of the partner who exhibits the void. An **inference** is a conclusion based upon an assumed fact. For example, when an opponent passes his partner's opening one bid, you can infer that he/she has fewer than 6 HCP's.

Inferences and deductions about the opponents' high cards and distribution can both be made from the auction and the play of the hand.

A. INFERENCES FROM THE AUCTION:

1. A player who has passed the opportunity of opening the bidding in first or second positions cannot have 13 HCP's, for, indeed, **all** 13 HCP hands satisfy the Rule of 20 and would have opened the bidding. Therefore, if such a passed hand has already evidenced 2 Aces and 1 King, in the play of the hand, he/she cannot hold a missing King or Queen.
2. A player who passes in response to his/her partner's opening hand cannot have 6 HCP's. If he/she has, in the play of the hand, already evidence a King and a Jack, he/she cannot have a Queen for which you might like to finesse against.
3. An opening 1NT bidder has the HCP's defined by his opening no trump stipulated range, usually 15-17 HCP's.
4. A responder who has bid 1NT in response to his/her partner's opening one Heart, holds 6-10 HCP's, no 4-card Spade Major holding, and lacks primary support for his/her partner's Heart suit.
5. A 1NT (2NT) opening bidder who responds "2D" ("3D") to his partner's "2C" ("3C") Conventional Stayman bid lacks a 4-card suit in either Major suit.
6. The partner of an opening 1 NT bidder who receives a 2S bid from his/her partner in response to a "2C" Stayman conventional bid, and who then bids 3NT had a 4-card Heart suit, otherwise he/she would have never sought a Major suit fit.

7. A responder who has bid a new suit at the 1-level has at least 6 HCP's.
 8. A responder who has bid a new suit at the 2-level has at least 10 HCP's.
 9. An player who makes an overcall has at least 5-cards in his/her bid suit, in addition to 8 or more HCP's at the 1-level, and 10 or more HCP's at the 2-level.
 - 10 An opening no trump bidder does not have a singleton, a void, a 5-card Major suit holding, nor a 6-card suit.
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- 11 A responder who raises a Minor does not have a 4-card Major suit holding.
 - 12 A opening weak two-bid probably evidences a 6-card suit, and a three-bid a 7-card suit.
 - 13 An opening bidder of 1H or 1S has at least a 5-card or longer Major suit holding.
 - 14 If the opponents have opened and raised a Major suit and you have 5 cards in that suit, your partner has a void in that suit.
 15. A responder who responds 1S to a 1C or 1D opening bid by partner does not likely have a 4-card Heart suit.
 16. An opening bid of 1C or 1D probably denies a 5-card Major suit holding.

B. INFERENCES FROM THE PLAY:

1. If the opening leader against a no trump contract leads a deuce, then he/she does not have a 5-card suit, since he has, by partnership and conventional understanding, led fourth from his/her longest suit.
2. If the opening leader leads a low card, he/she does not have an honor sequence in that suit, again, by partnership and conventional understanding.
3. If the opening leader leads a low card, he/she either has a singleton, or else three, or more cards in that suit headed by an honor.
4. If, as declarer, you are missing the ace and the king in any suit, and the opening leader does not lead that suit, he/she does not have both the ace and king.
5. If the partner of the opening leader has bid a suit and the opening leader does not lead the suit bid by his/her partner, he/she probably has a good reason for not doing so. The most common reasons are: (a) that he/she has an honor sequence in some other suit that appears more likely to be fruitful (apparent from the opening lead), (b) that he/she has the ace of the bid suit or (c) he/she is void in that suit, or (d) does not listen to the bidding and/or wants to frustrate his/her partner.

Realize that the abundance of information available about high cards and distribution of the opponents' hands is voluminous. Additional inferences may be based upon attitude (low card = a "discouragement" or high card = a "come-on encouragement"), distributional signals like (High-Low = an "even" or Low-High = an "odd" number of cards in the signalled suit), the lead of low from an honor, the lead of top of a presumed sequence, and/or the line of play. Counting, deductive reasoning, and assumed inferences are all important tools towards better bridge and a confident, assured, and productive defense by the opponents; or a more successful offense by declarer.

INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 10

THE STAYMAN CONVENTION

A. DEFINITION: - The Stayman Convention is used by the partner of a 1NT or 2NT opening bid in order to seek the possibility of a 4-card Major suit fit. When used in combination with Jacoby transfer bids it becomes a very useful tool in one's bidding arsenal. It is initiated and invoked by the responder and partner of the opening NT bid by utilizing an artificial "2D" forcing call. Stayman should not be invoked unless responder has at least an invitational strength hand; i.e., 9-10 HCP's or more. (Exception: Any hand where responder to the opening NT bid anticipates passing any feasible response by opener Example: XXXX
XXXX XXXX X

Examples: 1NT P "2C" (or) 2NT P "3C"

B. BIDS AND RESPONSES PLAYING NON-FORCING STAYMAN:

<u>OPENER</u>	<u>RESPONDER</u>	<u>MEANTNG OF RESPONDER'S LAST BID</u>
1NT	"2C"	A Non-Forcing Request for a 4-card Major suit
1NT "2D"	"2C" 2H/2S	An INVITATIONAL non-forcing holding of a 5-card suit in the responder's mentioned Major suit mentioned and a 4-card suit in the unmentioned alternate Major.
1NT "2D"/2H/2S	"2C" 2NT	INVITATIONAL showing the strength for a direct raise to 2NT with either one (or both) 4-card Majors unable to find a Major suit fit.
1NT 2H/2S	"2C" 3H/3S	INVITATIONAL - Shows support; and asks opener to carry on to game with a maximum (16-17 HCP's)
1NT 2H/2S	"2C" 4H/4S	SIGN-OFF - Shows a fit, game going values, and no interest in slam.
1NT	"2C"	SIGN-OFF - Unable to find a 4-4 Major fit and

"2D"/2H/2S	3NT	denies holding a 5-card major suit.
1NT	"2C"	SIGN-OFF - A very weak hand wanting to play in a likely 6-card minor suit specified.
"2D"/2H/2S	3C/3D	

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1NT	"2C"	FORCING - Promises a 5-card suit with game values and a 5-card suit in the bid Major suit along with a 4-card holding in the unmentioned alternate Major suit.
"2D"	3H/3S	
1NT	"2C"	FORCING - Gerber Convention asking for Aces
"2D"/2H/2S	"4C"	
1NT	"2C"	NATURAL - Invites 6NT if partner has a maximum of 16-17 HCP's else opener passes.
"2D"/2H/2S	"4NT"	
1NT	"2C"	NATURAL - Invites 7NT if partner has a maximum of 16-17 HCP's else opener bids 6NT.
"2D"/2H/2S	"5NT"	

C. OTHER RESPONSES WHEN PLAYING NON-FORCING STAYMAN:

1NT	3C/3D	INVITATIONAL - Shows a 6-card suit headed by two of the top three honors. Partner will proceed to game if he/she holds the missing honor in the Minor suit bid and stoppers in the other three suits, else passes.
1NT	"4C"	FORCING - The Gerber Convention asking for Aces.
1NT	3H/3S	FORCING - A 5-card suit forcing to 4H/4S/3NT
1NT	4H/4S	SIGN-OFF - A 6-card or longer suit with game values.
1NT	2NT	INVITATIONAL to 3NT. Opener passes with 15 HCP's, else 3NT with 16-17 HCP's.
1NT	3NT	SIGN-OFF
1NT	4NT	FORCING - (Not Blackwood) - Is a quantitative

bid asking opener to pass with 15 HCP's and to bid 6NT with 16-17 HCP's.

1NT

5NT

FORCING - Opener bids 6NT with a minimum of 15 HCP s and 7NT with a maximum of 16-17 HCP 's.

INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 11

THE LEBENSOHL CONVENTION

A. PROBLEM: - Suppose the bidding has gone.

<u>Partner</u>	<u>RHO</u>	<u>You</u>	You hold either:	(a) XX XX KJ10XXX XXX
1NT	2H	???	Or	(b) AJX XX AQ10XXX XX

In (a) you would wish to bid 3D as a sign-off; in (b) you would wish to bid 3D to push towards either 3NT or else 5D. Obviously you cannot bid 3D with both (a) and (b) while, at the same time, having partner being capable of discerning the difference between the two types on circumstances.

Often an overcall by the opponents over your partner's opening 1NT will prevent you from making the response you would have otherwise made in a non-competitive auction; i.e., one without interference. For example, one may be precluded from bidding Stayman ("2C") due to the intervening overcall, and yet you might otherwise be interested in opener's Major suit holdings. Even natural bids, jumps, and NT raises become ambiguous after an overcall to partner's 1NT bid.

Obviously, several questions arise after such an overcall over your sides 1NT opening bid. Which bids by you are forcing and which are not? Which bids are invitational? Which bids are natural and which artificial? How do you bid Stayman and how do you affirm or deny a stopper in the enemy suit if you are seeking a NT final contract?

All of these questions and ambiguities are handled by the Lebensohl Convention.

B. THE LEBENSOHL CONVENTION: -

(a) **A double is for penalties (NOT NEGATIVE)**

Examples: 1NT 2S DBL. 1NT 2C DBL. 1NT 3H DBL.

(b) **ANY 2-level suit bid is natural and a sign-off**

Examples: 1NT 2D 2H 1NT 2C 2S 1NT 2H 2S

(c) **ANY 3-level. suit bid is natural and game forcing and shows at least a 5-card suit**

Examples: (1NT 2H 3C) (1NT 2S 3H) (1NT 2C 3D) (1NT 2D 3S)

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(d) **An ARTIFICIAL "2NT" response is forcing and demands opener to puppet "3C".**

Responder can pass if he has a weak hand in Clubs, or he can rebid as follows: If he bids a suit below the rank of the suit of the overcall, it is a sign-off; if he/she bids a suit above the rank of the enemy suit, it is invitational. In either last case scenarios, responder has at least a 5-card suit.

Examples: 1NT 2H "2NT" P
"3C" P P (A weak hand in Clubs)

1NT 2H "2NT" P
"3C" P 3D (Sign-off)

1NT 2S "2NT" P
"3C" P 3H (Sign-off)

1NT 2D "2NT" P
"3C" P 3H/3S (Invitational)

(e) **A 3NT response achieved via:**

- (1) A direct jump to 3NT over an enemy overcall shows the values for game, but denies a stopper in the opponent's suit.
- (2) "2NT" followed by a 3NT over partner's puppet "3C" bid shows value for game, plus a stopper in the opponent's suit.

(f) **Stayman Convention** is achieved in either of the following 2 ways:

- (1) A Direct cue-bid of the opponent's overcall suit is Stayman **without** a stopper in the enemy's bid suit. It is forcing to game unless the partnership fails to find a Major suit fit and additionally lacks a stopper for 3NT. In that rare case, opener bids 4 of his better Minor suit.
- (2) A "2NT" response followed by a cue-bid of the opponent's suit over partner's forced "3C" is also Stayman, but this time **with** a promised stopper in the enemy suit. Lacking a Major fit, a contract of 3NT is finalized.

C. THE DISADVANTAGE OF THE LEBENSOHL CONVENTION: - The machinery of the Lebensohl convention makes it easy to avoid a NT contract when neither side has a stopper in the enemy suit. Yet it in no way hinders the search for Major suit fits. In addition, it clearly defines which responses are non-forcing, and which are invitational or forcing. To gain all this the only thing you give up is the natural meaning of the 2NT bid by responder; i.e., it precludes the ability of responder to the

1NT opening bidder to invite to 3NT by responding 2NT. In this situation, when playing Lebensohl and, therefore, without the ability to invite, it is best to go directly to 3NT when holding invitational values.

Example: 1NT 2S "2NT" P (AQX KXX JXXX XXX)
 "3C" P 3NT (Showing a Spade Stopper)
 (or)
 1NT 2S 3NT (XXX AQX KJXX XXX)
 Showing game values with **NO** Spade Stopper)

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INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 11

THE LEBENSOHL CONVENTION

(Continued)

Previously we presented the use of **The Lebensohl Convention**, used by responder, responding to a 1 NT opening bid, following an interference by responder's RHO as seen in examples a-g.

	1NT						
a)		2H					
		2S		(To Play)			
<u>Examples:</u>		-----					
		1NT					
b)		2S					
		3H		(Game Force Showing 5 Pieces)			

		1NT					
c)		2H					
		3NT		(To Play evidencing 9 or more HCP's)			

		1NT					
d)		2S					
		"3S"		(Game Force - Stayman for Hearts and <u>without</u> a Spade Stopper)			

		1NT/"3C"					
e)		2H/P					
		"2NT"/3D		(Artificial - Forces "3C" - 3D to Play)			

		1NT/"3C"					
f)		2S/P					
		"2NT"/"3S"		(Game Force - Stayman for Hearts but <u>with</u> a Spade Stopper)			

	1NT
g)	2D
	Dbl. (For Penalties)

INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 11

THE LEBENSORHL CONVENTION
(Continued)

Note: In the above-referenced use of The Lebensohl Convention, Responder is responding with partner having evidenced 15-17 HCP's with a subsequent interference. An almost exact circumstance evolves, with the only exception being that the order of the events taking place are reversed, occurs as follows: West's partner has doubled in the direct position subsequent to a pre-emptive interfering opening weak 2-Bid.

<u>Example:</u>	2 (B)	
	???	Dbl. (Take-out)
	P	

All of the same meanings become available to this responding partner, responding to a strong Take-out Double by partner, subsequent to a weak-2 opening pre-emptive bid by the opponent.

<u>Examples:</u>		2B
a. (Pass = Penalties)	???	Dbl. (Take-out)
		P

		2D
b. (2H = To Play)	???	Dbl. (Take-out)
		P

		2H
c. (3S = Game Force) (with 5 Spades)	???	Dbl. (Take-out)
		P

		2H
d. (3H = Stayman Game) (Force with 4 Spades)	???	Dbl. (Take-out)
		P

		2S

INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE

LESSON 11

THE LEBENSOHL CONVENTION

(Continued)

Handling of Responses to NT or Stronger Bids By Partner
Subsequent to Interferences Both Before and After Partner's Bid

	<u>N</u>			<u>N</u>	
	1NT			Db1.	
<u>W</u> Dealer P	(1)	<u>E</u>		(2)	<u>E</u>
		2B			P
	<u>S</u>			<u>S</u>	
	???			???	
	(Lebensohl)			(Lebensohl)	
	<u>N</u>			<u>N</u>	
	1NT			1NT	
<u>W</u> Dealer 1C/1D	(3)	<u>E</u>		(4)	<u>E</u>
		P			P
	<u>S</u>			<u>S</u>	
	???			???	
	("Front of Card")			(All Bids are Natural)	
	("2C" is Stayman)			(Opener's Suit is Stayman & Transfers are Off)	
	(& Transfers are On)				
	<u>N</u>			<u>N</u>	
	2NT			2NT	
<u>W</u> Dealer 2D	(5)	<u>E</u>		(6)	<u>E</u>
		P			P
	<u>S</u>			<u>S</u>	
	???			???	
	("Front of Card")			(All Bids are Natural)	
	("3C" is Stayman)			(Opener's Suit is Stayman & Transfers are Off)	
	(& Transfers are On)				

INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 12

RESPONDING OVER PARTNER'S 1NT OPENING SUBSEQUENT TO THE OPPONENT'S
TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

A. CIRCUMSTANCE: - Your partner has opened the bidding with 1NT (15-17 HCP's). Your right-hand opponent (RHO) has overcalled with a "Take-out Double" evidencing an equivalent or better hand. How do you offer a response and under what circumstances? When is it desirable to act and when is it not? Which bids are natural and which are artificial? Are transfers still in effect; and lastly, how do you invoke the Stayman Convention looking for a 4-card Major suit fit if you desire to do so, while at the same time being able to bid Clubs as a natural alternative bid?

Partner has shown (on average) 16 HCP's as has the opponent's overcall which evidences an equivalent or better holding. Thus, the combination of opener plus your RHO is equivalent to approximately 32 HCP's leaving, at most, 8 HCP's available between you and your left-hand opponent (LHO), the partner to the doubler. Therefore, it is possible, but surely highly unlikely, in all but the most unusually distributed scenarios, that game is possible with your team's combined, at most, 24 HCP's.

The responder must also realize that if he/she does not have the majority of the missing approximate 8 HCP's, then the Doubler's partner does, and Doubler's responder is likely to pass the Take-out Double thereby converting it to a penalty scenario. Responder to the opening 1NT must, therefore, assume a posture that the less he/she has, the more he/she must attempt to save the opener from a probable impending disaster by steering the bidding to any 5-card suit if it is available. Otherwise he/she must pass. That's the way the cookie crumbles!!!!

B. RESPONSES:

(1) - All of the reason's that validate the worthiness for both the Stayman Convention and Transfer scenarios are still fully valid not-with-standing the intervening Take-out Double. Therefore, most players play what is called "FRONT OF CARD" understandings; namely, that:

- (a) "2C" = Stayman asking for a 4-card Major suit.
- (b) "2D" = A transfer to Hearts
- (c) "2H" = A transfer to Spades

(d) "2S" = A request for a Minor suit preference; namely, a rebid by opener of 3C if his/her Club suit is equal or longer than his/her Diamonds, or "2NT" if opener's Diamonds are longer than his/her Clubs. This third leg of a 3-way transfer scenario is called "MINOR SUIT STAYMEN".

- (e) "2NT" = An unlikely bid, since (1) the 1NT is already doubled, and (2) not enough HCP's exist for an invitation to game and is thus highly unlikely anyway.

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(2) Suppose, however, that the responder wishes to play the contract in 2C or 2D. He/she cannot bid 2C to play at 2C (for it will be rightfully construed by opener as Stayman), and cannot bid 2D to play at 2D (for it will be rightfully construed by opener as a transfer to Hearts). Not to worry !!!!!

(a) Responder simply says "REDOUBLE". This is a conventional response which, in this particular singular scenario of: (1NT Dbl. ReDbl.) requests of opener to "puppet" "2C" which can be either passed by responder if Clubs were the intended destination, or else responder will correct to 2D which must be passed by opener. Under no circumstances is this "Redouble" for added bonus points.

<u>Examples:</u>	XX	XXX	XX	AXXXXX	1NT	Dbl.	"ReDbl."	P
					"2C"	P	P	
	XX	KX	XXXXXXXX	XX	1NT	Dbl.	"ReDbl."	P
					"2C"	P	2D	

(3) Suppose, however, that most, or all, of the missing 8-10 HCP's are held within the hand of the partner to the opening 1NT bid, especially if his/her hand is balanced absent a predominance of any particular suit. In that scenario, the responder may elect to simply "PASS", awaiting the required mandated desperation bid of the Doubler's partner. The opening 1NT bidder will naturally pass, allowing the responder to the opening bid of 1NT to "Double" whatever bid player #4 makes in order not to let the doubled 1NT contract to stand.

Example: 1NT Dbl. P 2B
 P P Dbl.

Note: In such instance it is usually best for the defense to continue to lead trumps whenever possible in order to eliminate them

from play thereby converting the play of the hand back to NT where the defenses high card domination will most likely prevail.

Alternatively, if all the points are held within player #4's hand, player #4 may pass trapping the 1NT bidder into a Doubled 1NT non-makeable contract, especially since 15-17 HCP's are located behind the opening 1NT bidder, diminishing his values while, at the same time, enhancing the value of the 15-17 HCP's in the hand of the Doubler who sits behind the opener's 1NT position.

Example: 1NT Dbl. P P

In such instances, since the partner of the opener took no defensive action (obviously devoid of any 5-card suit to go along with his 0-1 HCP's), the opener is oft times better to bid his/her 5-card Minor suit if it be present. within his/her 1NT distribution. If not, watch the slaughter.

INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE
LESSON 13
PRE-EMPTIVE BIDDING
"SUIT QUALITY TEST" AND "THE RULE OF 2*3*4"

Many duplicate players pre-empt the bidding with a weak 2-, 3-, 4-, or 5-level bid with the enthusiasm of a suicidal maniac playing a game of Russian Roulette, oft times with a pistol loaded only with "blanks". For the duplicate player, "blank cylinders" represent probable zeros on the score recap sheet totals; and their use denies added enjoyment to the game for both the user and his/her partner, while enriching the opposition.

Accordingly, it is with a degree of appropriateness that definitive methods of some fashion and logic must be employed so as to determine which suits are appropriate for a weak pre-emptive bid, and what level should be considered as a reasonable one to place the pre-emptive call. Obviously, vulnerability, sizing-up of the opponents, fortitude or lack thereof, whether partner has previously passed or not, position at the table, outside Major suit holdings, and many other factors have some relevance in this matter; but in general, two methods are suggested as the main considerations which should guide one's decision in this matter. They are: (1) suit quality, and (2) The Rule of 2-3-4. If these two guiding factors offer a variant preference, one should perhaps consider some compromise (*) between their differing guidance.

A. SUIT QUALITY: - The level of any pre-empt should not exceed the level equivalent to the suit quality of the pre-emptive suit holding; i.e., a bidding level equal to the summation of the number of cards held within that suit + the number of honors held within that same pre-emptive suit (only Jack or above are considered).

EXAMPLES:

AKXXXX	= 6 + 2 = 8	(Pre-emptive 2-bid is appropriate)
AQXXXX	= 7 + 2 = 9	(Pre-emptive 3-bid is appropriate)
AKJXXXX	= 7 + 3 = 10	(Pre-emptive 4-bid is appropriate)
KXXXXXXXX	= 7 + 1 = 8	(Pre-emptive 2-bid is appropriate)
10XXXXXXXX	= 8 + 0 = 8	(Pre-emptive 2-bid is appropriate)
AKQXXX	= 6 + 3 = 9	(Pre-emptive 3-bid is appropriate)

The suit quality test can be utilized singularly as a general rule in establishing a guideline as to the level of reasonableness of any contemplated pre-emptive bid, and is especially useful if one desires a rigid partnership understanding so as to only allow for "**structured**" or "**disciplined pre-empts**". Some players desiring to have an even more structured framework to their pre-emptive calls insist on having two of the top three honors in any suit holding given a pre-emptive consideration.

B. THE RULE OF 2-3-4: - When opting to pre-empt the bidding, either by an opening pre-emptive bid or by a pre-emptive jump overcall, it may become important for your partner to know exactly how strong or weak your pre-empt bid was. If the hand truly belonged to the opponents, then your partner has little interest other than to experience, with you, the outcome of your blockage attempt upon the opponents. If, on the other hand, your pre-empt bid finds your partner with the balance of the missing high cards, then it would be convenient, and indeed, extremely valuable for your partner to know the exact strength of your pre-emptive call without

first seeking further information. By such means, the partner of the pre-emptive call can gauge whether or not a game try is even justified in exploration before the attempt is even begun.

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Some superficial attempts to identify the quality of pre-emptive bids based upon the number of cards held within the suit that is bid (at least 6 for a pre-empt at the 2-level, 7 or more at the 3-level; etc.), a high card strength of 5-11 HCP's for a pre-emptive 2-bid and 7-11 HCP's for a 3-bid, or the suit-quality test as described above, are, at best, too vague in their attempt to qualify the strength of the bid and virtually incapable of ease of further clarification to a partner interested in pursuing a furtherance of the pre-emptive call or a possible game attempt. Conventions like a forcing 2NT bid asking for a feature (Ace or King) outside the pre-emptive suit, or the Ogust Convention (1-2, 1-2-3), and its variations are better than having no standardization at all, but notice, they are mostly effective over a pre-emptive 2-bid and not one made at a higher bidding level; i.e., at the 3-level and beyond.

The Rule of 2-3-4 serves to present a standardization, yet aggressive unstructured method upon which to base all pre-emptive calls, **at the 3-level or higher**, and is rooted upon losing trick count coupled with a variance based upon the relative vulnerabilities of the teams at play. It allows the partnership a standardization basis upon which partner, who happens to have a strong hand opposite the pre-empt by partner, can recover and better estimate the value of the combined partnership holdings in an evaluation as to whether or not to proceed toward a potential game or slam contract. When contemplating a pre-emptive call, holding at least 7 pieces in the suit in which one is prepared to pre-empt, the would-be pre-empter computes a 2-step process in order to determine the level of his pre-empt and once computed, the pre-emptive call can be understood by the partner as to how strong or how weak the hand chosen for the pre-emptive bid was in all actuality; i.e., just how many tricks the pre-emptive bidder anticipates going down in his/her sacrifice attempt. The two steps are as follows:

1. The number of presumed winning tricks is computed by the bidder by subtracting his losing trick count from 13.
2. To this number of winning trick count, the would-be pre-empter adds either 2-3-or 4 additional tricks he/she is willing to go down based upon the relative vulnerabilities as follows:

Notice: This technic is fairly aggressive in that it presumes that one trick will be found in partner's hand for the sacrifice to give up fewer points than would be given up by simply allowing the opponents to secure their rightfully-presumed game contract.

- a. Unfavorable vulnerability - Red (V) vs. White (NV) = An anticipated 2-Trick Set
- b. Equal vulnerability - Red (V) vs. Red (V) or White (NV) vs. White (NV)
= A 3-Trick Set
- c. Favorable vulnerability - White (NV) vs. Red (V) = A 4-Trick Set

EXAMPLES:

AJXXXXX X KXX XX (Vul. vs. Vul.) = Pre-empt a 3-Bid
KJXXXXXX XX AX X (Not Vul. vs. Vul.) = Pre-empt a 4-Bid
AXXXXX XXX KXX A (Vul. vs. Not Vul.) = Pre-empt a 2-Bid

Note: Once a partnership has agreed to utilize this method of determination for the pre-emptive level decision-making process, then the partner of the pre-emptive bid can use this information to either (a) calculate how much additionally to further the pre-emptive attempt, or (b) whether or not to try for game

or slam based upon his/her losing trick count when combined with that of the pre-emptive bidder's presumed hand and its concomitant losing tricks based upon the Rule of 2-3-4.

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INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE

LESSON 14

WHEN IS A HAND GOOD ENOUGH TO OPEN?

1. Most bridge players utilize **high-card point count** (HCP) plus distributional count to necessarily total an approximate 13-14 cumulative count in order to qualify for a safe, valid, disciplined and productive opening bid.

EXAMPLES: AKXX KXX QJXX XX (Open 1D) AQXXX KQXX X QX (Open 1S)

2. Some utilize the **suit quality test** (SQT), (The summation of the number of cards within the projected suit to be bid added to the number of honors within the suit) the numerical summation of which must be equivalent to or exceed the number of winning tricks to which one is committed by their proposed projected bid. Most recognize that the suit quality test is best utilized when deciding if a suit qualifies for an overcall, or when considering a weak pre-emptive opening call.

EXAMPLES:

- (a) AKXXX QXX X KXXX (Open 1S)
- (b) KQXX QXXX KX QXX (Do Not Open)

- (c) XX AQXXX AXXX XX (Overcall 1H)
- (d) JXXXX KXX X AXXX (Do Not Overcall 1S)

- (e) AQXXXX XX X XXXX (Pre-Empt 2S)
- (f) JXXXXX XX AOX XX (Do Not Pre-Empt 2S)

3. Some look towards **losing trick count** (LTC) which by rights is not fully valid until a suit fit between the partners has been achieved and is of little value and relatively meaningless in No Trump contracts. Using this technic, one looks for any hand with 7 or fewer losing tricks to qualify for an opening one of a suit.

EXAMPLES: AKXXX AX QX XXXX (Open 1S) KJXXX AXX KXX XX (Do Not Open)

4. Still others, in borderline situations, stay clear of opening any suit which would be an embarrassment should the partnership wind up on defense and partner were to hypothetically lead towards that holding; i.e., only open a **suit which can justifiably be lead into on defense**.

EXAMPLES: XXXXXX AQX AQX X (Do Not Open 1S) AKXXX XXX AJX XX (Open 1S)

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All of the above indicators are helpful, and when used in combination of two or more criteria towards the decision as to whether or not to open any particular hand, assist the would-be opener in making a winning decision. **NO SINGLE INDICATOR GUARANTEES THE VALIDITY OF ANY BORDERLINE OPENING SCENARIO.** In addition, those factors governing whether or not one should open, no matter what single or multiple criteria are used, must be altered dependent upon which of the four seats about the table one occupies. The best criteria, seats one through four, are next presented.

1st (Dealer) or 2nd Position Opening Criteria

The RULE OF 20: This rule states that a hand qualifies for an opening bid of one of a suit, in the first or second position, if the summation of HCP's plus the total number of cards in the two longest suits equals or exceeds the number 20. **This Rule of 20 is applicable *only* for use in the first or second seat.** It should **not** be used in third or fourth seat decision-making process regarding opening the bidding under any circumstances.

EXAMPLES: KXXXX QXX AQXX X (20) (Open 1 S)
XX AXXXX AKXX X (21) (Open 1 H)
KXXX AXQ QXXX QX (19) (Do not open)

Remember, however, the weaker a partnership allows itself to open, the more on guard opener must be to offset his/her partner's responsive actions, and, likewise, the more cautious responder must be in responding. Should opening partner decide to double for penalties in a competitive auction, for example, opener might decide to pull partner's double by bidding one level higher in the agreed-upon suit rather than sit for the questionable penalty double based, in part, on the pre-supposed undervalued opening bid. In a similar context, if invited to game, opener must turn down the invitation evidencing his/her holding which, in reality, is weaker than pre-supposed by partner.

Notes:

1. All Hands having 13 HCP's or more will automatically satisfy the Rule of twenty since they can have no fewer than 7 additional points resulting from seven (7) cards in two of the suits held if the hand (worst case scenario) is evenly divided 4-3-3-3.
2. Most hands holding 12 HCP's (exclusive of a 4-3-3-3 distribution) will also qualify under the Rule of twenty, for exclusive of the 4-3-3-3 scenario they will hold no fewer than 8 additional points resulting from the count of the cards in the two longest held suits.

3. All 11 HCP hands (see the example below) which have a 6-card suit will satisfy both the ability to open under the rule of twenty calculation, but, they will also qualify as to the credentials necessary to open a weak 2-bid. In this instance it is recommended that if the 6-card suit be Spades, one would fare best, since it be the controlling suit, to open 1 Spade. If the suit is Clubs, one cannot open a weak 2C bid because it would be perceived as a

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strong call, and should not open 3C since the suit is only a 6-card and not a 7-card suit. One should, therefore, open 1C with intent to rebid 2C at opener's turn to rebid. If the suit is either Hearts or Diamonds, however, it is calculated to statistically be best to open a weak 2H or 2D opening call.

AKXXXX AXX XX XX (Open 1 Spade)
 XX KJX XX AKXXXX (Open 1C with intent to rebid 2C)
 XX AQXXXX KQX XX (Open 2H)
 XXX KJX AKXXXX X (Open 2D)

4th Position Opening Criteria

The Rule of 15: In 4th position relative to the dealer; i.e., there has already been three successive passes by the dealer and the next two players, this player holds a unique distinction in that he/she holds singular power as to whether the hand gets passed out or not, and whether or not any score, plus or minus, by either side is created. In this seat alone, one should use **The Rule of 15**. This rule states that a hand qualifies for an opening bid of one of a suit, in the fourth (last) position, if the summation of HCP's plus the total number of cards in the Spade suit equals or exceeds the number 15. Since Spades is the controlling suit, the more physical Spades one owns, the less likely the opponents can enter the same auction competitively at the same level opener would be willing to bid.

The Rule of 15 is applicable *only* for use in the last seat. It should **not** be used in the first, second, or third seat decision-making process as to whether or not to open the bidding.

EXAMPLES: XX QXXX AQXX AXX (14) (Do not Open)
 XXX QXX AQXX AXX (15) (Open 1D)

3rd Position Opening Criteria

Third seat opening criteria, like the other three seats, is unique unto itself. One must remember that it is generally, universally, considered feasible to lower the point count requirements for 3rd seat openings of one of a suit. Accordingly, it is important for the partner of the 3rd seat would-be opener (the previously passing 2nd seat player) to be able to ascertain whether or not the 3rd seat opener has a full opening count, else a lighter than full count, especially if the 2nd seated player has a near opening count himself/herself. It is, therefore, recommended that if one does indeed choose to open light in the 3rd seat, one must only open with a hand that can be passed by any bid made by Responder, and that if the 3rd seat opener has a full opening count, that he/she promises a rebid to verify same.

EXAMPLES: X JXXX AQXX AXX (Do not Open - One cannot afford to

pass a likely Spade Response from partner, yet if opener were to rebid 1NT, he/she would evidence a full opening count by this rule, therefore pass and do not open.)

XXX JXX AQX AXX (Open 1C - With this holding, one can clearly afford to pass 1D, 1H, 1S, 1NT or even a 2C response from partner.)

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INTERMEDIATE-2 BRIDGE

LESSON 15

LOSING TRICK COUNT

Accurate bidding is one of the secrets to success in the game of bridge. The **Losing Trick Count (LTC)** method of hand evaluation greatly increases one's ability to more accurately place any contract. The LTC is a totally different method which augments the HCP count method of assessing the number of tricks a partnership is likely to win. Take the following as an example: Most players, following a 4 Spade rebid by opening partner would pass out this cold 6S, 25 HCP hand.

<u>Opener</u> (Partner)	<u>Responder</u> (You)
1D	1S
4S	??
AQJX	K10XXXX
XX	X
AKJXX	XX
KX	AXXX

One must **not** envisage the **LTC** as **replacing** point count. It is used in **coordination with point count** in order to elicit a more accurate guide as to the potential of the partnership's combined holding. When considering using the **LTC**, one must consider the following constraints:

- 1) It is **not** applicable when considering a No Trump Contract.
- 2) It is to be used **only after** a trump fit has been established.
- 3) It is quite unsuitable for misfit hands where no fit exists.

The LTC Formula

- 1) Count your losers
- 2) Add Partner's losers
- 3) Deduct this total from 24
- 4) The answer is the number of tricks a partnership can expect to win

<u>Opener</u> (Partner)	<u>Opponent #2</u>	<u>Responder</u> (You)	<u>Opponent #1</u>
1S	1NT	P	P
2H	P	3H	P

AKXXX		X	
AKXX	(6 Losers)	JXXXXX	(8 Losers)
XX		QXXXX	
XX		X	

The **LTC** does **not** guarantee that one will, in fact, make the number of anticipated tricks. It represents the number of tricks one will win most of the time assuming the suits break normally, and half of one's potential finesses work. Calculations within the **LTC** require two (2) stages. They are as follows:

1. CALCULATING YOUR LOSERS

- 1) Count losers **only** in the first three cards of each suit. The 4th, 5th, 6th, etc. cards in any suit are taken as winners.
- 2) With three or more cards in any suit, count the A,K, and Q as a winners; anything lower as a loser.
- 3) With two cards in any suit, count the A and K as winners; anything lower is a loser.
- 4) With one card in any suit, count the A as a winner; anything lower is a loser.
- 5) **There are never more than three losers in any suit.** There are never more losers in a suit than the number of cards held within that suit.
- 6) **An unguarded Q (Ex: QXX) is considered as one-half a loser;** a guarded or supported Q (Ex: QJX or AQX or KQX) is not counted as a loser; i.e., any Queen should be counted as a winner if it is supported by another honor.
- 7) **As ones HCP's increase, the losers decrease.** As ones HCP's decrease, the losers increase.
- 8) The more unbalanced the hand, the fewer the losers. The more balanced the hand, the more the losers.

2. ASSESSING PARTNER'S LOSERS

- 1) Partner's losers may be determined through knowledge of partner's strength as revealed through the bidding.

If you can tell how strong partner's hand is, one can calculate his/her losers.

The basis is that a minimum opening hand is equivalent to seven (7) losers.

- 2) A simple **enumeration of partner's losers** based upon strength would be:
 - a) Well below a sound opening bid, support for your opening bid with 6-10 HCP's, a constructive raise with 8-9 HCP's = **9 Losers.**
 - b) Just below a normal opening with 10-12 HCP's, a limit raise with 10-11 HCP's, A weak 2-bid = **8 Losers.**
 - c) A sound minimum opening bid with 13-15 HCP's, a take-out double = **7 Losers.**

- d) A strong opening bid with 16-18 HCP's, An opening 1NT with 15-17 HCP's = **6 Losers.**
- e) A very strong opening bid evidenced by a jump-shift rebid holding 19-21 HCP's = **5 Losers.**
- f) An opening strong "2C" holding 22+ HCP's = **4 Losers.**

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Why deduct the total losers between both hands from 24? Since the maximum number of losers you count in any one suit is three (3); and since there are as many as four (4) suits in each hand, partner's and yours; $3 \times 4 \times 2 = 24$. The LTC operates by deducting the actual losses from the maximum possible total. Therefore:

$$\text{LTC} = \text{The maximum possible losers (24)} - \text{Actual losers} = \text{Tricks Expected.}$$

If partner opens and your hand has seven (7) losers, game is likely if a fit can be found. If partner opens and you have five (5) losers, slam potential exists if a trump fit is found.

The above is a broad overlook at the LTC. It is based upon a generalized raw count as indicated in the above-listed reference examples. Adjustments must be made in order to be even more accurate; such as adjustments and refinements to super-trump fits, the quality of trump support, presence or absence of controls and cover-cards, just to name a few. A furtherance of understanding of the LTC can be achieved by reading Ron Klinger's "*the Modern Losing Trick Count*", and Marty Bergen's "*Points Schmoints*".

Sample Hands

(1)	(2)	(3)
K108643 7 43 A842	AQ75 106 AKJ62 K9	AQ876 K952 73 8642 76 A93
1D, 1S, 4S, 6S	1S, 2S, 4S	AQ876 973 AQJ 65 K952 Q86 K76 KJ4
		1S, 2S, P

(4)	(5)	(6)
AQ852 AQ2 865 98	K7643 8 72 A7432	K864 K4 AJ83 754
1S, 4S	AQ973 A6 2 AK62	AJ83 754
	P, 1S, 3S, 6S	AJ83 754
		AXXXXX XX X XXXX KQX AKXX AXXX XX
		1NT, "2H", 2S, 3S, 4S

(7)
KJ72 A865

K7	J54
Q103	J72
A983	KQ2

1C, 1S, 2S, P