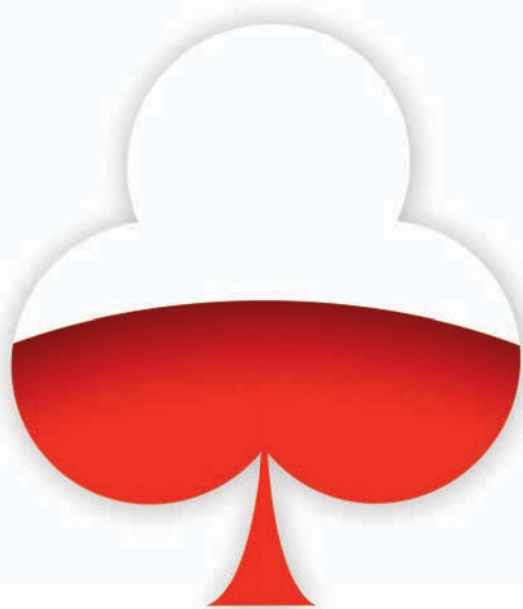




KRZYSZTOF JASSEM



**POLISH CLUB
INTERNATIONAL**

Krzysztof Jassem

Polish Club International

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Preface

The world does not stand still. Bridge systems are no different. In 2005 I published a book “WJ 2005 – a modern version of Polish Club”.

What was modern 8 years ago, is prehistoric now. **Polish Club International** absorbs modern solutions from other systems and puts them into the frame of a “two-way” 1♣ opening.

The book is intended for two groups of readers:

- those interested in Polish Club
- those who want to get better understanding of trendy bidding treatments.

The book is divided into two parts:

- 1) Polish Club International Standard; this is a result of an Internet survey among Polish Club users
- 2) Polish Club International Pro; this part describes modern bidding tendencies approved all over the world – systematized in one cohesive system.

Two features distinguish this book from other manuals on bridge systems and conventions:

- 1) Quizzes – every new piece of information ends with a quiz. Cover the right column of a quiz table before finding your answer to the question given in the left column.
- 2) Slam bidding – the conventions are explained by showing examples of mistakes made by bridge champions.

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Polish Club Survey

The questions posed in the survey are listed below. For each question, the solution chosen by the majority of users is indicated.

Survey Questions and Answers

Openings

1. 1♦ Opening
 - a. 4+ cards
 - b. Usually 5+ cards – 4 only with a 3-suited hand or 5 clubs

PCI Standard: (B) 1♦ opening is generally 5+ cards

2. 1NT Opening
 - a. 5 card major allowed
 - b. 5 card major not allowed

PCI Standard: (A) 1NT opening allow a 5-crđ major

3. 4♣ and 4♦ Openings
 - a. Natural
 - b. Show a strong hand with solid ♥/♠

PCI Standard: (A) 4♣/4♦ openings are natural

Responses

4. 2NT response to 1♣ opening
 - a. Nonforcing: 11-12 no 4 card major
 - b. GF: 13+ no 4 card major

PCI Standard: (A) 2NT response to 1♣ opening is nonforcing

Polish Club Survey

5. 3NT response to 1♣ opening
- a. Does Not Exist – would not allow intelligent auctions over strong 1♣ variant
 - b. 13-15 no 4 card major

PCI Standard: (B) 3NT response to 1♣ is allowed and shows 13-15 no 4 card major

6. 2♥/2♠ responses to 1♣ opening
- a. Natural, strong
 - b. Artificial – e.g. used to transfer NT declarership to the strong hand

PCI Standard: (A) 2♥/2♠ responses to 1♣ are natural

7. Over a 1♦ opening, a jump to 3♦ is:
- a. Preemptive (up to 7 HCP)
 - b. Constructive (7-9 HCP)

PCI Standard: (A) Jump to 3♦ is preemptive

8. 2♥/2♠ response to 1♦ opening
- a. Natural, strong
 - b. 5-4 majors minimum/invite (Reverse Flannery)

PCI Standard: (A) 2♥/2♠ response are natural, strong

9. 1NT response to 1 of a major opening
- a. Nonforcing
 - b. Forcing, may contain 3fit limit raise

PCI Standard: (A) a 1NT response to 1 of a major is non-forcing

10. 2/1 response (e.g. 1♠-2♣)
- a. Game-forcing
 - b. Game-forcing except if suit rebid after a weak rebid by opener

PCI Standard: (B) a 2 over 1 response is not forcing to game

11. 2♥ response to 1♠
- a. Game-forcing
 - b. Game-forcing except if suit rebid after weak rebid by opener

PCI Standard: (B) the 2 over 1 response is not forcing to game

12. 2NT response to 1♥/1♠
- a. Game-forcing raise
 - b. Limit raise

PCI Standard: (B) 2NT over 1♥/1♠ is a limit raise

13. Over a 1M opening, a jump to 3♣/3♦ is:
- a. Game-forcing natural, good 6+crd suit, slammish
 - b. Artificial raise

PCI Standard: (A) A jump to 3♣/3♦ over 1M is natural and game-forcing

14. Over a 1M opening,
- a. We play one splinter
 - b. We play splinters and mini-splinters

PCI Standard: (B) Over 1M we play splinters and mini-splinters

15. Over a 1N opening
- a. 2N is a transfer to diamonds
 - b. 2N is natural invite

PCI Standard: (B) Over an opening 1N, 2N is natural

16. Over a 2♣ (Precision) opening
- a. 2N is natural
 - b. 2N is a transfer to 3♣

PCI Standard: (B) Over a 2♣ opening 2N is a transfer to 3♣

Further bidding

17. After e.g. $1\clubsuit-1\heartsuit-1N$

- a. We play one asking bid: $2\clubsuit$ (Magister)
- b. We play two-way checkback: $2\clubsuit$ and $2\diamondsuit$

PCI Standard: (A) We play one asking bid $2\clubsuit$ (Magister)

18. After a major response to $1\clubsuit$ and *Odwrotka* ($2\diamondsuit$) we rebid

- a. 44-55-66 scheme
- b. Another method, in which $3\clubsuit$ and $3\diamondsuit$ show 5 card

suits

PCI Standard: (A) We play the 44-55-66 scheme over *Odwrotka*

19. Over e.g. $1\diamondsuit-1\spadesuit-2\diamondsuit$

- a. $2\heartsuit$ is seminatural
- b. $2\heartsuit$ is the relay to $2\clubsuit$

PCI Standard: (A) $2\heartsuit$ is seminatural

20. Over $1\heartsuit-1\spadesuit-2\heartsuit$

- a. 2N by responder is forcing, asking for a singleton or $\spadesuit$ fit
- b. 2N is nonforcing

PCI Standard: (B) $1\heartsuit-1\spadesuit-2\heartsuit-2N$ is nonforcing

21. Over $1\heartsuit-1\spadesuit-2\diamondsuit$

- a. 2N is forcing
- b. 2N is nonforcing

PCI Standard: (B) $1\heartsuit-1\spadesuit-2\diamondsuit-2N$ is nonforcing

22. $1\diamondsuit-2\clubsuit-2N$ shows:

- a. 3-suiter with a singleton club
- b. Strong balanced hand with 6 diamonds

PCI Standard: (A) $1\diamondsuit-2\clubsuit-2N$ shows a 3-suited hand with singleton club

23. After a 1N opening and Jacoby transfer, a new suit (e.g. 1N-2♥-2♠-3♣) is

- a. Gameforcing
- b. Not gameforcing

PCI Standard: (A) Over a 1N opening and Jacoby transfer, a new suit is forcing to game

Slam bidding

24. After Blackwood

- a. We use 0314 (5♣ = 0 or 3 keycards)
- b. We use 1430 (5♣ = 1 or 4 keycards)

PCI Standard: (B) We use 1430 responses to Blackwood

25. The next step after the keycard response

- a. Asks for Kings
- b. Asks for the Queen of trumps

PCI Standard: (B) The next step after the keycard response asks for the Queen of trumps

26. To help find slam

- a. We use Exclusion RKC
- b. We do not use Exclusion RKC

PCI Standard: (A) We use Exclusion RKC

Handling Interference

27. Over an enemy double of our partner's 1♣ opening

- a. 1♦ is negative without 3 clubs
- b. 1♦ is a natural response

PCI Standard: Over a double of 1♣, 1♦ is a natural response

28. After an enemy takeout double of our 1-level opening, a new suit at the 1-level (e.g. 1♦-[X]-1♥/♠)

- a. Is forcing for one round
- b. Is nonforcing

PCI Standard: (A) After an enemy takeout double a new suit at the 1-level is forcing

29. After an enemy takeout double of our 1-level opening, a new suit at the 2-level (e.g. 1♥-[X]-2♣)

- a. Is forcing for one round
- b. Is weak with a 6+crd suit (the longer the suit, the weaker it could be)

PCI Standard: (B) After a takeout double a new suit at the 2-level is nonforcing

30. After an enemy takeout double of partner's 1♥/1♠

- a. 1N is natural
- b. 1N shows a good 3fit raise (7-10 HCP)

PCI Standard: (B) After a takeout double of partner's 1♥/1♠, 1N shows a good raise

31. After an enemy takeout double of partner's 1♥/1♠, a single jump in a new suit (e.g. 1♥-[X]-3♣) is

- a. Fit-showing
- b. Natural, preemptive

PCI Standard: (A) After a takeout double of partner's 1♥/1♠ opening, a single jump in a new suit is fit-showing (shows a good side suit and fit for partner)

32. After an enemy takeout double of partner's 1♥/1♠, a double jump in a new suit (e.g. 1♥-[X]-4♣) is

- a. Fit-showing
- b. Splinter

PCI Standard: (B) After a takeout double of partner's 1♥/1♠ opening, a double jump in a new suit is a splinter

33. After an enemy overcall of partner's 1♥/1♠, a double jump in a new suit (e.g. 1♥-[1♠]-4♣) is

- a. Fit-showing
- b. Splinter

PCI Standard: (B) After an overcall of partner's 1♥/1♠ opening, a double jump in a new suit is a splinter

34. After an enemy overcall of partner's 1 of a major suit opening

- a. 2NT is invitational raise, cuebid is gameforcing raise
- b. 2NT is gameforcing raise, cuebid is invitational raise

PCI Standard: (B) After an enemy overcall of partner's 1 of a major suit opening, 2NT is a gameforcing raise

35. After an enemy overcall, a new suit at the 2-level is

- a. Nonforcing
- b. Forcing for 1 round

PCI Standard: (A) After an enemy overcall, a new suit at the 2-level is nonforcing

36. Over an enemy double of our 1N opening

- a. We bid naturally
- b. We ignore the double, systems on

PCI Standard: (B) Over an enemy double of our 1N opening, systems are on

37. Over partner's opening and an enemy overcall at the 1-level (e.g. 1♣-[1♥]-?)

- a. We transfer to the majors
- b. We do not use transfers

PCI Standard: (B) We do not play transfers over opponents' 1-level overcalls

Defensive Bidding

38. After our overcall, a new suit advance at the 2-level is

- a. Forcing
- b. Nonforcing

PCI Standard: (B) A new suit advance at the 2-level is nonforcing

39. Over the enemy 1♦/1♥ opening and partner's overcall at the 1-level

- a. 2♣ promises a fit, and opponent's suit is forcing without a fit (Drury Fit)
- b. Opponent's suit promises a fit, and 2♣ is forcing without a fit

PCI Standard: (A) Over the opponent's opening we play Drury Fit

40. Over the enemy 1NT opening

- a. 2♣ is for the majors, and 2♦ shows one major (Multi-Landy)
- b. 2♣ is for any 1-suiter, and 2♦ shows the majors

PCI Standard: (A) Vs NT 2♣ is for the majors

Part 1 – PCI Standard

Summary of Opening Bids

Opening	Description	Notes
1♣	1) 12-14 bal 2) 15+, with ♣ 3) Any 18+ HCP hand	2) Stronger than 2♣ opening 3) Including GF hands
1♦	1) 12-17 5+♦ 2) 12-17 4441 with 4♦ 3) 12-14, 5♣ - 4♦	
1♥, 1♠	12-17, 5+crds	
1N	15-17, may have 5-crd major	
2♣	Precision	12(11)-14(15), 6+♣ or 5 with a 4-crd major
2♦	6-10 Multi	Weak two in one major
2♥	6-10, 5♥ and a 5-crd any suit	
2♠	6-10, 5♠ and a 5-crd minor	
2N	6-10, 5+5+ minors	
3 of a suit	Preempt	Seven card suit
3N	Gambling	SOL 7crd minor, nothing else
4♣, 4♦	natural	

Uncontested Auctions

The uncontested auctions will be discussed as follows:

- Each opening in turn, starting with 1♦
- 1♣ opening
- Constructive bidding conventions

1♦ Opening

Definition

1♦ has the following meanings:

- 1) 5♦, 12-17
- 2) 4441 with 4♦, 12-17
- 3) 4♦-5♣, 12-14

QUIZ. Choose the right opening bid with the given hand:	
♠KJT8 ♥32 ♦AQJ65 ♣32	1♦. If all the HCP are in the long suits, you can open a little light.
♠T754 ♥KQ ♦J7654 ♣AQ	Pass. Same reasoning, in reverse.
♠AQ ♥J542 ♦KJ876 ♣KJ	1N. With a balanced 15-17 HCP hand with 5♦ we open 1N. And this is a balanced hand (look at the honors in ♠ and ♣)!
♠J3 ♥32 ♦AQJ43 ♣AQJ3	1♦. 1NT may well preempt the majors. But in this case, we have no major stoppers.
♠J2 ♥32 ♦AQJ3 ♣AQT32	1♦. And then clubs (12-15).

QUIZ (continued). Choose the right opening bid with the given hand:	
♠K32 ♥3 ♦AQJ3 ♣AQT32	1♣. With 15+ HCP we open 1♣, and then rebid ♣.
♠3 ♥AQT3 ♦AQJ3 ♣KT32	1♦. 4441 with 4 diamonds.
♠AQJ3 ♥AQT3 ♦3 ♣KT32	1♣. 4441, but without 4 diamonds.
♠32 ♥A873 ♦AQJ3 ♣K32	1♣. We do not open 1♦ with 4 diamonds in a balanced hand.

1♥ and 1♠ Responses

"1♥ and 1♠ responses are natural. They show at least 7 HCP and at least 4 cards in the bid suit."

This is taught as elementary bridge. If you are satisfied with this, fine; but if you are itching for a newer treatment, refer to Part2. PCI Pro.

Further bidding over a 1M response

1♦ 1♥(1♠)
2♣

Opener has one of two hands:

- 1) 5♦-4♣ 12-17
- 2) 5♣-4♦ 12-14

With 15+ HCP and 5♣-4♦ we open 1♣ and rebid clubs.

Uncontested Auctions. 1♦ Opening

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♦	1♥
2♣	?
What do you bid with these hands?	
♠KJT8 ♥QJ65 ♦J65 ♣J2	2♦. Negative preference.
♠KJ8 ♥QJ65 ♦J65 ♣J32	2♦. With equal length prefer diamonds (partner is more likely to have longer ♦ than ♣)
♠K84 ♥QJ643 ♦J6 ♣J32	Pass. Hearts are too weak to rebid. Even if partner has 5♦ and 4♣, 2♣ does not have to be a worse contract than 2♦. And it certainly will be better if partner has 5♣.
♠KJT8 ♥QJ65 ♦K4 ♣JT3	2N. Invite to 3N.
♠A65 ♥QJ95 ♦QT65 ♣Q3	3♦. Invite with a diamond fit. Maybe partner can declare 3N from their hand.
♠AJ4 ♥AJ876 ♦AQ3 ♣J2	2♠. Fourth suit forcing. You don't yet know which suit to play in.

Bidding over 4th suit forcing

1♦	1♠
2♣	2♥

In the above sequence the 4th suit asks among other things where opener's 5 card suit is. We assume that with 5 clubs opener will rebid clubs. All other bids deny 5 clubs.

QUIZ	
You	Partner
1♦	1♠
2♣	2♥
?	
What do you bid with these hands?	
♠Q4 ♥53 ♦KQ986 ♣AQ43	2♠. You may also have a 3-crd fit with minimum strength. Partner may further ask with 2N. We would then rebid 3N to complete our shape.
♠J32 ♥3 ♦KQ986 ♣AQ43	2♠. Partner is not sure whether you have 3 spades. She may ask with 2N, over which you will rebid 3♦.
♠J32 ♥3 ♦KQ98 ♣AQ432	2♠. Over an eventual 2N you will rebid 3♣.
♠KJ2 ♥3 ♦KQ986 ♣AQJ3	3♠. Nice hand with 3♠ and 5♦ (with 5♣ you would have opened 1♣).
♠94 ♥Q5 ♦KQ986 ♣AQ43	2N. When you showed 9 cards in 2 suits, the doubleton Queen should be considered a stopper.
♠94 ♥53 ♦KQ98 ♣AQJ87	3♣. 5 clubs. Number of diamonds unknown.
♠94 ♥5 ♦KQ985 ♣AQJ87	3♣. 5 clubs. Number of diamonds unknown.
♠9 ♥J54 ♦KQ985 ♣AQJ8	2N. Assume the tripleton Jack will keep hearts “under control”.
♠A4 ♥53 ♦KQ985 ♣AQJ8	3♥. Your response does not show hearts (with 4 hearts over 1♠ rebid 1N), but rather shows a strong hand without a heart stopper!

Uncontested Auctions. 1♦ Opening

Continuations over a 1♥ or 1♠ response

Here let's go over some common sequences over a 1♥ or 1♠ response:

1♦	1♥/1♠	
2♣/2♦	2N	= nonforcing

1♦	1♠	
2♠	2N	= asking for distribution – partner shows a side triplet

1♦	1♠	
3♠	2N	= asking for the shortness – partner bids the suit of the shortness or retreats to spades

1♦	1♥	
3♥	3♠	= asking for the shortness – partner bids the suit of the shortness or 3N to show the spade shortness, or retreats to hearts

1♦	1♥/1♠	
2N	3♦	= nonforcing, all other suit bids at the 3-level are forcing

1♦	1♥/1♠	
3♣	3♦	= nonforcing, all other suit bids at the 3-level are forcing

1♦	1♥/1♠	
3N		= solid diamonds and a stopper in a side suit not bid by partner

If you are interested in more advanced treatments after a 1M response to 1♦ I invite you to read up on it in Part2. PCI Pro.

1N Response

A 1N response shows 7-10 HCP in a balanced hand with no 4 card major. With unbalanced hands we have over 1♦ alternatives in the form of 2♦ and 3♦ (see below).

Continuations over a 1N Response

Further bidding over a 1N response is natural. Opener's 3♣ rebid is forcing for one round, but it is possible to stop in 3♦. A 3♦ rebid is invitational to 3N, but nonforcing.

2♣ Response

The 2♣ response is absolutely natural and shows at least 5 clubs (in extreme cases, 4) with gameforcing strength (12+) or 6+ clubs with invitational strength (9-11). The second variant is shown by rebidding 3♣ on the next round.

The reason it shows 5 clubs (as opposed to over a 1M opening) is that there is a wide range of other forcing responses (1♥, 1♠, 2♦).

Continuations over a 2♣ Response

- 2♦ shows a minimum opening (similar to 1♥-2♠-2♥)
- 2♥ and 2♠ show reverse strength (15-17) and 4 cards
- 2N shows 4441 distribution, 12-14
- 3N shows 4441 distribution, 15-17
- 3♣ shows extras with 4+♣
- 3♥ and 3♠ are splinters with ♣ as trumps

Uncontested Auctions. 1♦ Opening

QUIZ - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?				
W	E	W	E	Commentary
♠KJ76 ♥Q3 ♦AJT76 ♣J3	♠AQT5 ♥74 ♦Q5 ♣AQT75	1♦ 2♦ (12-14) 3♠	2♣ 2♣ ¹ 4♣	¹ see: Third suit forcing
♠K976 ♥K3 ♦AJT75 ♣J3	♠AJT5 ♥74 ♦Q6 ♣AJT75	1♦ 2♦ (12-14) 3N ²	2♣ 2♣ ¹ 4♣	¹ see: Third suit forcing ² 4 spades and ♥ stopper
♠K976 ♥K3 ♦AJT95 ♣J3	♠AT5 ♥74 ♦Q6 ♣AQT752	1♦ 2♦ (12-14) 3N ²	2♣ 2♣ ¹ Pass	¹ see: Third suit forcing ² 4 spades and ♥ stopper
♠KJ76 ♥A3 ♦AJT76 ♣K3	♠AQT5 ♥74 ♦Q6 ♣AQT75	1♦ 2♠ (15-17) 3N ¹ 4♦ ³ 4N (Aces) 5N (Kings) 6♠	2♣ 3♣ 4♣ ² 4♣ ⁴ 5♣ ⁵ 6♣ (none)	¹ see: Slam bidding: 3N shows positive hand with no shortness ^{2,3} cuebids ⁴ no heart cue ⁵ 2 keycards + trumps Queen

1♦ 2♣
 2♦ 3♦ = forcing

With an invitational hand with diamonds and clubs, responder can bid 1♦-2♦.

2♦ Response

The 2♦ response is forcing for one round. It shows 4+♦, no 4M, and 10+ HCP.

Continuations over a 2♦ response

- Further bidding is natural by opener, and seminatural (bidding stoppers) by responder.
- Later in the auction:
 - 3♦ by either side is a sign-off attempt
 - 2N by responder is forcing

QUIZ - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?				
W	E	W	E	Commentary
♠J6 ♥Q32 ♦AQT76 ♣K95	♠432 ♥K4 ♦K953 ♣AT74	1♦ 3♦	2♦ Pass	
♠6 ♥AQ32 ♦AQT76 ♣K95	♠532 ♥K4 ♦K954 ♣AT74	1♦ 2♥ 4♣	2♦ 3♣ ¹ 5♦	¹ Club stop, no spade stop (when partner bids hearts, this hand improves, so best not to bid 3♦ [signoff])
♠6 ♥AQ32 ♦AQT763 ♣K9	♠532 ♥K4 ♦K954 ♣AT74	1♦ 2♥ 4♦ 4N 6♦	2♦ 3♣ 4♥ ¹ 5♥	¹ Cue bid
♠AQ32 ♥62 ♦AQT76 ♣K9	♠532 ♥K4 ♦K954 ♣AT74	1♦ 2♠ 3♠ ²	2♦ 3♦ ¹ 3N ³	¹ When partner has spades, the value of this hand drops; you bid 3♦ to play ² "I don't have a heart stopper" ³ "I do"

2♥, 2♠, 3♣ Responses

See: Jump-shift responses in the Conventions section.

2N, 3N Responses

The 2N (11-12) and 3N (13-15) responses show a balanced hand without a 4 card major. Responder should feel obliged to have both majors stopped. Otherwise, she may bid 2♣ (or 2♦). Any further bidding would be natural.

3♦ Response

The 3♦ response is preemptive and shows up to 8 HCP with at least four diamonds. Opener may continue bidding (naturally) only with extremely interesting hands.

3♥, 3♠, 4♣ Responses

Splinters (see 1♥ opening responses, or Slam Bidding). Over 3♥ and 3♠ we may still play in 3N.

4♦ Response

Preemptive-tactical. Opener Passes with almost any hand.

1♥ Opening

Definition

This opening shows 12-17 HCP and at least five hearts. See the quiz in the next page to check if you choose the same openings as they are suggested by PCI.

QUIZ. How do you choose to open these hands?	
♠KJ98 ♥QJT65 ♦A5 ♣32	1♥. You have only 11 HCP, but with 9 cards in the majors. Bid!
♠3 ♥KJT87 ♦AQJ6 ♣432	1♥. You have only 11 HCP, but with everything in the longest suits. Upgrade!
♠3 ♥AKJT8 ♦AQJ6 ♣Q109	1♣. You have only 17 HCP (not 18+), but with everything in the longest suits. Upgrade!
♠QJ ♥QJ653 ♦K97 ♣QJ3	Pass. Points, schmoints.
♠Q3 ♥QJ965 ♦AJ8 ♣AQ9	1N. Balanced hand, stoppers in all suits.
♠KQ9 ♥KQJ95 ♦KJ8 ♣97	1♥. This hand belongs in a suit!
♠3 ♥KQT98 ♦AJT76 ♣95	1♥. 10 HCP, but a beautiful hand: all HCP in the long suits, good texture. This hand is too strong for a 2♥ 2-suiter opening.
♠3 ♥KJT86 ♦QJT76 ♣Q5	2♥.

1♠ Response

1♠ response is natural. It shows at least 7 HCP and at least 4 cards in the bid suit."

This treatment is again pre-historical. Refer to Part2. PCI Pro, if you are not a dinosaur.

1♥	1♠
2♣	3♥

Responder shows an invitational (9-11) hand with at least 4 spades and 3 hearts.

Uncontested Auctions. 1♥ Opening

1♥	1♠
2♣	2♥

Preference. Generally a doubleton(!) heart.

QUIZ. Partner opens 1♥. How do you plan the auction with these hands?	
♠KT87 ♥Q97 ♦52 ♣K987	2♥. You have 8 hearts altogether, what else do you need to look for with such a weak hand?
♠KQJ7 ♥Q97 ♦52 ♣K987	1♠. And over partner's rebid an invitational jump to 3♥. You will show a heart fit, and at the same time where your strength lies.
♠KQJ87 ♥975 ♦52 ♣J76	1♠. And over partner's rebid 2♥. It's hard not to show five spades like these.
♠KQ86 ♥KJ97 ♦Q2 ♣765	2N. Invite to game with a heart fit. You have 9 hearts altogether- introducing spades might get you into trouble.

NOTE: All jump-shifts by opener show at least 5-5 distribution!

QUIZ. You Partner 1♥ 1♠ ? What bid do you choose with these hands?	
♠K3 ♥AQ987 ♦AK1052 ♣2	3♦. 5-5, 15-17 HCP
♠K3 ♥QJ987 ♦AK1052 ♣2	2♦. Not strong enough for a jump-shift
♠K3 ♥AQ987 ♦AKJ5 ♣32	2♦. 5-4, 12-17 HCP

1♥	1♠
3♣	?
3♦ = 4 th suit	
3♥ = heart fit, forcing	

1♥	1♠
3♦	3♥
= forcing, but does not promise a good ♥ fit, (4 th suit forcing not available)	

1♥	1♠
3♠	3N
= asks for shortness – partner bids shortness or retreats to hearts	

1♥	1♠
2♥	2N
= nonforcing!	

1N Response

The strength of this response is roughly the same as that over 1♦ (7-11 HCP). 1N denies 4♠ or a heart fit. See the quiz on the next page to check if you choose the same response as suggested by PCI.

Uncontested Auctions. 1♥ Opening

QUIZ. Partner opens 1♥. How do you choose to respond with these hands?	
♠KT2 ♥2 ♦AJ87 ♣K9654	1N. If you had responded 2♣, then over partner's 2♥ rebid, you would have had nowhere to run (2N and 3♦ would have been forcing).
♠KT2 ♥2 ♦J87 ♣AK9654	2♣. And on the next round a nonforcing 3♣.
♠32 ♥2 ♦KQT32 ♣KJ432	1N. "Partner, please don't Pass."
♠32 ♥2 ♦JT32 ♣KQJ432	1N. "Partner, I beg you, bid something. I will rebid 3♣ and you will Pass."
♠5432 ♥2 ♦J8 ♣KQJ976	1N. This is the most realistic chance to get out low in clubs. (after a 1♠ response, you can no longer extricate yourselves)
♠KJ3 ♥987 ♦QJ6 ♣JT54	2♥. "I have a fit, whether I like it or not!"

Continuations over a 1N Response

A 1N response (to a 1M opening) is often a default bid and does not mean that is where responder really wants to play. Therefore opener should try to keep the bidding open in case responder has something interesting to say.

Opener has nothing to add with a minimum (12-14) hand with 5332 distribution. With that he Passes. With a stronger balanced hand he bids 2N.

With a side 4-crd suit opener should show it:

1♥	1N	
2♣		= 5♥, 4♣ 12-17 HCP

Let me remind you that jumping in a new suit promises 5 cards. There is no need in PolishClub to fancy any weird jumps in 3-crd suits.

1♥ 1N
3♣ = 5♥-5♣ 15-17 HCP

Two Over One Response (2♣ and 2♦)

A 2-over-1 is gameforcing unless responder rebids her suit. The 2-over-1 suit (except clubs) shows 5+ cards. It follows that without a long suit responder bids 2♣.

QUIZ Partner opens 1♥. How do you respond with these hands?	
♠T987 ♥A3 ♦532 ♣AKQ4	1♠. With 4 spades without a 5-card minor you'd better bid spades.
♠T987 ♥A3 ♦53 ♣AKQ42	2♣. Now you can show the clubs despite having 4 spades.
♠AQJ5 ♥6 ♦KQ9 ♣J9876	1♠. There is no need to show the clubs, they are too weak (unless partner bids them).
♠T987 ♥32 ♦53 ♣AKQ43	1♠. Clubs are great, but the hand is too weak to respond 2♣.
♠K98 ♥A3 ♦AQ43 ♣J987	2♣. 2♦ would show 5+ diamonds.
♠K98 ♥A3 ♦AKQ4 ♣J987	2♣. As above.
♠32 ♥AQ3 ♦K43 ♣AKJ98	2♣. And on the following round 3♥ - this way you show a fit with natural clubs and slam interest.

Continuations after a 2-over-1 Response

Raising clubs (after a 2♣ response) by opener promises 4+ clubs.
 Diamonds (after a 2♦ response) may be raised with a tripleton honor.
 Raising a minor suit promises extras and is gameforcing.

NOTE: Rebidding the opened suit (e.g. 1♥-2♣-2♥) shows a minimum (12-14) hand and says nothing about the number of hearts (besides the minimum of 5)!

Uncontested Auctions. 1♥ Opening

A jump-shift to a new suit below the opened suit (e.g. 1♥-2♣-3♦) shows 5-5 shape with a maximum opening.

A jump-shift to a new suit above the opened suit (e.g. 1♥-2♣-3♠) is a splinter (see Slam Bidding).

With 6-4 in a lower-ranking side suit (e.g. 1♥-2♣ and opener has 6♥-4♦) opener first rebids the side suit.

2♥ Response

Definition: 6-10 HCP and at least 3♥.

2♠/3♣/3♦ Responses

See Jump-shift Responses in the Conventions section.

2N response

The response shows a limit raise with support in opener's suit.

Even though the response is well defined, it still contains many hand-types: minimum, maximum, 3-crd support, 4-crd support, balanced or unbalanced. We have to remember that the jump raise (3♥) is *strictly* preemptive, destructive, and to no degree encourages bidding game. As a result, even a weak distributional hand, which gives a fair chance of a game, is bid by 2N. Such a hand is best suited for *Mixed Raise*, which, however we do not use in the PCI.

Continuing the auction, opener bids simply: 3♥ with an uninteresting hand, or 4♥ – with an interesting hand. Or he can make a help-suit game try.

I suggest introducing an asking bid for opener: 3♣. Responses are:

- 3♥ (returning to trumps) = "mixed raise"

Examples:

- ♠ 432 ♥ K432 ♦ Q5432 ♣ 2
- ♠ 2 ♥ Q432 ♦ JT432 ♣ K32
- ♠ 2 ♥ KT2 ♦ AJ432 ♣ 5432

- 4♥ = a pretty good unbalanced hand,

Examples:

- ♠ Q2 ♥ QJ32 ♦ K2 ♣ QJ865
- ♠ 2 ♥ KT2 ♦ KJ432 ♣ QT32

-3♦ = minimum balanced raise

Example:

- ♠ JT2 ♥ KQ32 ♦ K32 ♣ T32,

- 3NT = maximum balanced raise

Example:

- ♠ QJ2 ♥ QT2 ♦ KT2 ♣ KT32,

- 3♠ (other major) = maximum invite with a good 4-crd fit, at least 3 controls (good for slam)

Example:

- ♠ A432 ♥ K432 ♦ T92 ♣ K2.

3♥ Response

The 3♥ response is preemptive and promises 4 trumps. This agreement is based on total tricks: "If we have at least 9 trumps, it pays to get to the 3-level. If we don't make the contract, the opponents probably make something."

Uncontested Auctions. 1♥ Opening

Vulnerability	Examples of 3♥ preemptive raise
Favorable	♠2 ♥J432 ♦5432 ♣5432 ♠32 ♥QJ32 ♦J432 ♣432
Equal	♠2 ♥K432 ♦5432 ♣5432 ♠32 ♥K432 ♦Q32 ♣5432
Unfavorable	♠32 ♥QT32 ♦K5432 ♣32 ♠32 ♥JT432 ♦A32 ♣432

Splinters and Mini-splinters

The splinter bid is the one of the most effective gadgets for slam bidding. This is because we more often have the opportunity to bid and make slam based on ruffing power than on strength. Because of this, the splinter has strengthened its value on the market of slam conventions – giving birth to its “weak variety”, a.k.a. the *mini-splinter*, which is earning greater popularity.

Experience has taught that when nothing is wasted opposite a splinter, slams can be made with a combined strength of just 26+ HCP, about 28 HCP on average. Let’s assume the average strength of a 12-17 opener is 14 HCP. In this case the average strength of a splinter should be oscillating around about 13-14 HCP. In practice, we extend the range to 12-15 HCP (depending on distribution and number of controls). Broadening this range further would hurt partner’s ability to do the right thing.

Let’s assume, however, that partner opens 1♥ and we have:

♠A432 ♥QJ32 ♦2 ♣K432

Partner might have this 16 HCP hand:

♠K5 ♥AKT87 ♦543 ♣AQ5

Slam is excellent. But if we respond 4♦ and partner gets something like:

♠Q5 ♥AKT98 ♦A43 ♣Q65

it will be difficult to keep from going to slam, when even 5♥ is in danger.

To prevent these situations we distinguish two kinds of splinters: weak, with 9-12 HCP, and strong, 13-16 HCP.

1♥ 3♠ = weak splinter; unknown shortness

Opener can satisfy his curiosity by asking with 3NT for responder to show his shortness as naturally as possible (4♥ = ♠ shortness).

1♠ 3N = weak splinter; unknown shortness

Opener can satisfy his curiosity by asking with 4♣ for responder to show his shortness as naturally as possible (4♥ = ♠ shortness).

1♥ 4♣, 4♦ = strong splinter in ♣, ♦

1♥ 3NT = strong splinter in ♠, since 3♠ is devoted to the weaker splinters.

A common requirement of both varieties of splinter is that they promise **4-card support** for opener's suit.

QUIZ - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?				
W	E	W	E	Commentary
♠K5 ♥AKT87 ♦432 ♣AQ6	♠A432 ♥QJ32 ♦5 ♣K432	1♥ 3N ² 4N ⁴ 5♦ ⁶ 6♦ ⁸	3♠ ¹ 4♦ ³ 5♣ ⁵ 5♠ ⁷ 6♥ ⁹	¹ Mini-splinter ² Asks for shortness ³ Diamonds ⁴ RKC 1430 ⁵ One KC ⁶ Asks for trump Queen ⁷ "I have the trump Queen" ⁸ Asks for a void in diamonds ⁹ "No void"

Uncontested Auctions. 1♥ Opening

QUIZ (continued) - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?				
♠K5 ♥AKT87 ♦432 ♣AQ6	♠A432 ♥J9432 ♦-- ♣K432	1♥ 3N 4N 5♦ 6♦ ²	3♣ 4♦ 5♣ 5♠ ¹ 7♥ ³	¹ "I have the trump Queen" ² "Do you have a void in diamonds?" ³ "I do!"
♠K5 ♥AKT87 ♦AQ4 ♣876	♠A432 ♥J9432 ♦-- ♣K432	1♥ 3N 4♥ ¹	3♣ 4♦ Pass	¹ "Not the shortness I was looking for."

QUIZ	
You	Partner
1♥	3N (spade splinter, 12-15)
?	
How would you rate your hand on a scale of 1 (worst) to 5 (best)?	
How do you plan the auction?	
♠AJ6 ♥KQ8542 ♦2 ♣KQ6	5 points. Bid 4N. Two Aces make slam. Three Aces make grand.
♠JT62 ♥AQ653 ♦K5 ♣K8	4 points. Bid 4♣. Probing to find out whether partner has a spade void. - Over a 4♦ cuebid (no ♠ void, else would have bid 4♠), ask for keycards. - Over 4♥ (off two Aces - ♠ and ♦) Pass. - Over 4♠ ask for keycards and bid grand if 3.
♠76 ♥K8654 ♦AJ2 ♣A42	2 points. Bid 4♣, and over 4♦, 4♥.

QUIZ (continued) You Partner 1♥ 3N (spade splinter, 12-15) ? How would you rate your hand on a scale of 1 (worst) to 5 (best)? How do you plan the auction?	
♠QT64 ♥AQ872 ♦A6 ♣J5	3 points. Bid 4♦, and over 4♥, 5♥ (good hearts, no other cuebid).
♠Q63 ♥AK852 ♦K3 ♣JT4	2 points. Bid 4♦, and over 4♥, Pass. Slam probably has no chance.
♠AT8 ♥QJT32 ♦KQ5 ♣72	2 points. Bid 4♦, and over 4♥, Pass.
♠AJ6 ♥KT983 ♦AJ82 ♣2	4 points. Bid 4♣ - "Do you have a diamond cuebid partner?" - Over 4♦ ask for keycards and if partner has all the rest (including the trump Queen), bid 6♦: "Partner do you have the KQ or doubleton King?" - Over 4♥ you know there is a diamond to lose. Just the same ask for keycards and after an unfavorable response (1) stop in 5♥. - Over anything else go on to 6.
♠A75 ♥J9652 ♦QJ4 ♣KQ	2 points. The weak trumps are troublesome. Bid 4♣, but that's all, and give up.
♠KJ3 ♥QT982 ♦AQ6 ♣93	1 point. Immediate 4♥ signoff.
♠J73 ♥AKQ65 ♦Q8 ♣JT2	3 points. Bid 5♥. Very good trumps, nothing in spades, but no other cuebid.

Third seat opening Responses

A 2♣ response by a Passed hand is Drury (see Conventions).

A 2♦ response by a Passed hand (or 2♥ over 1♠) may be weaker than a normal 2/1 (8+ HCP) but shows a good suit and no fit.

3♣ and 3♦ responses show 9-11 HCP with a good 6+crd suit and no fit for partner.

We do not use the Magister convention by a Passed hand.

1♠ Opening

Definition:

The meaning of the opening and continuations are the same as 1♥.
With both 5 card majors we open 1♠.

The sequence worth discussing, because it does not occur over 1♥, is 1♠-2♥.

2♥ Response

9+ HCP and 6+♥, or 11+ HCP and 5♥

Continuations over a 2♥ Response

1♠	2♥
3♥	= minimum opening, 3 hearts, nonforcing

1♠	2♥
4♥	= decent opening, usuall 4 hearts

1♠	2♥
3N	= not too strong a hand, with 3 hearts (rarely 4) and shortness

With a good hand and heart fit, opener has the following possible rebids:

- Splinter with an unbalanced hand and 4-card fit
- 2N with a balanced hand (even 4 hearts!) and on the next round bid 3♥
- Bidding a minor suit, and on the next round 4♥ - to show 5 spades, 4 cards in the minor, and 3 hearts

QUIZ	
You	Partner
1♠	2♥
?	
How do you plan the auction with these hands?	
♠AK876 ♥J65 ♦A765 ♣3	3N. Mini-splinter with a 3-card fit.
♠AK876 ♥Q653 ♦A76 ♣3	4♣. 13 HCP is enough for a regular splinter (Aces are useful for slam)
♠A8764 ♥AQ54 ♦A2 ♣J2	2N. Too strong to jump to 4♥. On the next round, 3♥.
♠JT764 ♥AK3 ♦62 ♣AK3	2N. On the next round 3♥.
♠Q8653 ♥A632 ♦K3 ♣K2	4♥.
♠Q9763 ♥A63 ♦QJ2 ♣K2	3♥.
♠AK632 ♥Q74 ♦AQ32 ♣2	3♦. If partner rebids 3N, bid 4♥. Over other bids (3♥ and 3♠) cuebid 4♣.
♠KQJT76 ♥532 ♦A2 ♣J3	2♠. Weak hearts, great spades. Show the heart fit on the next round. And if partner Passes 2♠, it's no tragedy.

1N Opening

A 1N opening shows 15-17 HCP in a balanced hand.

QUIZ - What do you open with these hands?	
♠KQ4 ♥QT765 ♦32 ♣AKJ	1♥. The balanced hand and weak heart suit favors 1N. The weak doubleton diamond, however, contraindicates 1N.
♠QT765 ♥KQ3 ♦J2 ♣AKJ	1N. An argument for opening 1N with 5 spades is having 3 hearts. It's easier to find a 5-3 heart fit after 1N (via a transfer) than after a 1♠ opening.
♠Q4 ♥K3 ♦AKT93 ♣KJ98	1N. Opening this way preempts the opponents' majors. Also, with honors in the majors it is better to declare.
♠KT76 ♥AQ ♦KJ ♣QT543	1N. If you open a Precision 2♣, then 3N would be played by partner. Honors in hearts and diamonds indicate to play from your side.

2♣ Stayman

The 2♣ response asks for 4-crd majors. Responses to Stayman are as follows:

- 2♦ = no major
- 2♥ = 4 hearts (may have 4 spades)
- 2♠ = 4 spades (denies 4 hearts)

Further bidding is natural. Responder's rebid at the 2-level is nonforcing, and at the 3-level forcing (by a Passed hand, invitational) – except for Trybula transfers (see below).

1NT	2♣
2♦	?
2♥ = NF with 4-5♥. Responder wants to stop in a partial (either 4-5 hearts and 4 spades, or 4 hearts and a 5-card minor). Opener chooses between hearts and spades. Over 2♠ responder Passes or corrects to a minor.	
2♠ = invitational, with 5♠ and 4♥	
3♣ = natural, forcing (invitational by a Passed hand)	

1NT	2♣
2♥	?
2♠	= NF with 4♠
3NT	= promises 4♠
3♣	= natural, forcing (invitational by a Passed hand)

1NT	2♣
2♠	?
2NT	= game invite; sometimes unbalanced – with 4♥ and a five-card minor
3♣, 3♦	= natural, forcing (invitational by a Passed hand)

Trybula Transfers

After a major response to Stayman, an immediate bid by responder in the suit just below the major at the 3-level sets the major as trumps:

1N	2♣
2♥	3♦ = strong ♥ raise

1N	2♣
2♠	3♥ = strong ♠ raise

Opener's first duty is to suggest 3NT with a 4-4 fit if her hand is NT-oriented (4333 e.g.). Otherwise, a slam auction can develop.

2♦ and 2♥ Jacoby Transfers

2♦ and 2♥ promise 5+ cards in the next-higher suit, with any strength, and transfers to that suit.

Continuations over a Jacoby Transfer

We will discuss the following starting sequence:

1N 2♥

With the majority of hands opener bids 2♠, but there are exceptions:

1N 2♥
2N = very good hand with a fit, but the hand suggests
 playing in NT

Over this sequence 3♥ by responder is a retransfer to spades (opener must bid 3♠).

1N 2♥
3♠ = very good hand with a fit, suit-oriented

After this sequence, a final contract of 3N is impossible. Responder bids shortness with slam chances, and 3N with no shortness.

1N 2♥
2♠ 3♣ = 4 clubs, gameforcing

1N 2♥
2♠ 2N = may have minor four, nonforcing

QUIZ Partner You 1N ? How do you plan the auction with these hands?	
♠976543 ♥432 ♦32 ♣32	2♥. And over 2♠ by partner – Pass.
♠QJ9765 ♥K32 ♦QT2 ♣3	2♥. And over 2♠ by partner – 3♠, invitational to game with a 6-crd suit
♠QJ743 ♥K32 ♦QJ2 ♣32	2♥. And over 2♠ by partner – 2N, invitational to 3N with 5 spades.
♠QJ743 ♥K3 ♦QT32 ♣32	2♥. And over 2♠ by partner – 2N. The shape is not ideal but 3♦ would be gameforcing.
♠QJ743 ♥K3 ♦AQ T2 ♣32	2♥. And over 2♠ by partner – 3♦ - gameforcing.
♠AQJ743 ♥3 ♦AT2 ♣Q32	2♥. And over 2♠ by partner – 4♥! Autosplinter: short hearts, good spades; slam interest
♠AQJ74 ♥KJ3 ♦QT2 ♣K32	2♥. And over 2♠ by partner – 4N: invite to slam
♠AQ T743 ♥52 ♦KQT ♣K2	2♥. And over 2♠ - 4♣: 6 spades, invite to slam, balanced
♠KQT853 ♥T754 ♦A3 ♣2	4♥. (see: Texas transfer)
♠AQJ743 ♥3 ♦KQT5 ♣K2	4♥. And over 4♣, 4N: RKC 1430 for spades.

How to show both majors over a 1N opening

With 4-4 majors

- If weak (even very weak), we bid 2♣ and Pass a major response or bid 2♥ over 2♦

With 5-4 majors

- With a weak hand (up to 7 HCP) and a good 5-crds major we transfer to the major and Pass; with a good 4-crds major and bad 5-crds major, we bid 2♣ and Pass a major response or rebid 2♥ over 2♦
- With an invite hand
 - 5 hearts and 4 spades – we transfer 2♦ and rebid 2♠; this is forcing for one round (invite or better), but is not gameforcing
 - 5 spades and 4 hearts – we bid 2♣; over a 2♦ response we rebid 2♠ - invitational with 5♠ and 4♥

With 5-5 majors

- With a weak hand we bid 2♣ (and then 2♥ over 2♦)
- With a strong hand we use Wesolowski transfers – first we transfer to hearts!

1N	2♦
2♥	2♠
2N	3♠ = 5 spades

In this way we are able to show our 5-5 distribution at the 3-level (by starting with ♥ first we don't have to go all the way to 4♥). We can now find the best contract (might be 3N), and still have room for slam- bidding.

2♠ Response

1N	2♠	= transfer to clubs
?		
2N		= good club values (Hxx or better) and a good opener
3♣		= anything else

On the next round responder may show shortness with a gameforcing hand:

1N 2♠ = transfer to clubs

2N 3♥ = clubs, heart shortness, game forcing

1N 2♠ = transfer to clubs

2N 3N = responder hears the positive response and tries for 3NT

1N 2♠ = transfer to clubs

3♣ 3N = responder has enough for game even after the negative response, without a shortness. Responder was hoping for a positive response to think about going further.

2N Response

Invite to 3N.

3♣ Response

Transfer to diamonds (weak or strong).

Over this response opener must bid 3♦. With the weak variant responder Passes, and with the strong (gameforcing) shows shortness, or makes a light slam invite with 3N.

3♦ Response

Invite to 3N with a long diamond suit.

3♥ and 3♠ responses – the “5431” convention

These responses show hands with 5-4+ in the minors, and a short major. The convention gets its name from the most common of the distributions it describes: 5-4-3-1. However, other patterns are included (5521, 5530, 6421, 6430). The strength must be gameforcing to warrant the jump (you can't stop below game, and it may be slam- searching).

Uncontested Auctions. 1N Opening

So the bids individually show:

- 3♥ = short hearts, at least 5-4 in the minors
- 3♠ = short spades, at least 5-4 in the minors

Continuations

1NT 3♥ = short hearts without 4 spades
?

3♠ = 4 good (or any 5) spades, suggests playing in a
7-crd fit,

3NT = "I want to play 3NT - I have serious stoppage in hearts",

4♣ = sets clubs,

4♦ = sets diamonds,

4♥ = 4+ 4+ minors, maximum hand, nothing wasted in hearts,

4NT = 4+ 4+ minors, wrong hearts for 3NT, but not strong enough
for 4♥.

Texas transfers (4♦, 4♥)

Just like transfers at the 2-level, they show the next-higher suit:

1NT 4♦ = transfer to hearts

1NT 4♥ = transfer to spades

We bid Texas with a 6+crd suit in order to play 4♥ or 4♠ from opener's hand.

There are three goals of this convention:

- 1) Preempting the enemy - it could contain a weak distributional hand:

♠ 2 ♥ JT95432 ♦ T987 ♣ 2

1NT 4♦

4♥

"We might make 4♥, and if not, we may have preempted them out of their game."

- 2) Distinguishing game hands from slammish hands:

1NT 2♦

2♥ 4♥

“I have 6+ trumps, just like with Texas, but there’s some chance of slam (about 13-14 HCP).”

- 3) Distinguishing a quantitative 4NT from an RKC 4NT:

1NT 2♦

2♥ 4NT = Invite.

“5 hearts, about 15 HCP. Over to you.”

1NT 4♦

4♥ 4NT = RKC

“Surprise, partner! You were thinking I was weak, but I have such a rock-crusher that I just need to check on your keycards in hearts.”

2♣ Opening

Definition

We open 2♣ with 12-14 HCP and 5♣ and a 4-crd major, or 6+♣.

See the quiz on the next page to check if you choose the same opening as suggested by PCI.

Uncontested Auctions. 2♣ Opening

QUIZ- What do you open with these hands?	
♠AQ76 ♥43 ♦Q3 ♣AQ875	2♣.
♠K976 ♥K2 ♦Q2 ♣KJ865	1♣. When honors are spread out in all the suits in a 5422 shape I recommend to open 1♣. We have a chance to declare 1N.
♠Q32 ♥32 ♦42 ♣AKQ865	2♣. A good 6-crd club suit may open with 11 HCP.
♠3 ♥AQ76 ♦J54 ♣KJ865	Pass. Opening with 11 HCP and 5-4 shape is very dangerous because after a 2♦ relay it is very difficult to stop below game.
♠Q3 ♥KJ ♦AJ5 ♣J87643	1♣. And over a 1M response – 1N. The 6 clubs are as weak as a 5-crd suit.
♠AQ ♥KJ ♦AT5 ♣J87643	1N. Weak clubs, good side strength.

2♦ Response – Relay

2♦ response is a one-round forcing relay asking partner to show his 4-card major, if he has one.

2♣	2♦
2♥	?

2♠ = 5 spades, forcing

2N = relay

3♣ = 9-11 with a club fit (may have no 4-crd major)

3♦ = natural forcing

3♥ = invite to game

2♣	2♦
2♠	?

2N = relay

3♣ = 9-11 with a club fit

3♦/3♥ = natural forcing

3♠ = invite to game

2♣	2♦
?	

2N = 6 clubs, wants to declare NT from own hand, no shortness
(and no 4M)

3♣ = 6 clubs, no 4M, all others

2♣	2♦
3♣	3♦ (asks shortness)
?	

3♥/3♠ = shortness in bid suit

3N = no shortness in a major (may have short diamonds)

2♥ and 2♠ Responses

These bids are nonforcing with at least a 5-crd suit (6-11 HCP).

Opener raises partner with a 4-crd fit, Passes or raises (based on hand evaluation) with a 3-crd fit. With no fit, opener must decide whether to Pass or bid further.

Uncontested Auctions. 2♣ Opening

QUIZ	
You	Partner
2♣	2♥
?	
How do you rebid with these hands?	
♠AQ76 ♥43 ♦Q3 ♣AQ875	Pass. Partner does not have 4 spades (else would have bid 2♦).
♠AQJ8 ♥4 ♦T43 ♣AQJ75	2♠. Better played in one of your suits.
♠AQ83 ♥4 ♦T4 ♣AQJ975	3♣. Better to play in clubs than hearts.
♠K83 ♥J ♦QT4 ♣AKQ975	2N. "And maybe 3N if partner has quick tricks?"
♠Q3 ♥KJ3 ♦Q5 ♣KJ8764	Pass. Although there is a fit, chances of game are slim.
♠3 ♥KJ3 ♦AJ5 ♣QJ8764	3♥.
♠3 ♥KJ3 ♦AJ5 ♣AJ8764	4♥. Game try.

2N Response

- 1) Transfer to 3♣ - weak hand (5-8 HCP) with a fit
- 2) 2-suiter without clubs, gameforcing

With variant (2) over the forced 3♣ by opener the 2-suiter may be shown:

- 3♦ = diamonds and hearts
- 3♥ = hearts and spades
- 3♠ = spades and diamonds

QUIZ - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?				
W	E	W	E	Commentary
♠2 ♥J83 ♦KQ7 ♣AK7432	♠AK765 ♥4 ♦AJT653 ♣6	2♣ 3♣ 4♦ 4N 6♦	2N 3♠ 4♥ (cuebid) 5♥ Pass	
♠K5 ♥A3 ♦KQ7 ♣JT9532	♠AQ762 ♥K2 ♦AJT765 ♣--	2♣ 3♣ 4♦ 4♠ 7♦	2N 3♠ 4♥ 6♣ (void) Pass	
♠J5 ♥J4 ♦AQ4 ♣KQ9765	♠KT732 ♥AKQ32 ♦5 ♣J4	2♣ 3♣ 3N	2N 3♥ Pass	
♠Q8 ♥93 ♦Q94 ♣AK9765	♠KT732 ♥AKQ642 ♦5 ♣4	2♣ 3♣ 3♠ ¹ Pass	2N 3♥ 4♥	¹ Not promising a full ♠ fit.
♠AQ85 ♥9 ♦T5 ♣AK9765	♠KT732 ♥AKQ642 ♦5 ♣4	2♣ 3♣ 3♠ ¹ 5♣ ² 6♣	2N 3♥ 4♥ 5♦ (cue bid)	¹ Not promising a full fit. ² 5♣ is a cue bid for spades; to set hearts as trumps opener should cue bid directly over 3♥

Other Responses

- 3♣ = invitational (9-11)
- 3♦/3♥/3♠ = invitational natural

Handling Interference

A new suit is nonforcing at the 2-level and forcing at the 3-level.
Double is negative (opener with a good 4-crd holding in their suit may Pass).

2♦ Opening (Multi)

6-10 HCP with 6 cards in one of the majors.

QUIZ - What do you open with these hands?	
♠KJ9765 ♥T76 ♦K2 ♣97	2♦.
♠AKJ976 ♥T76 ♦K2 ♣97	1♠. Too strong for a 2♦ opening.
♠KQT876 ♥4 ♦32 ♣AJ87	1♠. With 6-4 and all honors in the two suits, the hand is too good for 2♦.
♠Q97543 ♥KJ3 ♦J3 ♣Q43	Pass. Spades are too weak.
♠AJ7654 ♥KT32 ♦3 ♣43	Pass. It's not recommended to open Multi with 4 cards in the other major...
♠KQJ654 ♥9732 ♦3 ♣J3	2♦. ... unless it is very weak.

We will go over the basic responses to Multi.

2♥ and 2♠ Responses

These responses say, "Pass if you have this suit. Otherwise, bid further"

2N Response

Asks for suit and strength. Possible rebids:

Response	Meaning, and further bidding
3♣	Maximum hand with either suit. Over this 3♦ asks for the suit: 3♥ shows ♠, 3♠ shows ♥.
3♦	Minimum with hearts.
3♥	Minimum with spades.

3♣ Response

3♣ is an artificial strong response – responder wants to show her own suit, and not ask for partner's. Over 3♣ opener must bid 3♦, and responder shows her suit naturally: 3♥, 3♠, 4♣, 4♦ (3N can show a hand with a SOL minor suit) and that bid is forcing.

3♦ Response

3♦ is invite to game in whichever suit opener has.

3♥ Response

This response is tactical: "Pass with hearts, bid 3♠ with spades". Generally we bid this with a weak hand and a fit for both majors, to preempt the opponents.

3♠ Response

"Pass with spades, bid on with hearts."

4♣ Response

"Transfer to your suit (4♦ with hearts, 4♥ with spades)."

4♦ Response

"Bid your suit naturally."

4♥, 4♠ Responses

To play – a real suit.

Handling Interference

Over enemy interference doubles are penalty.

Us	Them	Us
2♦	3♣/♦	3♥ = Pass/correct for partner's suit

Us	Them	Us
2♦	3♣/♦	4♥/4♠ = own suit

Us	Them	Us
2♦	3♣/♦	4♣ = "transfer to your suit"

2♥ and 2♠ Openings

2♥ and 2♠ show a hand with sub-opening strength (6-10), 5 cards in the bid suit, and 5 cards in another: in the case of 2♥ it may be any other suit, and with 2♠ it must be a minor.

See the table on the next page to check if you choose the same openings as suggested by PCI.

QUIZ – What do you open with these hands?	
♠KJ976 ♥KJT76 ♦976 ♣--	2♥.
♠AJT76 ♥AJT76 ♦976 ♣--	1♠. Too strong for 2♥.
♠KJ3 ♥J8765 ♦A9765 ♣--	Pass. This hand may be more suitable for play in spades than hearts or diamonds.
♠-- ♥J8765 ♦A9765 ♣KJ3	2♥. We are not worried about missing a spade fit now.
♠QT762 ♥Q2 ♦KJ765 ♣3	2♠. Suits are not good but they will do.
♠Q9765 ♥Q2 ♦J9654 ♣A	Pass. Too much strength in the short suits.

Let's recap the response structure:

2♠ Response (over 2♥)

2♠ = "Pass with spades, else bid your minor."

2N Response

2N asks for the second suit. A 2♥ opener can show ♠ by rebidding 3♥. Further bidding follows the rule: If we want to force the auction, we set a minor suit naturally, and cuebid for the major.

The 2N response is positive. It promises there will be a good fit with opener. Opener may jump rebid too. With a negative hand then, it is best not to bid 2N but instead: 2♠ or 3♣.

Other artificial responses

3♣ - Pass or correct; "Pass with clubs, bid without clubs."

3♦ - invitational raise of the major

Uncontested Auctions. 2♥ and 2♠ Openings

QUIZ Partner You 2♥ ? How do you plan the auction with these hands?	
♠A43 ♥AQ76 ♦K7 ♣QT43	4♥. Don't ask or delay. And maybe the opponents will be pushed off course.
♠85 ♥AQ76 ♦76 ♣97542	4♥. The opponents don't know if you are preempting or bidding to make.
♠AK3 ♥AQ952 ♦854 ♣AJ	2N. - Over a 3♣ response continue with 3♠ (slam try in ♥) and listen carefully for partner to cuebid ♦ shortness. - Over 3♦ bid 4♥ as avoiding 2 diamond losers seems too unlikely. - Over 3♥ (hearts and spades) set hearts as trumps with 4♣ and see whether partner can cuebid 4♦.
♠KJ3 ♥KJ32 ♦432 ♣AQJ7	2N. - Over 3♣ or 3♥ (spades) try 4♥. - Over 3♦ - just 3♥.
♠K97 ♥Q832 ♦KJ3 ♣AJ4	3♦. Just invite to game, and the opponents will not know which other suit partner has.
♠AQ72 ♥2 ♦K765 ♣Q32	3♣. (!). Pass/correct for partner's other suit. You expect partner to Pass this, but if by some miracle partner bids 3♥ (spades), bid 4♠!
♠Q9 ♥2 ♦KJ965 ♣AQ876	2♠. "I would rather play in spades than hearts (and even better in a minor if you have it, partner)."

Handling Interference

Over an enemy bid, double is penalty – and new suit bids are Pass-or-correct.

2NT Opening – Both Minors

Definition

Opening 2N shows 6-10 HCP and at least 5-5 in the minors.
Determining whether to open 2N is much the same as whether to open 2♥.

Continuations over a 2N Opening

Responder generally bids their best minor at the 3-level. 4-level minor responses are preemptive.

The artificial response is 3♥ - asking for distribution. In reply opener bids their longer major suit (3♠ with a doubleton spade, 3N with a doubleton heart, 4♥ with a tripleton heart, 4♠ with a tripleton spade), or bids a 6-crd minor naturally with 4♣ or 4♦.

3♠ is an invitation to game on one of the minors. Opener is forced to bid 3N, over which responder bids a suit he wants to play.

Three-level Openings

Definition

Openings are natural. Vulnerable they show a 7-crd suit, and not vulnerable a minor suit may be 6 cards. Opening strength depends on partnership style and the hand distribution. I suggest the 4-3-2-2 rule. This means that the hand can take as many tricks to come within 4 of making when favorable, 3 when both not vulnerable, and 2 when vulnerable (irrespective of the opponents' vulnerability). PCI Pro suggests a more aggressive approach.

Gambling 3N Opening

Definition

Solid 7-crds minor with no entry.

Continuations over a 3N opening

4♣ and 5♣ response are Pass-or-correct. Partner Passes with clubs, or bids 4♦ (5♦) with diamonds. 4♥ and 4♠ responses are natural.

The 4♦ response is artificial – asking for shortness. Opener bids a short major, or with shortness in the other minor bids 4N. Signing off in 5 of a minor shows no shortness (7222).

Note: Over a double of 3N, responder's Pass denotes the desire to play 3N-X (redouble just the same – but more so).

4♣ and 4♦ Openings – Natural

These openings are highly distributional, and suggest, for whatever reason (bad suit, freaky shape), that 3N will be an unsuitable contract.

4♥ and 4♠ Openings

The strength and distribution expected depends on partnership style. Without any agreement, again I suggest the 4-3-2-2 (described under 3-level openings). Subsequent bids are cuebids (even 4♠ over 4♥). The same treatment applies if the opponents enter the auction.

1♣ Opening

Definition

The 1♣ opening in PCI has 3 possible meanings:

- 1) Preparatory variant: 12-14 HCP, no 5-card major, 6 clubs, or 5 clubs - 4 other
- 2) Natural variant: 15+ unbalanced with clubs
- 3) Strong variant: 18+ HCP, any hand

Preparatory variant

With this variant of the opening it is 12-14 HCP balanced – no 5-card suit unless clubs with flat distribution (5332). With 5 clubs and 4 diamonds we open 1♦, and with 6 clubs or 5 clubs and a 4-card major we open 2♣.

If we open the bidding with 1♣ holding 5 clubs, then we should not on the next round make a point to rebid the clubs (“hey, I have extra clubs”) because it would appear to show variant (b) of the opening – natural, and hence showing a stronger hand.

QUIZ. Choose the opening bid:	
♠QJ98 ♥KJ32 ♦AQ2 ♣32	1♣ – preparatory
♠QJ98 ♥KJ3 ♦AQ78 ♣32	1♣ – 1♦ promises 5 cards unless unbalanced
♠42 ♥32 ♦AQJ2 ♣AJT43	1♦ – one of the exceptions to open 1♦ on 4 cards
♠K2 ♥K2 ♦J432 ♣AJT43	1♣ – nothing would induce me to open 1♦ on this hand. I open 1♣ and rebid in notrump.

Uncontested Auctions. 1♣ Opening

QUIZ (continued). Choose the opening bid:	
♠4 ♥KW2 ♦AQJ2 ♣AJT43	1♣ – Hand is strong enough (15+) to rebid clubs in the next round
♠4 ♥KW32 ♦AQ2 ♣AT943	2♣ – Precision shape opens 2♣
♠D4 ♥KW32 ♦AQ ♣J8743	1♣ – and rebid 1N over 1♠
♠D4 ♥KW3 ♦AQ ♣J98743	1♣ – system tells you to open Precision 2♣, common sense prompts you to open 1♣ (and rebid 1N)

How do you show the preparatory club variant (12-14)?

You show this variant by rebidding on the same level as the response or supporting partner.

Remember: with the weak variant you should not show long clubs at the first opportunity.

QUIZ	
You	Partner
1♣	1♥
?	
What bid do you choose?	
♠A43 ♥AQ76 ♦K7 ♣9865	2♥. Support with 4-crd support.
♠A4 ♥AQ7 ♦K765 ♣9865	1N. Do not support with 3-crd fit.
♠A432 ♥AQ7 ♦K7 ♣9865	1♠. Show your four spades at 1-level
♠A43 ♥A7 ♦754 ♣KJT87	1N. You cannot mention your club suit, as that would show 15+

Natural variant (15 – 17)

We use the opening 1♣ with 15-17 HCP club-based hands which are not suited for opening 1NT.

QUIZ. Choose the opening bid:	
♠J5 ♥K54 ♦A5 ♣AKJ654	1♣ – then rebid clubs cheaply
♠AQJ5 ♥75 ♦K4 ♣KQJ87	1♣ – bid 1♠ after partner's 1♥ (forcing); then show clubs in the next round
♠Q2 ♥J32 ♦AJ9 ♣ AKT98	1N – standard 1N opening
♠32 ♥432 ♦AKJ ♣AKJT9	1♣ – this way transfer no trump into partner's hand
♠AQ4 ♥KJ ♦AJ ♣J95432	1N – Systematically, you may open 1♣; I recommend 1N
♠AJ5 ♥K4 ♦A5 ♣AKJ654	1♣ – then you may just rebid clubs (forcing after partner's positive response), showing 15+

How do you show the medium variant of the 1♣ opening ?

Opener shows the medium variant by bidding clubs without jumping, e.g.

1♣ 1♥ (1♠, 1NT)
2♣

Opener's bid shows 15+ HCP and is forcing! Here, opener may still have 18+ HCP. Particularly over a 1♠ response, opener may not allow himself to jump in clubs when he has 4 hearts on the side.

With 15+ HCP, 5 clubs and 4 spades, over a 1♥ (or 1♦) response opener begins with spades:

1♣	1♥ or	1♣	1♥
1♣	1NT	1♣	2♥
2♣		3♣	

In both cases opener is showing a hand with 15+ HCP, 4 spades, and 5+ clubs. Responder should not Pass at this point.

NOTE: Showing clubs over enemy interference also shows at 15+ strength of the 1♣ opening.

Uncontested Auctions. 1♣ Opening

1♣	(1♥)	1♠	(Pass)
?			

Bidding clubs shows 15+ HCP.

The same reasoning holds when responder makes a negative double, e.g.

1♣	(1♠)	X	(Pass)
?			

This rule applies up to the 2-level:

1♣	(2♥)	X	(Pass)
?			

In both above auctions showing clubs requires 15+ HCP.

We remark that in such sequences opener's room for maneuvering is very limited. If he doesn't have a stopper in the opponent's suit and the card gods didn't bestow a lot of HCP (12-14), then he has little to bid. Showing clubs indicates at least a medium (15+) variant, and showing diamonds is even a stronger hand (*Odwrotka* over partner's 1M response, or a strong club with diamonds in all other situations).

The solution to these problems may, at first glance, seem grim. Opener must bid NT at the lowest level even without a stopper in the enemy suit (unless he has an unbid major four). However, despite appearances disaster doesn't threaten.

Responder, when he wants to play 3NT, and hasn't the enemy suit stopped, must check back on whether opener has a stopper.

Strong variant (18+)

The strong variant of the 1♣ opening distinguishes PCI from the mass of other bidding systems. The key to good operation of this system is therefore handling this unique opening variant.

We begin with naming the strengths and weaknesses of the strong club variant.

Strengths:

- 1) The ability to exactly define the total combined HCP of both hands;
This feature is accomplished by narrowing the strength of the other openings. Thanks to the 1♣ opening we can break the remaining 1-level suit openings into two narrow ranges: weak (12-14) and strong (15-17). In a system without this opening it is necessary to handle three wide strengths: 12-15, 16-18, 19-21.
- 2) The ability to find game when one of the hands is strong, and the other very weak
- 3) The ability to obtain exact information about the weak hand by saving a level when opening the strong hand;
This best applies to the situation when the strong hand has balanced distribution and the weak hand – unbalanced

Weaknesses:

- 1) Vulnerability to enemy preemption.
- 2) Leaving the room in the auction to the enemy.
- 3) Ambiguity of the 1♣ bid.

With these “for” and “against” arguments in mind, let us develop some practical rules which should be helpful while making the decision: “To open, or not to open, a strong club?”

Uncontested Auctions. 1♣ Opening

RULE 1.

Assume that partner has a balanced hand. If you choose an opening other than 1♣, and partner Passes, then can you be missing game?

If the answer is positive, open 1♣.

QUIZ. Choose the right opening bid:	
♠AKJ32 ♥K2 ♦QJ32 ♣A3	1♣ – 18 HCP
♠AKT5432 ♥A32 ♦KJ3 ♣--	1♣ – merely 15 HCP, but needs very little from partner (doubleton spade and an honor in hearts or diamonds would make game)
♠32 ♥AKQ432 ♦AQJ2 ♣2	1♣ – only 16 HCP, but one good honor (diamond King) secures 10 tricks in a heart contract

RULE 2.

“Suppose you have a 5-4 or 6-4 hand. Then if you choose an opening other than 1♣, partner bids 1NT, you bid another suit without jumping, and partner Passes, could the game have been missed?”

If the answer is positive, open 1♣.

QUIZ. Choose the right opening bid:	
♠AKJT2 ♥AQT2 ♦K32 ♣3	1♣ – holding lots of cards in the majors (9 or more), we can open a strong club with fewer HCP (good 17+)
♠AT9543 ♥A2 ♦AKJ3 ♣2	1♣ – then show spades, and diamonds later; if alternatively you open 1♣, and partner responds 1N, you have no good rebid
♠AT954 ♥A2 ♦AKJ32 ♣2	1♣ – You have a convenient rebid – jump to 3♦ to show the 5-5 distribution (15-17)

RULE 3.

A hand is most suited for a strong 1♣ opening when it would be difficult for enemy interference to prevent transmitting information about our hand.

QUIZ. Choose the right opening bid:	
♠AKT5432 ♥A32 ♦KJ3 ♣--	1♣ – whatever they bid, you can bid the same number in spades
♠-- ♥AKT5432 ♦A32 ♣KJ3	1♣ – less obvious – you might be soon fighting against spades
♠-- ♥A32 ♦AKT5432 ♣KJ3	1♦ – show your diamonds ASAP; you might be soon fighting against spades or hearts
♠AQ2 ♥KQT ♦KT43 ♣AK3	1♣ – strong balanced hand – no worry about them preempting us

How do you show the strong club variant?

The straightforward method of revealing this club variant is:

- jumping in a new suit (1♣-1♥-2♠), or
- jumping to 2NT (1♣-1♥-2NT = strong club with a balanced hand but less than 3 hearts).

Jumping in a new suit, however, is not necessary to distinguish the strong club hands:

1♣ 1♥
1♠

The above auction is forcing in PCI. It initially shows the 12-14 hands with 4 spades, but responder cannot Pass this bid since opener's hand may include the other opening hand types, including the strong club:

1♣ 1♥
1♠ 1NT
3NT

Opener has a strong balanced hand with 4 spades.

Uncontested Auctions. 1♣ Opening

1♣	1♥
1♠	1NT
2♠	

Opener has a strong hand (18+) with 5+ spades.

1♣	1♥
1♠	1NT
2♣	

4 spades, 5+ clubs, 15+ HCP; the bid is forcing for one round.

1♣	1♥
1♠	1NT
2♦	

4 spades, 5+ diamonds, 18+ HCP; the bid is forcing to game.

1♣	1♥
1♠	1NT
3♦	

Strong club (18+) with 5 spades and 5 diamonds.

1♣	1♥
1♠	1NT
3♣	

Strong club with 5 spades and 5 clubs.

The auction:

1♣	1♥
2♠	

shows something better than a strong club and 5 spades: opener has a strong club with (6+) very good spades.

Responder at the same time may not Pass in the sequence:

1♣	1♥
2♣ (15+)	

We can also communicate a strong club via an “uneconomical” major suit bid (equivalent to “natural system reversed bidding”), e.g.

1♣ 1NT
2♥(2♣)

Responder’s 1NT response excludes holding a 4-crd major, hence opener’s major suit bid should show 5 (initially, you don’t seek a fit in a suit in which there is no chance of having 8+ cards total between the two hands), and at the same time strong club strength.

Similarly:

1♣ 1♠
2♥

Responder’s 1♠ byPasses (and thus initially denies) the 4-crd heart suit. Opener’s 2♥ rebid hence shows a strong club with 5+ hearts.

Notice that playing PCI you do not need to reverse with clubs and a major four. Instead, you first introduce your real clubs (by bidding 2♣ over partner’s response, which shows 15+) and bid your major in the next turn, if necessary.

After a positive response to a 1♣ opening (anything but 1♦) and confirmation of a strong club, the auction is game-forcing.

After opener shows a strong club with a 5-crd major, responder with 3-crd support may raise opener in one of four ways:

- 1) Bid game – this is the weakest raise, strongly discouraging slam.
- 2) Bid 2NT, and on the next round bid game in partner’s suit. This sequence shows a pretty good hand (within the frame of the current auction), 3-crd support, and no ruffing potential.
- 3) Raise to the 3-level – a very encouraging raise for the context. Besides a fit it should promise ruffing values in the form of a side doubleton.
- 4) Show a fit with side shortness via a splinter.

1♦ response

In PCI the 1♦ response has 3 possible meanings:

- 1) 0-7 HCP
- 2) 8-11 HCP, unbalanced, no 4-crđ major,
- 3) 13+ HCP, balanced, no 4-crđ major or 5-crđ minor

The negative variant

Respond 1♦ with all “negative” hands. The upper limit of a “negative” is 6 HCP with a 4-crđ major and 7 HCP without. On the next round, responder normally Passes a 1-level bid by partner with 0-4 HCP and continues bidding with 5+ HCP.

1♣	1♦
1♥(1♠)	1NT

Now the 1NT bid shows 5-7 HCP. If opener has the preparatory club, he must Pass. Opener may start the auction just the same way with a strong club. Then, he would not Pass 1NT.

1♣	1♦
1♥	1NT (5-7)
2♥	?

Opener shows a strong club with 5 hearts. Yet, the auction is not game-forcing. 3♥ now would be invitational, and 4♥ - stronger.

The semipositive variant

The semipositive variant of the 1♦ response we reserve for unbalanced distributions with a minor and strength too weak to guarantee game opposite a weak opening club. The 2♣, 2♦ responses force to game so even with 11 HCP we are also forced to apply the “semipositive” variant of the 1♦ response (unless we have a good 6-crđ minor and 9-11 HCP; with that we respond in the suit at the 3-level).

In the later auction responder has the following chances to indicate the semipositive 1♦:

- jump in a minor suit, e.g.

1♣	1♦
1♥	3♣

Responder's bid shows 9-11 HCP with less-than-great 6 clubs (with a good 6-card suit responder bids 3♣ on the first round of the auction).

- bid 2♠ over a 1♥ rebid:

1♣	1♦
1♥	2♠

The above artificial sequence shows 5-4+ in the minors, and 8-11 HCP.

- bid a minor suit without jumping, e.g.

1♣	1♦
1♠	2♣

Responder has 5-11 HCP and 5+ clubs. This broad strength range doesn't lead to any special problems. Frankly, opener with the weak variant Passes, and with a strong hand bids further.

The strong variant

We show a strong variant of 1♦ response by jumping to NT in the next round. See: *Notrump responses to 1♣*.

We shall now discuss continuations after 1♦ response.

1NT, 2NT rebids

Opener's 1NT and 2NT rebids show balanced hands with 18-20 and 21-23 respectively. Responder utilizes the same methods as over a 1NT opener (see '1NT opening').

Uncontested Auctions. 1♣ Opening

1♣	1♦
1NT	?

2♣ is Stayman,
 2♦ and 2♥ are transfers to the majors,
 the remaining bids have the same meanings as over an opening 1NT, but the strength is defined by the first 1♦ response.

1♣	1♦
2NT	?

3♣ = Stayman,
 3♦, 3♥ = transfers,
 3♠ = 5-4 in the minors,
 4♣, 4♦ = natural responses (not transfers!), 6+ cards.

1♣	1♦
2NT	3♣
3♦	3♥ (3♠)

Responder is showing a 5-card suit with 4 cards in the other major.

1♥, 1♠ rebids

With 12-14, opener **may not** rebid 1NT (since this bid shows the strong NT). Opener bids his cheapest 4-card major, and if he hasn't one, then his cheapest 3-card major. Responder must take under advisement that the suit might be a "convenient" 3-card suit and should not jump-raise partner with four cards.

1♣	1♦
1♥	2♥ = 5-6 HCP, 4+ hearts

Opener starts with a 4-card major even with 5 clubs and 15-17 HCP:

1♣	1♦
1♥	1N (5-7)

2♣ = 4 hearts, 5+ clubs, 15+ HCP, forcing for one round

1♣ 1♦
 1♥/♠ 1N (5-7)
 2♦ = 4 hearts/spades, 4+ diamonds, 18+ HCP (either suit may be longer)

1♣ 1♦
 1♥ 1N (5-7)
 2♥ = 5+ hearts 18-20

2♦ rebid – game forcing

Opener's 2♦ is an artificial bid, showing that opener's hand is good enough to guarantee game (the auction cannot stop below game).

NOTE: The 2♦ rebid denies 5+-5+ distribution.

Later bidding is conducted naturally, except for responder's 2♥ rebid, which is a waiting bid: "I don't have a good suit to show". Experience shows that the responder should byPass 2♥ only with good reasons to do so. Otherwise it is advisable to let opener show where his strength lies as cheaply as possible.

QUIZ. Choose the right bid:	
Partner	You
1♣	1♦
2♦	?
♠QT532 ♥432 ♦32 ♣Q32	2♥ – spades are too freaky to be mentioned at that point
♠KQT32 ♥432 ♦32 ♣432	2♠ – this time it is quite different
♠432 ♥32 ♦Q32 ♣QJ432	2♥ – "I'm still waiting."
♠43 ♥32 ♦Q32 ♣QJT432	3♣ – "My clubs might make a good trump suit opposite a stiff honor."
♠2 ♥KJT432 ♦432 ♣432	3♥. "My hearts might make a good trump suit opposite a stiff honor."
♠JT2 ♥K2 ♦JT32 ♣Q432	2NT – super-maximum of a negative response

Uncontested Auctions. 1♣ Opening

The subsequent bidding is natural, including continuations over 2NT:

1♣	1♦
2♦	2NT

opener bids naturally (e.g. 3♣ shows a club suit).

After the following auction:

1♣	1♦
2♦	2♥

opener shows his suits, and with a balanced hand rebids 2NT. This bid promises at least 24 HCP and is game-forcing ("even if partner has zero, we can't stop short").

Over:

1♣	1♦
2♦	2♥
2NT	?

the auction proceeds exactly as it would have over:

1♣	1♦
2NT	

That means that Stayman and Jacoby transfers are in use.

Other 2-level bids and 3-level minor rebids

The remaining rebids at the 2-level (over a negative 1♦) are natural and show a strong club with at least 5 cards in the suit bid. Same thing holds for a bid of a minor at the 3-level.

Remember that a jump to 2♥ or 2♠ promises more strength than just a strong club (20+HCP). With any strong hand based on long diamonds, opener has no choice but bid 3♦ (unless he has a major four and 18-20 when he can rebid 1M) because 2♦ rebid is occupied by a game force.

Two-suited strong club hands

We use a special treatment for 2-suiter game forcing hands facing a negative response.

1♣ 1♦
?

3♥ = 2-suited with ♥

3♠ = 2-suited with ♠ + minor

4♣ = 2-suited with the minors

Continuations are analogous to those after 2♥ and 2♠ openings:

Over 3♥

- 3♠ = better ♠ than ♥
- 3N = asks for 2nd suit (4♥ = spades)
- 4♣/4♦ = positive for hearts (cuebids)

Over 3♠

- 3N = positive ask for the minor suit (suggests a good hand)
- 4♣ = negative – Pass/correct (the minor is the lesser evil than spades)
- 4♦/4♥ = positive for spades (cuebids)

Over 4♣

- 4♦ = sets diamonds as trumps
- 4♥/4♠ = cuebid for clubs
- 4N = positive for clubs with no cuebid

Actual hand (ACBL Nationals, San Diego, 2009):

Martens	Jassem	Martens	Jassem	
♠J96 ♥3 ♦Q743 ♣T6542	♠3 ♥AKQ7654 ♦AKT82 ♣--	1♦ 3♠ ² 4N ⁴ Pass	1♣ 3♥ ¹ 4♦ ³ 6♦	¹ Hearts and another, 5+- 5+ ² Spades better than hearts ³ Hearts and diamonds ⁴ Good diamond fit, no cuebid

At the other table the Dutch played 4♥.

Uncontested Auctions. 1♣ Opening

Two-suited jumps do not apply in competition.

1♣	(P)	1♦	(1♠)
?			

3♥ = very strong hand with ♥

2♠ = 2-suited with hearts (Michaels)

Jump to 3NT

Gambling to take 9 tricks with the aid of a “running” minor (usually a solid 6+-card minor).

1♥, 1♠ responses

The 1♥ and 1♠ responses show 7+ HCP (no upper limit) and at least 4 cards in the bid suit. With both 4-crd majors we respond 1♥ (following the general rule that 4-crd suits are introduced up the line), with 5 spades and 4 hearts we bid 1♠, and with 5+ cards in each major we respond 1♠ (following the general rule that with 2 five-card suits we bid the higher one first).

Holding a 4-crd major and a 5-crd minor we first show the major with less-than-GF strength (up to 11 HCP), but with 12+ HCP we bid the 5-crd minor first at the 2-level.

Let us now discuss the scheme of responses after the 1♥ and 1♠ responses.

1♣	1♥
1♠	

Opener's 1♠ bid is forcing. He bids this with the preparatory variant (12-14), with the strong club and 4 spades, or with the strong club and 5 spades (later rebidding spades), or with hands of 5 clubs and 4 spades and 15+ HCP (later bidding clubs).

Modifying the Magister convention

The Magister convention (discussed in a later chapter) requires modification for the sequences:

1♣	1♥
1♠	2♣

since opener may still have a strong club. Here are the extra suggested bids (2♦, 2♥, 2♠, 2NT have the same meanings as normal Magister):

- 3♣ = 5 clubs, 4 spades, 15+ HCP,
- 3♦ = 5 diamonds, 4 spades, 18+ HCP,
- 3♥ = 5 spades, 3 hearts, 18+ HCP,
- 3♠ = 5 spades, 0-2 hearts, 18+ HCP,
- 3NT = 4 spades, 18+ HCP (denying 3 hearts, since Odwrotka was not used first).

Raising the major suit

1♣	1♥(1♠)
2♥(2♠)	

Raising the major response promises 4 cards in that suit. Continuations are just like after a 1M opening and a simple raise (responder may show her side suit or temporize with 2N).

Other sequences over 1♥, 1♠ responses

1♣	1♥(1♠)
1♠(1NT)	2♦

Responder's 2♦ bid shows 7-10 HCP, at least 5 diamonds, and a hand not suited for playing in NT. Opener usually Passes, or with special values can try 2NT.

1♣	1♥
1♠	1N
?	

- 2♣ = 15+, 4 spades, 5 clubs, forcing
- 2♦ = 18+, 4 spades, 5+ diamonds, forcing
- 2♠ = 5+ spades, 18+
- 3♣/♦ = 5 spades and 5 cards in the bid suit

Uncontested Auctions. 1♣ Opening

1♣ 1♥

1♣/N ?

2♣ = Magister

2♦ = nonforcing with 5 diamonds (7-11)

1♣ 1♥(1♠)

2♣

The 2♣ rebid promises a hand with 15+ HCP. It is not game-forcing. Responder has three non-forcing bids available: rebidding the major, 2NT and 3♣.

1♣ 1♥

2♣ ?

2♦ = ART game force

2♥/2N/3♣ = nonforcing

2♠ = natural, forcing, expresses concern about diamonds

1♣ 1♠

2♣ ?

2♦ = ART game force

2♥/2♠/2N/3♣ = nonforcing

3♦/♥ = 5-5 gameforcing

3♠ = natural, forcing

Odwrotka (Fit-Reverse)

1♣ 1♥/1♠

2♦

This artificial bid shows the strong club with a 3-crd fit for responder's major. The bid is forcing to game.

1♣ 1♥/1♠
2♦ ?

2♥ = weak with 4 cards in the major bid

2♠ = strong with 4 cards

2N = weak with 5 cards

3♣ = strong with 5 cards

3♦ = weak with 6(+) cards

3♥ = strong with 6(+) cards

Those interested in a more sophisticated solution are referred to PCI Pro.

We respond “strong” with a hand well suited for a slam bidding.

We bid “strong” with either:

- 1) a hand that would open a bidding or
- 2) a hand with less HCP but nice distribution and/or good trumps

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♣	1♥
2♦	?
What do you bid with these hands?	
♠K32 ♥A632 ♦QJ2 ♣J32	2♥. Not strong enough to invite slam.
♠K2 ♥AJT2 ♦QJ32 ♣432	2♠. Almost opening hand with good hearts.
♠32 ♥AQJ2 ♦QJT32 ♣32	2♠. Nice trumps, good distribution.
♠QJ3 ♥J9876 ♦KJ6 ♣QJ	2N. No opening, bad trump suit.
♠32 ♥KQT54 ♦AJ65 ♣32	3♣. Good trumps, nice shape.
♠32 ♥KQJ643 ♦743 ♣J3	3♦. Six hearts, weak.
♠A32 ♥KQJ643 ♦743 ♣3	3♥. Six heart, strong.

Uncontested Auctions. 1♣ Opening

QUIZ - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?				
W	E	W	E	Commentary
♠KJ105 ♥AJ3 ♦AQ65 ♣K3	♠Q865 ♥Q754 ♦K3 ♣J65	1♣ 2♦ 2♠ ¹ 4♠	1♥ 2♥ 3♠	¹ 4 spades
♠QJ2 ♥KJ32 ♦AQ4 ♣AK4	♠K32 ♥A632 ♦J92 ♣J32	1♣ 2♦ 2BA ¹	1♥ 2♥ 3BA	¹ waiting
♠AQ4 ♥KJ32 ♦QJ3 ♣AK4	♠K5 ♥AQ108 ♦K932 ♣432	1♣ 2♦ 2BA 3♥	1♥ 2♠ 3♦ ... ²	¹ Promises 4 hearts (2♦ promised 3), "let's talk about slam" ² "With pleasure"
♠AQ42 ♥KJ32 ♦J76 ♣AK	♠K5 ♥AQ108 ♦K932 ♣432	1♣ 2♦ 2BA 4♥ ¹	1♥ 2♠ 3♦ Pass	¹ "I am not happy with you having diamonds besides your heart suit"
♠AK52 ♥Q32 ♦Q97 ♣AK10	♠QJ3 ♥J9876 ♦KJ6 ♣QJ6	1♣ 2♦ 3N ¹	1♥ 2N Pass ²	¹ Suggestion ² Accepted
♠AK52 ♥Q32 ♦Q97 ♣AK10	♠3 ♥KJ987 ♦KJ6 ♣J632	1♣ 2♦ 3N ¹ Pass	1♥ 2N 4♥	¹ Suggestion ² Rejected
♠A52 ♥Q32 ♦AK52 ♣AJ3	♠KJ8 ♥KJ1087 ♦QJ32 ♣2	1♣ 2♦ 3♦ ¹ ...	1♥ 3♣ 4♦ ²	¹ Looking for 4-4 fit ² Found!
♠A52 ♥Q32 ♦AKJ2 ♣A54	♠KJ8 ♥KJ1087 ♦2 ♣QJ32	1♣ 2♦ 3♦ ¹ Pass	1♥ 3♣ 4♥ ²	¹ Looking for 4-4 fit ² Not found at all!

1♣ 1♥

2♠ = 6+ spades (or 5 great ones), 18+

1♣ 1♥ (1♠)

2NT

Opener is showing an 18-23 HCP hand without 3-crd support for responder's major. Even a singleton is allowed in responder's suit (e.g. 5 diamonds and 4 hearts over responder's 1♠). Continuations are natural. Responder only rebids his suit immediately with 6 or a very good 5 cards.

Note the following treatment:

1♣ 1♥

3♣ = 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs, 18+ (!!!)

This treatment is necessary because otherwise showing both minors would be difficult. With 5+ clubs and 4 diamonds, we can bid 1♣-1♥-2♣, showing a strong club (even very strong) with a club suit.

1♣ 1♥

3♦ = 6+ diamonds, denies 4 spades or 4 clubs, 18+

1♣ 1♥

3♥ = 15-17 HCP, unbalanced, NF

1♣ 1♥

3♥ 3♠ = asks for shortness (3N = spades, 4♥ = none)

1♣ 1♥

3NT

Opener is trying to take 9 tricks based on a solid club suit. For example, it might be bid with :

♠ K32 ♥ 32 ♦ K2 ♣ AKQ432

or

♠ A2 ♥ 2 ♦ Q32 ♣ AKQ5432.

1NT response

Responder's 1NT response shows 8-11 HCP with no 4-crds major or shortness. This may include a 5-crds minor (even the occasional 5-4 minors hand). See also: *Bidding NT hands over a 1♣ Opening*.

Continuations over the 1NT response

1♣ 1NT
2♣

This sequence is natural, promising a good 15 HCP and **is forcing**. Continuations are as natural as possible. Of course bidding a major by responder has seminatural meaning – showing an honor (or honors) in the suit, and not a 4-crds suit, since responder already denied a 4-crds major.

1♣ 1NT
2♦

Opener has a strong club (18+) with at least 4 diamonds. Nobody can Pass below game. Further bidding is semi-natural (as over 1♣-1NT-2♣). Responder with a 4-crds diamond fit can show the better major or raise diamonds to the 3-level if the majors are of equal quality.

1♣ 1NT
2♥(2♠)

Opener has at least 5 cards in the bid suit, a strong club, and the auction is game-forcing. As you remember, the sequence:

1♣ 1NT
2♥ 3♥

promises not just a fit but also a ruffing source (any doubleton).

1♣ 1NT
3♣(3♦)

Good 6 cards in the bid suit, strong club, game-forcing.

1♣ 1NT

3♥(3♠)

Sets the major as trumps. Demands partner show his cheapest cue (Ace or King).

2♣, 2♦ responses

The 2♣ and 2♦ responses are game-forcing and show at least 5 cards in the bid suit. The minimum strength of these responses is 12 HCP.

Continuations over 2♣, 2♦ responses

Opener shows a 4-crd major (hearts, if both).

With a strong club opener doesn't jump, since the auction is game-forcing.

Raising responder's suit promises a 4-crd fit and no 4-crd major – it doesn't have to show extras. Responder rebidding his suit is forcing, e.g.

1♣ 2♦

2♥ 3♦

Opener may not Pass. The agreement is that invitational minor hands respond 3♣ or 3♦ immediately, or first go through 1♦.

2♥, 2♠ responses

Strong hand, very good suit, slam interest. See jump-shifts (chapter *Conventions*) for more details.

2NT response

The 2NT response shows 11-12 HCP with no 4-crd major or (as a rule) 5-crd minor. For details, see: *Bidding NT hands over a 1♣ Opening*.

3♣ and 3♦ Responses

These bids are nonforcing, showing a good 6+card suit. By a good suit we mean that any top honor in partner's hand stands to make the suit run. The suit should therefore have 2 top honors (AK, AQ, KQ), or any two honors and the Ten (AJT, KJT).

Uncontested Auctions. 1♣ Opening

Continuations over 3♣ and 3♦ Responses

1♣ 3♣
?

3♦ = seminatural: "Partner, bid a stopper." Gameforcing.

3♥/♠ = strong club, 5+crds

1♣ 3♦
?

3♥/♠ = ambiguous: natural 5+cards, or shows a stopper for 3N – gameforcing

Example auctions for the 3♦ response can be found in the section *Slam Bidding – Learning from the Mistakes of the Masters*.

Over both responses, the weak club variant does not show / ask stoppers: we decide to either bid 3N, or Pass.

3♥, 3♠ responses

These responses show 7-crds to two top honors in the suit bid, and nothing on the side. Partner with 3 "bare" Aces (with one in our suit) has the perfect info to wager 3NT and can make this contract with only 17 HCP, ... unless we have "taken liberties", e.g. in our suits we have the "lesser marriage" (Queen and Jack) – here we are left several short.

3NT response

The 2NT response shows 13-15 HCP with no 4-crd major or (as a rule) 5-crd minor, typically flat 4-3-3-3 distribution. For details, see: *Bidding NT hands over a 1♣ Opening*.

Bidding NT hands over a 1♣ Opening

1♣ 2N = invite to 3N with no 4-crd major; 11-12 HCP

1♣ 3N = 13-15, any 4333, good for NT (secondary honors)

Most gameforcing NT hands use this typical sequence:

1♣ 1♦
1♥/1♠ 2N = 13+, NT distribution

All gameforcing NT hands without a 4-crd major use this sequence.
Opener with a weak 1♣ simply raises to 3N.

QUIZ Partner 1♣ What do we bid with these hands?	
♠KJ3 ♥QJ6 ♦QJ76 ♣AJ3	3N. 4333 shape, soft hand.
♠A32 ♥KQ3 ♦KT3 ♣QT95	1♦. 14 HCP but not one Jack. This hand points towards slam if partner has a strong club!
♠KJ3 ♥QJ6 ♦AQJ7 ♣AJ3	1♦. Too strong for a 3N response.
♠KJ3 ♥QJ6 ♦QT76 ♣K93	2N. Invite to 3N.
♠Q3 ♥KJ4 ♦QJ743 ♣Q73	2N. A 2♦ response would be gameforcing.
♠KQ3 ♥KJ4 ♦QJ743 ♣Q7	2♦. Gameforcing. No reason to bid 3N.
♠Q3 ♥KJ ♦Q9765 ♣KT87	2N. Honors in the short suits point towards NT, and it's not a gameforcing hand.
♠32 ♥32 ♦AQ975 ♣KJ87	1♦. Over 1♥ by partner – 2♠ (ART: both minors). Over 1♠ – 2♦ (you have no way to show 5-4 minors there).

The 3N response is a warning, "Partner I have a strong hand but it is bad for slam." Even a strong 1♣ hand may Pass this. But if opener bids again, it is forcing:

1♣ 3N
4suit = "I know you what you have, but please cuebid"

Uncontested Auctions. 1♣ Opening

QUIZ - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?			
W	E	W	E
♠AQ5 ♥K92 ♦AJ5 ♣A832	♠KJ3 ♥QJ8 ♦KT3 ♣QJ75	1♣ Pass	3N
♠AQ964 ♥K92 ♦QT2 ♣AK	♠KJ3 ♥QJ8 ♦KJ3 ♣QJ75	1♣ Pass	3N
♠T5 ♥AK8542 ♦A2 ♣AK2	♠KJ3 ♥QJ7 ♦KT3 ♣QJ75	1♣ 4♥ 6N	3N 4♠ (obligatory cuebid) Pass
♠T5 ♥AK8542 ♦A2 ♣AK2	♠QJ3 ♥QJ7 ♦KJ3 ♣QJ75	1♣ 4♥ 5♥	3N 5♦ (obligatory cuebid) Pass

Modern bridge recognizes that there is a “correct side” from which to declare a NT contract. Therefore a hand that is unfit to declare NT should attempt to Pass the baton to partner.

1♣	1♦	
1♥	3♠	= 13-15 balanced, “Partner, bid 3N.”

1♣	1♦	
1♠	3♥	= 13-15 balanced, “Partner, bid 3N.”

QUIZ - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?				
W	E	W	E	Commentary
♠KJ54 ♥Q3 ♦QT9 ♣KJ82	♠32 ♥A87 ♦KJ87 ♣AQ75	1♣ 1♠ 3N	1♦ 3♥ ("bid 3N")	
♠J4 ♥K954 ♦AT9 ♣KJ82	♠632 ♥A8 ♦KJ87 ♣AQ72	1♣ 1♥ 3N	1♦ 3♠	
♠AK976 ♥K2 ♦A3 ♣KJT2	♠32 ♥A87 ♦KJ87 ♣AQ75	1♣ 1♠ 3♠ ¹ 4♣ 4N 7♣	1♦ 3♥ 3N 4♦ ² 5♠ ³	¹ Strong club with 5 spades ² cuebid for clubs ³ 2 KC + ♣Q
♠K2 ♥AK976 ♦A3 ♣KJT2	♠A87 ♥32 ♦KJ87 ♣AQ75	1♣ 1♥ 4♣ ¹ 4N 7♣	1♦ 3♠ 4♦ ² 5♠ ³	¹ 2 meanings: 5+♥-4+♣, or 4♥-5+♣ ² cue for clubs, the last bid suit ³ 2 KC + ♣Q

After the "strong diamond", opener does not always bid 1♥ or 1♠.
 How do we deal with the other rebids?

1♣ 1♦
 1N ?

4N = invite to slam (13-14)

5N = pick a slam in a minor

Conventions – The Uncontested Auctions

Jump-shift Responses

Bidding a new suit with a single jump shows a gameforcing hand with a *very good* suit, and slam chances. A very good suit would need just a singleton honor in partner's hand to solve what the question of trumps should be.

QUIZ. Partner opens 1♦. What do you bid with these hands?	
♠AQ9765 ♥A3 ♦K4 ♣K32	1♠. The suit is too weak to jump. A singleton honor in spades with partner does not mean spades should be trumps (yet).
♠K7 ♥A3 ♦Q4 ♣AQT8743	3♣. If partner has the singleton King or Jack of clubs the trump suit has been found. If partner has the Jack, and we have a loser (king), we can find it out via RKC.
♠K7 ♥A3 ♦32 ♣AQT8743	2♣. The hand is a bit too weak in honor strength to jump. It requires too much in partner's hand to think about slam.
♠AQJT4 ♥A3 ♦KQ2 ♣432	2♠. Then later support diamonds. If partner has the King of spades, then it is easy to count the tricks for slam. Give partner: ♠K3 ♥432 ♦AT7654 ♣A5 and there are 13 tricks in NT.
♠AQJ976 ♥AKJ3 ♦2 ♣Q3	1♠. Don't jump with a good side suit. It may be better to play in hearts.
♠AKQJ72 ♥A ♦32 ♣Q932	2♠. If partner bids 2N, rebid clubs. But not to play clubs! Just to complete your distribution for partner.

QUIZ.	
You	Partner
1♦	2♠
?	
What do you bid with these hands?	
♠Q32 ♥J3 ♦AQ876 ♣K32	3♠. Spade fit, encouraging hand.
♠Q3 ♥A3 ♦AJ876 ♣K987	3♠. A doubleton Queen is a fit. And the Aces/Kings – these partner needs for slam.
♠J87 ♥QJ ♦KJ865 ♣KJ65	4♠. Minimum opening, and there is nothing to lure partner with.
♠T3 ♥2 ♦AQJ87 ♣KQ654	3♣. Natural.
♠3 ♥AJ3 ♦AQJT76 ♣J65	3♦. “Maybe diamonds are better than spades, partner?”
♠Q ♥KJ3 ♦AT8765 ♣Q65	2N. Waiting. Diamonds are too weak to rebid.

RKC and Exclusion Blackwood both can be used, and the jumped suit is trumps. Rebidding the jump suit sets that suit as trumps.

Fourth Suit Forcing

Fourth suit forcing is a cheap bid in the only unbid suit. It is not a natural bid, nor does it promise any length or strength in the suit.

The goals of 4th suit are:

- 1) Find out whether partner has a stopper in the suit for NT,
- 2) Ask for more information about partner's strength and distribution,
- 3) Set partner's suit in a forcing manner,
- 4) Set another specific suit in a forcing manner.

Conventions – The Uncontested Auctions

Examples of the Fourth Suit Forcing:

1♦	1♥
1♠	2♣

1♥	1♠
2♣	2♦

1♠	2♣
2♦	2♥

1♠	2♣
2♥	3♦

Fourth suit is not gameforcing after a 1-over-1 response. But only the player who bid the 4th suit may Pass below game.

Fourth suit is gameforcing over a 2-over-1 response.

Continuations over Fourth Suit Forcing

In response to Fourth Suit Forcing:

- A jump shows extra strength;
- Opener shows a 3 card fit for partner if she has it;
- With 5-5 shape opener rebids their second suit;
- With 5-4 shape without a fit for partner, opener bids:
2N = minimum hand with at least a half-stopper (Qx)
in the fourth suit,

Rebids the opened suit = minimum hand without a half-stopper

3N = maximum hand with a stopper in the fourth suit

Three of the fourth suit = maximum hand without a half-stopper in the fourth suit

QUIZ - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?				
W	E	W	E	
♠AQ ^T 87 ♥KQ876 ♦32 ♣2	♠J3 ♥AJ3 ♦T54 ♣AQ986	1♠ 2♥ 3♥ Pass	2♣ 3♦ ¹ 4♥	¹⁴ th suit
♠AQ ^T 87 ♥KQ87 ♦Q32 ♣2	♠J3 ♥AJ3 ♦T54 ♣AQ986	1♠ 2♥ 3N	2♣ 3♦ ¹ Pass	¹⁴ th suit
♠AQ ^T 87 ♥KQ87 ♦32 ♣J2	♠J3 ♥AJ3 ♦T54 ♣AQ986	1♠ 2♥ 3♠ ²	2♣ 3♦ ¹ 4♠	¹⁴ th suit ² Does not promise 6 spades.

QUIZ. Partner You 1♥ 1♠ 2♣ ? How do you plan the auction with these hands?	
♠AQ432 ♥K97 ♦J97 ♣J7	3♥. Invite with heart fit.
♠AQ432 ♥K97 ♦A97 ♣K7	2♦. And on the next round raise hearts, which would be gameforcing.
♠AQJ987 ♥6 ♦K32 ♣J32	3♠. Invite to 4♠.
♠AQ9876 ♥6 ♦AK2 ♣K32	2♦. And on the next round rebid spades, forcing to game.

Third Suit Forcing

Third suit forcing is when there are two unbid suits – responder’s rebid in one of them is 3rd suit forcing. Third Suit Forcing does not require 4 cards in the suit, and is forcing to game.

QUIZ. Is the last bid Third Suit Forcing?	
1♥ 2♣ 2♥ 2♣	Yes. Responder does not need to have 4 spades at all.
1♦ 1♥ 2♣	No. 2♣ is a completely natural bid. Third Suit Forcing is used by responder, not opener.
1♣ 2♦ 2♥ 2♣	Yes. We do not consider 1♣ a natural bid, thus this is Third (not Fourth) Suit Forcing.
1♦ 1♠ 2♦ 2♥	Yes. Responder has either 5 spades and 4 hearts, or wants to force the auction without byPassing the 2- level.
1♦ 1♥ 1♠ 2♣	No. The last bid by responder is 4 th Suit Forcing.
1♥ 1♠ 2♥ 3♣	Yes. 3♣ is forcing, not necessarily real clubs.

What are the uses of Third Suit Forcing?

- 1) To find out if there is a fit in this suit.
- 2) To show worry about the unbid suit.
- 3) To set partner’s suit in a forcing manner.
- 4) To set one’s own suit in a forcing manner.

How does Opener proceed?

As naturally as possible – with one exception:

Jump to 3N shows four cards in the Third Suit and the stopper in the unbid suit.

QUIZ - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?				
W	E	W	E	Commentary
♠KJT7 ♥AT95 ♦K2 ♣J54	♠AQ65 ♥J6 ♦AQT87 ♣32	1♣ 2♥ 3♣ ² Pass	2♦ 2♠ ¹ 4♠	¹ Third Suit ² Four spades without a club stopper good for NT.
♠KJT7 ♥AT95 ♦K2 ♣J54	♠AQ6 ♥QJ6 ♦AQT87 ♣32	1♣ 2♥ 3♣ ² Pass	2♦ 2♠ ¹ 4♥ ³	¹ Third Suit ² Four spades without a club stopper good for NT. ³ "OK, let's try hearts."
♠KJT7 ♥AT95 ♦K2 ♣KJ4	♠AQ6 ♥QJ6 ♦AQT87 ♣32	1♣ 2♥ 3N ²	2♦ 2♠ ¹ Pass	¹ Third Suit ² Four spades and a club stopper!
♠KT ♥AT95 ♦J32 ♣KJT4	♠AQ7 ♥QJ6 ♦AQT87 ♣32	1♣ 2♥ 2N ² Pass	2♦ 2♠ ¹ 3N	¹ Third Suit ² Promises a club stopper, denies 4 spades.

2N Forcing

2N Forcing is yet another gameforcing bid by responder. 2N applies after a 2-over-1 response, or reverse.

Conventions – The Uncontested Auctions

QUIZ. Is the last bid 2N Forcing?	
1♥ 2♣ 2♥ 2N	Yes.
1♥ 1♠ 2♥ 2N	No. The initial response was at the 1-level
1♥ 2♣ 2N	No. 2N Forcing applies to responder's bid, not opener's. (the bid is forcing by common sense, not by convention)
1♠ 2♦ 2♥ 2N	Yes. Responder wants to find out more about opener's hand.
1♦ 1♠ 2♥ 2N	Yes. Over a reverse, 2N is forcing.
1♥ 1♠ 2♣ 2N	No. 2♣ was not a reverse.

What are the uses of 2N Forcing?

- 1) To find out more about partner's hand, before we decide what suit to set as trumps
- 2) To find out more about partner's hand at the lowest level possible, even when we know what trumps will be

See the quiz on the next page to check if you can make the proper use of 2N Forcing.

QUIZ. Partner You 1♥ 2♣ 2♥ ? Partner has shown minimum (12 -14) with at least 5 hearts. How do you bid with these hands?	
♠AT3 ♥J2 ♦K62 ♣AJT87	2N. If partner has 6 hearts, then you will play in hearts. If he has a four card club fit, then maybe you belong to clubs. Else 3N.
♠AK3 ♥J3 ♦642 ♣AJT87	2♠. Third Suit. You can't play in 3N if partner has no diamond stopper.
♠A65 ♥Q4 ♥K32 ♣AKJ83	2N. You only really want to think about slam if you find an 8-crd fit. So hope to hear 3♣ or 3♥ now.
♠AJ3 ♥32 ♥AK3 ♣AJ9865	2N. 3♣ would be nonforcing.
♠T87 ♥3 ♥AK3 ♣AK9765	3♦. Third Suit. "Partner do you have a spade stopper?"
♠75 ♥KJ3 ♥AQ52 ♣AKJ5	2N. You don't have to have a spade stopper if you have no plans on playing 3N (there is a heart fit). With 2N you hope to hear more about the layout of partner's hand.

Continuations over Forcing 2N

Further bidding is assumed natural.

Conventions – The Uncontested Auctions

QUIZ You Partner 1♥ 2♣ 2♦ 2N ? So far we have shown 5-4 with 12 – 17 HCP. How do you bid with the following hands?	
♠32 ♥AQ765 ♦KQJ86 ♣7	3♦. Five diamonds.
♠32 ♥AQ765 ♦KQJ8 ♣32	3N. Don't worry about the weak spades as partner bid 2N so should have a stopper (or plan).
♠KJ3 ♥AQ654 ♦KT87 ♣2	3♣. Partner wants to know our distribution.
♠K3 ♥AQ6542 ♦KT87 ♣2	3♥. True, hearts are pretty weak but we you to show your sixth card.
♠K2 ♥AQJ87 ♦KQT2 ♣Q5	4N. Partner didn't expect that! If you go down one when partner was just looking for a sixth heart you can apologize.

QUIZ - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?				
W	E	W	E	Commentary
♠2 ♥AKJ65 ♦K542 ♣J42	♠KQT ♥Q7 ♦AQ3 ♣A7653	1♥ 2♦ 3♣ ² Pass	2♣ 2N ¹ 3N	¹ Forcing 2N ² Three clubs

QUIZ (continued) - How should the bidding proceed with these hands?				
♠2 ♥AKJ652 ♦KJ54 ♣32	♠KQT ♥Q7 ♦AQ3 ♣A7654	1♥ 2♦ 3♥ ² 4♦ ⁴ Pass	2♣ 2N ¹ 3♠ ³ 4♥	¹ Forcing 2N ² Six hearts ³ Cue for hearts ⁴ Diamond cue, no club cue
♠32 ♥AKJ652 ♦KJ54 ♣2	♠KQT ♥Q7 ♦AQ3 ♣A7654	1♥ 2♦ 3♥ ² 4♦ ⁴ 5♥ ⁶ Pass	2♣ 2N ¹ 3♠ ³ 4N ⁵ 6♥	¹ Forcing 2N ² Six hearts ³ Cue for hearts ⁴ Club cue ⁵ RKC for hearts ⁶ 2 KC, no ♥Q
♠J32 ♥AK652 ♦KJ54 ♣3	♠KQT ♥Q7 ♦AQ93 ♣A765	1♥ 2♦ 3♠ ² 4♥ ⁴ 5♥ ⁶ Pass	2♣ 2N ¹ 4♦ ³ 4N ⁵ 6♦	¹ Forcing 2N ² Three spades ³ Sets diamonds ⁴ Cue ⁵ RKC for diamonds ⁶ 2 KC, no ♦Q

Magister

Magister is an artificial 2♣ ask by responder after having responded at the 1-level in a major.

QUIZ. Which of the following sequences' final bid is Magister?	
1♥ 1♠ 1N 2♣	Yes. Most common.
1♣ 1♦ 1N 2♣	No. Responder's first response was not in a major. This is Stayman.
1♦ 1♥ 1♠ 2♣	No. The exception. 2♣ here is Fourth Suit Forcing.

Meanings of Magister

Magister asks about support and strength, and is at least invitational to game.

Note! Responder's 3♣ bid in Magister's position is a signoff.

QUIZ. Partner You 1♣ 1♠ 1N ? How do you bid with these hands?	
♠KJ976 ♥T6 ♦AQ65 ♣J3	2♣. Asking for three card spade support with an invitational hand.
♠KJ976 ♥A6 ♦AQ65 ♣J3	2♣. Asking for three card spade support with a gameforcing hand (the same).
♠AKJ87 ♥T6 ♦AQ76 ♣3	3♦. Showing 5 spades, 5 diamonds. Partner should be able to tell where we should play. Perhaps even a 7 card spade fit.
♠A543 ♥76 ♦2 ♣QJ8765	3♣. (!) Signoff in clubs. As 2♣ is artificial, you need to put the signoff somewhere else.
♠AKJ87 ♥T6 ♦3 ♣AQ76	2♣. You have to start with 2♣ since partner would Pass 3♣.
♠KJ943 ♥QJ654 ♦43 ♣2	2♥. Natural, nonforcing.
♠KJ943 ♥AQJ6 ♦K32 ♣2	2♣. If partner does not have a spade fit, you can still discover a heart fit.
♠A543 ♥76 ♦42 ♣KQJ86	2N. The system does not have a way of inviting with a 5 card minor. Those who are dissatisfied with the solution should refer to PCI Pro.

Continuations over Magister

Opener's bids follow this scheme:

- 2♦ = minimum (12-13) without three card support for responder's major
- 2 of partner's suit = minimum with three card support
- 2 of the other major = maximum with three card support
- 2N = maximum without support

QUIZ.	
You	Partner
1♦	1♠
1N	2♣
?	
How do you bid these hands?	
♠3 ♥KJ76 ♦AQ65 ♣QJ32	2♦. Minimum, no fit. A singleton in partner's suit decreases the value of this hand.
♠T3 ♥KJ5 ♦KQT87 ♣AT3	2N. Maximum without a fit. The good diamond suit increases the value of the hand.
♠T3 ♥KJ97 ♦AQT76 ♣A2	2N. Partner did not ask about hearts – 2♥ would show a spade fit.
♠KJ3 ♥76 ♦AQT76 ♣KT5	2♥. Maximum with a fit.
♠Q87 ♥Q6 ♦AQT76 ♣KT5	2♠. Minimum with a fit.

The Magister bidder has choices on the following round:

- Rebidding her own suit at the 2 level – nonforcing
- Bidding a game – partner has nothing more to contribute
- Bidding a new suit or 2N – forcing

Conventions – Slam bidding

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♣	1♠
1N	2♣
2♥	?
Partner has shown 12-13 with spade support. How do you plan the rest of the auction with these hands?	
♠AJ976 ♥6 ♦2 ♣KJ9765	4♠. Why show clubs? You are going to play 4♠ anyway.
♠AQ765 ♥A3 ♦32 ♣AQJ3	2N. 4♠ is easy, but if partner bids 3♣ now, we can think about slam.
♠AQ87 ♥K3 ♦AJT7 ♣AJ2	2N. Does partner have four diamonds? Then there is a chance of slam.
♠KQT873 ♥3 ♦AQ3 ♣KJ5	4♥. Splinter for spades.

Drury

Drury refers to an artificial 2♣ response by a Passed hand to a 1♥ or 1♠ opening by partner. This response promises at least a three card fit for partner's suit with at least a good nine HCP. We also use this convention in response to partner's major suit overcall – in this case the condition of being a Passed hand is not needed.

Continuations after Drury

The major-suit opener has the following bids available:

- 2♦ = a hand slightly better than an immediate return to the suit
- Rebidding our suit = sub-minimum, game highly-unlikely
- Any other bid = natural game try

Personally, in response to Drury I recommend giving away the least information: rebidding the suit with a weak hand, bidding game with a wide range of strengths, and 2♦ - counter-try. Bidding a side suit game try is a double-edged sword – on one hand it adds precision to game-bidding, but on the other it gives the opponents information.

Conventions – Slam Bidding

This section consists of two parts. First comes an overview of the principles. In the second part I propose a method: “Learning from the Mistakes of the Masters”. The context is the Polish contingent in the 2000 Maastricht Olympiad quarterfinals, semifinals, and finals. In each of the cases, one pair made a mistake in the bidding, reaching the wrong contract. The task of the reader is to find the proper sequence in Polish Club International. Then your solution will be compared with that proposed by myself and Krzysztof Martens.

Examples were selected by Krzysztof Martens, whom I thank for providing some of his training materials. Martens also verified my proposed sequences as correct for Polish Club and suggested improvements and corrections. The final solution is that agreed upon by both of us.

RKC 1430

Roman Keycard Blackwood asks for five keycards: the four Aces and the King of trumps. The trump suit has usually been set, but if not, it is taken to be the last-bid suit.

Asking for the Queen of trumps, and Kings

After the RKC responses (5♣ and 5♦), the next cheap step not trumps asks for the Queen of trumps. Responses are the following:

- Cheap step = I do not have the trump Queen
- Next step = I have the trump Queen

The ask for Kings is the next cheapest step outside of trumps:

Spades is trumps:

4N	5♣ (1 or 4)
?	

5♦ = *Do you have the trump Queen?*

5♥ = *How many Kings do you have?*

Conventions – Slam bidding

For examples of RKC in action I encourage you to continue on to “Learning from the Mistakes of the Masters”.

Exclusion Keycard Blackwood

After trumps have been set, a jump in a side suit at the 5-level (or 4♣ when hearts is trumps) is Exclusion Keycard Blackwood – it shows a void in the bid suit and asks for the number of keycards not counting the Ace of the void suit.

5N RKC

When a competitive auction (or cuebidding sequence) has pushed the level past 4N, the ask for keycards is 5N. Responses are analogous to those after 4N (6♣ = 1 or 4, etc).

5N Trump Ask

If 5N is not RKC, then it is a Trump Ask. Responses:

- 6♣ = 0 top honors in trumps
- 6♦ = 1 top honor
- 6♥ = 2 top honors
- 7 of trumps = 3 top honors

Trump Invite

A trump invite is a jump to 5 of the agreed major suit: “Partner, Pass with weak trumps, bid slam with good trumps.”

Cuebids

A cuebid is a slambidding tool that indicates slam interest and shows first- or second-round control.

First- and Second-round Control cuebids

A cuebid in a suit with an Ace or void is first-round control. A cuebid in a suit with a King or singleton is second-round control.

Honor cuebids and Shortness cuebids

A cuebid in a suit in which we have an Ace or King is an Honor cuebid. A cuebid in a suit in which we have a singleton or void is a Shortness cuebid.

Preference of Shortness cuebids

When we have shown 9 cards in 2 suits we give preference to Shortness cuebids (with no shortness we may bid 3N as a general slam try).

Splinter

A splinter is an artificial jump to the 3- or 4-level (rarely 5-level). It shows shortness in the bid suit, and sets the last-bid suit as trumps (if not set already). A description of this convention may be found in the *1♥ Opening* section.

Six of a Splinter

This convention asks for a void in the splinter suit. We use this by bidding 6 of the suit partner made a splinter in. Responses are simply: grand slam in trumps = I have a void; small slam in trumps = I have a singleton.

Mini-splinter

The minisplinter occurs over a 1♥ or 1♠ opening:

1♥-3♠ = minisplinter, unknown shortness;

1♠-3N = minisplinter, unknown shortness.

This convention is discussed in the section on the 1♥ opening.

Autosplinter

The autosplinter is the same as a normal splinter, except it sets the splintering side's suit as trump, and not partner's. This situation occurs only when partner has not shown any suit.

Handling Interference in Slam Auctions

Over RKC

If over our RKC the opponents enter the auction we use steps (DOPI):

- a) Pass = one keycard
- b) Double = zero keycards
- c) Next step = two keycards
- d) Following step = three keycards

Etc.

If for example over RKC the opponents bid 5♦, 5♥ shows two keycards, 5♠ – three, and 5N – four. The reason we do not combine answers (1/4, 0/3) is that partner cannot be sure what partner has and cannot make the final decision. In an uncontested sequence, asker when not sure can assume the pessimistic view and sign off, leaving partner to bid on with the greater number.

The opponents double an RKC response

XX = penalty (“Don’t mess around with us.”)

Else = as if no double (Pass does not exist)

The opponents double a cuebid

If the opponents double partner’s cuebid, then:

- a) Redouble shows Ace of the suit
- b) Cuebidding another suit shows we will not lose two fast tricks in the suit (we have a singleton or Queen)
- c) Pass asks for clarification

Slam-bidding – Learn from the Mistakes of the Masters

All hands come from the 2000 Olympiad in Maastricht where the Polish team of: Cezary Balicki – Adam Żmudziński, Michał Kwiecień – Jacek Pszczola, Krzysztof Jassem – Piotr Tuszyński won the silver medal.

Quarterfinal: Poland – France

Problem 1

This was the auction of a French pair:

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠AJ763 ♥AJ65 ♦73 ♣K9	♠K9852 ♥94 ♦A ♣AJ762	2N ¹	1♠ 4♠	¹ 10-15 with a spade fit

Find the mistake, and suggest a PCI auction.

Answer

Mistake: The 4♠ response is too conservative. There are many hands partner may have that could yield slam.

The suggested auction in PCI is:

Slam-bidding – Learn from the Mistakes of the Masters

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠AJ763 ♥AJ65 ♦73 ♣K9	♠K9852 ♥94 ♦A ♣AJ762	2♣ 2N 3♠ 4♥ 6♠ ⁴	1♠ 2♠ 3♣ ¹ 4♦ ² 5♣ ³	¹ Four clubs ² Short diamonds. After showing nine cards in two suits, a cuebid is shortness. ³ If partner can try for slam despite our negative 2♣, we have extras: the fifth club. Therefore we can go past the game level. ⁴ “I think the King of clubs is a perfect complement to partner’s suit.”

Problem 2

This was the auction of a French pair:

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠AQ ♥AKJ83 ♦K97 ♣AQ2	♠9742 ♥96 ♦A62 ♣KJ104	2♦ ¹ 3N 4♥ ⁴	3♣ ² 4♣ ³ 6N ⁵	¹ Strong ² An Ace in a minor suit ³ Asks for a four card major ⁴ Four hearts ⁵ “I have to decide”

11 tricks. How should the auction go in PCI?

Answer

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠AQ ♥AKJ83 ♦K97 ♣AQ2	♠9742 ♥96 ♦A62 ♣KJ104	1♣ 2♥ 4N ¹	1♠ 2N Pass	¹ Raising a notrump bid to 4N is not RKC, but invite.

Exactly as the Polish pair bid.

The question is: would the Polish auction have been different had East the ♥T? Then, the slam would be excellent. We can't really say.

Problem 3

This was another unfortunate French bidding:

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠AJ ♥AT5 ♦AQ652 ♣AQT	♠Q743 ♥KQJ ♦T73 ♣K98	2♦ ¹ 2N 3♦ ⁴	2♥ ² 3♣ ³ 6N ⁵	¹ Strong ² Waiting ³ Asks for a four card major ⁴ None ⁵ Replay

How should the auction go in PCI?

Answer

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠AJ ♥AT5 ♦AQ652 ♣AQT	♠Q743 ♥KQJ ♦T73 ♣K98	1♣ 2N Pass ²	1♠ 3N ¹	¹ It would have been optimistic to bid 4N. A pessimist sees the wasted honors in the short heart suit. ² One high card point more and 4N invitation should be appropriate.

Slam-bidding – Learn from the Mistakes of the Masters

Problem 4

The French auction went:

West	East	W		E		Meaning of bids
♠KJ97	♠AQ63	1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass	¹ Cuebid for some suit
♥AK3	♥Q9872	2N	Pass	3♠	Pass	² Ace of clubs
♦K62	♦A5	4♣ ¹	X	Pass	Pass	³ Cuebid
♣A65	♣97	XX ²	Pass	4♦ ³	Pass	⁴ RKC
		4N ⁴	Pass	5♥ ⁵	Pass	⁵ I don't know which suit is trumps, so I show no Queen
		Pass ⁶	Pass			⁶ If no trump queen, then no slam

How should the auction go in PCI?

Answer

West	East	W		E		Meaning of bids
♠KJ97	♠AQ63	1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass	¹ <i>Odzwrotka</i>
♥AK3	♥Q9872	2♦ ¹	Pass	3♣ ²	Pass	² Strong with 5 cards in hearts
♦K62	♦A5	3N ³	Pass	4♦ ⁴	Pass	³ 4333 distribution
♣A65	♣97	4♣ ⁵	Pass	4N	Pass	⁴ Diamond cue, no club cue
		5♦ Pass	Pass	6♥	Pass	⁵ Spade cue, implies club cue
			Pass			

True – the above auction is a little like walking in the dark. Slam is great because the spades holdings complement each other, not even mentioned in the auction. To make matters worse, the best contract is a grand slam in spades, which in PCI Standard cannot be reached.

This is why it makes sense to seek a more precise treatment than *Odzwrotka*. Such a structure is proposed in PCI Pro, where responder can show his distribution and strength.

Problem 5

This time the French went too high:

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠AQ ♥Q87 ♦AT432 ♣AK5	♠65 ♥A6 ♦KQ8765 ♣J97	2N ¹ 4♦ 6♦ ⁴	4♣ ² 4♥ ³ 7♦ ⁵	¹ 20-22 ² Strong transfer to diamonds ³ Cuebid ⁴ Thump ⁵ Re-thump

And down one.

On this particular hand small slam (not grand!) makes because South has both major Kings, but theoretically it's not percentage.

The Polish auction was:

West East

1♣	3♦
3N	Pass

Was the Polish auction correct? How should it be bid in PCI?

Answer

The auction reached a favorable ending, but it was not correct. Had East a singleton heart and King third of spades it would have made slam in diamonds, and not 3N. The proposed auction:

West	East	West	East
♠AQ ♥Q87 ♦AT432 ♣AK5	♠65 ♥A6 ♦KQ8765 ♣J97	1♣ 3♣ Pass	3♦ 3N

Slam-bidding – Learn from the Mistakes of the Masters

3♠ is dual-meaning: strong club with spades, or showing a stopper for 3N. Over 3N by East, now there cannot be a singleton heart opposite and slam is very unlikely.

Problem 6

Here a Polish pair did not arrive at the top spot:

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠KJT9 ♥A6 ♦AQT87 ♣A4	♠A4 ♥KQ9874 ♦6543 ♣5	1♦ 2♠ 3N 4♥ 5♣	1♥ 2N ¹ 4♦ 4♠ 5♦	¹ forcing

Result: 12 tricks. Where was the mistake? How should the auction go in PCI?

Answer

At first glance it seems East had a simple situation. After 4♥ by partner he had enough to ask for keycards. Well, yes, but if partner gives the wrong answer, like 5♣, we are too high and without hope.

So if East cannot take the reins, he should give partner a positive sign and jump to 4♦ over 2♠.

For this hand it is worth remembering the following wisdom: The hand with a plethora of keycards should be using RKC because partner may be afraid of an inconveniently high response to RKC. West is not sure at all that slam can be made, but when partner jumps and he is looking at three keycards and the trump Queen, well...

And how would this be bid in PCI?

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠KJT9 ♥A6 ♦AQT87 ♣A4	♠A4 ♥KQ9874 ♦6543 ♣5	1♣ 1♠ 4♣ ² 4N ⁴ 6♥	1♥ 3♥ ¹ 4♠ ³ 5♠ ⁵	¹ Invite to game in hearts ² Cue for hearts ³ No diamond control, spade control, "I have a very interesting hand for slam." ⁴ RKC for hearts ⁵ Two keys and trump Queen

In this way we got to a slam worse than that in diamonds. Diamonds never saw the light of day. This is one of the "little charms" of PCI.

Semifinal: Poland – USA

Problem 7

In the below deal the Americans easily reached the heart slam played by East. The Polish auction:

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠J82 ♥KQ6 ♦K7 ♣AKQJT	♠K3 ♥AJT94 ♦A5 ♣7653	 2♣ 3♦ ¹ 4♥	1♥ 2♥ 4♣ Pass	¹ Third Suit Forcing

West bid third suit forcing and 4♣ was unpleasant because trumps had not yet been set. 4♥ was intended as a slamtry but East, even if he knew it, Passed.

What was the mistake? How should it be bid in PCI?

Answer

The mistake was bidding Third Suit Forcing rather than Forcing 2N. Then it all fell apart. The suggested auction:

Slam-bidding – Learn from the Mistakes of the Masters

West	East	W	E	Meaning of bids
♠J82 ♥KQ6 ♦K7 ♣AKQJT	♠K3 ♥AJT94 ♦A5 ♣7653	2♣ 2N ¹ 3♥ 4♣ ³ 5♣ ⁵	1♥ 2♥ 3♣ 3N ² 4♦ ⁴ 6♥ ⁶	¹ Forcing 2N. Never mind that West does not have spades stopped. If you know you are playing in a certain suit, 2N does not need to have specific suits stopped. ² No shortness. The hand is not hopeless (if hopeless – 4♥). ³ Cuebid ⁴ Cuebid below game – in response to partner's cue – is obligatory ⁵ "Are we losing two spades?" ⁶ "No. Only one". With the Ace of spades East would bid 5♣, because there could be a grand slam.

Problem 8.

With the below hands both pairs reached a spade slam. Let us look at the Polish auction:

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠AQ64 ♥763 ♦AK632 ♣T	♠KJ82 ♥AJT ♦T97 ♣AKJ	1♦ 2♠ 4♣ ² 4N 6♠	1♠ 3♦ ¹ 4♥ ³ 5♥	¹ "We have a diamond fit." ² "I accept game, and, in case you have hopes for more, this is my shortness." ³ "I have slam interest, and a heart cue, but no diamond cue."

On the ♦Q lead, slam made.

Is slam correct? How should it be bid in PCI Standard?

Answer

Slam isn't good. On the given auction, a heart lead is normal, and

then it takes a club finesse to begin with. But even then there are handling problems if spades or diamonds are 4-1.

The proposed auction:

West	East	West	East	Meaning of bids
♠AQ64 ♥763 ♦AK632 ♣T	♠KJ82 ♥AJT ♦T97 ♣AKJ	1♦ 2♣ 3♥ ² Pass	1♠ 2N ¹ 4♠	¹ Ask for distribution ² Three hearts

If West has a singleton club, then it is hard to find a hand when slam is pretty good. Much different, if West has a singleton heart...

Problem 9

The Americans after a 1♦ opening by East agreed spades and quickly got to slam, down one.

In the other room, the Poles opened a Wilkosz 2♦ (showing 5-5 distribution) and got to game, not even trying for slam.

Let us see how the hand should be bid with PCI:

West	East	W	E	Meaning of bids
♠KT2 ♥AKJT86 ♦5 ♣A84	♠Q8654 ♥-- ♦AJ87642 ♣K	4♠ ²	2♠ ¹ Pass	¹ Doubtful 1-level opening, with such a weak spade suit. ² West can imagine hands with partner that might yield slam, but by far most hands don't give decent chances, so best to bid practically.

Slam-bidding – Learn from the Mistakes of the Masters

Problem 10

Here the Americans stopped low.

West	East	W	N	E	S	Meaning of bids
♠AKJ8 ♥K85 ♦AKT53 ♣J	♠Q95 ♥AQJ92 ♦2 ♣9764	X 4♣ ² 4♥	3♣ X Pass	3♥ 4♦ ³ Pass	2N ¹ Pass Pass Pass	¹ Minors ^{2,3} Cuebids

Where was the mistake? How should it be bid in PCI?

Answer

3♥ was pessimistic. But it could have ended well if he had bid more later. The suggested auction:

West	East	W		E		Meaning of bids
♠AKJ8 ♥K85 ♦AKT53 ♣J	♠Q95 ♥AQJ92 ♦2 ♣9764	X 4♣ ² 4♥	3♣ X Pass	3♥ 4♦ ³ 6♥	2N ¹ Pass Pass Pass	¹ Minors ^{2,3} Cuebids

4♣ suggests club shortness. East has an amazing hand. Outstanding trumps, nothing wasted in clubs, and a singleton diamond. 4♦ checks to see if partner has a void in clubs – then you can investigate grand! But East must at least bid 6.

Final: Poland – Italy

Problem 11

Let us analyse the bidding of a Polish pair, who did not reach slam.

West	East	W	N	E	S	Meaning of bids
♠Q ♥KQ ♦T98542 ♣KQJ5	♠A75 ♥4 ♦AK763 ♣A973	1♦ 3♦ 5♦	P P P	2♦ ¹ 4♥ ² P	2♥ P P	¹ Strong raise ² Splinter

Where was the mistake in this auction? How should it be bid in PCI?

Answer

The mistake was West's – 3♦. First it did not announce the club suit, which could be important given that the opponents could continue bidding, but also 3♦ was a signoff. In a situation that is forcing to 3♦, bidding 3♦ immediately shows the worst possible hand (even worse than Pass).

How should the auction have gone?

West	East	W	N	E	S	Meaning of bids
♠Q ♥KQ ♦T98542 ♣KQJ5	♠A75 ♥4 ♦AK763 ♣A973	1♦ 3♣ 5♦ ³	P P P	2♦ ¹ 4♣ ² 6♦ ⁴	2♥ P P	¹ Too strong for a splinter ² Setting clubs as trumps in order to ask for keycards in clubs (those are the important cards) ³ "I give up" ⁴ "If you had enough to bid clubs, slam is a foregone conclusion"

Slam-bidding – Learn from the Mistakes of the Masters

Problem 12

West	East
♠AK84 ♥A97 ♦AK843 ♣6	♠76 ♥KQJ5 ♦965 ♣A532

The Italians after a series of artificial bids got to 6♥, down 2 after a trump lead and hearts did not split 3-3 (without a trump lead, East can duck a diamond, then ruff a club, and use a trump to return to hand to collect 4 hearts, 4 diamonds, 2 spades, 1 club, and 1 club ruff). How should the hand be bid in PCI?

West	East	W	E	Meaning of bids
♠AK84 ♥A97 ♦AK843 ♣6	♠76 ♥KQJ5 ♦965 ♣A532	1♣ 2♦¹ 2♣³ 3N⁵	1♥ 2♥² 3♣⁴ Pass	¹Odwrotka ²Weak with 4 hearts (a strong hand is one which we would have opened) ³Natural – 4 spades ⁴Seminatural – not bidding NT without a diamond stopper ⁵Unfortunately there is no way to find a way to a diamond fit, and thus no slam

The lesson of the hand is as follows:

If you open a strong club, and partner response one of a major, don't use Odwrotka if you have two suits to show.

A similar situation would arise if opener had 4 spades, 3 hearts, and 5 clubs.

The proposed amendment:

West	East	W	E	Meaning of bids
♠AK84 ♥A97 ♦AK843 ♣6	♠76 ♥KQJ5 ♦965 ♣A532	1♣ 1♠ 2♦ ¹ 3♥ ² 4♦ ⁴ 4♠ ⁶	1♥ 1N 3♦ 4♣ ³ 4♥ ⁵ 6♦ ⁷	¹ Five diamonds, preparing a full description of the hand ² Seminatural – three hearts or a heart feature ³ If partner likes hearts, the hand can be upgraded ⁴ "Can we bid slam?" ^{5,6} Cuebids ⁷ "Partner has invited slam and we have the Ace of clubs and a source of tricks in hearts."

Problem 13

West	East
♠T953 ♥3 ♦AT6 ♣AJT62	♠AKQJ8 ♥AKQJ8 ♦95 ♣3

The Italians reached an "ambitious slam" which easily made. The Poles quickly reached grand slam, which unluckily went down because spades were 4-0 and hearts 5-2.

How should it be bid in PCI?

West	East	W	E	Meaning of bids
♠T953 ♥3 ♦AT6 ♣AJT62	♠AKQJ8 ♥AKQJ8 ♦95 ♣3	1♠ 2♥ 4♦ ² 5♥	1♣ 2♦ 4♣ ¹ 4N 7♠ ³	¹ Very strong splinter, because <i>Odwtrotka</i> preceded it ² With 2 Aces and a singleton, you must react positively despite the minimum strength ³ With reasonable layouts, grand slam should make

We note however, that if West had a different distribution, e.g. 4342, grand would be hopeless – even with 2 Aces with West. This points to the need for something more precise than Odwotka – both in terms of strength and distribution. For those interested, see PCI Pro.

Problem 14

	♠KQJT74 ♥Q ♦T6 ♣T876	
♠A ♥AKT3 ♦AKQ987 ♣54	N W E S	♠85 ♥J986 ♦52 ♣AQ932
	♠9632 ♥7542 ♦J43 ♣KJ	

Luck was with the Poles as they reached 4♠-X by North, down 2 for -300. In the other room, this was the auction:

West	North	East	South
X	2♠	Pass	3♠
4♠	Pass	4♥	Pass
5♦	Pass	5♣	Pass
7♥	Pass	6♥	Pass
	Pass	Pass	Pass

The Queen of hearts dropped, the diamonds split – so the play was not a problem. But to be honest the Poles overbid in the board. How should it be bid in PCI?

Answer

West	North	East	South	Meaning of the bids
X	2♠	Pass	3♠	^{1,2} Cuebids
4♠ ¹	Pass	4♥	Pass	³ RKC. If cuebidding takes us past 4N, then 5N
5N ³	Pass	5♣ ²	Pass	assumes
6♦ ⁵	Pass	6♣ ⁴	Pass	the role of Blackwood.
Pass ⁷		6♥ ⁶	Pass	⁴ One or four
				⁵ Asks for Queen of trumps
				⁶ No Queen
				⁷ No Queen, no grand

Problem 15

On this hand the Italians played the normal contract of six hearts. One of the Polish pairs crept all the way to grand slam. This is how the misunderstanding happened:

Slam-bidding – Learn from the Mistakes of the Masters

West	East	W	E	Meaning of bids
♠76 ♥A964 ♦A ♣AQT742	♠KQ853 ♥KQ872 ♦K43 ♣--	 2♣ 3♥ 4♦ 5♦ 6♦ ³	1♠ 2♥ 4♣ ¹ 4N 6♣ ² 7♥ ⁴	¹ To East – shortness; to West – general cue ² To East – “I have a club void. What do you think?” ³ “Are we sure we know what we are doing?” ⁴ “Someone has to make a decision”

How should it be bid in PCI?

Answer

West	East	W	E	Meaning of bids
♠76 ♥A964 ♦A ♣AQT742	♠KQ853 ♥KQ872 ♦K43 ♣--	 2♣ 3♥ 5♠ ²	1♠ 2♥ 5♣ ¹ 6♥	¹ Exclusion RKC ² Two keys outside of clubs

Problem 16

West	East
♠AKJ7 ♥AQT6 ♦KQ ♣KQ5	♠53 ♥J32 ♦AJ74 ♣AT93

The Italians bid artificially and got stuck in 4N. The Poles bid a very direct 1♣-1N-6N.

Is this the correct auction? How should it be bid in PCI?

Answer

West’s auction was quite flamboyant. East may have had a weaker hand and slam pretty remote. It’s optimistic to just shut your eyes and bid slam. A rationalist would bid as follows:

West	East	W	E	Meaning of bids
♠AKJ7 ♥AQ ^T 6 ♦KQ ♣KQ5	♠53 ♥J32 ♦AJ74 ♣AT93	1♣ 4N ¹ 6N ³	1N 5N ²	¹ Invitational ² "Pick a slam. Can we play in a minor? I have both of them." ³ "Thanks but I prefer no trumps."

Problem 17

	♠AQJT62 ♥6 ♦853 ♣QT7	
♠5 ♥AKJT7 ♦T6 ♣K8532	N W E S	♠9743 ♥Q54 ♦AKQ4 ♣A9
	♠K8 ♥9832 ♦J972 ♣J64	

Italian Auction (East-West):

West	North	East	South	Meaning of the bids
2♦ X ¹ 4N Pass	2♠ Pass Pass Pass	1N Pass 4♥ 5♥ ²	Pass Pass Pass Pass	¹ Action ² Two keys, but saying nothing about the trump Queen

¹Action

²Two keys, but saying nothing about the trump Queen

The West Italian player was put in a difficult position: he didn't know about the trump Queen or whether there was a club loser. The Poles bid more dynamically:

Slam-bidding – Learn from the Mistakes of the Masters

West	North	East	South
2♦	2♠	1N	Pass
4♣	Pass	3♥	3♠
4♠	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♥	Pass	4N	Pass
Pass	Pass	6♥	Pass

Was this auction by the book?

Answer

It wasn't textbook, but the players knew what they were doing. First, 3♥ should show four hearts. However, East took the view that because of his partner's likely spade shortness, his hand was great. West's 4♣ showed a side suit. Remember that in a competitive auction, a bid of a new suit is not a cuebid, but natural. Its purpose is to make life easier for partner if the opponents outbid us. Thus, if the opponents compete to 4♠, East should bid higher with fitting club cards (double or Pass without). East, with both the ♣A and nothing wasted in spades saw some chance at slam. 4♦ communicated this. If West then signed off in 4♥, it would have meant that 4♣ was just showing distribution, and not serious, so game should be the limit. When however West bid on with 4♠, showing serious slam interest as well as short spades, East could "see" the top heart honors and club King. Without these key values, inviting slam would have made no sense. So he took matters into his own hands.

This last example shows that cuebids alone are not enough. Slam-bidding requires imagination, courage, and confidence in partner.

Conventions – The Contested Auctions

This part will cover competitive bidding sequences.

Negative Double

The negative double is used after partner opens and one of the opponents overcalls anything up to and including 4♦. The aim is to find a trump suit from the suits not bid by overcaller or partner. A negative double implies no fit for partner's suit.

The purpose of a negative double may be:

- Showing the possibility of playing in one of the two unbid suits

1♣ (1♦) X = both four card majors

- Showing four cards in the unbid major

1♦ (1♠) X = four hearts, says nothing about clubs

- Forcing with a side five card suit (when direct suit-showing bid would be NF)

1♣/♦ (1♠) X (Pass)

1N Pass 2♥ = five hearts, forcing (direct 2♥ is NF in PCI)

1♥ (2♣) X (Pass)

2♥ (Pass) 2♠ = five spades, forcing (direct 2♠ is NF in PCI)

In both cases, rebidding the major suit after doubling initially is forcing for at least one round.

- Double as an invite to 3N

1♥ (1♠) X (Pass)

2♣ (Pass) 2N

An immediate 2N would have shown a gameforcing raise.

2N after double shows an invite to 3N.

Support Double

We use a support double after we open at the 1-level, partner responds in a major, and our right-hand opponent overcalls below two of partner's suit. This shows a 3 card fit for partner and an offensive hand.

QUIZ. Does the double show support?				
Us	Them	Us	Them	Yes.
1♥	Pass	1♠	2♦	
X				
Us	Them	Us	Them	No. This is a cards double: extra HCP without short diamonds.
1♥	Pass	1♠		
2♦	Pass	Pass	X	
Us	Them	Us	Them	Yes. Double promises a fit. (see: <i>Third Seat Interference over 1♣</i>)
1♣	Pass	1♥		
2♦	X			

QUIZ				
You	Opp	Pd	Opp	
1♣	Pass	1♥	2♦	
?				
What do you bid with these hands?				
♠KJ7 ♥J32 ♦KQ97 ♣A87				Pass. Don't make a support double with a trump stack behind the opponents.
♠AT7 ♥K97 ♦32 ♣KJT76				Double. Support double. Not showing extras, but an offensive hand.
♠AT7 ♥KJ7 ♦3 ♣AKJT76				Support double. Let's hope partner doesn't Pass.
♠AT7 ♥KJ7 ♦AQ3 ♣KJT3				Support double – may be strong (see: <i>Handling Interference by 4th seat</i>).

Trap Pass

The Trap Pass is a consequence of the takeout double and negative double. With a hand with which we would like to penalize the opponents, we are forced to Pass. Partner is aware that the meaning of our Pass is ambiguous: either weak, or the desire to punish the opponents (though sometimes it's a hand with HCP but no good call) – this knowledge means that partner should keep the bidding alive somehow.

Trap Pass over an Opponent's Opening

(1♥)	P	(P)	X
(P)	?		

Pass = Trap Pass – strength unknown

2♥ = 13-16 – I don't have a trump stack, and I couldn't make a takeout double because I didn't have three spades

(1♥)	P	(P)	X
(XX)	P		

Pass over the redouble indicates the desire to defend hearts redoubled (“I have a Trap Pass”).

Pass of redouble by the player behind the doubled suit is to play. Pass by a player in front of the doubled suit indicates, “I have no clear preference which suit to play”.

Trap Pass over an Opponent's Overcall

The Trap Pass over an opponent's overcall we use at the 2-level below partner's suit.

We expect partner to re-open the bidding without any strength extras if we can still stop at the 2 level in his initial suit.

Conventions – The Contested Auctions

QUIZ Partner Opp You 1♠ 2♦ ? What is your plan?	
♠7 ♥5432 ♦KJ975 ♣432	Pass. If partner reopens the bidding with a double, Pass. Let's hope they go down – even one.
♠7 ♥AJ32 ♦KJ975 ♣KQ2	Pass. If partner balances with a double – Pass. They should go for a number. Let's hope that the penalty will be more than our game score.
♠KJ97 ♥3 ♦KJ975 ♣Q32	4♠. Experience shows that with a great fit for partner, it does not pay to Trap Pass.
♠J6 ♥AJ73 ♦AT32 ♣JT3	Double. Negative. Declaring seems more lucrative than trying to penalize the opponents.

QUIZ. Unfav vul Partner Opp You 1♥ 3♦ ? What is your plan?	
♠7 ♥5432 ♦KQ975 ♣432	Pass. If partner reopens with a double, Pass. And if it Passes out, well, they will go down undoubled.
♠7 ♥AJ92 ♦KQ975 ♣KQ2	3N. You have no assurance partner will reopen, as the opponents are at the 3-level. And undoubled, their penalty will still be a horrible score for us.

QUIZ	
You	Opp
1♠	2♦
P	P
?	
What is your plan?	
♠AQ T87 ♥KQ 64 ♦6 ♣QJ3	Double. This does not promise extras.
♠AQ T87 ♥KQ 6 ♦62 ♣QJ3	Double. A doubleton diamond is still justification for balancing.
♠AQ T87 ♥K4 ♦T63 ♣AJ3	Pass. Without shortness in the opponent's suit, don't reopen. (If partner has a Trap Pass, tough luck.)
♠KQJ87 ♥KQJ32 ♦6 ♣43	2♥. The huge offensive potential makes the double less attractive.
♠AQ T87 ♥KJ3 ♦-- ♣KQT72	3♣. It may turn out better to have doubled, but with a void it's better to seek an alternative.
♠AQ T87 ♥KJ32 ♦-- ♣KT87	Double. The void is a strike against, but by doubling we might get to either of the unbid suits, playable contracts.

Western Cue

The Western Cue is a bid in a suit bid previously by an opponent with the goal of finding out whether partner has stopper in the suit. In response to this bid, partner bids NT, if she has a stopper in this suit, and bids something else without one. E.g.:

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♦	1♥	X	P
2♦	P	2♥	

2♥ asks for a heart stopper.

Conventions – The Contested Auctions

Let's look at a situation where the opponents have shown two suits, e.g.

Us	Them	Us	
1♦	2♦ ¹	?	¹ Majors

- 1) 2♥ (the opponent's cheapest suit) – "Partner, can you stop hearts?" With stoppers in both majors, opener bids NT. With a heart stopper but no spade stopper, she can bid: 2♠ = "I can stop hearts, but not spades. Where do you stand in spades?"
- 2) 2♠ (the opponent's higher suit) – "Partner can you stop spades? I have hearts covered."

Over a Double of our Western Cue

If the opponents double a Western Cue, it becomes possible to specify our holding further:

- **Redouble** shows the Ace and nothing else
- **NT** shows a stopper that is not just the Ace
- **Bidding a suit** shows shortness in the opponent's suit
- **Pass** shows at least a doubleton in the opponent's suit

Half-stopper

By a half-stopper we mean a holding that by itself cannot take a trick in the suit, but in combination with a half-stopper in partner's suit provides sufficient defense. When we talk about a half-stopper we refer to these types of holdings:

K	Qx	Jxx	Txxx
---	----	-----	------

So when combined with another such holding in partner's hand, we stop the suit, e.g.

K	K	Qx	Qx
Qx	Jxx	Jxx	Txxx

There are two ways to show complementary half-stoppers for NT:

- 1) With the help of an opponent who doubles our stopper-ask:

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♣	P	3♣
P	3♥	X	P
P	XX	P	3N

South's Pass of the double denies shortness in hearts. North – with the redouble – shows a half-stopper (note that a XX shows the Ace only immediately over the double). South bids 3N to confirm possession of another half-stopper.

- 2) Without the opponents' help

This situation can occur when the opponents' suit is not spades, e.g.

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♣	P	3♣
P	3♥	P	3♠
P	3N		

North asked for a heart stopper, and South did not rule out 3N – bidding 3♠ (in this case the only suit available below 3N) showing a half-stopper in hearts. North confirmed possession of a half-stopper herself with 3N.

BIDDING CONTEST, "Bridge World", Sept. 2009	
West	East
♠KJ63 ♥J2 ♦KT6 ♣9853	♠Q ♥T965 ♦A7 ♣AKQJ42

Conventions – The Contested Auctions

Auction suggested by editor(s) of Bridge World:

West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♣	P
3♣	P	3♦	P
3♠	P	4♣	

It's difficult to agree with this suggested auction. 3♦ should be a natural bid. If East wants to ask for a heart stopper, he should bid 3♥. The author commentary states:

In Poland most pairs play differently, the opponent's suit as a Western Cue. Surprisingly this would have solved the problem much better, namely:

West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♣	P
3♣	P	3♥	P
3♠	P	3N	

The reasoning above is a bit stretched. Namely, the doubleton Jack is not a half-stopper. Still with the doubleton Queen, the Bridge World action would remain the same and the "Polish action" would surprisingly bring us home without stretching.

Bidding Over an Opponent's Takeout Double

Meanings of bids over the opponent's takeout double

Over an opponent's double of our opening, new suits are forcing at the 1-level, and nonforcing at the 2-level.

Over an opponent's double of our opening, a single jump-shift is a fit-showing jump:

1♥ (X) 3♣ = clubs and at least 3 hearts, forcing to 3♥

Over an opponent's double of our opening, a double jump-shift is a Splinter:

1♥ (X) 4♣ = short clubs

Note: Over an opponent's double we don't use minisplinters and

strong splinters. Most important is to name the short suit in case the opponents wish to join us in the auction:

1♥ (X) 3♠ = short spades

1♥ (X) 3N = good raise for hearts

The point of 3N is to set up a forcing Pass if the opponents outbid us.

Over the opponent's double of our 1♣ opening – 1♦ is a natural nonforcing response, with no lower limit of strength.

1♣ (X) 2♣ = natural, nonforcing, up to 10 HCP

Over the opponent's double of our 1N opening, we bid as if there was no double.

Redouble

Redouble shows a hand with at least 10 HCP.

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♠	X	XX	2♦
P	P	?	

2♠ shows about 10 HCP with at least a doubleton spade.

3♠ shows a gameforcing spade fit.

3♦ shows a gameforcing hand without a spade fit (asks for stopper).

Bidding over a redouble

An immediate rebid by opener at or below two of the opened suit shows a minimum hand.

An immediate rebid by opener above the 2-level in the opened suit shows extra strength and distribution.

Conventions – The Contested Auctions

1♠ (X) XX (2♦)
?

2♥ = minimum hand, 4+ hearts

2♠ = minimum hand, 6 spades

3♣ = 5 spades, 4(+) clubs, extras

1♠ (X) XX (2♥)
P P 3♣ = forcing

In the above sequence 3♣ is forcing (with a weaker hand she would have bid 2♣ the previous round).

Raises after a 1♥ or 1♠ Opening and Double

QUIZ. Explain the meanings of the bids in these sequences.		
Us	Them	Us
1♥	X	?
Bid	Meaning	
Redouble	If with a fit then: 10 HCP balanced; then support partner at the cheapest level; or Gameforcing with a fit; then we jump-raise partner	
1N	7-11 HCP with a 3-card fit	
2♥	4-7 HCP with a 3-card fit	
2N	Invite to game with a 4-card fit	
3♣/3♦	Fit-showing jump with at least a 3-card fit	
3♥	Preemptive with a 4-card fit	
3♠/4♣/4♦	Splinters	
3N	Strong raise with a fit (sets a forcing Pass)	
4♥	Preemptive	

Bidding Over an Overcall

In the PCI Pro I propose a method of transfers which is becoming more and more popular – I hope they soon become standard.

Here let's recall the standard general bidding rules in PCI:

A new suit is forcing at the one and three level, and nonforcing at the two level.

Us	Them	Us
1♣	1♥	?
		1♠ = forcing
		2♣/♦ = nonforcing
		3♣/♦ = forcing

In order to force in a new suit you must either jump or start with a negative double.

QUIZ	
Pard	Opp
1♠	2♦
What is your bid?	
♠A2 ♥KQ964 ♦Q2 ♣432	2♥. Nonforcing
♠5 ♥QJT765 ♦32 ♣KJ32	2♥. Nonforcing
♠A2 ♥KJ964 ♦32 ♣AJ2	Dble. Bid hearts in the next round. (Direct 2♥ would be non-forcing).
♠5 ♥AQJT76 ♦32 ♣KJ32	3♥. Forcing with good hearts.

A jump-raise of partner's suit to the 3-level is preemptive:

Us	Them	Us
1♥	2♣	3♥ = preempt

Strong bids with a fit for partner's suit

Cuebidding the opponent's suit shows a limit raise. 2N is gameforcing with a fit.

Us	Them	Us
1♥	2♣	?
3♣ = invite to game with a heart fit		
2N = gameforcing with a heart fit		

After a 1♣ opening, a jump cue at the 3-level is a transfer to 3N:

1♣	(1♠)	3♣	= "bid 3N; I have a stopper, but NT plays best from your side"
----	------	----	--

Handling Interference Over our 1N Opening

Over double, we bid as if there had been no double.

Over a natural overcall at the 2- or 3-level:

- Bids are natural – at the 2-level nonforcing and 3-level forcing
- Lebensohl
- Double is negative

Over an artificial overcall:

- Bids are natural – at the 2-level nonforcing and 3-level forcing
- Double shows HCP and sets up a one-round force

Over a bid that shows both majors (Landy e.g.):

- 2♥ and 2♠ are Western Cues
- 4♦ and 4♥ are Texas!

Handling Interference Over our 2-Level Openings

Vs. an overcall of our 2♣ opening, a new suit is nonforcing at the 2-level and forcing at the 3-level. 2N is natural, double is negative.

Over our 2♦, 2♥, or 2♠ openings a new suit is "Pass/correct" – "Pass if you have this suit, bid on without it".

Handling Interference Over our 2N or Higher Openings

Doubles are penalty.

Balancing by Opener

A reopening double below two of opener's suit does not promise extras:

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♥	2♣	P	P
X			

In the above sequence opener has at most a doubleton club, but he need not have extras.

A reopening double above two of opener's suit shows extras:

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♥	2♠	P	P
X = at most two spades, extras			

Handling Interference by Fourth Seat

Here we refer to the situation where opener's right-hand opponent enters the auction after partner's response.

After a 1N Response

Pertinent auctions:

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♣/♦/♥/♠	P	1N	2♣/♦/♥/♠

Double is **penalty** over a **major** suit overcall. Double shows **extra strength** after a **minor** suit overcall.

The reasoning is thus: 1N implies responder has most of her cards in the minors. With extra strength but no special distribution, opener offers a **cards double** to take advantage of the situations when responder has a stack in the opponent's minor.

Conventions – The Contested Auctions

After a major suit overcall, it's opener that threatens to have the stack. Responder over a Pass would usually just let the auction die there, so immediate action is needed.

After a 2-over-1 Response

After a 2-over-1 the auction is forced to three of responder's suit. Based on this, we use the following treatment:

After a 2-level overcall, Pass is forcing, and double is penalty. After an overcall above three of responder's suit, Pass is nonforcing, and double shows extras.

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♥	P	2♦	2♠
?			

X = penalty

Pass = forcing

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♠	P	2♦	3♥
?			

Pass = nonforcing

X = "I have enough for game, please do something intelligent."

After a 1♦ Response to a 1♣ Opening

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♣	P	1♦	1♥
?			

1♠ = strong club with 5 spades

X = takeout (or gameforcing hands)

1N = 18-20

2♣ = natural, 15+

2♦ = natural, strong with diamonds

2♥ = Michaels – strong with 5 spades and a 5 card minor

2♠/3♣/3♦ = "close to game, with a very good suit"

2N = 21-23

Note: When you open 1♣ and partner responds negatively (1♦ or Pass after overcall) you should not interfere with opponents' auction unless you are strong.

After a 1♥/1♠ Response to a 1♣ Opening

Even regular partnerships often have problems after interference in 1♣ auctions. We propose some clear simple rules:

- If the overcall is at the 2-level below responder's suit, then X shows a fit for partner – either weak or strong club variants.
- 2♦ is still *Odwrotka*.
- A cuebid of the opponent's suit through 3♥ shows a strong club without a fit for partner.
- Starting from 3♠ and above cue bid is a splinter raise: shortness in the suit and 4 card support.

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♣	P	1♥	1♠
?			

X = 3 hearts, 12-17 (with 18+ use *Odwrotka*)

2♣ = 5 clubs, 15+ (usually without three hearts)

2♦ = *Odwrotka*

2♠ = strong club without a heart fit

3♣ = 5 diamonds, 4 clubs (as without the overcall), strong

3♠/4♣/4♦ = splinters

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♣	P	1♥/♠	2♦
?			

X = fit of at least 3 cards, weak or strong variants (including 18+ with a 4 card fit)

2N = natural, strong club

3♦ = strong, no fit

4♦ = splinter

Conventions – The Contested Auctions

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♣	P	1♥	2♠
?			

X = strong club, with fit (even 4 cards), or without

2N = strong club, stopper in spades

3♠ = splinter

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♣	Pass	1♠	3♥
?			

X = strong club (may have 4 spades without short hearts)

4♥ = splinter

Forcing Pass

Forcing Pass is one that says, “Partner I don’t know if we should outbid the opponents, so I’ll leave the decision to you, but you cannot Pass.” In recent years may be noted a tendency to restrict the number of Forcing Pass situations. This is probably due to the fact that in this age of computer-generated hands there often are high-level contracts based on distribution which, when doubled, just make easily.

Currently the general treatment is that Pass in a competitive auction just shows uncertainty as what to bid, but does not require partner to do anything. However, certainly there are still a few situations where Pass should be forcing, and here we will discuss them.

1) Unfavorable vulnerability, and the opponents bid to the 5-level, e.g.

	Them	Us	Them	Us
a.	3♣	4♥	5♣	P
b.	3♣	3♥	5♣	P
c.	3♣	X	5♣	P

In all the above sequences, Pass is forcing.

2) On the way to game, a Forcing Pass situation is created when we bid a side suit or NT.

Unfav vul

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♥	P	2♥	2♠
?			

4♥ = tactical; further Passes are not forcing

2N/3♣/3♦ (et al) = natural, creates a forcing Pass if our game is outbid by the opponents

Us	Them	Us	Them	
1♥	P	2N ¹	3♠	¹ Invite raise
?				

4♥ = tactical; further Passes are not forcing

4♣/♦ = natural; sets up a forcing Pass if the opponents outbid

Us

3) Pass is forcing at the 2-level after our 2-over-1

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♥	P	2♦	2♠
?			

Pass = forcing

X = penalty

4) The opponents didn't want to be in game, but did so only after we bid game, e.g.

Us	Them	Us	Them
1♣	1♠	P	2♠
3♥	P	4♥	P
P	4♠	P	

The opponents were willing to let us play 3♥, but over 4♥ they pushed on.

This last agreement can lead to confusion. An example is this hand from the US Nationals, San Diego, 2009.

Conventions – The Contested Auctions

US Nationals in San Diego 2009; N-S vul		
	♠Q83 ♥75 ♦Q986532 ♣3	
♠AKT76 ♥92 ♦JT7 ♣T72	N W E S	♠J954 ♥AJ63 ♦K4 ♣A94
	♠2 ♥KQT84 ♦A ♣KQJ865	

West	North	East	South
1♠	P	1♣	1♥
P	4♥	2♠	4♣
4♠	P	P	P
P	P	P	5♣
P	P	X	P

South felt that North's Pass over 4S was forcing because the opponents did not want to play in 4♠ (West Passed 4♠, which could end the auction), and bid it only after N-S ended in game, as a defensive move.

North, as you can see, was of a different opinion.

A poll conducted among Polish experts gave a surprising result. One half of the experts thought that North's Pass was forcing, and half did not! Even regular partners differed.

The lesson from this is that every partnership should determine for themselves the situations for a forcing Pass and stick to those situations only.

This hand I think the Pass should be forcing (see rule 4).

Defensive Bidding

Drury

Over partner's one of a major overcall and third seat's Pass 2♣ is the Drury convention – asks for the quality of the overcall.

Them	Us	Them	Us
1♥	1♠	Pass	2♣ = Drury, promising a spade fit

The rules for the auction are the same as those over Drury in an uncontested auction (third/fourth seat opening and 2♣ response by a Passed hand).

With a strong hand *without* a fit advancer should cuebid the opponent's suit – 2♥.

After an opponent's 1♣ opening, 2♣ Drury promises a fit only if used by a Passed hand.

Them	Us	Them	Us
			P
1♣	1♠	P	2♣ = Drury – promising a spade fit

Them	Us	Them	Us
1♣	1♠	P	2♣ = general force – no fit promised

Michaels Cue and Two-suited 2N

By Michaels Cue we mean a bid in the opponent's suit at the cheapest level to show a 5-5 two-suiter in two unbid suits.

Defensive Bidding

Them	Us	
1♥	2♥	= 5 spades and a 5 card minor
1♠	2♠	= 5 hearts and a 5 card minor
1♦	2♦	= 5-5 majors
1♣	2♦	= 5-5 majors

Continuations over Michaels Cue

Let's consider the sequence:

Them	Us	Them	Us
1♥	2♥	P	?
2♠ = weak bid, may be a doubleton spade			
2N = positive values, asks for the minor suit			
3♣ = to play in pd's suit ("Partner, Pass with clubs"), weak			

2N Overcall

Overcalling 2N over the opponent's one of a suit opening shows both minors 5-5, or, in the case of 1♦, hearts and clubs.

The strength required for 2N is the same as that of Michaels Cue (and not that of an opening 2N) – it depends on the vulnerability. Lebensohl

Lebensohl after our 1N opening

This situation refers to when we open 1N and the opponents overcall 2♥ or 2♠. Let's look at it for the case of 2♥:

Us	Them	Us
1N	2♥	?
X = negative (usually with 4 spades), enough strength to compete		
2♠ = natural, nonforcing		
2N = signoff with own suit, or gameforcing with 4 spades		
3♣, 3♦ = natural, forcing		
3♥ = asks for a stopper, without 4 spades		
3♠ = forcing with (5) spades		

After 2N, opener is forced to bid 3♣.

Us	Them	Us	Them
1N	2♥	2N	P
3♣	P	?	

Pass = signoff with clubs

3♦ = signoff with diamonds

3♥ = four spades, no heart stopper, gameforcing

3♠ = five spades, invite to game

3N = four spades with a heart stopper

(My personal opinion is that the Lebensohl convention is clearly inferior to Rubensohl – when you show your suit prior to your strength. This will hopefully change in future versions of Polish Club.)

Lebensohl after the opponents' weak two opening and our takeout double

This situation refers to when the opponents open 2♥ or 2♠ and one of our side doubles (whether direct or reopening).

Them	Us	Them	Us
2♠	X	P	?

2N = 0-7, or gameforcing with 4 hearts

3♣, 3♦, 3♥ = natural, indicating the longest suit, 8-11 HCP

3♠ = asks for a spade stopper, without four hearts, gameforcing

One-level Overcalls

Definition

8-17 HCP with at least a five card suit.

Defensive Bidding

QUIZ Opp You 1♦ ? What do you bid with these hands?	
♠J8765 ♥K3 ♦QJ7 ♣KJ7	Pass. There is no reason to introduce spades. Weak suit. More tricks on defense than offense. And the diamonds – horrors!
♠AQJ87 ♥T ♦976 ♣T976	1♠. I wrote that an overcall starts at 8 HCP? I must have made a mistake.
♠Q9765 ♥3 ♦AQ76 ♣976	1♠. It may be necessary to compete in spades against hearts. And something like ♠KJ95 ♥865 ♦32 ♣KQT4 with partner suddenly gets us a making game.

Continuations after partner's 1-level overcall

- New suit without a jump at the 1-level or 2-level is nonforcing
- Jump in a new suit is forcing
- 1N shows 9-12 HCP, 2N – 13-15 HCP
- Cuebidding the opponent's suit shows a strong hand without a fit
- 2♣ shows at least an invite hand with a fit (Drury)

Two-level Overcalls

A two-level non-jump overcall should be solid, about 11+ HCP with a six card suit, or 13+ HCP with a five card suit, and requires a good suit, especially vulnerable.

QUIZ Opp You 1♠ ? What do you bid?	
♠8 ♥76 ♦J865 ♣AKQ976	2♣. At any vulnerability. Great suit, good distribution.
♠Q97 ♥QJ3 ♦K3 ♣KQ654	Pass. Weak suit, low on tricks.
♠QT76 ♥K ♦AQ3 ♣KQT87	1N. No one is perfect.
♠5 ♥AQT8 ♦Q32 ♣KQT87	Double. Takeout. Fits for all suits.

After a 2-level overcall a new suit is forcing for one round, and a cuebid of the opponent's suit asks for a stopper.

1N Overcall

We use the 1N overcall as the classic 15-17 HCP balanced with a stopper in the opponent's suit.

There are a few differences between the 1N *overcall* and *opening*:

- The overcall requires a stopper in the opponent's suit
- The overcall can deviate from traditional NT shapes at times – it may have a 5-4 shape or a 6 card minor
- The hands that qualify for a 1N opening must open 1N (there is no other place in the system) but hands that could overcall 1N have alternatives (Pass, Double, Overcall)

Defensive Bidding

QUIZ Your right-hand opponent opens 1♠. What do you bid with these hands?	
♠KJ8 ♥54 ♦KQT6 ♣AQ97	1N. 15 HCP (minimum), but two spade stoppers.
♠54 ♥KJ8 ♦KQT6 ♣AQ97	Double. Takeout. No spade stopper ... no 1N overcall.
♠954 ♥A3 ♦KQT6 ♣AQ97	Pass. Despite 15 HCP there is no bid. Notrump is excluded because of no spade stop, and a takeout double denies a doubleton heart.
♠A2 ♥KJ32 ♦A86 ♣A874	Double. Takeout. The hand is suit-oriented, and the Ace stopper does not encourage declaring NT.
♠QJ2 ♥K5 ♦AKJ432 ♣J2	1N. Having six diamonds only strengthens the hand.
♠KJ92 ♥KT2 ♦K ♣AQJ32	1N. With the 1N overcall comes possible deviations from traditional balanced hands.

Continuations over a 1N overcall

Continuations are no different than after a 1N opening – Stayman and Jacoby. The only difference we have to discuss is when the opponents double because that is a real danger.

Them	Us	Them	Us
1♠	1N	X	?
2♣/2♦/2♥ = weak, signoff XX = SOS – “I have two suits, and don’t want to play NT”			

The above considerations also apply to when we overcall 2N over the opponent’s 2-level opening. Continuations are like over a 1N opening (3♣ Stayman, 3♦/♥ Jacoby). Running from a penalty double is the same as when we overcalled 1N.

Balancing NT

After the opponents have opened at the 1-level and two Passes follow:

- 1N shows 12-15 HCP balanced and does not promise a stopper in the opponent's suit, but does show some length (with shortness – double)
- 2N shows 19-21 HCP balanced and promises a stopper
With 16-18 we double and follow up with NT on the next round

QUIZ	
Opp	Pard
Opp	You
1♦	P P ?
How do you plan the auction?	
♠KJ8 ♥A4 ♦J75 ♣KT765	1N.
♠KJ8 ♥AJ43 ♦75 ♣KT76	Double. Takeout. 7 cards in the majors suggest asking for a suit.
♠KJ8 ♥A4 ♦AJ5 ♣KT765	Double. And then 1N over partner's response. The hand is too strong for a balancing 1N.
♠KJ8 ♥A4 ♦AQ5 ♣KQ765	2N. 19-21 with a diamond stopper.

Continuations over a balancing 1N

Auctions are the same as over a 1N opening. Transfer to the opponent's suit asks for a stopper.

Them	Us	Them	Us
1♥	P	P	1N
P	?		

2♣ = asks for a four card major

2♦ = asks for a heart stopper

2♥ = transfer to spades

Etc.

Defensive Bidding

Jump Overcalls

Jump overcalls show a one-suited hand with a long suit. E.g.

(1♣) 2♠ = six spades, 6-10 HCP

The overcalls therefore differ from the openings (which show two-suited hands). Jump overcalls – especially vulnerable – should have a good suit.

Doubles

Doubles of the opponent's opening has one of two possible meanings: either *takeout*, showing a hand of opening strength without a clear suit to bid, or *explanatory*, showing a hand too strong for overcalls, i.e. 17+ HCP.

PCI bidders tend to overcall lightly. Therefore with great hands (17+) they prefer to double first and bid their suits later.

Bidding after a double of 1♣

A PCI negative 1♦ response gave rise to this helpful treatment:

West	North	East	South
1♣	X	P	?

1♦ = negative

1♥/1♠ = 7+ HCP, forcing for one round

Balancing double

We double in the balancing position with 9+ HCP.

Them	Us	Them	Us
1♥	P	P	X
P	?		

1N = 7-11 with a stopper in the opponent's suit

2N = 12-14 with a good stopper in the opponent's suit

3N = to play

Doubling a 2-level opening

The double of a 2-level opening has mostly the same meaning as a double of a 1-level opening. Some of the highlights are discussed below.

Over a 2♥, 2♠ opening

Over a takeout double of these openings we use Lebensohl (see *Conventions – The Contested Auction*)

Over a Multi 2♦

Doubling an artificial 2♦ (Multi) has the same meaning as a double over a natural 2♠ opening. With a takeout double of hearts one must Pass.

Them	Us
2♦	X = takeout of spades

Them	Us	Them	Us
2♦	P	2♥	P
P	X = takeout of hearts		

Them	Us	Them	Us
2♦	P	2♥	P
2♠	X = takeout of hearts (!)		

Continuations:

Them	Us	Them	Us
2♦	X	2♥	X = “I have points, without short hearts”

Them	Us	Them	Us
2♦	X	3♥	X = “I have points, without a clear suit”

Them	Us	Them	Us
2♦	X	2♠	X = penalty, “I have spades”

Defensive Bidding

Jump Cuebid

The auction might be the following:

Them	Us
1♥	3♥

Jumping in the opponent's suit has the following meanings:

- 1) Asks for a stopper, with a solid minor
- 2) Gameforcing with a self-sufficient minor or major

Let's assume that your opponent has opened 1♥. 3♥ we would bid with the following sample hands:

♠J32 ♥2 ♦A2 ♣AKQ5432
♠AKQT432 ♥-- ♦AQ2 ♣AJT
♠AJ ♥2 ♦KQJT9432 ♣AK

Overcalling the Opponent's 1N Opening

- 2♣ = both major suits: 2♦ asks for the longer major
- 2♦ = one major suit (further bidding is as over Multi)
- 2♥, 2♠ = the bid major with a side minor of at least four cards
- 3♣, 3♦ = natural

Vs a weak NT

- Double = 13+ HCP, any hand
- 2♣ = both majors -> 2♦ asks for the longer major
- 2♦ = one six card or longer major, 6-11 HCP (Multi)
- 2♥/2♠ = natural, 13+
- 3♣/3♦ = natural, constructive

Bidding Over Higher Openings

Double at the 3-level is strictly takeout.

Double at the 4-level is more "cards-takeout" Doubles at the 5-level have constructive character: the hand is probably ours, but partner you are not encouraged to bid without something special.

Part 2 – PCI Pro

Opening Summary

Opening	Not vulnerable	Vulnerable
1♣	1) 12-14 balanced 2) 15+, clubs 3) 18+, any hand	THE SAME
1♦	1) 12-17 5+ cards 2) 12-17 4441 with 4♦ 3) 12-14, 5 clubs, 4 diamonds	THE SAME
1♥, 1♠	10-17, 5+ cards	12-17, 5+ cards
1N	15-17	THE SAME
2♣	12-15, Precision	THE SAME
2♦	Weak Multi (4-9) – may be 5 cards	Weak Multi (6-10) – six cards
2♥	4-9, 5♥ and a 4 card minor	6-10, 5♥ and any other five card suit (may be spades)
2♠	4-9, 5♠ and a 4 card minor	6-10, 5♠ and a five card minor
2N	6-10; minors (5-5)	6-10; minors (5-5)
3 of a suit	Preempt, 6+cards	Preempt, 7+ cards
3N	Gambling; in 3 rd /4 th suit to play	THE SAME
4♣, 4♦	Natural	THE SAME

Reasoning Behind PCI Pro.

Bidding systems can be divided into the aggressive and the precise.

The aim of the aggressive system is to quickly take the initiative in the auction and deprive the opponents of bidding room. An example of an aggressive system is: four card majors, weak NT. The most common one-level openings take up a lot of space. The reverse side of the coin is the lack of precision – increasing the level leaves less room for an exchange of information.

On the other side lie the systems where the bidding is opened as low as possible to allow a long and accurate exchange of information. A classic example is Precision which opens 1♣ more often than any other system.

Polish Club should be placed in the middle on the scale of aggressiveness. On the one hand it opens 1♣ more than most other systems, and on the other hand is an entire arsenal of aggressive 2-level openings.

It should be noted however that the Polish 2-suiters are no longer Polish – they are spreading faster than the swine flu virus. Losing the edge in this element, Polish club is a bit behind when it comes to aggressive bidding.

PCI Pro keeps the best of Polish Club but at the same time adds aggressiveness.

Besides, in PCI Pro I introduce my favorite worldwide-accepted treatments, adjusted to fit the system.

Aggressive Openings

First let's list the advantages and disadvantages of aggressive openings.

Advantages of Aggressive Openings

- 1) Quick initiative in the auction – as a consequence, winning the partial battle
- 2) The ability to bid distributional games more often – with less HCP
- 3) Finding a viable contract or sacrifice
- 4) Communicating the best lead, should the opponents win the auction
- 5) Handicapping the opponents' auction by removing bidding space

Disadvantages of Aggressive Openings

- 1) The chance of a bigger penalty
- 2) Giving the opponents more information to use when playing the hand, if they win the auction

My proposition is the following:

We use aggressive openings in the majors, and only nonvulnerable.

Weak major suit openings give you the best chances to preempt the opponents. (Weakish 1♣ opening gains nothing – neither does it take much space away from the opponents nor directs a lead, nor accelerates finding a fit with partner.)

Using weak openings only nonvulnerable provides safety. Let's note that vulnerable the penalty for down 2 or 3, even undoubled, is a big loss in a match, and disastrous at matchpoints. Quite difference is the case when we are just shelling out 50/undertrick, which can prove to be quite a good investment.

Note that preemptive openings have long been gauged against vulnerability. Why then should 1-level openings be any different?

PCI Pro. Aggressive Openings

The design of major suit openings is the following:

- The lower limit of the nonvulnerable openings is lowered by 2 HCP
- 2♥ and 2♠ openings are 4-9 HCP and promise both a five card major and at least a four card minor
- 2♦ - Multi is bid with 4-9 HCP – it may be opened with a good 5 card suit
- 3-level openings are weak, and very destructive in character

QUIZ What do you choose to open nonvulnerable with these hands?	
♠AKJT8 ♥8 ♦543 ♣JT87	1♠. The hand is too nice to open 2♠.
♠J9765 ♥KQ ♦QJ ♣Q762	Pass. Points, schmoins.
♠8 ♥KJT87 ♦965 ♣JT87	2♥. Minimum opening. With all the points in the long suits – it is an offensive hand.
♠Q3 ♥QT765 ♦J3 ♣J987	Pass. Don't stretch to open with honors in the short suits.
♠KQJ76 ♥87 ♦53 ♠8654	2♦. Weak two in spades (clubs don't count).
♠KQT875 ♥8 ♦A32 ♣976	1♠. This hand is much stronger than the previous.
♠QT87654 ♥7 ♦JT5 ♣32	3♠. Nonvulnerable preempts are weak – destructive.
♠6 ♥QJ9876 ♦QT65 ♣32	3♥ (or 2♦). You can afford to open 3 with a six card suit, if the suit is decent and is supported by a side four card suit.
♠KJ987 ♥KQ865 ♦3 ♣32	1♠. 9 HCP with 5-5 distribution is enough to open at the one level.
♠QT876 ♥KQ865 ♦3 ♣32	Pass. Not vulnerable there is no systemic weak bid for 5-5 majors.

1♥ and 1♠ Openings

Definition

10-17 with five cards in the suit bid.

Continuations

Careful!

Bidding rules are similar to those of PCI Standard. The difference is that the wider opening range reduces the precision of the auction. A range of 12-17 can be divided into two narrow ranges: 12-14 and 15-17, whereas not vulnerable the zones are extended to 10-13 and 14-17.

QUIZ Partner You 1♠ ? How do you bid not vulnerable, and vulnerable?	
♠J ♥KJ87 ♦Q987 ♣AJ72	NV: 1N. Vul – 2♣.
♠QT8 ♥87 ♦AT76 ♣AT76	NV: 2♠. Vul: 2N – invite to game.

QUIZ You Partner 1♠ 1N ? How do you bid not vulnerable, and vulnerable?	
♠AQ876 ♥94 ♦AQJ7 ♣K3	NV: 2♦. Vul also 2♦.
♠KQT87 ♥J3 ♦KJ4 ♣AT4	NV: 2N (max opening). Vul: Pass.

QUIZ You Partner 1♠ 2♥ ? How do you bid not vulnerable, and vulnerable?	
♠KJ987 ♥Q3 ♦AJ8 ♣KT3	NV: 2N (14-17). Vul - 2♠ (12-14).
♠AKT76 ♥3 ♦AQ76 ♣32	NV: 3♦ (14-17). Vul - 2♠ (12-14).

2♦ Opening – Multi with five cards

Bidding after 2♦ doesn't change. This means we may be forced to play in our suit when partner has a singleton in it! Therefore you may want to think twice before opening with just five cards, unless the suit is very good.

QUIZ. Would you open Multi nonvulnerable with these hands?	
♠KQT98 ♥32 ♦T87 ♣J32	The powerful spades would tempt me to open 2♦ - especially at favorable.
♠AQ76 ♥QT3 ♦876 ♣86	I Pass. Here with three decent hearts it may be right to play in hearts, not spades.

2♥ and 2♠ Openings Not Vulnerable: 5-4

Definition

Five cards in the bid suit and a four card minor (at least), 4-9 HCP

Continuations

2♠ over 2♥ is natural, nonforcing.

2N is a forcing relay.

Over the 2N ask:

- 3♣ = 4 clubs; responder may inquire for a three-card fraction with 3♦
- 3♦ = 4 diamonds, no other major 3-card
- 3♥ = 4 diamonds and the other major 3-card
- 3♠ = 5 clubs
- 3NT = 5 diamonds

Over these rebids the minor is agreed naturally, and the major – the cheapest cue.

QUIZ. How should the bidding proceed not vulnerable, West opening?				
W	E	W	E	
♠43 ♥AJ876 ♦J876 ♣54	♠AKQ97 ♥K3 ♦AK3 ♣A32	2♥ 3♦ ¹ Pass	2N 4♠	4 diamonds, no 3 spades
♠543 ♥AJ876 ♦J876 ♣5	♠AKQ97 ♥K3 ♦AK3 ♣A32	2♥ 3♥ ¹ 4♥ ³ 5♣ 5♠ 6♠ ⁷	2N 4♣ ² 4N ⁴ 5♥ ⁵ 5N ⁶ Pass	¹ 4 diamonds, 3 spades ² sets spades (3♠ would set hearts) ³ Cuebid ⁴ RKC spades ⁵ King ask ⁶ "Do you have anything else?" ⁷ "Absolutely nothing."
♠J3 ♥AJ876 ♦J8765 ♣8	♠AKQ97 ♥K3 ♦AK3 ♣A32	2♥ 3♠ ¹ 4♥ ³ 5♣ 5♠ ⁵	2N 4♦ ² 4N 5♥ ⁴ 6♦	¹ 5 diamonds ² Sets diamonds ³ Cuebid ⁴ Asks trump Queen ⁵ No

Openings at the 3-Level

If we agree to allow destructive openings at the 3-level, then we must be appropriately conservative when responding.

QUIZ. What do we bid over partner's 3♣ opening a) vul, b) not vul ?	
♠A3 ♥KJ3 ♦AQ3 ♣QJ98	a) 3N. Partner should have KQ seventh spades. b) Pass.
♠Q3 ♥AQ54 ♦J3 ♣AQJ76	a) 4♠. b) Pass.
♠AJ3 ♥5 ♦J982 ♣KT875	a) 4♠. Perhaps it will make. b) 4♠. Sacrifice against four hearts.

NOTE!

Many times we have to choose: open preemptively, or quietly Pass? A strong reason not to preempt is being in second seat. If your RHO Passes, it greatly increases the chance that your partner has a strong hand, and you are preempting her, not the opponents. In other words, the most profitable seats for preempting are first and third.

Aggressive Responses

One of the tips I give beginning bridge players is: "If partner opens the auction with a suit, and you don't have a fit, and you have a weak hand, then Pass as soon as possible."

Experts do not listen to that advice. Experts bid whenever they have something to show. Let's take a look at the following hands after partner has opened 1♦, and see what the follower of my rule does, and what an expert does.

Hand	How does "my reader" bid?	How does an expert bid?
♠KQT765 ♥T76 ♦6 ♣T54	Pass	1♠
♠6 ♥QT97654 ♦2 ♣J976	Pass	1♥
♠65432 ♥KJT97 ♦2 ♣32	Pass	1♥(!)
♠65 ♥732 ♦3 ♣QJT9876	Pass	1N(!)

Remember that playing Polish Club you should not respond light to a 1♣ opening since partner can just be too strong.

What aims are the experts pursuing when they keep the auction alive with poor hands?

1) **Disrupting the opponents' auction, which cannot be based on counting HCP anymore**

The defenders (let's say, the pair that did not open the auction) cannot focus solely on finding the best suit to play in at the lowest possible level – they must also figure out whose hand it is.

Let's suppose the auction proceeds:

(1♦) P (1♠) ?

Most pairs play here that double is strictly takeout for the two unbid suits (clubs and hearts here). And how to bid with strong hands? Until recently there was no problem. The opening pair had half the deck (12 HCP for opener, 7 HCP for responder), and therefore the defender concluded that they were fighting only for a partscore. Today the response is often a weak hand – the HCP totals cannot be counted on. The expert does not Pass up this hand:

♠65 ♥732 ♦3 ♣QJT9876

He responds 1N. If necessary he can run to clubs – and the opponents have no idea who should be bidding to what level.

2) Lead-directing

A clinical example is

♠65432 ♥KJT97 ♦2 ♣32,

with which an expert over an opening 1♦ would respond 1♥, and not 1♠, expecting that the opponents will eventually win the auction.

3) Buying the auction in a part score

Whoever enters the auction first has the initiative.

4) Getting to game when the cards fit well

If we want to bid like an expert, we would have to remember the fact that – like with opening – it pays to bid light **not vulnerable**.

QUIZ. Partner opens 1♦. How do you bid the following hands depending on vulnerability?	
♠J65 ♥K9876 ♦J2 ♣543	Pass. Always. The hearts are not so strong that a lead in the suit by partner would be crucial, and they are not long enough to rebid.
♠KQT97 ♥3 ♦875 ♣5432	1♠. Always. We preempt the opponents' hearts, we have no misfit (diamonds fit), and in extreme cases we may have game in spades.
♠7 ♥QJT9765 ♦98 ♣T87	1♥. Always. We have so many hearts we aren't afraid to play them, even if partner bids very high.
♠KJ876 ♥976 ♦T8 ♣J53	The hand is limited, since while the spades are not bad, they are not solid. I would decide to bid 1♠ not vulnerable, but Pass vulnerable.
♠JT9876 ♥T8 ♦T87 ♣32	1♠, but only at favorable vulnerability. Any other time I would lack the courage to bid.

Having explained all the benefits of aggressive responses, it is necessary however to mention one big "BUT". This style of bidding disturbs opener's count on the hand most of all, so without a good system of brakes this would not be worth playing.

The purpose of this part of the book is to propose a mechanism with two objectives:

- To allow aggressive one-level responses
- To avoid disaster in almost all situations

This mechanism cannot guarantee 100% security. But if you don't take the risk, you will be behind the rest of the world, which is responding aggressively.

First let's start with a classic example where an aggressive response brings us to a dead end. It occurs when opener jump-shifts, e.g.

1♦	1♥
3♦	?

"Partner, what are you doing? I wanted to just play in hearts, at a low level." Oh well, now we have to Pass because 3♥ would be forcing.

Fortunately in our arsenal we have established that 3♦ denies a heart fit (see: *Raising responder after a 1♦ Opening*). So the loss will be limited, just losing a part score.

1♥	1♠
3♥	?

If we had bid 1♠ aggressively, and without a heart fit, then misery on us. 3♠ would be forcing so we have to just Pass and pray.

1♥	1♠
3♦	?

Do we have 6 spades, 2 hearts, 1 diamond, and 4 clubs? Then we would love to correct to hearts, but that would be forcing, so we have to Pass and use whatever lucky charms we have available to hope.

The advantage of Polish Club is that the openings have a narrower range of strength than most other systems, so **the jump-shift is not forcing**. And in other situations we have a solution – **Cheap Transfers**.

Cheap Transfers

Cheap Transfers is a gadget that sets into one schema a few ideas invented all over the world.

The proposed mechanism can be described by a single principle:

After a response at the 1-level:

the second bid by responder in the cheapest unbid suit is artificial and asks opener to bid the next higher suit.

Let us start with the example of the highest level that this convention is used: opener jump rebids 2N. The cheapest bid in an unbid suit is 3♣. For example:

1♦	1♠
2N	3♣

The 3♣ means that responder wants to play as low as possible. Opener is obliged to bid the next suit, in this case 3♦.

1♦	1♠
2N	3♣
3♦	?

Pass = “I want to play 3♦”

3♥ = “I want to play 3♥ (unless you correct to 3♠)”

3♠ = “I want to play 3♠”

3N = “3♣ was natural, I am not sure about 3N”

A consequence of this is that any other suit bid at the 3-level is forcing.

1♦ 1♠
2N ?

3♦ = diamond fit, forcing

3♥ = natural, forcing

3♠ = natural, forcing

Similar treatment holds if the auction starts out:

1♦ 1♥
2N ?

Or

1♥ 1♠
2N ?

QUIZ. Initial bidding:	
Partner	You
1♦	1♠
2N	?
How do you plan the auction with these hands?	
♠QJT976 ♥J765 ♦6 ♣J9	3♣. And over 3♦ by partner – 3♠ signoff.
♠KJT976 ♥KQ7 ♦5 ♣AT8	3♠. Forcing.
♠KT8765 ♥J83 ♦T87 ♣3	3♣. And over 3♦ by partner – Pass.
♠AT876 ♥863 ♦KQ6 ♣K3	3♦. Forcing.
♠AJ987 ♥3 ♦2 ♣KQJT85	3♣. And over 3♦ by partner – 4♣ - forcing (an immediate 4♣ would have been a splinter for diamonds).
♠AJ987 ♥3 ♦T2 ♣JT876	3♣. And over 3♦ - Pass. This should be a better contract than 3N. Clubs are buried this time.

PCI Pro. Cheap Transfers

Let's take a look at Cheap Transfers at a lower level.

1♦	1♠
2♦	

1♦	1♠
2♣	

In both above sequences our conventional rebid is 2♥. 2♦ is not available in the latter sequence because it would be suit preference. 2♥ has the following meanings:

- 1) Signoff in spades, or
- 2) **Any gameforcing hand**

An important advantage of this arrangement is the ability to rebid a five card spade suit to invite at a low level. Rebidding spades (2♠) shows a stronger hand than signing off in spades – so opener is free to continue bidding.

Solve the quiz on the next page to check if you can use Cheap Transfers at a low level.

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♦	1♠
2♦	?
How do you plan to continue the auction with these hands?	
♠KJT875 ♥Q75 ♦3 ♣T86	2♥. And over 2♠ by partner, a polite Pass.
♠KJ976 ♥742 ♦2 ♣AQT4	2♠. Partner with a spade fit and good hand probably will whisper something more.
♠AQJT87 ♥KT3 ♦32 ♣J5	3♠. Invite to game with a good six card suit.
♠AQT876 ♥AQ3 ♦J3 ♣Q2	2♥. And over 2♠ by partner – 3♠. Gameforcing with six spades.
♠KT75 ♥97 ♦QT8 ♣AJ65	3♦. Invitational.
♠AT53 ♥A64 ♦JT8 ♣A64	2♥. And over 2♠ - 3♦. Forcing. If partner bids 3N, it will play better from his hand.
♠KJ97 ♥QJ7 ♦J5 ♣K953	2N. Natural, nonforcing.
♠AKJ93 ♥A97 ♦J5 ♣K95	2♥. And over 2♠ by partner – 2N. Forcing: “Let’s find the right suit first, and then think about slam.”

Even more interesting is the Cheap Transfer at a lower level still.

1♥	1♠
2♣	?

The cheapest bid in an unbid suit is 2♦ - transfer to 2♥: Signoff in 2♥ or 2♠, or **Any gameforcing hand**.

Over the obligatory 2♥ by opener:

1♥	1♠
2♣	2♦
2♥	?

Pass = “I want to play 2♥”

2♠ = signoff in spades

PCI Pro. Cheap Transfers

Higher bids are gameforcing:

- 2N = Gameforcing – same as Forcing 2N
- 3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠ = gameforcing

In this situation excluded from 2♦ (which is either signoff or gameforcing) are the invitational hands:

1♥ 1♠
2♣ ?

2♥ = better than transferring via 2♦ - a light invite – may be a doubleton heart, like a 2N call that has no good club stopper

2♠ = invite with spades

2N = invite with a good club stopper

3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠ = invite

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♥	1♠
2♣	?
How do you bid these hands?	
♠KQ976 ♥J4 ♦QT87 ♣K3	2♠. Invite with 5 spades (with a signoff type hand you would have bid 2♦).
♠KQJT87 ♥J5 ♦AT7 ♣43	3♠. Invite with six good spades (with a GF you would have bid 2♦).
♠KJ87 ♥Q3 ♦KJT8 ♣J76	2N. Natural nonforcing with a good diamond stopper.
♠KJ87 ♥Q3 ♦A763 ♣J76	2♥(!). Light invite with at least two hearts. If a doubleton, than no great diamond stopper. An eventual 3N is best played from partner's hand.

QUIZ Partner You 1♥ 1♠ 2♣ 2♦ ? How do you bid these hands?	
♠K7 ♥AQ976 ♦KJ ♣QJ98	2♥. If partner wants to play 2♥ or 2♠, then that's as high as you want to go.
♠A ♥Q9876 ♦KQJ ♣KQJ6	2♥. Despite the high number of HCP, no game will make if partner goes low.
♠J ♥AJT765 ♦A6 ♣AQ7	3♥. Even if partner wants to play low, such a dynamic hand must try to push with 3♥.
♠KJ3 ♥AT876 ♦3 ♣AK53	2♠. Even if partner was dreaming of playing 2♥, you have to let him know about your solid extras and 3-crd spade fit.

QUIZ Partner You 1♥ 1♠ 2♣ 2♦ 2♥ ? How do you bid these hands?	
♠AJ976 ♥J6 ♦Q765 ♣J3	Pass. Don't abuse the convention! Your spades are too weak to rebid.
♠QJT987 ♥954 ♦72 ♣J3	2♠. Better to play spades than hearts (your spades are useless in a heart contract)
♠AJ986 ♥KJ7 ♦A54 ♣K3	3♥. Forcing, if bid after a Cheap Transfer.
♠KQT87 ♥Q5 ♦AJ3 ♣QJ3	2N. Forcing. You will play game, but the question is in what? Spades? Hearts? Clubs? NT? You have time, Forcing 2N.

PCI Pro. Cheap Transfers

Let's discuss the sequence:

1♦	1♥
1♠	?

There are various tools out there partnerships use: some treat 2♣ as Fourth Suit Forcing, and others two-way checkback. I propose Cheap Transfer.

1♦	1♥
1♠	2♣

2♣ is a Cheap Transfer, preparing a signoff, or a game force.

1♦	1♥
1♠	2♣
2♦	?

Pass = "I want to play 2♦"

2♥/2♠ = signoff in hearts or spades

2N/3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠ = game forcing

In these situations, other bids at the 2-level are slightly encouraging.

1♦	1♥
1♠	?

2♦ = better than going through 2♣ (may be a 2N bid without a good club stopper)

2♥ = encouraging with five hearts

2♠ = encouraging with a spade fit

2N = invite with a good club stopper

3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠ = solid invite

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♦	1♥
1♠	?
How do you bid the following hands?	
♠K876 ♥J876 ♦Q76 ♣J5	2♣. And over 2♦, 2♠
♠K876 ♥A876 ♦Q76 ♣J5	2♣. Better than going through 2♣.
♠Q65 ♥KQJ87 ♦Q3 ♣J54	2♥. Invitational with at least five hearts.
♠65 ♥KQJ765 ♦32 ♣J54	2♣. Preparing a signoff in hearts.
♠Q3 ♥QJ987 ♦J987 ♣J3	2♣. And over 2♦ by partner, Pass.
♠Q65 ♥QJ87 ♦Q54 ♣A53	2♦(!). Light invite – clubs too weak for 2N.
♠Q65 ♥QJ87 ♦T54 ♣AQ3	2N. Natural, nonforcing, good club stop.
♠653 ♥QT87 ♦KQ76 ♣A3	3♦. Natural invite.

Two-Way Checkback

For several years the convention known as Magister (One-way Checkback) dominated Polish Club (described in PCI Standard). In other systems, and among many top Polish pairs, Two-way Checkback has become increasingly popular.

After a major suit response and 1N rebid by opener, 2♣ and 2♦ rebids are artificial: 2♣ shows an invite hand (or signoff in diamonds), while 2♦ is any gameforcing hand.

The reasons for the adoption of this treatment are as follows:

- 1) Playing one check-back it is not possible to show an invite hand with a four card major and five card minor.
- 2) Invitational hands should be bid tactically differently from gameforcing hands. Invite hands are general approximations, based on HCP. Losses arising from lack of precision are repaid with interest from the low information leaked to the opponents

PCI Pro. Two-way Checkback

during the auction. However, when we have enough HCP for game, we need to be more careful in order to get to the best game, or find out if we have slam. Slam is more difficult to gauge than game, so the camouflage argument doesn't hold water.

When is Two-Way Checkback Used?

This convention is used in all hands that would have used Magister (One_way Checkback) from PCI Standard.

2♣ Checkback

Definition

"I want to play 2♦, or invite to game."

Continuations

Opener must bid 2♦, unless she has a strong club. Responder Passes ("I want to play 2♦") or continues bidding naturally ("invite to game").

Special Situations

Responder bidding NT after 2♣ is natural, but promises a five card major.

- 2N is invite with 5332 distribution
- 3N is choice of game with 5332 distribution

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♦	1♠
1N	?
How do you bid the following hands?	
♠KJ87 ♥QT3 ♦J5 ♣KJ62	2N. Totally normal.
♠KJ876 ♥QT7 ♦Q5 ♣K93	2♣. And over 2♦, 2N. Invite with 5 spades, good hand for NT.
♠KQT87 ♥T5 ♦Q5 ♣KT75	2♣. And over 2♦, 2♠. Invite with 5 spades.
♠A876 ♥96 ♦J5 ♣KQJ86	2♣. And over 2♦, 3♣. Invite with 5 clubs.
♠A876 ♥96 ♦3 ♣QJ9876	3♣. "If 2♣ is not available, I have to bid 3♣ to sign off".
♠QJ987 ♥KT9 ♦K ♣QJ97	2♣. And over 2♦, 3N. "Oh, sorry partner, not 5332, I had a club in with the diamonds."
♠QT753 ♥KJ75 ♦T75 ♣3	2♣. Partner bids 2♦, and you Pass. An immediate 2♦ would have been gameforcing Checkback!

Opener has a Strong Club

1♣	1♥
1♠	2♣

Opener may have a strong club here. Then, instead of 2♦ opener bids:

- 2♥ = 18+, 5+ spades, 3 hearts (with 4 spades he would have used Odwrotka)
- 2♠ = 18+, 5+♠ without 3 hearts
- 2N = 18+, natural with 4 spades (without 3 hearts)
- 3♣/3♦ = 18+, four spades, 5+ card minor

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♣	1♥
1♠	2♣
?	
How do you bid the following hands?	
♠KQT6 ♥7 ♦AQT8 ♣AKJ3	2N. This leaves room for finding a possible fit in either minor.
♠AQT6 ♥T2 ♦3 ♣AKQJ98	3♣. This hand does not want to play 2♦. 3♣ is forcing, so it might get you too high (if partner intends to sign off in diamonds), but you have to take the small chance.
♠KQT3 ♥K ♦J52 ♣AQJ65	2♦. If partner wants to play just 2♦, you don't want to go any higher. If she continues to bid, then you will surely get to game.
♠AQJT6 ♥3 ♦AQJ98 ♣AJ	2♠. An immediate 3♦ would tell partner about the fifth diamond, but then you would never be able to convince partner of the fifth spade.

2♦ Checkback

Definition

Artificial game force.

Continuations

Natural, economical.

QUIZ Partner You 1♦ 1♠ 1N ? How do you bid the following hands?	
♠KJ987 ♥QJ876 ♦3 ♣J5	2♥. Nonforcing. Partner selects the suit to play in at a low level.
♠KJ987 ♥AQJ4 ♦Q2 ♣K5	2♦. Game force.
♠KJ98 ♥J ♦AT87 ♣QT53	3♦. Invite without 5 spades.
♠KJ98 ♥J ♦AT87 ♣KQ65	2♦ Game force. And on the next round raise diamonds.

QUIZ Partner You 1♠ 1♠ 1N 2♦ ? How do you bid the following hands?	
♠Q6 ♥KJ7 ♦J97 ♣KQT82	3♣. It's time to reveal the clubs.
♠Q63 ♥KJ7 ♦J7 ♣KQT82	2♠. We have to communicate two important pieces of information – the spade fit and the fifth club. We choose the cheaper of the two (we have to bid economically).
♠Q63 ♥KJ74 ♦J7 ♣KQT8	2♥. Two things to show: hearts and spades. Economically!
♠Q6 ♥KJ7 ♦J974 ♣KQT8	2N. Nothing new to show (yet).

Opener has a Strong Club

Take the following sequence:

1♣	1♥
1♠	2♦

PCI Pro. Two-way Checkback

The strong club and gameforcing checkback don't often occur at the same time. But when the situation does arise, it does not mean you have to play in slam. Perhaps opener upgraded for good distribution. Perhaps responder did too. There could be a misfit of massive proportions. "Economical" bidding allows for the full communication between partners.

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♣	1♥
1♠	2♦
?	
How do you bid the following hands?	
♠AQT97 ♥K4 ♦AQ7 ♣A3	2♠. Rebidding spades shows 5+ spades and the strong club.
♠AQT97 ♥K65 ♦AQ7 ♣A2	3♥. 5+ spades and 3 hearts, strong club.
♠AQT9 ♥5 ♦Q97 ♣AKJ98	3♣. Time to show the clubs.
♠AKJT5 ♥5 ♦86 ♣AKJ75	2♠. Smells like a possible misfit – for now show the 5 spades.
♠KQT8 ♥5 ♦KQ97 ♣AKQ7	2N. Well, partner will not know that you have a strong club. But what is the alternative? You will reveal strong club later.

Auctions After Opener Rebids Clubs

This section involves the sequence:

1♣ 1♥/1♠
2♣

Opener's sequence shows a hand with at least 15 HCP and no upper limit. This can cause problems determining the right level contract, particularly when responder's hand is strong.

The remedy for this situation is the *Other Major* convention.

Suppose that responder used the 2♦ artificial game force over 2♣:

1♣	1♥
2♣	2♦
?	

All bids by opener are natural and imply 15-17 HCP, with the exception of the other major (here 2♠). This means the hand has 18+ HCP. The rest of the auction unfolds naturally, but responder knows more about the combined strengths and can place the contract more precisely.

Let's take a look at a particular example:

1♣	1♠
2♣	2♦
?	

2♥ (other major) = 18+ HCP any hand; all other bids show 15-17 HCP

This raises the problem now of how to find a heart fit. The solution is as follows:

1♣	1♠
2♣	2♦ = gameforcing, without 4 hearts

1♣	1♠
2♣	2♥ = natural, forcing for one round

This treatment creates problem with weak responses (7-9 HCP) with 5 spades and 5 hearts. The remedy is described in *Jumps shifts in a major*.

PCI Pro. Auctions After Opener Rebids Clubs

QUIZ Partner You 1♣ 1♠ 2♣ ? How do you bid the following hands?	
♠QJ9763 ♥K3 ♦J32 ♣87	2♠. Nonforcing.
♠KJ976 ♥AT7 ♦T87 ♣Q3	2♦. Forcing ask.
♠KJ987 ♥AT74 ♦T8 ♣Q3	2♥. One round force.
♠KJ987 ♥KT74 ♦T8 ♣32	2♥. Natural, forcing for one round (if you do not use the suggested jumps shifts in a major).

QUIZ Partner You 1♣ 1♠ 2♣ 2♦ ? How do you bid the following hands?	
♠QJ2 ♥Q4 ♦J2 ♣AKQJ96	2♠. 15-17, 3 spades.
♠KJ3 ♥3 ♦K32 ♣AKJ765	3♠. 15-17, 3 spades, extra tricks.
♠KJ3 ♥3 ♦AK3 ♣AKJ765	2♥. 18+, for now.
♠76 ♥AQJ3 ♦Q2 ♣AQJ52	2N. 15-17 natural. Partner is not interested in hearts.
♠76 ♥AQJ3 ♦4 ♣AKJ987	3♣. 15-17, 6+ clubs.
♠A6 ♥AQJ3 ♦4 ♣AKJ987	2♥. 18+, says nothing about distribution.
♠76 ♥4 ♦AQJ3 ♣AKJ987	3♦. Natural, 15-17.
♠A6 ♥4 ♦AQJ3 ♣AKJ987	2♥. 18+, says nothing about distribution.

Odwrotka – Strong 2♥

The best thing about *Odwrotka* is not a structure of artificial responses for 2♦ relay bid. It is the fact that with that one bid opener informs of the strong hand with support in responder's suit. The other virtue is the negative reasoning: other strong rebids of the opener deny support.

In the chapter devoted to slam bidding I showed two cases when standard *Odwrotka* treatment failed. No wonder: most nice slams are bid on fitting distribution rather than on combined strength.

In the survey for PCI Standard the voters decided to return to the 44-55-66 structure. Fine.

I present another structure that will likely be adopted because of its many advantages, including simplicity. This can be called: *Odwrotka – Strong 2♥*.

1♣	1♥/1♠
2♦	?

2♥ = strong: a hand interested in slam or opening strength
all other responses are weak...

2♠ = four card major without a five card minor

3♣/3♦ = four card major with this five card minor; 9 – 11 HCP

2N = 5card major, side 4+ card suit

3♥ = 5M(332)

3♠ = 6+ cards in the major 1-suiter

3N = "partner sorry, my idea was to get you to play NT, I have just a 3 card major"

The unusual 2N response has two benefits:

- We can find a side fit
- The weaker hand should bid NT only when 3N is unlikely to be the final contract

After a 2♠ rebid, opener may describe his hand, or wait with 2N.

1♣	1♥/1♠
2♦	2♠ (minimum, four card major, no five card minor)
2N	?
	3♣/3♦ = natural, showing at least four card suit (five cards if 7-8 HCP)
	3♠ (after 1♥) = four cards, natural
	Rebidding the major = both four card minors

After a 2N rebid, opener may continue to mine for more information, asking with 3♣:

1♣	1♥/1♠
2♦	2N
3♣	?
	Rebidding the major = four clubs
	Else = natural, 4+ card suit

After a 2♥ rebid (strong), opener may easily satisfy her curiosity via a 2♠ ask. Further bidding is the same as the weak bids:

- 2N = at least a five card major, unbalanced
- 3♣/3♦ = natural, four cards in the suit and four spades (5+ card minor impossible because it would have responded 2 of a minor originally)
- 3♥ = 5(332)
- 3♠ (after 1♥) = 4 hearts, 4 spades (here is the difference!) – after 1♠, this is normal 6+ cards
- 3N = 4333

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♣	1♥
2♦	?
How do you bid the following hands?	
♠-- ♥AT87 ♦Q8765 ♣QJ65	2♠. Minimum, four hearts, no five card minor. Systemically you could bid 3♦, but then finding a 4-4 club fit would be impossible. Assume partner will ask with 2N, and now 3♥ will show 4 cards in both minors (with the fifth diamond a nice surprise).
♠KJ98 ♥AQT6 ♦JT7 ♣32	2♥. Strong. This is almost opening hand with very good hearts.
♠J432 ♥J876 ♦AJ5 ♣KQ	2♠. Minimum with four cards. 12 HCP? Yes, but look what you have in our primary suits: hearts and spades! Do not encourage your partner to try for slam.
♠Q3 ♥J9765 ♦KJ ♣J432	3♥. I know, I'm being impish. I'll give full credit for 2N, but I don't think bragging about a second suit does anything with all the honors in the short suits. If partner bids 3NT, you will happily Pass.
♠32 ♥QJ6 ♦A876 ♣J832	3N. "Partner I was so trying not to respond 1N with the weak doubleton spade, but I shouldn't try to fool you any longer."
♠2 ♥QJ865 ♦2 ♣KJ9765	2N. 5 hearts, unbalanced. Very unbalanced!

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♣	1♠
2♦	2♥ (strong)
2♠ (ask)	?
How do you bid the following hands?	
♠AJ76 ♥K3 ♦KJ76 ♣765	3♦. Four diamonds. And how does partner know it is not five? Well because you did not respond 2♦, just 1♠.
♠AJ76 ♥KJ ♦9876 ♣KQ5	4N. Don't show this diamond suit. On the other hand, 3N sounds too weak with 14 HCP.
♠K9876 ♥AQ765 ♦Q2 ♣3	2N. Five spades, unbalanced. Even hearts must wait their turn!
♠KJ8765 ♥KJ3 ♦K2 ♣74	3♠. With spades, you may use this response to show 6+ cards. Had the original response been 1♥, then this would have shown four hearts and four spades (so with six cards, the only options would be 2N and 3♥ if desired).
♠KJ8765 ♥KJ3 ♦K32 ♣3	4♣. Six spades, short clubs.

Raising a Major Suit Response After a 1♦ Opening

One of the most difficult problems to solve is finding a major fit after opener jump rebids their suit:

1♦ 1♥/1♠
3♦

Some pairs like to play that 3♦ promises three card support for the major, and a 2N jump rebid would be the same hand without three card support.

Neither natural, nor wise!

What for example does

♠987 ♥6 ♦AKQJ98 ♣A65

bid after:

1♦ 1♥
?

2♦ is far too anemic, and grabbing declarership of NT is a mortal sin – the lead is best coming into partner’s hand for every suit except diamonds.

1♥ Response

Rescuing us is the feature of Polish club that the hands that use the following sequence are rare:

1♦ 1♥
2♠

In fact we see very little reason for this auction: with very strong hands we open 1♣. Even with a solid opening, we see no reason to fear partner Passing a 1♠ rebid with a spade fit, thanks to the Cheap Transfer (partner can rebid 2♣, and over 2♦, 2♠).

I propose the following agreement:

1♦ 1♥
2♠ = strong hand with 3 hearts and 6+ diamonds

Thanks to this treatment, opener with 6 diamonds can choose 2NT or 3♦ depending on the character of the hand. In both cases, it would deny a heart fit.

Raising a Major Suit Response After a 1♦ Opening

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♦	1♥
?	
How do you bid the following hands?	
♠KQT7 ♥8 ♦AQJ765 ♣K3	1♠. Take it easy!
♠72 ♥AJ7 ♦AQJ765 ♣K3	2♠. 6 diamonds and 3 hearts, maximum opening.
♠KJ ♥43 ♦KQT876 ♣AQ7	2N. "I don't mind playing NT from my hand."
♠K32 ♥2 ♦KQJ987 ♣A54	3♦. "If we play in NT, this time I'll let you play it, partner."

Continuations

We use the Cheap Transfer: 3♣ says we want to play in 3♦ or 3♥ and other bids (2N, 3♦, 3♥) are forcing.

2N asks for shortness! Opener shows shortness if she has it, and otherwise bids 3♦ with a good suit, 3♥ with honors in partner's suit, or 3N with distributed honors.

1♠ Response

After a 1♠ response the situation is more complicated because it's difficult to just give up the ability to show a good hand with hearts. On the other hand, rare is the hand that would want to Pass a 2♥ reverse either.

I propose that the 2♥ reverse has two meanings:

1♦	1♠	
2♥		= two meanings:
		1) Reverse into hearts
		2) 6 diamonds with 3 spades

Continuations

2♠ is nonforcing, 2N is forcing, and 3♣ is a Cheap Transfer.

1♦ 1♠
 2♥ 2N = forcing
 ?

Rebids are practically natural:

3♣ = 4 hearts, 3 clubs

3♦ = 6 diamonds, 4 hearts

3♥ = 4 hearts, 3 spades

3♠ = 3 spades, 6 diamonds

3N = 4 hearts and two doubletons

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♦	1♠
?	
How do you bid the following hands?	
♠K3 ♥KJ76 ♦QT865 ♣A2	1N. The hand is too weak for a 2♥ reverse.
♠3 ♥AKJ7 ♦AQT96 ♣Q92	2♥. Natural reverse, or 6 diamonds with a spade fit.
♠KJ3 ♥6 ♦AQJ765 ♣A65	2♥. 6 diamonds with a spade fit, or a natural reverse.

Raising a Major Suit Response After a 1♦ Opening

QUIZ	
Partner	You
1♦	1♠
2♥	?
How do you bid the following hands?	
♠KJ9765 ♥T76 ♦J ♣J96	2♠. To play.
♠QJ987 ♥QJ98 ♦32 ♣32	3♣. Cheap Transfer. Over 3♦ by partner – 3♥. If partner has spades, she will move to 3♠.
♠AQJ98 ♥QT98 ♦32 ♣32	4♥. “Pass, or correct to 4♠.”
♠AK983 ♥AQ79 ♦32 ♣32	3♥. Strong heart raise. If partner bids 3♠, then spades will be trumps instead.
♠QJ987 ♥K8 ♦T32 ♣T32	3♣. And over 3♦ - Pass.
♠AQJ8 ♥53 ♦A32 ♣J983	3♦. Forcing. “Why do I have to rush to declare NT with a doubleton heart?”
♠QJ987 ♥A3 ♦J76 ♣Q93	2N. “Let’s see what partner has, then figure out what to do.”

Jump-shifts in a Major

The convention concerns 2♥ and 2♠ responses to 1♣ / 1♦ openings. The structure is following:

- 2♥ = 5 spades, 4+ hearts, 7 – 9 HCP
- 2♠ = invite to 3NT – transferring declarer play to partner

On the minus plus is abandoning strong jump-shifts. On the plus side is the following reasoning: The first treatment comes handy when partner opens 1♣/1♦ and then rebids his suit. Over 1♣ opening (and partner’s rebidding clubs) we want 2♥ to be forcing (see: Auctions after Opener Rebids Clubs). Over 1♦ opening (and partner’s rebidding diamonds) we need 2♥ as a Cheap Transfer.

The second treatment has two advantages. Firstly, it allows for transferring declarer play if needed. Secondly, after 1♣ opening the

treatment makes it possible to distinguish between 2♠ - invite and 2N - forcing. No more do we need the worst response to 1♣: 3N!

QUIZ Partner You 1♦ ? How do you bid the following hands?	
♠KJ976 ♥QJ765 ♦J ♣J9	2♥. This shows 5 spades and at least 4 hearts.
♠KJT87 ♥AJT87 ♦32 ♣3	1♠. Just a bit too strong for 2♥.
♠KT7 ♥AQ7 ♦JT2 ♣J974	2N. Invite. No transfer needed.
♠A32 ♥K32 ♦QJ2 ♣AQ432	2♠. "You'd better be declarer in no trumps."

QUIZ You Partner 1♣ 2♠ How do you bid the following hands?	
♠KJ8 ♥73 ♦QJ76 ♣KQ93	2N. "Ugh. We both might be short of heart stop."
♠KJ8 ♥73 ♦QJT6 ♣AQJ3	3N. "I'd prefer to be dummy. Can't we change the system for a while?"
♠AQJ76 ♥AQ74 ♦JT2 ♣A	3♠. Strange. If we play spades, you will be declarer.
♠A32 ♥K3 ♦QJ2 ♣AQ432	3♣. Forcing .

Transfers After an Enemy Overcall

Using transfers after an opponent overcalls is gaining popularity. The reasons are similar to those over a 1N opening:

- 1) The contract is declared from a more convenient side
- 2) You can show your suit with a weak hand, or strong hand

PCI Pro. Transfers After an Enemy Overcall

Let us discuss the first concept. If the opponent entered the auction, it is most likely they bid for the lead. So let him make the opening lead himself!

In the model case our hand has the Ace-Queen of a suit, and the defenders have the King. If the King is in front of the Ace, then the lead does not matter. But if the King is behind the Ace, then it is much better to have the lead coming towards our hand.

Consider some other combinations:

Kxx	AJTxx
Qxx	

KQx	AJ10xx
xxx	

In each of the above layouts, it's better to have the North hand declaring, and not the South hand.

Moreover, even with a good stopper it may be better to let partner declare:

Jx	KT9xx
AQx	

Qx	KJTxxx
Axx	

Jxx	AQxxx
Kxx	

As we will also show, transfers can also be useful for the rapid determination of the total number of trumps, which can be crucial in

competitive bidding.

In PCI we propose using transfers in the most basic situation:

The opponents overcall 1♦ or 1♥ - transfers are played to majors and NT.

Us	Them	Us
1♣	1♦	?

We use transfers:

X = at least four hearts

1♥ = at least four spades

1♠ = transfer to NT

2♦ = at least five hearts

2♥ = at least five spades

Other bids are natural.

Us	Them	Us
1♣/♦	1♥	?

X = at least four spades

1♠ = transfer to NT

2♥ = at least five spades

This prompts the question: why have two different transfers to the spades? The answer is: to help partner out if the auction heats up.

Suppose that we play standard approach:

Pd	Opp	You	Opp
1♦	1♥	1♠	3♥ (or 4♥)

Should partner support us with three spades?

If you want partner to outbid the opponents with three cards in your suit, transfer at the two-level. If not, transfer at the one-level.

PCI Pro. Transfers After an Enemy Overcall

QUIZ Partner Opp You 1♦ 1♥ ? How do you bid the following hands?	
♠KJ76 ♥AQ92 ♦Q62 ♣84	X. Four spades. You will have time to get to NT if necessary.
♠K9762 ♥KJ3 ♦42 ♣Q76	X. At least 4 spades. Do you want partner to outcompete the opponents' hearts with just three spades? Absolutely not!
♠KJT98 ♥832 ♦K32 ♣J3	2♥. If the opponents jump in hearts, and partner has three spades, it is definitely good to hear about it.
♠AJT87 ♥73 ♦QJ54 ♠986	2♥. If the opponents bid 3♥, and partner does not raise spades (no 3 cards), you will raise to 4♦.
♠QJT876 ♥73 ♦Q87 ♠986	2♥. "Partner, give me a boost if you have a spade fit."
♠J9876 ♥Q32 ♦Q65 ♣KJ	X. Spades are too weak for 2♥.
♠AJ965 ♥73 ♦4 ♠KQT93	2♥. If they raise to 3♥, and partner does not support spades, you will introduce clubs.

NOTE! The transfer to NT merely states that it is best that this hand does not declare NT, so transferring may or may not show a stopper!

QUIZ Partner Opp You 1♣ 1♥ ? How do you bid the following hands?	
♠KT3 ♥AQ4 ♦JT2 ♣QT43	1♠. "Partner, bid NT. Maybe you have the Jack or Ten of hearts."
♠AKT ♥75 ♦JT2 ♣AQ43	1♠. Partner will probably bid 1N. Then ask with 2♥, "Partner do you actually have a heart stopper?"
♠KT3 ♥QT43 ♦JT2 ♣K43	1N. You don't fear playing NT from your hand.
♠KT3 ♥K43 ♦JT2 ♣Q432	1♠. "If, partner, you have the Queen or Jack of hearts, it is better to play NT from your hand. If not, nothing to worry about – I have them stopped."

NOTE! After we open 1♦, and they overcall 1♥, a transfer to NT may also be an invite or better raise (because 2♥ is no longer available – it is a transfer to spades).

QUIZ Partner Opp You 1♦ 1♥ ? What do you plan to do with these hands?	
♠K97 ♥43 ♦QT92 ♣QT43	2♦. You have a fit, so show it.
♠K97 ♥3 ♦JT92 ♣QT432	3♦. Preemptive with a diamond fit.
♠K97 ♥43 ♦QT92 ♣AQ43	1♠. Transfer to NT. On the next round bid 3♦, invitational raise.
♠A97 ♥43 ♦QJ92 ♣AQ43	1♠. With this hand you should get to game. Therefore on the next round bid the opponent's suit – 2♥: Forcing to game and asking for a stopper.

Continuations

After partner's transfer to a major **at the one-level**, and fourth seat Pass:

- Completing the transfer shows a three-card fit
- Completing the transfer with a jump shows a four-card fit
- 2♦ after 1♣ opening is Odwrotka

QUIZ			
You	Opp	Pd	Opp
1♣	1♥	X	P
?			
How do you bid the following hands?			
♠875 ♥K32 ♦Q9 ♣AKJ87			1♠. Spades played from the right side.
♠875 ♥AKJ ♦KJ3 ♣Q987			1N. Despite holding three spades. What use would rules be without exceptions?
♠Q432 ♥A32 ♦K43 ♣KJ3			2♣. The "pancake" shape should not lead us off the path – we have to show a four card fit.
♠KQ3 ♥A32 ♦K43 ♣AQJ2			2♦. Odwrotka.

QUIZ			
You	Opp	Pd	Opp
1♣	1♥	X	2♥
?			
How do you bid the following hands?			
♠QT3 ♥65 ♦AJT3 ♣KQ65			X. Support double. Suggesting a Moysian fit.
♠QT3 ♥KJT ♦A876 ♣KJ3			Pass. Defensive hand. Let them play it.
♠QT3 ♥AJ3 ♦A876 ♣AKJ			X. Support double. Partner will probably bid 2♣, and we will follow with 2N. Showing strength and fit.
♠J654 ♥K32 ♦A32 ♣A32			2♠. Duty is duty.

After a transfer to NT, the bidding proceeds a little differently after 1♣, than after 1♦.

- After 1♣ and a transfer to NT, opener with a weak variant must bid 1N, and all other bids show a strong variant
- After 1♦ opener is free to choose a most descriptive bid

QUIZ			
You	Opp	Pd	Opp
1♣	1♥	1♠	P
?			
How do you bid the following hands?			
♠K32 ♥Q4 ♦Q32 ♣AJT76	1N. Happy to declare NT. If partner has the King or Ace (or even Jack) of hearts, it is best played from our hand.		
♠K32 ♥43 ♦Q32 ♣AJT76	1N. We have no choice. 2♣ would be a stronger hand. If partner has no heart stopper, and wants to bid higher, she must ask with 2♥.		
♠K32 ♥K4 ♦QJ2 ♣AKQ32	2N. Strong club with a heart stopper.		
♠KJ2 ♥32 ♦KQ2 ♣AKQ32	2♥. Strong club without a heart stopper.		

QUIZ			
You	Opp	Pd	Opp
1♦	1♥	1♠	P
?			
How do you bid the following hands?			
♠KQT7 ♥J3 ♦AJ987 ♣J2	1N. You have nothing new to show. Partner does not have spades. You are not promising a heart stopper!		
♠K3 ♥32 ♦AJ987 ♣KQT3	2♣. Descriptive. Partner may have clubs.		
♠K3 ♥J2 ♦KQT876 ♣Q32	2♦. Shows the sixth diamond.		

How do we bid after a two-level transfer? If fourth seat Passes, you

PCI Pro. Transfers After an Enemy Overcall

just assume responder has a weak hand and complete the transfer.
Anything else shows a big hand or interesting distribution.

QUIZ			
You	Opp	Pd	Opp
1♣	1♥	2♥	P
?			
How do you bid the following hands?			
♠32 ♥AQ3 ♦KJ98 ♣KJ98		2♠. True, you have 14 HCP and a good heart stopper. But relax, partner may have a wasteland.	
♠Q32 ♥32 ♦A76 ♣AKJ98		3♠. If you go down one, apologize.	
♠Q2 ♥AQ6 ♦AJ3 ♣AQT32		2N. Strong club.	
♠6 ♥87 ♦KQJ3 ♣AKJ976		3♣. "Sorry partner, I have a better suit. True, 3♣ is forcing and we may get too high."	

Nefarious opponents have a bad habit of getting into our auction. However, if partner has transferred **at the 2-level** and we have 3-card support we should support her.

QUIZ			
You	Opp	Pd	Opp
1♦	1♥	2♥	3♥
?			
How do you bid the following hands?			
♠K32 ♥Q4 ♦AJT873 ♣K3		3♠. "Here come the cavalry, partner!"	
♠K32 ♥KQ ♦QT765 ♣Q97		Pass. "I refuse to support you because of the honors in hearts."	
♠K32 ♥2 ♦AJT873 ♣KQ2		4♠. Might go down. But if the hand in the first example bids 3♠, this hand is much better.	

QUIZ			
You	Opp	Pd	Opp
1♣	1♥	2♥	4♥
?			
How do you bid the following hands?			
♠K432 ♥987 ♦KJ3 ♣AJ3		4♠. All signs are that partner has short hearts, and you have nothing wasted. Although your distribution is unfortunate, you have to raise.	
♠K32 ♥87 ♦A98 ♣KQT87		4♠. Risky. But partner strongly suggested to outbid the opponents, via the 2-level transfer.	
♠QJ3 ♥QJ3 ♦KJ ♣KJT87		Pass.	

I wish all PCI players to let opponents buy the bidding – only when both sides do not make any game.

KRZYSZTOF JASSEM



Multi-time member of the Polish national team

1997 – silver medalist of Transnational World Championship

2000 – silver medalist of Bridge Olympiad

2008 – Winner of Vanderbilt Cup

2009 – silver medalist of European Pair Championship

2013 – gold medalist of European Team Championship

Professor of Computer Science at Poznan University.

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“WJ05 – a modern version of Polish Club”.

POLISH CLUB INTERNATIONAL

This book is intended for two groups of readers:

Those interested in Polish Club and those who want to get better understanding of trendy bidding treatments.