

Ultra Club

This system was developed and played by John Lowenthal and Philip Martin.

One Club Opening

DESCRIPTION

17+ HCP unbalanced or 18+ HCP balanced.

FIRST SERIES RESPONSES

In the first series, responder indicates whether he has a balanced (no singleton) or unbalanced hand and how many Schenken points he holds. Schenken points are counted 3 for an ace, 2 for a protected king, 1 for a queen or a singleton king. The first series responses are:

<i>Schenken points</i>	<i>Balanced</i>	<i>Unbalanced</i>
0-2	.1D.1S.2D *	.1D.1N.2D+
3	.1D.1S.2H+	.1D.2D+
4	.1D.2C.2H+	.2D+
5	.1S.2C.2H+	.1S.2D+
6	.2C.2H+	.1N.2D+
7	.1H.2C.2H+	.1H.2D+
8	.1H.2C.2H+	.1H.1N.2D+
9	.1S.2C.3H+	.1S.3D+
10	.2C.3H+	.1N.3D+
11	.1H.2C.3H+	.1H.3D+
12+	.3H+	.1H.1N.3D+
<9 with an AKQxxx suit	.3D	.3D

(With 9+ and an AKQxxx suit, show point count according to unbalanced schedule, then bid 4D.)

* If responder must bid 2H as his first second series bid, he does so in preference to bidding 2D. Thus 1D.1S.2H may be 0-3 points.

Opener's cheapest rebid is a relay throughout the first series except for auction .1D.1S. Then 1NT shows 20-21 and 2C is the relay.

SECOND SERIES RESPONSES (BALANCED)

Opener's cheapest bid is a relay throughout the second series except for a bid of 3NT. If responder holds 9 or more points, these auctions will take place one level higher, in which case opener's 3NT bid is a relay.

4333

.3C.3H four-card minor
 .3N clubs
 .4C++ diamonds
.3C.3S four hearts
.3C.3N four spades

One-Suiters (5332, 6332, 7222)

.2H.3D spades
.2N.3D diamonds
.2S.3D clubs
.3D hearts

Then:

3S 5332, high doubleton
3N.4D middle doubleton
3N.4H++* low doubleton
4C 6322, low tripleton or 7222
4D middle tripleton
4H++ * high tripleton

* If responder had a 1D response to 1C, he may not zoom past game in his suit.

Two-Suiters (4432 or 5422)

.2H spades
 .2N and hearts
 .3C and clubs
 .3H+ and diamonds
.2S clubs
 .3C and diamonds
 .3H+ and hearts
.2N diamonds
 .3H+ and hearts

Then:

.3H nine cards
 .3N 45
 .4C++ 54
.3S 44, high doubleton
.3N low doubleton

Good Suits (6 or 7 with three of the top four honors)

.2H.2N.3D any good suit

Then opener bids:

3H asking for suit (responder shows suit numerically)

3S asking for suit quality:

3N not playable in slam opposite singleton

4C missing ace

4D missing king

4H++ missing queen

(zoom may start earlier if responder's known point count precludes one or more responses)

3N to play (responder may override)

4C begins third series

Responder never clarifies his remainder.

Choice-of-Games Bids by Opener

A non-relay bid of 3H or 3S by opener asks responder to choose between that suit and 3NT. Usually opener is looking for 3-card support, but after .2H.2N he is looking for 5-card support. (With his own suit and no slam interest, he would have asked after 2H.)

Alternatively, opener can bid 3D (artificial) after .2H.2N. This asks responder to show a five-card major at the 3-level or to show a good suit at the 4-level. (Responder is not expected to show a good suit after opener's 3H or 3S.)

Bidding Tree for BAL hands

.2C.

.2H spades or very good 6-card suit

.2N very good 6-card suit (.3D)

.3C and diamonds

.3D one-suiter

.3H+ and hearts

.2S clubs

.3C and diamonds

.3D one-suiter

.3H+ and hearts

.2N diamonds

.3D one-suiter

.3H 2-4-5-2 (.3N) or 2-5-4-2 (.4C+)

.3S 2-4-4-3

.3N 3-4-4-2

.3C any 4333

.3D H one-suiter

.3H+ same shapes as a level lower but 4 extra RP

SECOND SERIES RESPONSES (UNBALANCED)

One-Suiters

A good suit is one headed by three of the top four honors. Responder clarifies his suit quality and his shortness as follows:

<i>Suit Quality</i>	<i>Sequence</i>	<i>Suit</i>
Bad suit, 6-7 cards	.2D.3D.3S+	hearts
	.2H.3D.3S+	spades
	.2S.3D.3S+	clubs
	.2N.3D.3S+	diamonds
Good suit, 6-7 cards	.2D.4C+	hearts
	.2H.4C+	spades
	.2S.4C+	clubs
	.2N.4C+	diamonds
Bad suit, 8+ cards	.2D.3C.4C+	hearts
	.2H.3C.4C+	spades
	.2S.3C.4C+	clubs
	.3C.4C+	diamonds
Good suit, 8+ cards	.2D.2S.4C+	diamonds
	.2D.2S.3C.4C+	clubs
	.2D.2N.4C+	hearts
	.2H.2N.4C+	spades

Then:

1 step	high singleton
2 steps	middle singleton
3 steps	low singleton
4 steps	high void
5 steps	middle void
6 steps++	low void

In the first set of auctions, responder will always bid 3D. At that point, if opener does not want to get past 3NT opposite low shortness, he can employ an anti-relay of 3S. Responder then bids:

3NT	low shortness
4C	high singleton
4D	middle singleton
4H	high void
4S++	middle void

Two-Suiters

The "primary" suit is the longer suit or the higher-ranking in case of a tie.

.2H	primary spades
.2N	and hearts
.3C	and clubs
.3H+	and diamonds
.2D	primary hearts
.2N	and spades
.3C	and clubs
.3H+	and diamonds
.2S.3C	minors, primary clubs
.3C	minors, primary diamonds

DM: How to show $m > M$??? See bidding tree below for a suggestion,

Then:

3H	10+ cards
3S	9 cards, high shortness
3N	low shortness

After 3H, responder shows his suit lengths in steps (55, 64, 65, 74, etc. or 46, 56, 47, etc.) then his remainder (12, 21, 03, 30 or 11, 02, 20).

Three-Suiters

.2D.2S.3D	short in a major, no 5-card major
.3S	short spades (then 4D = 44, 4H = 45, 4S = 54 in minors)
.3N+	short hearts (steps as above)
.2D.2N.3D	short clubs or 5 hearts
.3S	short clubs without five hearts (then 4D = 4 diamonds, 4H++ = 5)
.3N+	five hearts (show void numerically)
.2H.2N.3D	short diamonds or 5 spades
.3S	short diamonds without five spades (then 4D = 4 clubs, 4H++ = 5)
.3N+	five spades (show void numerically)

After 3D, opener can employ an anti-relay to show his own suit, requesting that responder not bypass three notrump with shortness in that suit. In the first auction, 3S by opener shows hearts. Responder bids:

3N	short hearts
4C	short spades, 44 in minors
4D	45 in minors
4H++	54 in minors

In the second auction, 3S shows diamonds and 3N show spades. Over 3S:

3N	short diamonds (therefore five hearts)
4C	short spades (therefore five hearts)
4D	short clubs, 44 in red suits
4H	45 in red suits
4S++	54 in red suits

Over 3N:

Pass	short spades
4C	short diamonds
4D	short clubs, 44 in red suits
4H	45 in red suits
4S++	54 in red suits

In the third auction, 3S shows clubs and 3N shows hearts. Responder's rebids parallel those above. If opener shows a major via an anti-relay and then bids that major at his next turn, it is a signoff, not a relay, even if it is the cheapest step.

Bidding Tree for UNBAL hands

- .2D hearts
 - .2S two-suiter, $C > H$ (.3C.3H-3N) or Good suit, $8+C$ (.3C.4C+) OR three-suiter short in a major, no 5-card major (.3D) OR two-suiter, $D > H$ (.3H-3N) OR Good suit, $8+D$ (.4C)
 - .2N $H > S$ (.3H+) OR 3-suiter short in C or 5H440 (.3D)
 - .3C $H > +C$ or Bad suit, $8+H$
 - .3D bad 6-7H one-suiter
 - .3H-3N $H \geq D$
 - .4C+ 6-7H one-suiter, good suit
- .2H spades
 - .2N $S \geq H$ (.3H-3N) OR 3-suiter short in D or 5S440 (.3D) OR Good suit, $8+S$ (.4C+)
 - .3C $S \geq C$ or Bad suit, $8+S$
 - .3D bad 6-7S one-suiter
 - .3H-3N $S \geq D$
 - .4C+ 6-7S one-suiter, good suit
- .2S clubs
 - .3C $C > S$??? or Bad suit, $8+C$
 - .3D bad 6-7C one-suiter
 - .3H-3N $C \geq D$
 - .4C+ 6-7C one-suiter, good suit
- 2N diamonds
 - .3D bad one-suiter
 - .3H-3N $D > S$
 - .4C+ 6-7D one-suiter, good suit
- .3C minors, primary diamonds or $8+D$
 - .3H x-x-6-4 or x-x-7-4
 - .3S 1-3-5-4
 - .3N 3-1-5-4
 - .4C+ Bad suit, $8+D$
- .3D As a direct response shows $<9SP$ with an AKQxxx suit; after showing SP is a TFR to H with +4SP

SOLID SUIT AUCTIONS

After 1C 3D, opener bids:

3H asking responder to show his suit numerically

3S asking for suit quality:

3N = AKQxxx

4C = AKQJxx

4D = AKQxxxx

4H = AKQJxxx or better

3N to play

4C+an asking bid (a new suit after 3H or 3S is also an asking bid)

Responder answers an asking bid as follows:

1 step	no control
2 steps	singleton
3 steps	void
4 steps	king
5 steps	ace
6 steps	ace-king or ace-queen

After an asking bid, opener may ask in a different suit. Responder answers:

1 step	no control
2 steps	second-round control
3 steps	first-round control

Opener can sign off only by bidding notrump, responder's suit, or a previously asked-about suit or by jumping.

OPENER'S NON-GAME-FORCING REBIDS

Balanced Hands

1C 1D / 1N	18-19 HCP
1C 1D / 1H 1S / 1N	20-21 HCP
1C 1D / 1H 1N / 2D	20-21 HCP
1C 1D / 1H 1S / 2C 2D,H / 2N	22-24 HCP

After 1N or 2N rebids, responder can bid Stayman or Jacoby. After the 20-21 2D rebid, responder bids:

Pass, 2H, 2S, 3C	to play
3D, H, S, N	invitational (NT = clubs)
2N	game-forcing (Baron)

Semi-Balanced Hands (Approximately 5-4-3-1)

Opener rebids 1S over 1D. Responder bids:

1N	Forcing, balanced or short clubs.
2C	Weak hand, shortness in some suit other than clubs. Starts a scramble.
2D,H,S	Weak, natural.
2N	Invitational with a good suit. Opener bids 3C, responder shows his suit.
3C,D,H,S	Invitational, bad suit.

After 1N, opener bids a five-card suit or his cheapest 4- card suit with 4-4-4-1. If responder bids a new suit, he shows a singleton in the suit opener bid. A scramble ensues. With a good hand, responder can bid 2N. Opener then bids:

If his first bid was two of a minor:

his minor	Shortness in the other minor.
other minor	Shortness in a major, 3 cards in other major.
a major	4-card suit, shortness in other major.

If his first bid was two of a major:

3C	clubs
3D	diamonds
3H	both majors, short diamonds
3S	both majors, short clubs

If opener has not yet identified his shortness (2M.3m or 2m.3other minor), a 1-step bid by responder is a relay asking opener to identify his shortness numerically.

One-Suiters

Opener bids 2H, 2S, 3C, or 3D over 1D. Any non-game bid by responder except a raise is forcing.

Two-Suiters

After 1C 1D / 1H 1N, opener may try to avoid game opposite a misfit by rebidding as follows:

2N non-touching suits. Over responder's 3C:

3D = pointed suits

3H = round suits

3S = black suits

3C,D,H that suit and the next higher suit

Responder then bids:

Pass or preference misfit

Raise or jump pref. moderate fit

1 step good fit for lower-ranking suit

2 steps good fit for higher-ranking suit

INTERFERENCE OVER ONE CLUB

Normal relay interference rules apply after a double or a 1D or 1H overcall. After a 1S overcall, responder bids:

Pass	a 1H response; double by opener is a relay
D'ble	a 1D response; auction proceeds naturally
1N or 2C	5 or 6 points (responder must clarify in the third series)
other	as if no interference

After a higher bid, any action by responder creates a game force. A double shows a flexible hand. Any bid in a suit shown by the opponents is natural by opener or responder provided a penalty double of that suit was not available.

One-of-a-Suit Openings

CHOICE OF SUITS

With a balanced hand and 12-13 HCP, open (in order of preference) 1H with 4 hearts, 1S with 4 spades, or 1D with 3+ diamonds. With 3-3-2-5, pass or open 1NT. With a one-suiter, open that suit (2C with clubs). With a 4441, open 1H with hearts, else 1S or 1D at your discretion. With a 5440, open (in order of preference) 2D (reverse Flannery) with 5-4 in the majors, 2H or 2S (Roman) with a five-card major and 4 clubs, 1H with 4 hearts and a 5-card minor, or 1S (or 1D at your discretion) with 4045 or 4054. With two-suiters, bid as follows:

Both minors	Usually 1D. 2C is possible with 6+ clubs and 4 bad diamonds.
Hearts and clubs	2H with primary hearts, 1H with secondary hearts. With 5-5, may open 1H if the hearts are weak.
Hearts and diamonds	1H except with a strong canape.
Spades and clubs	2S with primary spades, 1S with secondary spades. With 5-5, may open 1S if the spades are weak.
Spades and diamonds	Usually 1S except with a strong canape. With longer diamonds, may choose 1D instead.
Spades and hearts	Reverse Flannery with 5-4 or with 6-4 and good hearts. Otherwise 1S except with a strong canape.

When opener has a choice between 1D and 1S, he tends to choose 1S unless a 2H bid by responder would embarrass him.

With a strong canape (15-16 HCP and at least 10 cards in the two suits), open the shorter suit. With equal suits, tend to open the lower-ranking suit. You may open the higher of equal suits if the higher suit is weak.

REBIDS AFTER 2C

2D	No 6-card suit, no void, no 5-5
2H	10 cards in touching suits
2S	10 cards in non-touching suits
2N	1-suiter with some singleton or void
3C	1-suiter with no shortness
3D	Solid suit
3H,S,N	5440

After 2D

- .2S Minimum, semi-balanced hand (4441 5431 5422)
- .3C.3H Singleton club
- .3C.3S/N Singleton diamond (singleton spade if 1D was opened)
- .3D Singleton heart (singleton spade if 1H was opened)

.3H 5422 not covered by 3S or 3N
 .3S 5422, five clubs
 .3N 5422, maximum possible major-suit length
 .2N Balanced (12-13)
 .3C+Maximum semi-balanced hand (as above)

With a singleton, opener clarifies numerically over the next relay if necessary. The exact sequences need not be memorized, since you can work them out at the table, but you should memorize the number of possible patterns with each singleton so that you can be sure you haven't left one out when you construct the steps.

Sequence Pattern No of Patterns
 1D.2D.(2S.)3C.3H 4351 1-2-4

.3S 1345
 .3N 1354

3D.3S 3145
 .3N 3154
 .4C 4144
 .4D++4153

1H.2D.(2S.)3C.3H.3N 3451 3-2-4
 .4C 3541
 .4D++ 4441

.3S 3415
 .3N 4414

3D.3S 1435
 .3N 1444
 .4C 1453
 .4D++ 1543

1S.2D.(2S.)3C.3H.3N 4351 3-2-4
 .4C 4531
 .4D++ 5341

.3S 4315
 .3N 4513

3D.3S 4135
 .3N 4144
 .4C 4153
 .4D++5143

The 5422 patterns work as follows:

1D.2D.(2S.)3H 2254
 3S 2245 (5 clubs)

3N 4252 (maximum length in majors)

1H.2D.(2S.)3H 2452

3S 2425 (5 clubs)

3N 2541 (maximum length in majors)

1S.2D.(2S.)3H diamonds

.3N 4252

.4C++ 5242

3S 4225 (5 clubs)

3N 4522 (maximum length in majors)

With a weak NT, opener bids 2NT, then:

After 1D.2D.2N:

3D 44 in minors

3H 5332 with clubs

3S 5332 with diamonds

3N 4333

.4D with clubs

.4H++ with diamonds

After 1H.2D.2N:

3D 44 with a minor

.3S clubs

.3N diamonds

3H 5 hearts

3S 4 spades

3N 4333

After 1S.2D.2N:

3D 44 with a minor

.3S clubs

.3N diamonds

3H 5 spades, 3 hearts

3S 5233 (2 hearts)

3N 4333

If necessary, opener shows his precise pattern numerically over the next relay.

After 2H or 2S (10+-Card Two-Suiters)

.2H.2N Next higher suit (clubs if 1S opened). Second suit must be longer or equal.

.2H.3C Next lower suit, second suit is shorter.

.2H.3D+ Next lower suit, second suit is longer or equal.

.2S.3C Non-touching suit, second suit is shorter.

.2S.3D+ Non-touching suit, second suit is longer or equal.

Opener next shows his length in steps (55, 46, 56, 47, etc. or 64, 65, 74, etc.) then his remainder numerically, most balanced first (e.g., 12, 21, 03, 30).

If he has disclosed a strong canape, his hand is known to be strong. Otherwise, he employs a min-max step before showing controls.

After 2N (Unbalanced One-Suiters)

Opener can bid 3C (relay) or 3D (Ogust). After Ogust, he can continue to relay for controls and DCBs, but he cannot learn opener's pattern.

After 3C:

3D Good suit (playable in slam opposite two small)

.3S+ Singleton (steps 1-3) or void (4-6++)

3H+ Singleton (steps 1-3) or void (4-6++)

After the good suit step (3D), responder can employ an anti-relay to stay below 3NT opposite low shortness.

Opener bids:

3N low shortness

4C high singleton

4D middle singleton

4H high void

4S++ middle void

After 3D:

3H Bad suit, minimum

3S Good suit, minimum

3N Bad suit, maximum

4C++ Good suit, maximum

Alternatively, responder can break relay with a natural bid of 3H or 3S.

After 3C (Balanced One-Suiters)

Opener can bid Ogust (as above) or bid 3H or 3S (natural). He cannot learn opener's pattern.

After 3D (Solid Suit)

Opener can bid 3H as an ask for suit quality or can make an asking bid. See the discussion of 1C-3D.

Three-Suiters

After 1D:

3H 4045

3S 4054

After 1H:

3H high shortness

.3N 0445
.4C++ 0454
3S 4405 (middle shortness)
3N 4450 (low shortness)

After 1S:

3H high shortness
.3N 4045
.4C++ 4054
3S 4504
3N 4540

Eight-Card Suits

Opener bids over 2C:

4C+ high shortness
2D.4C+ middle shortness
2D.2S.4C+ low shortness

4C+ means:

4C bad suit, singleton
4D bad suit, void
4H good suit (playable in slam opposite a singleton), singleton
4S++ good suit, void

Two Club Opening

DESCRIPTION

Six or more clubs, no 4-card major. Might have 4 diamonds, but with good diamonds and bad clubs, a 1D opening is preferred.

RESPONSES

2D Relay. Game-forcing except for a 2NT or 3C rebid over 2H.

2H,S Natural, non-forcing.

2NT Invitational. Opener bids 3C with a minimum. With a maximum, he bids 3NT or shows a singleton numerically with 3D-3S.

raises Pre-emptive.

RELAY STRUCTURE

2H A minimum without four diamonds.

.2N One-suiter with a singleton.

.3C One-suiter with no shortness.

.3H-N 7330 (numeric).

2S Four or more diamonds.

.3C Seven clubs (then 3H+ for remainder).

.3D+ Remainder.

2N+ Maximum without four diamonds (as above).

4C+ 8 clubs, spade shortness. (Ogust.)

2H.4C+ 8 clubs, heart shortness.

2N.4C+ 8 clubs, diamond shortness.

After 2N showing a 1-suiter, opener can bid 3C relay or 3D Ogust; after 3C showing a balanced 1-suiter, opener can bid 3D Ogust. In either case, there are only two Ogust steps, since min/max is already known.

Two Diamond Opening

DESCRIPTION

Five spades and four hearts. Might be 6-4 with good hearts.

RESPONSES

2H,2S Signoff.
2N Relay (game-forcing) by an unpassed hand.
Natural and invitational by a passed hand.
3C Signoff.
3D Artificial game try with diamond cards.
3H,3S Game try with club cards.

RELAY STRUCTURE

Note: In Flannery auctions, responder's cheapest step is always a relay, even if that bid is 3NT.

3C Any 5-4 (unless suitable for 3NT)
.3H Minimum, no void
.3N 22 in minors
.4C 13
.4D 31
.3S Some void
.4C+ Remainder, then min/max.
.3N+ Maximum, no void (as above)
3D 6-4 minimum
.3S+ Remainder
3H+6-4 maximum (3NT does not count as a step)
3N 5-4 with strong doubletons.

SKIP-LEVEL RELAYS

After 2D 2N / 3C, 3H is a skip-level relay against spades and 3S is a skip-level relay against hearts.

Roman Two-Bids

DESCRIPTION

Five-four or better in the bid major and clubs. With five-five and a bad major, one of the major is the preferred opening.

RESPONSES

2N = Relay (game-forcing) by an unpassed hand. Natural and invitational by a passed hand.

3C = Often a decent hand, since with a bad hand and less than a 3-card discrepancy in opener's suits, responder tends to pass. Accordingly, opener should consider bidding on with a maximum.

3D = Non-forcing.

Other major = Non-forcing.

Raise = Invitational.

RELAY STRUCTURE

3C 54, no void.

.3H22 remainder.

.3S13

.3N31

3D 55

3H 64

3S 65

3N 5440 (void in other major)

4C+Continuation of length steps.

Third Series

The third series consists of some clarification steps if necessary followed controls, then by denial cue-bidding. In one club auctions, clarification steps are necessary if responder's point count is not completely defined. This occurs in three auctions:

1C 1H 7-8 points, balanced
1S 2C

1C (1S) 1N 5-6 points, unbalanced

1C (1S) 2C 5-6 points, balanced

(Ignore for now the 0-2 or 0-3 point ambiguities after a negative response.)

In these three cases, responder bids one step with the minimum point count and higher with the maximum point count.

After other opening bids (when responder relays), opener may need to clarify minimum or maximum. If so, he bids one step with a minimum, higher with a maximum. A maximum is usually defined as 15-16 HCP, but with 10 or more cards in two suits, especially if the pattern permitted a strong canape, the maximum can be shaded down to 13 or even a concentrated 12.

After the clarification steps, if necessary, the relayee shows controls. After a one club opening, this consists merely of bidding one step with odd parity, higher with even parity. After other opening bids, the relayee shows controls by steps. With a non 10-card pattern, the first step shows 2 or 3 controls if opener is minimum (Over the next relay, he bids one step with two, higher with 3.) or 4 controls if opener is maximum. With a 10-card pattern (55 or better, 7330, or an eight-card suit), the first step shows 2 controls if minimum, 3 if maximum. With a strong canape pattern, the first step shows 4 controls.

Singleton kings are not counted as controls. They are counted as queens. That is, they count 1 Schenken points, they do not count in determining controls or parity, and they are DCB'd as queens.

After the control steps, we proceed to denial cue-bidding. The relayee's suits are sorted longest to shortest, highest to lowest in case of ties. He then scans his suits in that order, showing or denying controls. He denies in a suit when he has no control or when he has both the ace and king. With the ace alone or king alone, he shows in that suit. The control scan is over when the relayee's controls are known (under the assumption that the relayer was able to resolve all ambiguities) or when n-1 suits (where n is the number of non-singleton suits) have been scanned. When the control scan is over, the scan order is reset to the longest suit. The relayee then DCB's queens. Once he can no longer hold queens, he begins to DCB jacks but without resetting the scan order. He never DCB's tens. When a suit is known down to the jack, it is dropped from the scan.

Some examples:

(1) KQJ10xx Kx xxx xx .1S.2C.2H.2N.3D.?

The auction so far shows 5 points and some six-card suit with 3 of the top 4 honors (but not AKQ). If opener knows the suit, he can continue with 4C. Responder will then bid 4NT:

- 4D Odd parity
- 4H Even parity, AK of spades (therefore AKJ)
- 4S Even parity, one spade control, no heart control
- 4N Even parity, one spade control, one heart control, no heart jack (scan is reset, but spades are dropped).

(2) AQJ10xx Qxx x Axx .1H.1N.2H.4D.?

Responder shows 8 points with 6 or 7 good spades (as defined above) and a singleton diamond. Over 4H, he bids 5C:

- 4S Odd parity
- 4N Even parity, AKJ of spades
- 5C Even parity, one spade control, no heart control

The control scan is now over, since only 2 suits are scanned when the relayee holds a singleton. So over 5D, responder bids 5S:

- 5H No heart queen (spades are dropped)
- 5S Heart queen, no club jack.

(3) Occasionally, a suit is dropped by a negative inference:

AKxxxx Qxx x xxx .1N.2H.3D.3N.4D.4S

Responder has shown 6 points with six spades and a singleton diamond, odd parity and the AK of spades. Since he can hold neither the queen nor jack of spades, spades is dropped from the queen-jack scan. Over 4N, he bids 5D: heart queen, no club jack.

(4) If responder shows his holding in a suit before beginning the third series, he shows parity as normal but drops his suit from the control scan:

AQJ10xx Qx Jxx xx .1S.2C.2H.2N.3D.?

If opener inquires about suit quality with 3S, responder bids 4D to show a suit missing the king that is playable for one loser opposite a singleton. Then, over 4H, he bids 5D:

- 4S Odd parity
- 4N Even parity, no heart queen
- 5C Even parity, heart queen, no diamond jack
- 5D Even parity, heart queen, diamond jack, no club jack

Since spades is dropped from the control scan and there are no controls outside of spades, queen DCBs begin immediately. If responder did have controls outside of spades, at most two suits would be scanned. (The shortest non-singleton suit is always omitted from the control scan.)

In general, the relayer's cheapest bid is a relay through 6S. There are four exceptions to this rule:

- 1) 3NT is usually to play. It is a relay if relayee has shown 11 cards in two suits or a void. It is also a relay if we are in an extra-control or skip-level auction.
- 2) If the relayer shows his own suit via an anti-relay, game in that suit at his very next turn is to play.
- 3) If the relayee shows an eight-card suit, an immediate game bid in that suit by the relayer is to play.
- 4) After Flannery or a Roman Two-Bid and a skip-level relay, game (but not game+1) in the agreed trump suit is a signoff.

WEAK HANDS

After 1C and a 0-2 or 0-3 Schenken-point response, responder uses a specialized third series.

With 0-2 points, he bids one step if does not have a king. With a king, he shows it. He shows his king in steps, scanning the suits in reverse-DCB order, that is, shortest to longest, lowest-ranking in case of ties. So:

- 1 step No king
- 2 steps King of shortest non-singleton suit
- 3 steps King of next shortest suit etc.

He then DCBs queens (with no kings) or jacks (with a king or after all possible queens are accounted for).

With 0-3 points, he bids:

- 1 step 0-2 with no king
- 2 steps one king (then he shows it as above)
- 3 steps+one ace or three queens

With an ace, he shows it as he would a king. With three queens, he DCBs them in the normal fashion.

Skip-Level Relays

AFTER ONE CLUB

After responder's first second-series bid, provided it was below 3D, a relay+1 bid by opener is a skip-level relay asking about responder's holding in the suit he has just shown (hearts if his bid was 2C, showing a balanced hand). After responder shows his holding, he continues with the second series one level higher.

Responder bids:

1 step 4-6 points in his suit

.3 steps 6 points

.4 steps 5 points *

.5 steps+ 4 points *

2 steps 3 points

.4 steps KQ *

.5 steps+ A *

3 steps 2 points

4 steps 1 point *

5 steps+ 0 points *

* Responder cannot bid the 4th step if his pattern demands a 5th step bid to get back into the second series. Accordingly, the 5th step bid is always ambiguous. Responder might have the 4th- step holding.

AFTER A ONE-LEVEL OPENING

After a one-level opening, a 2C relay, and a 2D, 2H, or 2S rebid, responder can make a skip level relay. Again, opener's 5th step bid is ambiguous, since he must return to the pattern-showing structure one level higher than normal.

Opener rebids over a skip-level relay as follows:

1 step 0-4 HCP (not Schenken points) outside suit

.3 steps 0-2 HCP outside

.4 steps 3 HCP *

.5 steps+ 4 HCP *

2 steps 5-6 HCP outside

.4 steps 5 *

.5 steps+ 6 *

3 steps 7 HCP outside

4 steps 8 *

5 steps+ 9 or more *

* See note above

AFTER FLANNERY OR ROMAN TWO-BIDS

After 2NT and 3C, 3D, or 3H response, responder has two skip-level relays available. The cheaper relay sets the major (or hearts in the case of Flannery) as trump and asks about opener's holding in the other suit. The other skip-level relay agrees the other suit as trump and asks about opener's holding in the side suit. (The cheaper relay agrees the suit in which the cheaper game is available.) Opener shows his point count outside the side suit as after a one-level opening. He returns to the pattern-showing structure on the 5th step. (In the case of a double-skip relay, the pattern-showing structure will now be out of phase.) Game (but not game+1) in the agreed trump suit is a signoff even if that is the cheapest step.

After 2NT and a 3S response, responder has only one skip-level relay available: 4D. That bid agrees the more expensive suit for game purposes (clubs over Roman, spades over Flannery) and asks about the other suit.

Miscellaneous Topics

When Responder Bids Opener's Main Suit

A double jump to four of a minor (1H-1S-4C), even opener's bid minor (1D-1H-4D) shows a strong canape in responder's suit and a control in the bid minor. If opener has a strong canape and responder bids his suit at the 2-level, opener can bid 2NT, then take unsolicited action.

For example,

1S-2H

2N-3C

4C or 4D A strong canape in hearts with a club (diamond) control.

But:

1S-2H

2N-3D

4C or 5C Natural (responder invited in clubs)

Splinters

After a 1H or 1S opening bid, responder can splinter with good trumps (playable in slam opposite Jxxx) and a side suit void. He does so by bidding 3N, 4C, or 4D (showing his void numerically).

With bad trumps and a void, he starts with 2C. After a 2D, 2H, or 2S rebid, he can then splinter (numerically) with 3N-4D. After a 2N or 3C rebid, he splinters by bidding three of opener's major. Opener bids one step; responder then shows his void numerically.

After any natural response, a secondary jump by responder into opener's major is a splinter in support of opener's second suit:

1H-1N

2m-3H Splinter (a simple preference is constructive)

1D-1N

2C-3D Natural

After any natural response and a strong canape, responder's jump preference is a splinter regardless of whether it is into a major or a minor.

1D-1H

2S-4D Splinter

An exception is the auction 1D-1H-2N/3C. This is the only strong canape auction where a simple preference is non-forcing, so 4D is natural and forcing, not a splinter.

Major-Suit Raises in Competition

A single raise in competition shows either a normal 3-trump single raise or a light (5-6 support points) 4-trump raise. If advancer passes, opener's new suit bid (except for 3H) is a forcing game try. If advancer bids, opener's new suit bid is competitive: a long suit with only four of the major.

A jump raise in competition shows four trumps and a constructive (7-9 support points) single raise. A Q-bid shows a four-trump limit raise. A negative double followed by a simple preference shows a 3-trump limit raise.