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A Bridge System Collection

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Preface

This report started out almost by accident. Just wanting to write down some information about different bidding systems, I started collecting more and more of them. Soon, the effort grew, and I decided to ask for more information on the Internet, in the newsgroup Rec.games.bridge, (RGB).

When motivating people, I realized that I had to promise to share what I found. Why shouldn't I? Well, the very obvious reason is that, in order to share information, it should be put in readable form... Anyway, that is how this system collection began.

What is it good for? My original objective was to make an overview of different systems, in order to get a general idea of what kinds of systems that have been invented, played, and what you might expect to meet from time to time. As a bidding system designer, I also wanted to see what kinds of bids I should device defenses against, (I do not belong to that unpleasant category of Bridge players who wish to forbid every unusual system just because they don't have the will to prepare a defense against them). Hopefully, this information can be of general interest, and if you happen to find a system that you would like to know more about, I have included my sources as often as

possible. If there is no attribution, well, then the information comes from me and my general Bridge knowledge or experiences.

I have also included data on mean openings. I myself is a strong believer in "lowlevel preempting", i.e., using weak opening bids often, to take the offensive in bidding and maybe preempting the opponents, (and anyone who likes weak notrump and weak two openings shares my opinion, I think). Thus, I find it interesting to see what a system's mean opening is. If you also like these ideas, well, then you have a nice number to use in your evaluation of the systems.

If you like "light" opening bids, check out EHAA, a completely natural system with a mean opening of 4.06. Or why not investigate Moscito-D or Tangerine Club? These are strong 1C systems which will let you open on all hands with 10 points and up. If you want to play a "standard" system, take a look at the Science.

Artificial systems, especially strong pass systems, are often referred to as strange, bizarre, etc. Even Charles Goren himself writes:

"But don't expect such modern (should I say "futuristic"?) treatments as the initial pass to show a good hand, or the artificial opening bid to show a poor one. These and similar methods are designed primarily to confuse the opponents. The main object of my methods remains to communicate useful information between partners, so as to arrive at the best declaration for your side".

Goren, C. H., *Goren's New Bridge Complete*, Doubleday, Garden City, New York, p. vi, 1985.

Certainly, some systems have been constructed mainly to be unusual,

but for most of the systems described here, this is a very unfair and uneducated view, and in my opinion it is almost unbelievable that an authority like Goren could write what he did.

In fact, there are several constructive arguments for preferring strong 1C and strong pass systems over "standard" ones. If you feel that it must be possible to do better than the standard systems' virtually unlimited one of a suit, do examine the systems described here. Maybe you will find something interesting... So I also hope that this report will show that those "bizarre" systems actually contain some good ideas. Even if you don't want to play one yourself, it will hopefully show you why people invent and play them. Best of all, when they meet you, you can have a good defense waiting for them!

The selection criterium for whether a system should be entered was very simple: "all systems go". This means that common systems like Goren will share space with highly unusual systems that might never have been played at all, like 1D Example System. In order to at least give a hint about the use of a system, all unusual systems are marked with a '*' after their name. This means that the system in question has not been played by a widespread selection of players. It doesn't mean that the system is a mere theoretical construction. Systems like Awkward, Moscito-D, and Tangerine Club have only been played by a small number of players, (often teammates and friends), but they have been used with great success over a long time and in both pairs and teams competitions.

This report is not in its final form yet, and maybe it will never be. Its development hinges on you, dear reader, as much as on me. Thus, please, if you know of a system, a common one, your own or someone

elses invention, and whether it has ever been played or not, do send it to me. Likewise, if you spot an error or think that some important detail in the description of a system is missing, please contact me. To say it in a different way: do look for missing systems, errors, and omissions, but don't complain about it. Instead, help me have it corrected in the next version!

The best way of contacting me is via e-mail:

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By the way, let me mention the Rec.games.bridge archive, which contains lot's of information. It is kept by Markus Buchhorn, Markus@arp.anu.edu.au, and if your are lucky enough to be on the information super highway, you can investigate it via anonymous ftp to arp.anu.edu.au, or 150.203.20.2 if that works better. The directory is /pub/Bridge/FAQ.

Finally, I would like to thank all contributors. I have tried to name them together with the systems they helped me with. If someone has been forgotten, here is a thanks to you!

I would like to dedicate this work to Anu Uus, my life companion, wife, Bridge partner, and best friend.

Now, let's drool over all those nifty bids...

About the Author

I was born in Sweden in 1959, and I'm currently working as a Postdoctoral Fellow, (i.e., a researcher), in Artificial Intelligence

at Stanford University in California. During my student and Ph. D. years in Lund, Sweden, I played Bridge in local clubs. For a while, I belonged to the junior elite of southern Sweden, and later I played on an average club level. I have always liked to invent new systems and conventions. My best achievement is, at least in my opinion, the Tangerine Club, (Swedish: Clementinklover), where the opening 1C shows 8-9 or 15+ points.

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Standard Systems

This includes all approach forcing systems, i.e., systems where one of a suit shows some 10 to 22+ points. The main advantages are said to be that these systems are natural and easy to learn and use. Probably neither is true. In many of the systems, 1C and 1D show only 3+ cards in the suit, and the bidding after the openings one of a suit is often quite difficult to control.

The only clear advantage with these systems is that they adhere to the common and traditional way of bidding. Thus, they have been well investigated and developed, and can be played all around the world with minor modifications.

The obvious drawback is the wide range of strength of the openings one of a suit, (as well as a rather nebulous pass). With some 10 points in responder's hand there may be a grand slam, or a part score may be difficult. This makes the bidding difficult and imprecise, especially in competitive situations.

Aces Scientific 1.70

A system quite similar to Standard American. It was developed in the seventies by Ira Corn's team Dallas Aces, with Robert Goldman as the chief designer. See Standard American for opening bids. Information from Root and Pavlicek, Modern Bridge Conventions.

Acol 1.72

Acol is the classical British system, known for simplicity, naturalness, and light opening bids. It was the system that introduced

systematic limit bids. Information on current versions from Ed Sheldon, Cambridge, England, and additional information from Steve Willner, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Acol Opening Bids

1C 12-21 3+ clubs

1D 12-21 4+ diamonds

1H 12-21 4+ hearts

1S 12-21 4+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced

2C 22+ any shape

2D 18+ 5+ diamonds

2H 18+ 5+ hearts

2S 18+ 5+ spades

2N 20-22 balanced

In the original Acol, 1N is 12-14 non-vulnerable and 15-17 vulnerable. It is common in practise, though, that it is either 12-14 or 15-17 independent of vulnerability. A 4333 is opened 1C, with 44 the higher. The 2D/H/S openings are known as Acol two openings and show strong playing hands with either a 6+ card suit or a 55+ two-suiter. They usually contain a minimum of some 18 points.

Common variations are to use Multi 2D, meaning a weak two in hearts or spades, an "Acol Two" in clubs or diamonds, or a 22-23 balanced.

Benjamin means that 2C shows an Acol Two in any suit, 2D is game-forcing, and 2H/S are weak. Reverse Benjamin means that 2C is game-forcing and 2D shows an Acol Two. With a weak notrump, Acol's mean opening is 1.77, with strong notrump it is 1.66, and with weak notrump and Multi 2D is 1.97.

Australian Standard 1.78

Australia has a large variety of bidding systems. The following seems to be a common version. (It is actually a variant of the system Buchhorn plays himself, but we think it may give a fairly accurate picture of an Australian Standard. The system shown differs from Buchhorn's in the 2N opening.) Most Australian players use either this system, Acol, or Goren. Information from Markus Buchhorn, Canberra, New South Wales, and Dennis Yovich, Perth, Western Australia.

Australian Standard Opening Bids

1C 11-20 3+ clubs

1D 11-20 4+ diamonds

1H 11-20 4+ hearts

1S 11-20 5+ spades

1N 16-18 balanced

2C 21+ any shape

2D 6-10 6 diamonds

2H 6-10 6 hearts

2S 6-10 6 spades

2N 21-22 balanced

1N is followed by Stayman and transfers on the two level.

Benjaminised Acol 1.98

A version of Acol, where 2C shows an Acol Two, 2D is game-forcing, and 2H/S are weak. Information from Ed Sheldon, Cambridge, England.

BiederMeier 1.68

This system is the "Dutch Standard" if there is one. In Holland, many different systems are in use. Information from Hans van Staveren, Amstelveen, the Netherlands.

Biedermeier Opening Bids

1C 12-21 3+ clubs

1D 12-21 4+ diamonds

1H 12-21 4+ hearts

1S 12-21 5+ spades

1N 15-17 balanced

2C 22+ any shape

2D 8-11 6 hearts or spades

22-23 balanced

2H 18+ 5+ hearts

2S 18+ 5+ spades

2N 20-21 balanced

1N is followed by Stayman and transfers on the two level, and 2H/S are Acol two openings.

Bridge World Standard 1.68

This system was created by consensus of the readers of the Bridge World Magazine, (with Edgar Kaplan as editor and driving force). Information from the RGB archive.

Bridge World Standard Opening Bids

1C 12-21 3+ clubs

1D 12-21 3+ diamonds

1H 12-21 5+ hearts

1S 12-21 5+ spades

1N 15-18 balanced
2C 22+ any shape
2D 8-11 6 diamonds
2H 8-11 6 hearts
2S 8-11 6 spades
2N 20-22 balanced

1N is followed by Stayman and transfers on the two and four levels, and 1H/S-1N is forcing for one round.

CAB 1.63

CAB is a British system from the fifties. The acronym stands for "2 Clubs, Ace responses, and Blackwood". Information from Richard Lighton, Wood-Ridge, New Jersey. See The Quintessence of CAB, circa 1950.

CAB Opening Bids

1C 12-21 4+ clubs
1D 12-21 4+ diamonds
1H 12-21 4+ hearts
1S 12-21 4+ spades
1N 16-18 balanced
2C 22+ any shape
2D 18+ 5+ diamonds
2H 18+ 5+ hearts
2S 18+ 5+ spades
2N 21-23 balanced

CAB uses no "prepared" opening bids as in Culbertson, instead any suit is biddable. A 2-over-1 shows 10+ points, jump raises and 2N are

forcing, and after jump raises opener shows a side ace. After 2C, 2D shows no ace, 2N shows no ace but 2 kings and 8+ points, 3N shows two aces, and other bids the location of one ace. The other two openings are according to Acol.

Cambridge Standard 1.82

This is a simple version of a system played by several young British experts. Information from Ed Sheldon, Cambridge, England.

Cambridge Standard Opening Bids

1C 12-21 3+ clubs

1D 12-21 3+ diamonds

1H 12-21 5+ hearts

1S 12-21 5+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced

2C 22+ any shape

2D 8-11 6 diamonds

2H 8-11 6 hearts

2S 8-11 6 spades

2N 20-21 balanced

Inverted raises in minors. After 1H/S, 2N shows support and at least invitational strength. Some partnerships treat 2-over-1 as game-forcing.

Clement-Oliver* 2.18 (hcp)

This version of Benjaminised Acol was developed and played by Bruce Clement and Pam Oliver, Wellington, New Zealand. Information from Bruce Clement.

Clement-Oliver Opening Bids

1C 9-22 3+ clubs

1D 9-22 4+ diamonds

1H 9-22 4+ hearts

1S 9-22 4+ spades

1N 11-14 balanced

2C 23+ any shape

2D 6-10 6 hearts or spades

18+ "Acol Two"

20-22 balanced

2H 7-15 55+ in hearts and another

2S 7-15 55+ in spades and minor

2N 6-10 55+ in spades and minor

The lower limit of the opening bids are calculated according to the "rule of 19", i.e., the sum of the hcp and the number of cards in the two longest suits must be at least 19. Usually, this corresponds well with opening on 12 points. Otherwise, the system uses hcp only.

After 2C, 2D is an artificial negative and all other bids show slam interest. After 2D, 2H is negative, 2S agrees hearts, and 2N is strong. After 2H/S, 2N is forcing, whereupon opener bids his second suit, (weak), or shows point count.

Crowhurst Acol 1.77

In Southern England Crowhurst Acol is still popular. In Crowhurst, 1N is always 12-14. Information from Ed Sheldon, Cambridge, England.

Crowhurst Acol Opening Bids

1C 12-21 3+ clubs
1D 12-21 4+ diamonds
1H 12-21 4+ hearts
1S 12-21 4+ spades
1N 12-14 balanced
2C 22+ any shape
2D 18+ 5+ diamonds
2H 18+ 5+ hearts
2S 18+ 5+ spades
2N 20-22 balanced

The openings 2D/H/S are Acol (sic!) two openings.

Culbertson 1.10

Culbertson was the first wide-spread system and is one of the ancestors of Standard American. The early versions of Culbertson used a trick count evaluation of the hands.

Culbertson Opening Bids

1C 13-22 3+ clubs
1D 13-22 4+ diamonds
1H 13-22 4+ hearts
1S 13-22 4+ spades
1N 16-19 balanced
2C 23+ 5+ clubs
2D 23+ 5+ diamonds
2H 23+ 5+ hearts
2S 23+ 5+ spades
2N 20-22 balanced

Culbertson demands at least a honor in a suit in order to open in it. Thus, 1C is used if there is no other openable suit. Raises to the three level are game forcing with trump support, and all the two level openings are strong enough to force to game, with 2N as a negative response. In order to invite to game with trump support, responder first bids another suit and then raises the opening suit, the so called delayed raise.

Danish Standard 1.59 (hcp)

This system is the Danish Standard as described in a booklet by F. Dahl in the early eighties, and very similar to the system used by the expert in the national Bridge magazine Dansk Bridge. Information from Steffen Enni, Odense, Denmark.

Danish Standard Opening Bids

1C 11-20 3+ clubs

1D 11-20 4+ diamonds

1H 11-20 4+ hearts

1S 11-20 5+ spades

1N 15-17 balanced

2C 21+ any shape

2D 6-11 6 hearts or spades

18+ 5+ clubs or diamonds

2H 18+ 5+ hearts

2S 18+ 5+ spades

2N 20-22 balanced

1N is followed by Stayman and transfers on the two level. After 1H/S, 2N is a game-forcing trump support. The openings 2D/H/S shows Acoll two bids, i.e., hands with high playing strength. With two 4 card suits,

the lowest is opened, and with 4333, the opening bid is 1C.

Danish Trend 1.89 (hcp)

This system is the new trend among many top Danish players. Information from Steffen Enni, Odense, Denmark.

Danish Trend Opening Bids

1C 11-20 3+ clubs

1D 11-20 3+ diamonds

1H 11-20 5+ hearts

1S 11-20 5+ spades

1N 10-13 balanced

2C 21+ any shape

2D 6-10 6 hearts or spades

20-21 balanced

2H 6-10 55+ in rounded or pointed

2S 6-10 55+ in blacks or reds

2N 6-10 55+ in minors or majors

Danish Trend uses a variable notrump opening, 10-13 when non-vulnerable, 12-14 when vulnerable. The mean openings are 2.03 and 1.75, respectively.

Dutch Acol 1.74 (hcp)

This is Acol in a modern Dutch version. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Dutch Acol Opening Bids

1C 11-20 3+ clubs

1D 11-20 4+ diamonds

1H 11-20 5+ hearts

11-20 44 in majors

1S 11-20 5+ spades

1N 15-17 balanced

2C 7-10 6 diamonds

21+ any shape

2D 7-10 6 hearts or spades

18+ 5+ minor

22-23 balanced

2H 7-11 54+ in hearts and minor

2S 7-11 54+ in spades and minor

2N 20-21 balanced

The opening 2D can hold an Acol two opening in a minor.

Eastern Scientific 1.70

A standard system quite similar to Standard American. It was developed in the seventies in the Philadelphia area, with Robert Goldman and William Eisenberg as chief designers. See Standard American for opening bids. Information from Root and Pavlicek, Modern Bridge Conventions.

Efos 1.23

Efos, the Economical Forcing System, was developed by Eric Jannersten and others in Sweden, in the sixties and seventies.

Efos Opening Bids

1C 13-21 3+ clubs

1D 13-21 4+ diamonds
1H 13-21 4+ hearts
1S 13-21 4+ spades
1N 16-19 balanced
2C 22+ 5+ clubs
2D 18+ 5+ diamonds
2H 18+ 5+ hearts
2S 18+ 5+ spades
2N 22-23 balanced

Efos introduced several modern gadgets in the notrump bidding, such as repeated Stayman and an extensive transfer system. After the opening one of a suit, the nearest suit bid is either natural or a general forcing bid, which makes Efos somewhat similar to a relay system.

Finnish Junior Standard 1.78 (hcp)

This system was developed by Finnish juniors in the late eighties and early nineties. Nowadays, it is more popular than the Finnish Standard. Information from Pekka Viitasalo, Espoo, Finland.

Finnish Junior Standard Opening Bids

1C 11-20 4+ clubs
1D 11-20 4+ diamonds
1H 11-20 4+ hearts
1S 11-20 4+ spades
1N 15-17 balanced
2C 21+ forcing
2D 7-11 6 hearts of spades
 20-21 balanced
2H 7-11 55+ in rounded or pointed

2S 7-11 55+ in blacks or reds

2N 7-11 55+ in minors or majors

Inverted limit raises in minors. After 1H/S, 2N is at least invitational with trump support, and after 1N, both 2C and 2D ask for majors.

Finnish Standard 1.63 (hcp)

This is the system used by the bidding panel of the Finnish Bridge magazine. The current version stems from 1987 and was defined by Eero Salmenkivi, (editor), and Pekka Viitasalo, (panel director in 1987). Information from Pekka Viitasalo, Espoo, Finland.

Finnish Standard Opening Bids

1C 11-20 4+ clubs

1D 11-20 4+ diamonds

1H 11-20 4+ hearts

1S 11-20 4+ spades

1N 15-17 balanced

2C 21+ forcing

2D 7-11 6 diamonds

2H 7-11 6 hearts

2S 7-11 6 spades

2N 20-21 balanced

After 1H/S, 2N is an artificial game force with trump support, (Stenberg 2N), and after 1N, both 2C and 2D ask for majors.

Goren 1.05

Goren is the second and most influential forefather of Standard American. It used to be the standard in America, and maybe it still is. Information from Goren's Bridge Complete. Additional information from Steve Willner, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Goren Opening Bids

1C 13-22 3+ clubs

1D 13-22 4+ diamonds

1H 13-22 4+ hearts

1S 13-22 4+ spades

1N 16-18 balanced

2C 23+ 5+ clubs

2D 23+ 5+ diamonds

2H 23+ 5+ hearts

2S 23+ 5+ spades

2N 22-24 balanced

Raises to the three level are game forcing with trump support, and all two level openings are strong enough to force to game, with 2N as a negative response. In order to invite to game with trump support, responder first bids another suit and then raises the opening suit, the so called delayed raise.

Goren '85 1.55

The earlier versions of Goren used 4+ card major openings, but the newer version, described in Goren's New Bridge Complete, introduces 5+ card major openings, and 3+ card minor openings, together with weak two openings and limit raises. Information from Goren's New Bridge Complete.

Goren '85 Opening Bids

1C 13-22 3+ clubs

1D 13-22 3+ diamonds

1H 13-22 5+ hearts

1S 13-22 5+ spades

1N 16-18 balanced

2C 23+ any shape

2D 6-12 6 diamonds

2H 6-12 6 hearts

2S 6-12 6 spades

2N 21-22 balanced

The new version of Goren also introduced limit raises as in Acol, instead of the old way of using raises to the three level to show game-forcing hands, and recommended weak two openings instead of strong ones. In addition, 1H/S-1N is forcing for one round.

Hungarian Standard

Most Hungarian players use variants of Standard American or Precision, with some pairs playing Aces Scientific. Information from Steve Starkey, Pecs, Hungary.

Icelandic Standard

On Iceland, some 40% play a system very similar to Standard American, with 16-18 notrump and 2-over-1 game-forcing. Another 40% play Precision or similar strong 1C systems, while some 20% play Vienna. Information from Bjorgvin Runar Leifsson, Husavik, Iceland.

Irish Standard

Ireland has no clear national standard, but the most common system is Acol in different variations. On club level, 12-14 notrump is most common, and the two openings are either classical Acol, Multi 2D or Benjamin. Five card majors with better minor also exist. On top level, 15-17 notrump is more common, and of the top 40 Irish pairs, 28 play Acol variants, 8 play Blue Team Club, 2 play Precision, and 2 play Carrot Club. Information from Mark Burke, Limerick, Ireland.

Jacoby Modern 1.64

This system was developed by Oswald Jacoby and uses 4+ card openings. Note its similarity with the Nordic standard systems. Information from Root and Pavlicek, Modern Bridge Conventions.

Jacoby Modern Opening Bids

1C 12-21 4+ clubs

1D 12-21 4+ diamonds

1H 12-21 4+ hearts

1S 12-21 4+ spades

1N 15-17 balanced

2C 22+ forcing

2D 8-11 6 diamonds

2H 8-11 6 hearts

2S 8-11 6 spades

2N 20-21 balanced

Jacoby Modern uses Jacoby transfers after 1N and after 1H/S, 2N shows game forcing support.

Kaplan-Sheinwold 1.89

A system developed by Edgar Kaplan and Alfred Sheinwold. Information from Root and Pavlicek, *Modern Bridge Conventions*. Additional information from Steve Willner, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Kaplan-Sheinwold Opening Bids

1C 12-21 3+ clubs

1D 12-21 3+ diamonds

1H 11-21 5+ hearts

1S 11-21 5+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced

2C 22+ any shape

2D 8-11 6 diamonds

2H 7-10 6 hearts

2S 7-10 6 spades

2N 21-22 balanced

Kaplan-Sheinwold uses reverse limit raises in the minors, 1H/S-1N is forcing for one round, and 2 minor over 1 major is game-forcing. The system also uses controlled psychics.

Majeure Cinqieme 1.66

Majeure Cinqieme is the French Standard system. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Majeure Cinqieme Opening Bids

1C 12-22 3+ clubs

1D 12-22 3+ diamonds

1H 12-22 5+ hearts

1S 12-22 5+ spades
1N 15-18 balanced
2C 18+ 5+ suit
 23-24 balanced
2D 23+ any shape
2H 8-11 6 hearts
2S 8-11 6 spades
2N 21-22 balanced

The 2C opening shows a strong playing and with some 8 or 9 tricks based on a long suit, while 2D is a pure game force.

MamiC* 1.60

The MamiC, (Major minor Canape), system was developed in 1990. Information from the inventor, Richard Lighton, Wood-Ridge, New Jersey.

MamiC Opening Bids

1C 12-21 4+ clubs
1D 12-21 4+ diamonds
1H 12-21 4+ hearts
1S 12-21 4+ spades
1N 20+ balanced or forcing
2C 10-14 5+ hearts and 4+ clubs
2D 10-14 5+ spades and 4 + diamonds
2H 10-14 5+ hearts and 4+ diamonds
2S 10-14 5+ spades and 4+ clubs
2N 23-24 balanced

Four card majors are opened before five card minors, and four card

minors before five card majors.

Mock Swedish* 1.71

The Mock Swedish system was designed in 1993 and is based on MamiC and, (loosely), Swedish Standard. The name comes from the language supposedly spoken by the Swedish Chef in the Muppet Show. Information from the inventor, Richard Lighton, Wood-Ridge, New Jersey.

Mock Swedish Opening Bids

1C 12-15 5+ clubs

16-21 3+ clubs

1D 12-15 5+ diamonds

16-21 3+ diamonds

1H 12-15 4+ hearts

16-21 5+ hearts

1S 12-15 4+ spades

16-21 5+ spades

1N 12-15 balanced, no major

2C 20+ balanced or forcing

2D 11-15 4441

2H 8-11 6 hearts

2S 8-11 6 spades

2N 23-24 balanced

Reverse Benjaminised Acol 2.00

A version of Acol, where 2C is game-forcing, 2D shows an Acol Two, and 2H/S are weak. Information from Ed Sheldon, Cambridge, England.

Romex 1.42

Romex was developed by Doctor George Rosenkrantz of Mexico City. Information from Paul Friedman, St. Paul, Minnesota, Ed Sheldon, Cambridge, England, and Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Romex Opening Bids

- 1C 12-22 3+ clubs or balanced
- 1D 12-22 3+ diamonds or balanced
- 1H 12-22 5+ hearts
- 1S 12-22 5+ spades
- 1N 19-22 balanced
- 2C 23+ any shape
- 2D 22+ 5+ diamonds or 4441/5440
23-24 balanced
- 2H 7-11 6 hearts
- 2S 7-11 6 spades
- 2N 25-26 balanced

The Romex system is known for its invitational bids, for example, after 1H-2H, when the relay is a puppet to showing a negative invitation, (short suit), while a new suit shows a positive invitation. Subsequent bidding is fairly standard with 1H/S-1N forcing and 2-over-1 game-forcing.

There are several variants of the system, where 1N and some of the two openings shifted meaning. The version shown comes from Rosencranz, Bridge, the Bidder's Game, 1985. In the later book Rosencranz, Bid to Win, Play for Pleasure, the 2D opening may show clubs, and in another version, it shows a balanced 19-20.

Roth-Stone 1.55

A system developed by Alvin Roth and Tobias Stone. Information from Root and Pavlicek, Modern Bridge Conventions.

Roth-Stone Opening Bids

1C 13-21 3+ clubs

1D 13-21 3+ diamonds

1H 13-21 5+ hearts

1S 13-21 5+ spades

1N 15-17 balanced

2C 22+ any shape

2D 8-12 6 diamonds

2H 8-12 6 hearts

2S 8-12 6 spades

2N 20-22 balanced

1H/S-1N is forcing for one round, 2-over-1 is game-forcing, and jump shifts are weak. The system contains controlled psychics. Roth-Stone is known for its solid opening bids, (no light openings here!). The Walsh system, by Richard Walsh, is a modern version of Roth-Stone.

Rubber Bridge Acol 1.67

In Northern England, the current standard is Rubber Bridge Acol, which uses a 15-17 notrump opening. Information from Ed Sheldon, Cambridge, England.

Rubber Bridge Acol Opening Bids

1C 12-21 3+ clubs

1D 12-21 4+ diamonds

1H 12-21 4+ hearts
1S 12-21 4+ spades
1N 15-17 balanced
2C 22+ any shape
2D 18+ 5+ diamonds
2H 18+ 5+ hearts
2S 18+ 5+ spades
2N 20-22 balanced

Science 2.60

This is a popular system invented by Tom Townsend and played by members of the Cambridge University Bridge Club. It is similar to the Forrester and Robson and the Hackett and Hackett natural methods. Information from Robin Michaels and Ed Sheldon, Cambridge, England.

The Science Opening Bids

1C 12-21 4+ clubs
1D 12-21 4+ diamonds
1H 10-21 4+ hearts
1S 10-21 4+ spades
1N 14-16 balanced
2C 22+ any shape
2D 6-10 5 hearts or spades
2H 6-10 6 hearts
2S 6-10 6 spades
2N 20-21 balanced

The major openings may hide a longer minor. After 1x, 1N is 4-12 balanced, and opener will pass with 10-13 balanced only. A 2-over-1

is game-forcing, and 1x-2N is balanced and game-forcing.

Instead of the Multi 2D, you may use Flannery, which gives a mean opening of 2.23.

The system style is to open as often as possible with 10+ points and a 4+ card major. Bidding sequences like 1S-1N; pass, and 1S-1N; 2N-3N are very common. Thus the system is aggressive, discloses little information, and often preempts the opponents from good part scores and games. The downside is that sometimes the bidding precision is low, and the pair may land in 1N while there is a much better part score or even a game. However, the Hackett twins, one of Britain's leading junior pairs and part of the team that won the Junior European Championships 1994, plays the Science at all vulnerabilities.

Standard American 1.70

This system is an average over what is commonly played in the United States. It coincides fairly well with the Bridge World Standard system, voted on by consensus by the readers of the Bridge World Magazine, (and with Edgar Kaplan as a main driving force). Information from the RGB archive.

Standard American Opening Bids

1C 12-21 3+ clubs

1D 12-21 3+ diamonds

1H 12-21 5+ hearts

1S 12-21 5+ spades

1N 15-17 balanced

2C 22+ any shape

2D 8-11 6 diamonds

2H 8-11 6 hearts
2S 8-11 6 spades
2N 20-21 balanced

1N is usually followed by Stayman and Jacoby, i.e., transfers on the two level, and 1H/S-1N is normally forcing for one round.

A large number of systems are either ancestors or variants of Standard American, among others Aces Scientific, developed in the seventies by Ira Corn's famous Dallas Aces Team, with Robert Goldman as the most influential publisher. Eastern Scientific evolved in the Philadelphia area with Robert Goldman and William Eisenberg as main constructors, and is very similar to Aces Scientific. Information from Root and Pavlicek, Modern Bridge Conventions.

Stayman 1.62

This is the system developed by Samuel Stayman, the inventor of the famous major asking convention. Information from Root and Pavlicek, Modern Bridge Conventions. Additional information from Paul Friedman, St. Paul, Minnesota and Richard Lighton, Wood-Ridge, New Jersey.

Stayman Opening Bids

1C 13-21 3+ clubs
1D 13-21 3+ diamonds
1H 13-21 5+ hearts
1S 13-21 5+ spades
1N 12-14 balanced
2C 22+ any shape
2D 19-20 balanced

20-24 major 1 or 2 suiter

2H 6-12 6 hearts

2S 6-12 6 spades

2N 21-23 balanced

The 1N opening is 12-14 when non-vulnerable, (mean opening 1.70), and 15-17 vulnerable, (mean opening 1.53). The Stayman system also has controlled psychics, opening one of a suit on 3-6 hcp balanced.

In the version presented in Stayman, The Complete Stayman System of Contract Bidding, 2D is an ordinary weak two opening.

Swedish Standard 1.69 (hcp)

This system was described by Mats Nilslund in his book Modern Standard and became the most common bidding system in Sweden in the mid eighties.

Swedish Standard Opening Bids

1C 11-20 4+ clubs

1D 11-20 4+ diamonds

1H 11-20 4+ hearts

1S 11-20 4+ spades

1N 15-17 balanced

2C 21+ forcing

2D 6-10 6 diamonds

2H 6-10 6 hearts

2S 6-10 6 spades

2N 20-21 balanced

With 55, the highest suit is opened, with 44 the order of preference

is H, C, S, D. After 1H/S, 2N is an artificial game force with trump support, (Stenberg 2N), and 1N is followed by Stayman and transfers on the two level.

Walsh 1.55

A modern version of the Roth-Stone system, invented by Richard Walsh. Information from Root and Pavlicek, Modern Bridge Conventions.

Strong 1C Systems

Strong 1C systems remedy the main disadvantage of the "standard" systems, the wide point range of the one level openings. The opening 1C is used to show stronger hands, from around 16 points and upwards. This allows the rest of the opening bids to be limited and the subsequent bidding will become both easier and much more precise.

In essence, a strong 1C system will divide the opening bid point range into three intervals, of 0-10, 11-15, and 16+. Of course, the standard systems can be seen to use three intervals too, but the 20+ range is so rare that in practise, a standard system uses only two intervals instead of three, (see Section 5 for some statistics).

In addition, the 1C bidding may contain asking bids and other methods suited for finding slams. The main drawback is that the 1C opening may be tactically weak, allowing the opponents to come in and disturb the partnership. A strong 1C is no more sensitive than a standard one of a suit, though.

Thus, it is the author's opinion that strong 1C systems are

superior to standard systems, especially if the opponents let the partnership bid without interference after 1C. Goren has the following to say about Precision and other strong 1C systems:

"Except for 1 Club opening, which is conventional, similar to 2 Clubs in standard methods, almost all other Precision bids are also played as part of Standard American. Therefore, it is easy to learn. But the player who adopts the Precision System enjoys the enormous advantage of knowing, often from the very first bid, whether the partnership is in part score, game or slam territory".

Goren, C. H., *Goren's New Bridge Complete*, Doubleday, Garden City, New York, p. 287, 1985.

William Root and Richard Pavlicek write the following:

"Some systems today employ the '1C forcing' concept, which prescribes a 1C opening as the strong, artificial, forcing bid. It cannot be denied that this gives them greater freedom in the bidding of strong hands... if you roll over and play dead, that is".

Root, W. S., and R. Pavlicek, *Modern Bridge Conventions*, Crown Publishers, New York, p. 169, 1981.

Maybe you should consider playing a strong 1C system?

Whether you do or not, opponents who play a strong 1C system against you are going to have an advantage. Therefore it is important to use an aggressive defense against such systems. If you bid something in the 6-12 range against every 1C opening, the strong 1C opening will lose some of its efficiency in the long run. Not because you "psych"

them, but because they must begin their constructive bidding at a higher level. They may even be forced to start their slam investigations as high as after the standard systems' forcing opening 2C...

Aces Club 1.50 (hcp)

The Aces Club was played by Hamman and Wolff in the American Aces team, and is very similar to the Blue Team Club. Information from Steve Altus, Palo Alto, USA, and Root and Pavlicek, Modern Bridge Conventions.

Aces Club Opening Bids

1C 17+ any shape

1D 11-16 3+ diamonds

1H 11-16 4+ hearts

1S 11-16 4+ spades

1N 13-15 3325/3334

16-17 balanced

2C 11-16 6+ clubs

2D 17-24 4441 or 5440

2H 11-16 5+ hearts and 4+ spades

2S 6-10 6 spades

2N 22-23 balanced

After 1C, 1D is semipositive with 6+ points and 0-2 top controls, 1H is negative 0-5, 2D is 4-7 hcp and a 6 card major, 2H is 9+ and 4441, other responses show number of controls. Subsequent bidding is generally natural. After 1D/H/S, a new suit is canape. The opening 3C is a constructive bid with a strong club suit.

Bernier Big Club* 2.15 (hcp)

This sixties system was developed by Jerry Bernier and Mike Schmenk. It is based on Kaplan-Sheinwold and Schenken Club. Information from Mike Hurt, who currently plays the system with Jerry Bernier.

Bernier Club Opening Bids

- 1C 16+ any shape
- 1D 11-15 4+ diamonds
- 1H 11-15 4+ hearts
- 1S 11-15 4+ spades
- 1N 12-16 balanced
- 2C 11-15 5+ clubs
- 2D 10-16 4441 or 5440
- 2H 5-10 6 hearts
- 2S 5-10 6 spades
- 2N 5-10 55+ in minors

After 1C, 1D shows 0-7, any shape, 1H/S and 2C/D show 8-11 or 15+ and a 4+ card suit, and 1N shows 12-14, any shape. After 1N, a modified system with Stayman and transfers is used. The basic Bernier Club has a mean opening of 2.01.

Except at unfavorable vulnerability, Bernier Club uses systematic psychs of 0-5 points and 0-2 cards in the opened suit, and 333+ in the other suits. Since the only forcing bid after one of a suit is a new suit on lowest level, a psyching opener simply passes responder's forcing bid. With consistent psyches, the mean opening is 2.19.

Blue Team Club 1.22 (hcp)

Blue Team Club was the main system of the Italian Blue Team before they switched to Precision. It is one of the common systems in Italy today. Several of the top Austrian pairs also play it, and many different versions exist, (one can be found in the RGB archive).

BTC Opening Bids

1C 17+ any shape

1D 12-16 4+ diamonds

1H 12-16 4+ hearts

1S 12-16 4+ spades

1N 13-15 3325/3334

16-17 balanced

2C 12-16 5+ clubs

2D 17-20 4441 or 5440

2H 12-16 5+ hearts and 4+ clubs

2S 12-16 5+ spades and 4+ clubs

2N 21-22 balanced

After 1C, responder shows his number of top controls with steps. BTC uses canape throughout. Thus, all two-suited hands are opened with the shorter suit. The opening 3C is constructive with a strong club suit.

Cablecar* 2.98 (hcp)

This system was invented by Steve Altus, Palo Alto, California. The information from Mike Fagan, Houston, Texas.

Cablecar Opening Bids

1C 17+ any shape

1D 13-16 various shapes
1H 8-12 4+ hearts
1S 8-12 4+ spades
1N 10-12 balanced
2C 8-12 5+ clubs
2D 8-12 5+ diamonds
2H 13-16 5+ hearts
2S 13-16 5+ spades
2N 6-9 55+ in minors

The openings 3C/D show 13-16 and a 6+ card suit with no other 4 card suit. The 4 card major openings may contain canapes, as in the Mafia system.

COBRA* 1.88 (hcp)

The COBRA system, optimized by computer and designed primarily for use by computers, was developed by E. T. Lindelof. It is fairly similar to Schenken Club. The system includes its own hand evaluation method which sets precise limits for bids; the hcp ranges given are approximate except for the 1N and 2D openings. Information from Lindelof, COBRA, and David Grabiner, Claremont, California. COBRA stands for "Computer Oriented Bridge Analysis".

COBRA Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape
1D 11-15 3+ diamonds
1H 11-15 4+ hearts
1S 11-15 4+ spades
1N 15-17 balanced
2C 11-15 5+ clubs or preemptive club hand

2D 23+ balanced or game-forcing

2H 9-12 5-6 hearts

2S 9-12 5-6 spades

2N 11-15 55+ in two suits, 0-1 S

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative and other responses natural. 1H/S-1N is forcing for one round. In third seat at favorable vulnerability, distributional hands which would normally open 1D will psyche 1N 50% of the time. After 2D, responder shows aces, and may later show kings and queens. After 2N, the responses 3C/D and 4C show 0-3/4-7/8+ hcp. COBRA point requirements to open apply to all bids, even preempts, except in third seat. Preempts often meet this by counting 7 points for a good 7-card suit, but such a hand still requires about 7 hcp.

Competitive bidding is based on the law of total tricks. A double of a strong artificial 1C or 2C shows any strong hand. A cue-bid of a natural opening is similar to a takeout double but shows a void; a takeout double promises at least one card in the suit. Over strong 1N, all overcalls are natural and preemptive; over weak 1N, 2C shows a minor-major two-suiter and 2D both majors. COBRA uses optional doubles over 3-bids, takeout doubles over 4C/D, and penalty doubles over 4H and higher.

The designer claims that COBRA has a mean opening of 1.19. The big difference between that statement and the computed mean opening is probably due to additional suit quality demands not captured by the mean opening calculation program.

Cranberry Club* 2.96

The Cranberry Club is a simpler version of Tangerine, where the 1C opening is unambiguously strong. It was developed by Jan Eric Larsson, Lund, Sweden.

Cranberry Club Opening Bids

1C 15+ any shape

1D 10-14 4+ diamonds

10-11 exactly 3334 distribution

1H 10-14 4+ hearts

1S 10-14 4+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced, no 5 card major

2C 10-14 5+ clubs

2D 5-9 5+ diamonds

2H 5-9 5+ hearts

2S 5-9 5+ spades

2N 5-9 55+ in minors

The responses to 1C are natural and Precision-like. After 1N, 2C is invitational and 2D game-forcing Stayman. Cranberry uses reverse limit in diamonds.

Crazy Diamond 1.65 (hcp)

The Crazy Diamond is a Dutch system developed by Arie van Heusden, his wife Willy, Jaap Kokkes, Kees Kaiser, and others, and described in the book G. J. R. Forch, Bieden voor gevorderden. Still popular in and around Culemborg, Holland. Information from Alain Verberkmoes, Utrecht, the Netherlands and Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Crazy Diamond Opening Bids

1C 17+ any shape

1D 11-16 various shapes
1H 11-16 4+ hearts
1S 11-16 4+ spades
1N 15-17 balanced
2C 11-16 4+ clubs and 5+ diamonds
2D 17-20 4441 with minor singleton
2H 6-10 6 hearts
2S 6-10 6 spades
2N 20-22 balanced

The opening 1D shows either a hand with maximum 2 cards in each major, a balanced 12-14, or a twosuit major-minor with longer major and at most 3 cards in the other major. 1H/S shows a 4+ major with a longer minor, (canape), a major onesuiter, (6+ cards), or a 4441 with the singleton in the other major. Finally, a major 5+ is also opened with 1H/S. The opening 3C shows 14-16 and an good 6+ card suit, (KQTxxx or better), while 3D shows 14-16 and a solid 6+ card suit, (AKQxxx or better).

After the opening 1C, responder shows the number of top controls with steps, and after 1D, 1H/S shows 3+ cards and 0+ points, and 1N shows 0-8 and max 22 in the majors.

Other versions use 2C to show an 11-16, 4441 and 2D for a 17+, 4441 multi 2D, while 2H/S are weak twosuiters.

Estonian Diamond 1.79 (hcp)

The information about the Estonian Diamond system is incomplete, (we are not sure about the two level), but what is shown here comes from Alain Verberkmoes, Utrecht, the Netherlands. The information on the

bids from 2D to 2N is uncertain.

Estonian Diamond Opening Bids

- 1C 16+ any shape
- 1D 11-15 different shapes
- 1H 11-15 5+ hearts
- 1S 11-15 5+ spades
- 1N 15-17 balanced
- 2C 11-15 5+ clubs
- 2D 6-10 6 card hearts or spades
- 20-21 balanced
- 2H 6-10 55+ in hearts and minor
- 2S 6-10 55+ in spades and other suit
- 2N 6-10 55+ in minors

German Moscito* 1.88 (hcp)

German Moscito was developed by Nikolas Bausback, Jurgen Dueball, Bjorn Janson, and Rene Steiner, and is based on a Moscito version invented by Martin Buchen, Australia. It combines a strong 1C with openings showing major holdings and complete relay responses. See also the latest version, Moscito-D. Information from Rene Steiner, Dusseldorf, Germany, and from the RGB archive.

German Moscito Opening Bids

- 1C 15+ any shape
- 1D 10-14 max 33 in majors
- 1H 10-14 4+ hearts
- 1S 10-14 4+ spades
- 1N 10-14 balanced with 4-5 spades
- 2C 10-14 44+ in majors, unbalanced

- 2D 6-9 6 hearts or spades
- 2H 6-9 55+ in majors or minors
- 2S 6-9 55+ in blacks or reds
- 2N 6-9 55+ in rounded or pointed

Responses to 1C show major holdings and are followed by relays. All other opening bids are followed by relays.

Honeymoon Moscito* 1.75 (hcp)

Honeymoon Moscito was invented by Peter Buchen of Australia, and is based on the original Moscito system invented by Paul Marston, New Zealand, (currently Australia). It combines a strong 1C with other openings showing major holdings and complete but natural relay responses. Information from the RGB archive.

Honeymoon Moscito Opening Bids

- 1C 15+ any shape
- 1D 10-14 max 33 in majors
- 1H 10-14 4+ hearts
- 1S 10-14 4+ spades
- 1N 10-14 44 in majors
- 2C 6-9 6 hearts or spades
- 2D 6-9 55+ in majors
- 2H 6-9 55+ in hearts and minor
- 2S 6-9 55+ in spades and minor
- 2N 6-9 55+ in minors

Responses to 1C show major holdings and are followed by relays. All other opening bids are followed by relays.

Hybrid Club* 1.85 (hcp)

The Hybrid Club was described by Ronald W. Vickery in his book The Hybrid Club-An Action System. The information from Alain Verberkmoes, Utrecht, the Netherlands, and Mike Fagan, Houston, Texas.

Hybrid Club Opening Bids

- 1C 16+ any shape
- 1D 11-15 various shapes
- 1H 11-15 5+ hearts
- 1S 11-15 5+ spades
- 1N 10-12 balanced
- 2C 11-15 5+ clubs
- 2D 10-12 any 4441
- 2H 11-15 5 hearts and 4 spades
- 2S 6-11 6 spades
- 2N 22-23 balanced

The 1N opening may be semi-balanced, and can even contain a 6 card minor when minimum. In third and fourth seat, 1N shows 13-15 balanced.

The responses to 1C show number of controls. After 1D/H/S, 2-over-1 is game-forcing. After 1N 10-12 the system uses two-way Stayman, (both 2C and 2D ask for majors), while after 1N 13-15, 2C is Stayman, and 2D/H are transfers. The opening 2C may not contain a 4 card major, but there may be a 65+ pattern.

Ice Relay* 2.61 (hcp)

Ice Relay was invented by Jon Baldursson of Iceland. It combines a strong 1C with five-card openings on the one level. Information

from Bjorgvin Runar Leifsson, Husavik, Iceland.

Ice Relay Opening Bids

- 1C 16+ any shape
- 1D 10-15 5+ minor or any 4441
- 1H 10-15 5+ hearts
- 1S 10-15 5+ spades
- 1N 13-15 balanced
- 2C 5-10 6 diamonds
 - 5-10 54+ in majors
 - 23-24 balanced
- 2D 5-10 6 hearts or spades
 - 25+ balanced
- 2H 5-11 54+ in hearts and minor
- 2S 5-11 54+ in spades and minor
- 2N good preempt in minor

Responses to 1C show major holdings and are followed by relays. After 1D, 1N is a game-forcing relay, after 1H/S, the relay is 2C.

Match Point Precision* 1.31 (hcp)

Match Point Precision is a development of Precision, and was used by C. C. Wei and Roy Andersson. It opens more hands with 1D, which may contain as few as one diamonds. Information from Root and Pavlicek, Modern Bridge Conventions.

Match Point Precision Opening Bids

- 1C 16+ any shape
- 1D 11-15 different shapes
- 1H 11-15 5+ hearts

1S 11-15 5+ spades
1N 13-15 balanced
2C 11-15 5+ clubs
2D 11-15 4441 or 5440, short in D
2H 8-10 6 hearts
2S 8-10 6 spades
2N 22-23 balanced

The responses to 1C are natural, but the subsequent bidding may use asking bids. 1H/S-1N is forcing for one round.

Modern Standard Club 1.87 (hcp)

The Modern Standard Club is based on the Swedish Standard system with a strong 1C opening.

Modern Standard Club Opening Bids

1C 17+ any shape
1D 11-16 3+ diamonds
1H 11-16 4+ hearts
1S 11-16 4+ spades
1N 15-17 balanced
2C 11-16 5+ clubs
2D 7-10 6 diamonds
2H 7-10 6 hearts
2S 7-10 6 spades
2N 20-21 balanced

The responses to 1C are Precision-like, including an impossible negative. After 1H/S, 2N is an artificial game force with trump support, (Stenberg 2N), and 1N is followed by Stayman and transfers on

the two level.

Moscito-D* 2.49 (hcp)

This is the latest version of the Moscito system, as developed by the German Moscito team Nikolas Bausback, Jurgen Dueball, Bjorn Janson, and Rene Steiner. Information from Rene Steiner, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Moscito-D Opening Bids

1C 15+ any shape

1D 10-14 max 33 in majors

1H 10-14 4+ hearts max 3 spades

1S 10-14 4+ spades max 3 hearts, unbalanced

1N 10-14 balanced with 4-5 spades

2C 10-14 54+ in majors, unbalanced

2D 10-14 5440 or 4441 with 44 majors

2H 6-9 5+ hearts

2S 6-9 5+ spades

2N 6-9 55+ minors

Responses to 1C show major holdings and are followed by relays. All other opening bids are followed by relays.

Neapolitan Club 1.83 (hcp)

The Neapolitan Club was the main system of the Italian Blue Team before they switched to its successor, the Blue Team Club. Information from Paul Friedman, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Neapolitan Club Opening Bids

1C 17+ any shape
1D 12-16 4+ diamonds
1H 12-16 4+ hearts
1S 12-16 4+ spades
1N 12-16 balanced
2C 12-16 5+ clubs
2D 8-11 6 diamonds
2H 8-11 6 hearts
2S 8-11 6 spades
2N good preempt

After 1C, responder shows his number of top controls with steps. The Neapolitan Club uses canape bidding throughout. Thus, all two-suited hands are opened with the shorter suit. After the opening 1N, 2C is negative, 2D transfer, and 2H/S natural and forcing.

Newlands Moscito* 1.77 (hcp)

Newlands Moscito was developed by D. A. Newlands and M. Willcox, based on Paul Marston's original Moscito system. This version is not played by its inventor anymore. See Moscito-D or Honeymoon Moscito for the current versions of the opening bids. Information from the RGB archive.

Newlands Moscito Opening Bids

1C 15+ any shape
1D 10-14 4+ in majors
1H 10-14 4+ hearts
1S 10-14 4+ spades
1N 10-14 max 33 in majors
2C 10-14 6+ clubs

2D 10-14 6+ diamonds

2H 10-14 55+ in majors or minors

2S 10-14 55+ in blacks or reds

2N 10-14 55+ in pointeds or rounded

Responses to 1C show major holdings and are followed by relays. All other opening bids are followed by relays.

Nottingham Club 1.60

This is a British system from the thirties, but still flourishing in the sixties. Information from Richard Lighton, Wood-Ridge, New Jersey.

Nottingham Club Opening Bids

1C 16-21 any shape

1D 12-15 various shapes

1H 12-15 5+ hearts

1S 12-15 5+ spades

1N 13-15 balanced

2C 12-15 5+ clubs

2D 22+ any shape

2H 13-15 6+ hearts

2S 13-15 6+ spades

2N 21-22 balanced

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative, and after 2D, 2H is an artificial negative. The opening 2D is game-forcing except after 2D-2H; 2N. In the defensive bidding, 1N is used as a weak takeout double, and a direct double is strong.

Power Precision* 1.59 (hcp)

Power Precision is a variant of Precision. Information from Simon Kuipers, Delft, the Netherlands.

Power Precision Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape
1D 11-15 various shapes
1H 11-16 5+ hearts
1S 11-16 5+ spades
1N 15-17 balanced
2C 11-15 6+ clubs
2D 6-10 6 hearts
17-24 4441/5440
25+ balanced
2H 11-15 45xx/4414/4405
2S 6-10 6 spades
2N preempt in clubs

The responses to 1C are natural, but the subsequent bidding may use asking bids. 1H/S-1N is forcing for one round.

Precision Club 1.34 (hcp)

Precision is the most popular strong 1C system, invented by C. C. Wei, and used with great success by the Chinese national team.

Precision Club Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape
1D 11-15 3+ diamonds
1H 11-15 5+ hearts
1S 11-15 5+ spades

1N 13-15 balanced
2C 11-15 5+ clubs
2D 11-15 4441 or 5440, short in D
2H 8-10 6 hearts
2S 8-10 6 spades
2N 22-23 balanced

The responses to 1C are natural, but the subsequent bidding may use asking bids. After 1N, both 2C and 2D ask for majors. 1H/S-1N is forcing for one round.

Reed-Horn Club* 1.67 (hcp)

This system was invented by Reed and Horn. Information from Mike Fagan, Houston, Texas.

Reed-Horn Club Opening Bids

1C 18+ any shape
1D 13-17 3+ diamonds
 15-17 balanced
1H 13-17 5+ hearts
1S 13-17 5+ spades
1N 12-14 balanced
2C 13-17 5+ clubs
2D 13-17 4414 or 4405
2H 8-12 6 hearts
2S 8-12 6 spades
2N 21-22 balanced

Relay Club* 2.18 (hcp)

This system was invented by S. G. Bose Mullic of New Delhi, India, in 1976. It is derived from the French Alpha, Beta, Gamma, and Monaco and therefore employs a lot of relays and canape sequences. Information from Rene Steiner, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Relay Club Opening Bids

- 1C 17+ any shape
- 1D 10-16 4+ diamonds
 - 15-16 balanced
- 1H 10-16 4+ hearts
- 1S 10-16 4+ spades
- 1N 12-14 balanced
- 2C 10-16 6+ clubs
 - 10-16 4441/5450 with 4-5 clubs
- 2D 10-16 5+ majors
- 2H 10-16 5+ hearts and 4+ clubs
- 2S 10-16 5+ spades and 4+ clubs
- 2N 10-16 5+ minors

Schenken Club 1.79

Schenken club is an older American strong 1C system, also called the "Big Club", which is often used to refer to any strong 1C system. Information from Kearse, Bridge Conventions Complete.

Schenken Club Opening Bids

- 1C 17+ any shape
- 1D 12-16 3+ diamonds
- 1H 12-16 5+ hearts
- 1S 12-16 5+ spades
- 1N 16-18 balanced

2C 12-16 5+ clubs
2D 22+ balanced or game-forcing
2H 7-11 6 hearts
2S 7-11 6 spades
2N 12-16 55+ in minors

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative and other responses natural. After 2D, responder shows aces, and may later show kings and queens.

Super Mixed Precision* 1.75 (hcp)

This is a Swedish system based on the Precision Club, with light major openings.

Super Mixed Precision Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape
1D 11-15 different shapes
1H 8-15 5+ hearts
1S 8-15 5+ spades
1N 13-15 balanced
2C 11-15 5+ clubs
2D 11-15 4441 or 5440, short in D
2H 6-10 6 hearts
2S 6-10 6 spades
2N 22-23 balanced

After 1C, subsequent bidding uses asking bids. 1H/S-1N is forcing for one round.

Super Precision 1.31 (hcp)

Super Precision is a development of Precision, developed by Benito Garozzo and Giorgio Belladonna, and used by the Italian Blue Team. It opens more hands with 1D, which may contain as few as one diamonds, and has a complex machinery of asking bids after 1C.

Super Precision Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape

1D 11-15 different shapes

1H 11-15 5+ hearts

1S 11-15 5+ spades

1N 13-15 balanced

2C 11-15 5+ clubs

2D 11-15 4441 or 5440, short in D

2H 8-10 6 hearts

2S 8-10 6 spades

2N 22-23 balanced

After 1C, the subsequent bidding uses complex but very efficient asking bids. 1H/S-1N is forcing for one round. The opening 3C is a constructive bid with a strong club suit, while 3D shows a solid suit with no side strength at all, (Sharif 3D).

Symmetric Club* 1.62 (hcp)

The Symmetric Club is based on Precision, uses relay responses, and was developed by Roy Kerr and Paul Marston of New Zealand. Information from the RGB archive.

Symmetric Club Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape

1D 11-15 2+ diamonds
1H 11-15 5+ hearts
1S 11-15 5+ spades
1N 12-15 balanced
2C 11-15 6+ clubs
2D 11-15 6+ diamonds
2H 8-10 6 hearts
2S 8-10 6 spades
2N 22-23 balanced

The responses to 1C are natural with 4+ card suits, and the subsequent bidding uses relays throughout.

Symmetric Relay* 1.53 (hcp)

The Symmetric Relay is based on Precision, but uses relay responses throughout, and was developed by Hugh Grosvenor and Ian Robinson of New Zealand. Information from the RGB archive.

Symmetric Relay Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape
1D 11-15 2+ diamonds
1H 11-15 5+ hearts
1S 11-15 5+ spades
1N 14-16 balanced
2C 11-15 6+ clubs
2D 11-15 6+ diamonds
2H 11-15 55+ in majors
2S 6-10 6 spades
2N 6-10 55+ in reds or majors

The responses to 1C are transfers with 4+ card majors, and the subsequent bidding uses relays throughout.

Torpedo Pairs* 1.71 (hcp)

This is a version of the Symmetric Club, developed and played by Dean Eidler and Murat Genc, New Zealand. Information from Dean Eidler, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Torpedo Pairs Opening Bids

1C 15+ any shape

1D 10-14 4+ hearts

1H 10-14 4+ spades

1S 10-14 4+ in majors

1N 12-14 no 4 card major

2C 10-14 6+ clubs

2D 10-14 6+ diamonds

2H 5-9 6 hearts

2S 5-9 6 spades

2N 5-9 5+ in minors

In third and fourth seat, the opening point ranges are 12-16 and 17+. The system uses symmetric style relays throughout.

Transfer Precision* 1.49 (hcp)

This version of Precision, with transfer positives, was invented by Ian Wilson, Irvine, California.

Transfer Precision Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape

1D 11-15 3+ diamonds
1H 11-15 5+ hearts
1S 11-15 5+ spades
1N 11-13 balanced
2C 11-15 5+ clubs
2D 11-15 4441 or 5440, short in D
2H 8-10 6 hearts
2S 8-10 6 spades
2N 22-23 balanced

After 1C, the positive responses are devised to make opener become declarer.

Truscott Symmetric Relay* 1.31 (hcp)

A variant of Precision, which uses relay principles in the subsequent bidding. Information from the RGB archive.

Truscott Symmetric Relay Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape
1D 11-15 3+ diamonds
1H 11-15 5+ hearts
1S 11-15 5+ spades
1N 13-15 balanced
2C 11-15 5+ clubs
2D 11-15 4441 or 5440, short in D
2H 8-10 6 hearts
2S 8-10 6 spades
2N 22-23 balanced

Ultimate Club 1.51 (hcp)

The Ultimate Club is an American strong 1C system. The information from Kears, Bridge Conventions Complete.

Ultimate Club Opening Bids

- 1C 17+ any shape
- 1D 11-16 3+ diamonds
- 1H 11-16 4+ hearts
- 1S 11-16 4+ spades
- 1N 15-17 balanced
- 2C 14-16 5+ clubs and 4+ in major
- 2D 8-10 6 cards in major
- 2H 14-16 5+ hearts and 4+ clubs
- 2S 14-16 5+ spades and 4+ clubs
- 2N 14-16 5+ diamonds and 4+ clubs

1C is followed by control showing responses, while the openings 1D/H/S are followed by relay bidding.

Ultimate with Five Majors* 1.78 (hcp)

This version of the Ultimate Club was invented and played by Erich Friedman. The information from Erich Friedman, De Land, Florida.

Ultimate Five Majors Opening Bids

- 1C 16+ any shape
- 1D 11-15 3+ diamonds
- 1H 11-15 5+ hearts
- 1S 11-15 5+ spades
- 1N 13-15 balanced
- 2C 11-15 5+ clubs

2D 11-15 4414/4405/4315/3415

2H 6-10 5+ hearts and 4+ clubs

2S 6-10 5+ spades and 4+ clubs

2N 14-15 5+ diamonds and 4+ clubs

1C is followed by control showing responses, while the openings 1D/H/S are followed by relay bidding.

Vanderbilt Club 1.83

This system was invented by Harold S. Vanderbilt himself, millionaire, flight pioneer, and the creator of contract Bridge as we know it today. The Vanderbilt Club is the main ancestor of the Schenken Club. Information from Paul Friedman, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Vanderbilt Club Opening Bids

1C 17+ any shape

1D 12-16 4+ diamonds

1H 12-16 4+ hearts

1S 12-16 4+ spades

1N 15-17 balanced

2C 12-16 5+ clubs

2D 22+ balanced or game-forcing

2H 6-12 6 hearts

2S 6-12 6 spades

2N 22-23 balanced

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative and other responses natural. After 2D, responder shows aces.

Veejay System* 1.55 (hcp)

The Veejay System was invented by A. D. J. Victor of New Delhi, India, 1983. It is essentially Precision with transfer responses to 1C and natural relays after all opening bids. Information from Rene Steiner, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Veejay System Opening Bids

- 1C 16+ any shape
- 1D 12-15 4+ diamonds, unbalanced
- 1H 12-15 5+ hearts
- 1S 12-15 5+ spades
- 1N 12-15 balanced
- 2C 12-15 5+ clubs
- 2D 12-15 5440 or 4441 with 44 majors
 - 7-11 64 or 55 majors
 - 12-15 when vulnerable
- 2H 6-11 6+ hearts
- 2S 6-11 6+ spades
- 2N 8-11 55+ minors or 6+D and 4+C
 - 12-15 when vulnerable

Viking Club* 1.86 (hcp)

The Viking Club is a strong 1C relay system from Norway, invented by G. Groethim, Norway. Information from Ken Are Astrup, Kristiansand, Norway.

Viking Club Opening Bids

- 1C 16+ any shape
- 1D 11-15 various shapes
- 1H 11-15 5+ hearts

1S 11-15 5+ spades
1N 10-12 balanced
2C 11-15 6+ clubs
2D 11-15 any 4441
2H 5-10 55+ without diamonds
2S 5-10 6+ spades or 55+ in minors
2N 5-10 55+ without clubs

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative and other bids game-forcing. The subsequent bidding uses relays, asking bids, and natural methods. The system uses relays throughout.

Volmac Precision* 1.59 (hcp)

Volmac Precision was developed by Benito Garozzo in 1978, for the Dutch National Team sponsored by the Volmac software company. It was played by Anton Maas and several partners from 1979 to 1985, and by Elly Schippers and Marijke van der Pas from 1979 to 1994. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Volmac Precision Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape
1D 11-15 various shapes
1H 11-15 5+ hearts
1S 11-15 5+ spades
1N 13-15 balanced
2C 11-15 6+ clubs
2D 11-15 6+ diamonds
2H 7-11 6 hearts
2S 7-11 6 spades
2N 7-11 55+ in majors

After 1C, 1D is negative, while 1H is either natural or shows 3 top controls, 1S is natural, and other bids show controls.

Whimsical Club* 1.42 (hcp)

The Whimsical Club was invented by Steve Starkey, Pecs, Hungary.

Whimsical Club Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape

1D 11-15 3+ diamonds

1H 11-15 5+ hearts

1S 11-15 5+ spades

1N 13-15 balanced

2C 11-15 5+ clubs, not 4 diamonds

2D 7-10 55+ in minors

11-15 4441 or 5440, short in D

2H 7-10 6 hearts

2S 7-10 6 spades

2N 22-23 balanced

Yui-Bin-Had Club* 1.92 (hcp)

This system was invented and played by Steve Altus and Varis Carey on the US Junior team. Information from Steve Altus, Palo Alto, California. The system is named after Yui-Bin Chen, well-known player of Blackjack, Poker, and comps, and a contributor to the Rec.gambling newsgroup.

Yui-Bin-Had Club Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape

1D 11-15 4+ diamonds or balanced
 1H 11-15 4+ hearts
 1S 11-15 4+ spades
 1N 10-12 balanced
 2C 11-15 5+ clubs
 2D 7-10 6 hearts or spades
 2H 11-15 4+ hearts and 5+ spades
 2S weak preempt in any suit
 2N 7-10 55+ in minors

In third and fourth seat, 1C shows 18+ and 1N shows 16-18. Canape is used after 1D/H/S. This system has a mean opening of 2.09. If the destructive 2S bid is not allowed, 2S shows 11-15 and 4+ clubs and 5+ spades. When vulnerable against non-vulnerable, a different system is used:

Yui-Bin-Had Club Opening Bids

1C 13-21 4+ clubs
 1D 13-21 4+ diamonds
 1H 13-21 4+ hearts
 1S 13-21 4+ spades
 1N 15-17 balanced
 2C 22+ any suit except diamonds
 20-21 balanced
 26-27 balanced
 2D 22+ 5+ diamonds
 22+ any 4441
 22-23 balanced
 28+ balanced
 2H 18+ 5+ hearts
 2S 18+ 5+ spades

2N 24-25 balanced

The openings 2H/S are Acol two openings. This system has a mean opening of 1.40.

Weak/Strong 1C Systems

The only weakness of strong 1C systems is the 1C opening itself. There are two slightly different reasons for this. First, opponents using systematic weak overcalls will decrease the precision in the bidding. Secondly, many opponents use "psychic" overcalls. The latter may not be a particularly good idea, but it will take away lots of reliability in the bidding.

The idea of weak/strong 1C systems is to remove the reason for destructive and psychic overcalls of the 1C opening. This opening now shows either the strong variant, or a weak hand, typically a balanced or semi-balanced hand around 10 points. If an opponent interferes with a psychic bid, he may destroy the subsequent bidding for his own side.

Beta* 1.87 (hcp)

Beta was invented by Pierre Collet of France around 1969. Information from Rene Steiner, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Beta Opening Bids

1C 10-14 54+ with 5 card major

19+ any shape

1D 15-18 any shape

1H 10-14 4+ hearts

1S 10-14 4+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced
2C 11-13 6+ clubs or minors
2D 10-16 6+ diamonds
2H 9-11 6+ hearts
 11-13 5 hearts 332
2S 9-11 6+ spades
 11-13 5 spades 332

Relays and canape sequences dominate further bidding. The opening frequency of the weak 1C is 8.99% and of the strong 5.85%, i.e., it is weak in 61% and strong in 39% of the cases.

Carrot Club 1.88 (hcp)

The Carrot Club, originally "Morotsklovern", (Swedish for Carrot Club), was invented by Sven-Olof Flodqvist and Anders Morath in 1972 for use in the European Championships in Athens, Greece. It was the system that won the European Championships in 1977, with two pairs playing Carrot. In the European Championships the Carrot team placed 1st in 1987, 3rd in 1989, 2nd in 1991, and 5th in 1993. In the World Championship they placed 3rd in 1987 and 1991, and in the Olympics 3rd in 1988 and 4th in 1992.

Other members of the team were Hans Gothe, P. O. Sundelin, and Tommy Gullberg. The rights of the Swedish name was bought by Eric Jannersten when he published a book written by Sven-Olof Flodqvist in 1978, and the later variants of the system has been called Carrot Club.

After playing SKalmar, (a Swedish weak/strong 1C system), for two seasons with Jorgen Lindqvist in the early eighties, Sven-Olof

Flodqvist introduced a weak/strong 1C opening. It was first used in the strong pass system Carrotti that was also created at the same time. Sven-Olof Flodqvist and Hans Gothe qualified themselves to the European Championships in 1985 using Carrotti. They were not allowed to play it in the championships, so they used Carrot with a weak/strong 1C instead.

Anders Morath has later developed a new version of the system, called Svan, with 5+ card major openings. The latest Carrot Club version, O'Carrot, has kept the 4 card major openings, (they are always unbalanced, though). Information from Sven-Olof Flodqvist, Stockholm, Sweden, Lars Andersson, Stockholm, Sweden, (who currently plays Carrotti with Hans Gothe), Niklas Mellin, Stockholm, Sweden, and Steffen Enni, Odense, Denmark.

Carrot Club Opening Bids

1C 10-12 balanced

17+ any shape

1D 11-16 4+ diamonds

1H 11-16 4+ hearts

1S 11-16 4+ spades

1N 13-17 balanced

2C 11-16 6+ clubs

2D 7-10 6 hearts or spades

22-23 balanced

2H 13-16 5+ hearts, 4+ clubs

2S 13-16 5+ spades, 4+ clubs

2N 13-16 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs

Carrot is known for its 1N opening, showing 15-17 and a standard hand, or 13-14 and the distribution 3334, a hand which otherwise would

demand the opening bid 1D to be made on 3 cards. The Carrot 1N has later been abandoned by the Carrot team, though. The opening frequency of the weak 1C is 4.48% and of the strong 5.17%, i.e., it is weak in 46% and strong in 54% of the cases.

Cloudberry Club* 1.97 (hcp)

Cloudberry was developed by Max Odlund, Sweden, in the late seventies.

Cloudberry Club Opening Bids

1C 8-10 balanced

17+ any shape

1D 11-16 4+ diamonds

1H 11-16 4+ hearts

1S 11-16 4+ spades

1N 15-17 balanced

2C 11-16 5+ clubs

2D 7-10 6 hearts or spades

20-21 balanced

2H 13-16 5+ hearts, 4+ clubs

2S 13-16 5+ spades, 4+ clubs

2N 13-16 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs

After 1C, 1D is negative, 1H/S shows 5+ cards, and 2C is game-forcing against the weak hand and slam-forcing (sic!) against the strong hand. The opening frequency of the weak 1C is 13.60% and of the strong 4.84%, i.e., it is weak in 74% and strong in 26% of the cases.

Medium Club Relay* 1.84 (hcp)

This system was developed and played by Alex Franz of Indonesia. It has been used in international competitions. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Medium Club Relay Club Opening Bids

1C 7-9 5+ clubs and 6+ major

12-14 6+ clubs

12-14 5+ clubs and 4+ major

15+ any shape

1D 9-14 4+ diamonds

1H 9-14 5+ hearts

1S 9-14 5+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced

2C 9-14 4441/5440

2D 15-17 4441/5440

2H 9-14 64+ in hearts and minor

12-14 7+ hearts

2H 9-14 64+ in spades and minor

12-14 7+ spades

2N 10-13 65+ in minors

The responses to 1C show point count with step responses. In third and fourth seat, 1C is 15+ and 1N is 15-17 balanced. The opening frequency of the weak 1C is 0.05%, of the medium 1.80, and of the strong 13.75%, i.e., it is weak in 0.003%, medium in 12%, and strong in 88% of the cases.

O'Carrot 1.40 (hcp)

This is the current version of the Carrot Club, developed by Sven-Olof

Flodqvist, who plays it with Svante Ryman, Hans Gothe, and Lars Andersson. Information from Sven-Olof Flodqvist, Stockholm, Sweden.

O'Carrot Opening Bids

1C 11-13 balanced

17+ any shape

1D 11-16 4+ diamonds, 4441, or club canape

1H 11-16 4+ hearts, 4441, or club canape

1S 11-16 4+ spades, 4441, or club canape

1N 14-17 balanced

2C 11-16 6+ clubs or 54 in clubs and major

2D 5-10 6 hearts, 6 spades, or 55+ in minors

2H 13-16 5+ hearts, 4+ clubs

2S 13-16 5+ spades, 4+ clubs

2N 13-16 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs

The responses to 1C are mostly natural. Note that the openings 1D/H/S show 4+ card suits, but are always unbalanced, (which is one reason for the 'o' in the name; unbalanced is "obalanserad" in Swedish). O'Carrot may also use the weak openings bid system used in Svan. The opening frequency of the weak 1C is 9.52% and of the strong 5.32%, i.e., it is weak in 64% and strong in 36% of the cases.

Svan 1.60 (hcp)

This is one of the newer versions of the Carrot Club, developed by Anders Morath, Stockholm, Sweden. The system is currently popular with Swedish junior elite, where it is known as Skrot, (Swedish for metal junk). Information from Sven-Olof Flodqvist, Stockholm, Sweden, Niklas Mellin, Stockholm, Sweden, and from Steffen Enni, Odense, Denmark.

Svan Opening Bids

- 1C 11-13 balanced
 - 17+ any shape
- 1D 11-16 5+ diamonds, 4441, or club canape
- 1H 11-16 5+ hearts
- 1S 11-16 5+ spades
- 1N 14-16 balanced
- 2C 11-16 6+ clubs or 54 in clubs and major
- 2D 11-16 4414 or 4405
- 2H 6-10 6 hearts
- 2S 6-10 6 spades
- 2N 6-10 55+ in minors

Most of the responses to 1C are natural. The openings 1H and 1S show 5+ cards, and thus the club canapes are not opened with these bids. The opening frequency of the weak 1C is 9.52% and of the strong 6.45%, i.e., it is weak in 60% and strong in 40% of the cases.

Swedish Precision* 1.38 (hcp)

This is another weak/strong 1C system, with inspiration from Carrot and Precision. In spite of the name, the system was not invented in Sweden. Information from Bruce Berris, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Swedish Precision Opening Bids

- 1C 10-13 balanced
 - 17+ any shape
- 1D 12-16 various shapes
- 1H 12-16 5+ hearts
- 1S 12-16 5+ spades

1N 14-16 balanced
2C 12-16 6+ clubs or 54 in clubs and major
2D 11-14 4414 or 4405
2H 8-11 6 hearts
2S 8-11 6 spades
2N 22-24 balanced

Most of the responses to 1C are natural, but after that, the subsequent bidding uses relays throughout. The opening frequency of the weak 1C is 13.26% and of the strong 6.27%, i.e., it is weak in 68% and strong in 32% of the cases.

Tangerine Club* 3.07

The Tangerine Club was developed by Jan Eric Larsson and Soren Romare, Lund, Sweden, and used in Sweden in the late seventies and early eighties.

Tangerine Club Opening Bids

1C 8-9 balanced
15+ any shape
1D 10-14 4+ diamonds
10-11 exactly 3334 distribution
1H 10-14 4+ hearts
1S 10-14 4+ spades
1N 12-14 balanced, no 5 card major
2C 10-14 5+ clubs
2D 5-9 5+ diamonds
2H 5-9 5+ hearts
2S 5-9 5+ spades
2N 0-9 7+ suit

The responses to 1C are natural and Precision-like, with 2N as game force against the weak variant and (almost) slam force against the strong variant. The subsequent bidding can use Italian-style asking bids or a relay system. After 1N, 2C is invitational and 2D game-forcing Stayman. Tangerine uses reverse limits in diamonds. The opening frequency of the weak 1C is 8.09% and of the strong 22.86%, i.e., it is weak in 26% and strong in 74% of the cases.

Interestingly enough, there were two strong pass versions of Tangerine. In one of them, Mandarin, the meanings of the opening bids pass and 1D were exchanged, so that 1D showed 0-7 and pass 10-14 with 4+ diamonds. In the other version, the Diamond Heart, the bids were changed around so that 1H was 0-7, pass showed 10-14 with 4+ diamonds, and 1D showed 10-14 and 4+ hearts. This was some five years before the birth of Carrotti. The mean opening of Mandarin is 3.13 and of Diamond Heart 3.12.

Universal Club 1.42

The Universal Club, (or Uniclub), system is an American system, combining a strong 1C with a weaker hand with clubs. Information from Kears, Bridge Conventions Complete.

Universal Club Opening Bids

1C 13-16 4+ clubs

17+ any shape

1D 12-16 5+ diamonds

1H 12-16 5+ hearts

1S 12-16 5+ spades

1N 13-16 balanced

2C 12-17 4441 or 5440, short diamonds
2D 16-21 4441 or 5440, not short diamonds
2H 14+ 55+ in hearts and other
2S 14+ 55+ in spades and other
2N 20-21 balanced

After 1C, 1D is either 0-6 or 14+. The frequency of the weak 1C is 4.49% and of the strong 10.59%, i.e., it is weak in 30% and strong in 70% of the cases.

Yovich's Carrot Club* 2.12 (hcp)

This is a Western-Australian version of the Carrot Club, as played by Dennis Yovich and his partner, Perth, Australia. The weak two openings, (called Optimal Twos), were invented by Avon Wilsmore of West Australia, (now Sydney). Information from Dennis Yovich, Perth, Western Australia. The Optimal Twos are described in the RGB archive.

Yovich's Carrot Club Opening Bids

1C 9-11 balanced
17+ any shape
1D 11-16 4+ diamonds
1H 11-16 4+ hearts
1S 11-16 4+ spades
1N 13-17 balanced
2C 11-16 6+ clubs
2D 6-10 6 hearts
6-10 55+ in C+D or C+S
2H 6-10 6 spades
6-10 55+ in H+C or H+D
2S 6-10 6 clubs

6-10 55+ in S+D or S+H

2N 13-16 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs

The opening frequency of the weak 1C is 3.12% and of the strong 5.32%, i.e., it is weak in 37% and strong in 63% of the cases.

Artificial 1C/D Systems

So far, we have seen standard systems and strong 1C systems. Another possible design principle is to use the openings 1C and/or 1D for a mixture of hands, (not necessarily strong), while the rest of the openings can be more precise, in points or in distribution. In this way, the "nebulous" one of a suit is avoided. The drawback is, of course, that the "catchall" opening, (1C and/or 1D), becomes nebulous instead, and thus tactically weak, especially in competitive situations.

Alpha* 1.68

Alpha was invented by Bertrand Romanet of France around 1968. It is one of the early relay systems. Information from Rene Steiner, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Alpha Opening Bids

1C 12-22 4+ clubs

15-18 balanced

1D 12-22 4+ diamonds

19-22 balanced

1H 11-16 5+ hearts

1S 11-16 5+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced

2C 23+ any shape
2D strong 3-suiter, max 5 losers
2H 8-12 6+ hearts
2S 8-12 6+ spades
2N transfer to clubs

Further bidding involves relay and canape sequences.

Arno 1.30

Arno, (or Little Roman), is a version of the Roman system, with a forcing 1N opening. It has been played with great success by several Italian partnerships. Information from Don Varvel, Austin, Texas, and the RGB archive.

Arno Opening Bids

1C 12-16 balanced
21-22 balanced
25-26 balanced
17-22 4 clubs and a 5+ suit
17-22 5+ clubs
1D 12-22 natural canape
17-22 balanced
1H 12-22 natural canape
1S 12-22 natural canape
1N 23+ any shape
2C 12-16 4441 or 5440
2D 17-20 4441 or 5440
2H 12-16 5+ hearts and 4 clubs
2S 12-16 5+ spades and 4 clubs
2N 23-24 balanced

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative while other responses are natural. Arno uses canape, but the suit of the opening bid is always 4 cards, except diamonds, which may be short. After the openings 1D, 1H, and 1S, (all forcing for one round), the next bid, (the relay), is an artificial negative with 0-9 points. After 1N, responder shows the number of top controls with steps.

Bangkok Club 1.16

Bangkok Club is a version of the Vienna system, played by some partnerships in the Thailand team in the sixties, for example the 1966 and 1967 Bermuda Bowls and the 1968 Oplympics, (the rest of the team played Culbertson...). Information from Paul Friedman, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Bangkok Club Opening Bids

1C 12-20 various shapes
1D 12-20 5+ diamonds
1H 12-18 5+ hearts
1S 12-18 5+ spades
1N 21-22 balanced
 18+ 4 to 5 losers
2C 23+ natural, game-forcing
2D 23+ natural, game-forcing
2H 23+ natural, game-forcing
2S 23+ natural, game-forcing
2N 23-24 balanced

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative, 1N game-forcing, and other bids natural. After the opening 1N, which is forcing for one round, 2C

is negative and other bids positive. The Bangkok Club uses Culbertson asking bids extensively.

Big Diamond 1.49

The Big Diamond system is an American system which combines strong 1C and 1D openings. Information from Kearse, Bridge Conventions Complete.

Big Diamond Opening Bids

1C 12-16 minors

17+ balanced

1D 17+ unbalanced

1H 12-16 5+ hearts

1S 12-16 5+ spades

1N 14-16 balanced

2C 12-16 54+ in minors

2D 12-16 54+ in majors

2H 15+ 6+ hearts

2S 15+ 6+ spades

2N 20-21 balanced

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative, and after 1D, 1H is an artificial negative.

Bowman-Hancock* 1.64 (hcp)

A system invented by John Hancock, Los Alamos, New Mexico, and further elaborated by Allen Bowman of Green Valley, Arizona. Information from Erik Fugelso, Los Alamos, New Mexico.

Bowman-Hancock Opening Bids

1C 11-20 3+ clubs

1D 11-20 3+ diamonds

1H 11-16 5+ hearts

1S 11-16 5+ spades

1N 14-16 balanced

2C 17+ 5+ major

2D 21+ no 5+ card major

2H 5-10 6 hearts

2S 5-10 6 spades

2N 19-20 balanced

1N is followed by Stayman and transfers on the two and four levels, and 1H/S-1N is forcing for one round. After 2C/D the relay is an artificial negative. The main idea behind Bowman-Hancock is to enable the use of the constructive and descriptive 1H/S openings.

Breakthrough* 1.78

This system was invented by Robert Sundby and played by Katz-Cohen. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Breakthrough Opening Bids

1C 17-22 any shape

1D 12-22 4+ diamonds

1H 12-22 4+ hearts

1S 12-22 4+ spades

1N 14-16 balanced

2C 23+ any shape

2D 12-16 6+ clubs, 0-2 D, 0-3 H/S

2H 7-11 6 hearts

2S 7-11 6 spades

2N 21-22 balanced

Natural responses after 1C. 1D/H/S can be canape, and 1N is the only forcing response.

DESY Polish Club* 1.65

This is a simple version of the Polish Club. Information from the web site of DESY, Hamburg, Germany.

DESY Polish Club Opening Bids

1C 12-15 balanced

12+ 4441 or 4+ clubs

19-20 balanced

19+ any shape

1D 12-16 4+ diamonds

1H 12-16 5+ hearts

1S 12-16 5+ spades

1N 16-18 balanced

2C 22+ any shape

2D 17-21 5+ diamonds

2H 17-21 5+ hearts

2S 17-21 5+ spades

2N 21-22 balanced

Deuces Scientific* 1.69

This system was invented and played by Don Varvel and Eric Taylor, Austin, Texas. Information from Don Varvel, Austin, Texas.

Deuces Scientific Opening Bids

1C 13-21 4+ clubs

18-20 balanced

1D 13-21 4+ diamonds

1H 11-21 4+ hearts

1S 11-21 4+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced

2C 22+ any shape

2D 8-12 6 diamonds

2H 7-10 6 hearts

2S 7-10 6 spades

2N 21-22 balanced

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative with 0-6 hcp.

1D Example System* 1.94 (hcp)

This system was presented by Glen Ashton as an example of a system which has a complex 1D opening but is still legal according to ACBL. Information from Glen Ashton, Ottawa, Canada, and the RGB archive.

1D Example System Opening Bids

1C 9-17 4 spades or 3 spades and 1 heart

15+ balanced

15+ max 3 cards in majors

18+ no 5 card major

20+ any shape

1D 9-17 4 hearts or 3 hearts and 1 spade

1H 10-19 5+ hearts

1S 10-19 5+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced
2C 10-15 6+ clubs
2D 10-15 6+ diamonds
2H 6-9 6 hearts
2S 6-9 6 spades
2N 12-14 55+ in minors

After 1C, 1D is a relay for clarification, and after 1D, 1H shows 4+ hearts and is forcing for one round.

Diamond Major* 1.77 (hcp)

The Diamond Major system was invented by Peter Oakley, New Zealand, in 1992. The information from Rene Steiner, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Diamond Major Opening Bids

1C 11-19 not exactly 4 card major
1D 11-19 exactly 4 card major(s)
1H 10-15 5+ hearts
1S 10-15 5+ spades
1N 14-15 balanced
2C 20+ forcing
2D 6-10 6-card major
 17+ 6-card minor
 22-23 balanced
 26-27 balanced
2H 6-10 5 hearts + 5 clubs
 18+ 5 spades + 5 diamonds
2S 6-10 5 spades + 5 diamonds
 18+ 5 hearts + 5 clubs
2N 6-10 6+ minor

6-10 5 spades + 5 clubs

18+ 5 hearts + 5 diamonds

18+ 5 diamonds + 5 clubs

3C 7-10 5 diamonds + 5 clubs

Feldspar* 1.73 (hcp)

The Feldspar system was invented by Gordon Bower, (who is a geologist), during some less interesting college classes. The general motivation was to avoid 2C as a "too high" forcing bid. Information from Gordon Bower, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Feldspar Opening Bids

1C 13-18 5+ clubs

17-19 balanced

19+ one or twosuit

23+ balanced

1D 13-18 4+ diamonds

1H 11-18 5+ hearts

1S 11-18 5+ spades

1N 14-16 balanced

2C 11-14 4441/5440

19+ 4441/5440

2D 11-14 44, 55, or 66 in majors

15-18 4441/5440

19+ 44, 55, or 66 in majors

2H 6-12 6 hearts

2S 6-12 6 spades

2N 20-22 balanced

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative with 0-5 points, and some other

hands, while other responses are natural. After 1N Feldspar uses Stayman and transfers, after 2C, 2D is forcing and 2N game-forcing, and after 2D 2N is forcing. Jump shifts are weak and 1D/H/S-1N is not forcing.

Gamma* 1.93 (hcp)

The Gamma system was invented by Dr. E. Lachand of France around 1971. Information from Rene Steiner, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Gamma Opening Bids

1C 12-19 various shapes

1D 12-19 3+ diamonds

1H 10-19 5+ hearts

1S 10-19 5+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced

2C 24+ any shape

2D 21-23 balanced

2H 8-12 6+ hearts

2S 8-12 6+ spades

2N transfer to clubs

Relays and canape sequences are employed in the subsequent bidding.

Imprecision Club* 1.61 (hcp)

This system was invented by Robin Michaels, Cambridge, England. Information from the inventor.

Imprecision Club Opening Bids

1C 12-16 various shapes

1D 17+ any shape
1H 8-16 5+ hearts
1S 8-16 5+ spades
1N 14-16 balanced
2C 12-16 5 clubs and 4 card major
2D 12-16 5 diamonds and 4 card major
2H 12-16 5 hearts and 4 card minor
2S 12-16 5 spades and 4 card minor
2N 20-22 balanced

The responses to 1C are artificial and show strength, while the responses to 1D are Precisionlike, with 1H as an artificial negative.

Kentucky Club* 1.65 (hcp)

The Kentucky Club system is an American system with a forcing 1C opening. Information from Kears, Bridge Conventions Complete.

Kentucky Club Opening Bids

1C 15+ balanced
game-forcing
1D 11-21 5+ diamonds
1H 11-21 5+ hearts
1S 11-21 5+ spades
1N 12-14 balanced
2C 11-21 5+ clubs
2D 11-14 4441 or 5440
2H 7-10 6 hearts
2S 7-10 6 spades
2N 20-22 balanced

After 1C, 1D is a positive response.

Lea* 1.57

The Lea system is an American system based on a forcing 1C opening. Information from Paul Friedman, St. Paul, Minnesota, and Kears, Bridge Conventions Complete. From a privately published book by Robert H. Lea, Bridge is Easy with the Lea System, 1965.

Lea Opening Bids

1C 12+ different shapes

1D 15-16 6+ diamonds

1H 15-16 6+ hearts

1S 15-16 6+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced

2C 6-11 6+ clubs

2D 6-11 6+ diamonds

2H 6-11 6+ hearts

2S 6-11 6+ spades

2N 12-14 54 or 55 in minors

After 1C responder shows his strength with a step system.

Modern Polish Club 1.55 (hcp)

The Modern Polish Club is a newer version of the Polish Club. This version was developed by Matula and played by Gawrys-Lasocki. Compare with Polish Club. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Modern Polish Club Opening Bids

1C 12-14 balanced
 12+ 4441
 16-18 5+ clubs
 19+ any shape
 1D 11-18 4+ diamonds
 1H 11-18 5+ hearts
 1S 11-18 5+ spades
 1N 16-17 balanced
 2C 11-15 6+ clubs or 5 clubs, 4 card major
 2D 7-11 6 card hearts or spades
 19-22 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs or hearts
 2H 7-11 55+ in hearts and minor
 2S 7-11 55+ in spades and another
 2N 7-11 55+ in minors

Monaco* 1.72 (hcp)

The Monaco system was invented by Pierre Ghestem of France around 1954. It is the grand father of all relay systems, and became (in-) famous for, (supposedly), being complex and incomprehensible. Information from Rene Steiner, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Monaco Opening Bids

1C 13-23 2+ clubs (usually 3+)
 1D 13-18 4+ diamonds
 1H 10-17 5+ hearts
 1S 10-17 5+ spades
 1N 18-20 balanced
 2C 24+ any shape
 2D 19-21 5+ diamonds

2H 18-21 5+ hearts

2S 18-21 5+ spades

Monaco uses relay sequences throughout the subsequent bidding.

New South Wales 1.53

An old system from Australia. Information from Paul Friedman, St. Paul, Minnesota.

New South Wales Opening Bids

1C 12-22 various shapes

1D 12-22 4+ diamonds

1H 12-22 5+ hearts

1S 12-22 5+ spades

1N 16-18 balanced

2C 23+ any shape

2D 21-22 balanced

2H 6-12 6 hearts

2S 6-12 6 spades

2N 23-24 balanced

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative, new suits are forcing, and jumps asking bids. A jump raise is a slam try.

Polish Club 1.45

The Polish Club is the standard system of Poland. Here is an older version. Compare with Modern Polish Club. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Polish Club Opening Bids

1C 12-14 balanced

12-16 4+ clubs

17-22 any shape

1D 12-16 4+ diamonds

1H 12-16 5+ hearts

1S 12-16 5+ spades

1N 15-17 balanced

2C 23+ any shape

2D 7-11 55+ in major and minor

2H 7-11 6 hearts

2S 7-11 6 spades

2N 7-11 55+ in majors or minors

Power System* 2.28

Power System is related to Vienna, Roman, and Arno. Information from Don Varvel, Austin, Texas, and the RGB archive.

Power System Opening Bids

1C 12-16 balanced

10-18 clubs

10+ 4441

19+ any shape

1D 10-18 5+ diamonds

1H 10-18 5+ hearts

1S 10-18 5+ spades

1N 17-20 balanced

2C 10-16 6+ clubs or 54+ in C+D

2D 7-19 6+ diamonds

2H 7-19 6+ hearts

2S 7-19 6+ spades

2N 23-24 balanced

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative while other responses are natural.

PRO* 1.41

The Pattern Relay Organized system is an American system based on a 1C opening showing a balanced hand or clubs, and a complete relay structure in the subsequent bidding. Information from Kears, Bridge Conventions Complete.

PRO Opening Bids

1C 12-20 3+ clubs

17-20 balanced

1D 12-20 3+ diamonds

1H 12-20 5+ hearts

1S 12-20 5+ spades

1N 14-16 balanced

2C 21+ 5+ clubs

2D 21+ 5+ diamonds

2H 21+ 5+ hearts

2S 21+ 5+ spades

2N 21-22 balanced

Protest* 1.69

The Protest system was developed in 1985, as a protest against the 5 card major openings promoted by Goren's Goren's New Bridge Complete. In Protest, a major opening can be 4 or 6 cards, but never

5. Information from the inventor, Richard Lighton, Wood-Ridge, New Jersey.

Protest Opening Bids

1C 12-21 4+ clubs or 5 card major

1D 12-21 4+ diamonds

1H 12-21 4 or 6+ hearts

1S 12-21 4 or 6+ spades

1N 12-16 no 4 card major

2C 22+ any shape

2D 11-15 4441

2H 10-14 5-6 hearts and 4+ clubs

2S 10-14 5-6 spades and 4+ clubs

2N 20-22 balanced

The 1C opening can contain as few as zero clubs in a 5530 hand, and it denies a 4 card major. After 1C/D, 1H/S shows a 5+ card suit, since opener doesn't have a 4 card major.

Roman 1.56

Roman was played by Walter Avarelli and Georgio Belladonna of the Italian Blue Team, and won them several world championships. It's ancestor is the Vienna system. Information from Don Varvel, Austin, Texas, and the RGB archive.

Roman Opening Bids

1C 12-16 balanced

21-22 balanced

25-26 balanced

17-20 4 clubs and a 5+ suit

game forcing

1D 12-20 natural canape

1H 12-20 natural canape

1S 12-20 natural canape

1N 17-20 balanced

2C 12-16 4441 or 5440

2D 17-20 4441 or 5440

2H 12-16 5+ hearts and 4 clubs

2S 12-16 5+ spades and 4 clubs

2N 23-24 balanced

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative while other responses are natural. Roman uses canape, and the suit of the opening bid may be three cards only, while the second suit is 5+. After 1D, 1H, and 1S, (all forcing for one round), the next bid is an artificial negative with 0-9 points.

Scientific Diamond* 2.46 (hcp)

This system was invented by Robin Michaels, Cambridge, England. Information from the inventor.

Scientific Diamond Opening Bids

1C 9-16 various shapes

1D 17+ any shape

1H 9-16 4+ hearts

1S 9-16 4+ spades

1N 14-16 balanced

2C 9-12 5+ diamonds, no 4+ major

13-16 5+ diamonds and 4+ major

2D 6-10 6 diamonds

2H 6-10 6 hearts
2S 6-10 6 spades
2N 20-22 balanced

The system is a development of the Science. The responses to 1D are Precisionlike, with 1H as an artificial negative, while after 1C the bidding follows "standard" methods after a short club opening. After 2C, responder bids 2D with all weak and medium hands, after which opener passes or bids a major, the latter with the stronger variant.

Vienna 1.20

Vienna is the ancestor of Arno, Roman, and other systems. It is still one of the popular systems in Iceland. Information from Paul Friedman, St. Paul, Minnesota, and Richard Lighton, Wood-Ridge, New Jersey. See Reese, Bridge Player's Dictionary, 1959.

Vienna Opening Bids

1C 12-18 various shapes
1D 12-18 5+ diamonds
1H 12-18 5+ hearts
1S 12-18 5+ spades
1N 19-20 balanced
 18-22 unbalanced
2C 23+ natural, game-forcing
2D 23+ natural, game-forcing
2H 23+ natural, game-forcing
2S 23+ natural, game-forcing
2N 21-23 balanced

After 1C, 1D is an artificial negative, 1N game-forcing, and other

bids natural. After the opening 1N, which is forcing for one round, 2C is negative and other bids positive. Vienna uses Culbertson asking bids extensively.

Strong Pass Systems

A number of system uses pass as a strong or forcing bid. However, the pass itself is not the most important property of these systems. Instead, the main idea is usually to split the opening bids into three different point ranges: 0-7, 8-12, and 13+, as opposed to 0-12 and 13+ for standard systems. The main idea behind this is to construct systems that try to get a tactical advantage by opening as often as possible. Thus, this section contains a number of artificial systems. It just so happens that they all use pass for something different than a weak hand...

Let's look at the frequencies for four different ways of assigning the opening bid point ranges:

0-12	13-20	21+	0-10	11-15	16+
73.21	25.99	0.80	56.24	34.00	9.76
0-9	10-14	15+	0-7	8-12	13+
46.83	38.98	14.19	28.58	44.63	27.79

In this table, the upper numbers define a point range, and the lower number is the percentage of hands that lie in this range.

As can be seen, the standard systems in practise use only two intervals. The third, 21+, is very rare, while the lowest interval, usually opened with a pass, is very frequent. Thus, it could be argued that a standard system uses the available bids in a poor way to describe the point

strength of a hand.

The most interesting approach to strong pass systems has been taken by the Polish players Lukasz Slawinski and Stanislaw Ruminski in their book Introduction to Weak Opening Systems. Their idea is to use the following base:

System Base

13+ pass

0-7 1D

8-12 other bids

This setup has been used to construct several interesting systems. Another idea of theirs is to let opening bids show shortness instead of length, see for example the Delta system.

In Slawinski's and Ruminski's base, the "responder" reopens with similar bids after pass, using the ranges 0-5, 6-10, and 11+, where 1C shows either 6-10 or 11+, (and 11+ will be shown by bidding the relay on the next round). After pass-1C, "opener" reopens, now with the ranges 13-16 and 17+, and 1D shows either 13-16 or 17+, (17+ to be shown with a relay on the next round). After an opening bid the relay asks for more information, and the responder can find out opener's distribution and top controls, while all other bids are natural and non-forcing.

The main advantage of a strong pass system is the aggressivity. The downside is the pass itself, which is tactically weak and easy to disturb, (it is more sensitive than 1C in a typical strong 1C system, since it may contain as little as 13 points). In competition with standard systems, the pass system partnership will have shown the

strength for an opening bid but no suit or distribution. Thus, on 25% of all hands, the pass system is at a disadvantage. On the other 75%, though, it is at an advantage, when the partnership bids or preempts more readily than a standard system. If you believe in weak 1N and weak two openings, why not check out a strong pass system?

One feature of several strong pass systems is openings showing 3-4 cards in a suit, often hearts or spades, (see Major, Regres, etc.). This gives valuable information to the partner, while the opponents cannot assume that it is not their trump suit. Thus, it is very difficult to defend against such openings. Users of canape systems like Blue Team Club, Arno, and Roman have also discovered this, and sometimes open on three card majors, and the same idea is used in the Mafia system. The drawback is, of course, when partner has a four card support and will be much more reluctant to compete, when all other pairs know that there is an eight card trump.

Slawinski and Ruminski also introduced the idea of guessing principles. For example, in the Lambda system, 1H shows 8-12 points and a 54+ in either C+H or D+S. This is difficult to defend against, since you don't know what the opener holds. His partner will guess from his own holding and bid as high as he dares. If he guesses wrong, the true distribution will be a nice surprise. This works very well in practise.

Several systems use 1C and 1D as transfers to hearts and spades. These bids are weak and give an advantage for the opponents, provided that they have figured out a defense. Then they suddenly have both a double and a low cuebid to use when showing their holdings. If the transfer opening shows a 5+ card suit, as in Awkward and Aron-Rosa, it is easier for the strong pass pair to compete, though.

The advantage of these transfer bids is that 1H and 1S can be used for balanced and minor suit hands, which makes the system tactically strong. It is like if the system contains a whole army of weak notrump openings with which to preempt the opponents, see for example Awkward.

Finally, most systems use 1D as the weak bid, while some use the much more aggressive 1H or even 1S. The main advantage of using 1D as the weak bid, instead of pass, is that you take away a very important step for the opponents. If you play a standard system, you may double to show either a 1C or a 1D opening, but what if you play Precision? One bid is missing and your precision (!) will be lower!

The 1H and 1S openings are even more preemptive and quite difficult to defend against. Believe it or not, but this one or two steps make a big difference. In practise, you are thrown back into using a low precision, natural limit system. But luckily, there is an downside of the coin too. If you and your partner hold some 20+ points together against the 1H/S opener and all have balanced hands, you may sit back and double on everything, and the strong passers will have a bad board, whatever they try.

But once again, note that there is a very sensible reason to open 1D, 1H, or 1S on 0-7. If your opponents are playing, say, Super Precision, and find slam after slam against you, you can't stop them, and force them back to a standard system with less bidding precision. Or can you? Yes, by a weak 1D, 1H, or 1S!

Certainly, if you don't understand the advantages of strong pass

systems, you may feel that they are constructed to confuse the opponents. And if you don't care to figure out even a minimal agreement about what to do against weak artificial openings, well, you are at a clear disadvantage. But if it was that easy to get points just by confusing the opponents, standard systems would never have seen the daylight. No, Goren is profoundly wrong in his quote, (see the Preface, page 2), and strong pass systems have definite advantages which have nothing whatsoever to do with confusion.

Alpha* 2.80 (hcp)

Alpha was the first of the systems presented by Lukasz Slawinski and Stanislaw Ruminski in their book Introduction to Weak Opening Systems. It was invented by Slawinski in 1963, too early for it to use the standard base. Information from Erich Friedman, De Land, Florida.

Alpha Opening Bids

pass 12-18 any shape

1C 0-4 any shape

19+ any shape

1D 9-11 3+ hearts

1H 9-11 3+ spades

1S 5-8 any shape

1N 9-11 44+ in majors

2C 9-11 5+ clubs

2D 9-11 5+ diamonds

2H 9-11 5+ hearts in onesuiter

2S 9-11 5+ spades in onesuiter

Antidelta* 2.78 (hcp)

Antidelta is one of the systems presented by Lukasz Slawinski and Stanislaw Ruminski in their book Introduction to Weak Opening Systems. The Delta system uses shortness openings, which gives the bidding very good precision. However, Slawinski and Ruminski felt that Delta's mean opening of 1.60 was too low, and thus devised Antidelta for the openings in first hand. Whenever there is a shortness, (singleton or void), the opening bid is 1C; after a relay opener uses the Delta openings to describe his hand. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany and Erich Friedman, De Land, Florida.

Antidelta Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 any singleton or void

1D 0-7 any shape

1H 8-12 4-5 hearts

1S 8-12 4-5 spades

1N 8-12 balanced without major

2C 8-12 5+ clubs

2D 8-12 5+ diamonds

2H 8-12 6+ hearts

2S 8-12 6+ spades

After pass, the "responder" reopens with bids according to the Delta system, his limits being 6-10 points. After 1D the only forcing bid is 1N. After other opening bids, the nearest suit is a forcing relay bid while other bids are natural and non-forcing.

Aron-Rosa was developed in 1979, on the night between the name days of Aron and Rosa, with Haa kan Fransson as the chief architect. It has been played by several pairs in Sweden and won at least two pairs competitions, in spite of its somewhat wild two level opening bids. It also served as a main inspiration for the Awkward system.

Aron-Rosa Opening Bids

pass 13-19 any shape

1C 8-12 5+ hearts

1D 8-12 5+ spades

1H 8-12 balanced

1S 8-12 minors

1N 8-12 44+ in majors

2C 0-7 or 20+ 5+ hearts

2D 0-7 or 20+ 5+ spades

2H 0-7 or 20+ balanced

2S 0-7 or 20+ minors

2N 0-7 or 20+ 44+ in majors

After pass, the "responder" opens in a similar way, his limits being 6-12 for the one-level bids and 0-5 or 13+ for the two-level bids. After 1H/S, the relay is strong and the next relay, (preference of shown suit), is weak and signoff.

Aspro Symmetric Pass* 2.28 (hcp)

Aspro Symmetric Pass was developed by Nick Guoth and Peter Foong. Information from the RGB archive.

Aspro Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 4+ hearts
1D 8-12 4+ spades
1H 0-7 any shape
1S 8-12 minor or minors
1N 9-12 balanced, no 4 card major
2C 3-7 6+ clubs
2D 8-12 4441 or 5440, short major
2H 8-10 54+ in S+H
2S 5-8 55+ spades + other
2N 5-8 55+ no spades

The subsequent bidding uses relays throughout.

Awkward* 2.85

Awkward was invented by Mats Berggren, Haa kan Fransson, Anders Freij, Soren Romare, and Ulf Nilsson and played successfully in pairs and team competitions in Sweden in the early eighties. One of its ancestors was the Aron-Rosa system.

Awkward Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape
1C 8-12 5+ hearts
1D 8-12 5+ spades
1H 0-7 any shape
12-14 balanced
1S 8-11 balanced
1N 8-12 one 5 card minor
2C 7-11 6 diamonds
12-15 4441/5440
20+ 5+ clubs

2D 4-8 6 hearts
16-19 4441/5440
20+ 5+ diamonds

2H 4-8 6 spades
20+ 5+ hearts
20-21 balanced

2S 7-11 6 clubs
20+ 5+ spades
22-23 balanced

2N 0-10 weak preempt
24+ balanced

The subsequent bidding is fairly natural, but often uses a single relay bid to show an invitation or a game-forcing hand. The system also uses overcalls in the shortest suit to show two-suited hands in the defense.

Beta* 2.30 (hcp)

Beta is one of the systems presented by Lukasz Slawinski and Stanislaw Ruminski in their book Introduction to Weak Opening Systems. It was invented by Slawinski in 1964. Information from Erich Friedman, De Land, Florida.

Beta Opening Bids

pass 0-7 any shape

17+ any shape

1C 8-12 balanced

13-16 a 4 card major

1D 13-16 no 4 card major

1H 8-12 4+ hearts, unbalanced

1S 8-12 4+ spades, unbalanced
1N 8-12 44+ in majors
2C 8-12 5+ clubs
2D 8-12 5+ diamonds
2H 8-12 5+ hearts in onesuiter
2S 8-12 5+ spades in onesuiter

Big Beat* 1.83 (hcp)

Big Beat is one of the systems presented by Lukasz Slawinski and Stanislaw Ruminski in their book Introduction to Weak Opening Systems. It includes their idea of showing shortnesses, (singletons and voids). Information from Erich Friedman, De Land, Florida.

Big Beat Opening Bids

pass 8-12 major shortness
13-17 any shape
1C 8-12 balanced
18+ any shape
1D 0-7 any shape
1H 8-12 minor shortness
1S 8-12 no shortness, 4-5 spades
1N 8-12 no shortness, 4-5 hearts
2C 8-12 no shortness, 5+ cards
2D 8-12 no shortness, 5+ cards
2H 8-12 no shortness, 6+ cards
2S 8-12 no shortness, 6+ cards

Carrotti 2.34 (hcp)

Carrotti is a strong pass system based on the Carrot Club. It is

currently played by Lars Andersson and Hans Gothe, who have introduced a weak (0-7) 1H for use when non-vulnerable. Information from Sven-Olof Flodqvist, Stockholm, Sweden, and Lars Andersson, Stockholm, Sweden.

Carrotti Opening Bids

pass 12-16 unbalanced

15-17 balanced

1C 9-11 balanced

17+ any shape

1D 0-8 balanced

0-7 unbalanced

1H 8-11 4+ hearts

1S 8-11 4+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced

2C 8-11 6+ clubs or 54 in minors

2D 8-11 6 diamonds or 55+ in minors

2H 6-11 55+ in rounded or pointed

2S 6-11 55+ in blacks or reds

2N 6-11 55+ in majors or minors

When 1H shows 0-7, (non-vulnerable), the system is called Carrotti with a Twist. It has a mean opening of 2.56 when non-vulnerable and 2.45 in average.

Delta* 1.66 (hcp)

Delta is one of the systems presented by Lukasz Slawinski and Stanislaw Ruminski in their book Introduction to Weak Opening Systems. It includes their idea of showing shortness instead of length in suits. Information from Erich Friedman, De Land, Florida.

Delta Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 no shortness

1D 0-7 any shape

1H 8-12 short spades

1S 8-12 short hearts

1N 8-12 short diamonds, 5+ major

2C 8-12 short diamonds

2D 8-12 short clubs

2H 8-12 short clubs, 5+ hearts

2S 8-12 short clubs, 5+ spades

2N 8-12 short clubs, 55+ in majors

After pass, the "responder" reopens with similar bids, his limits being 6-10 points. After 1D the only forcing bid is 1N. After other opening bids, the nearest suit is a forcing relay bid while other bids are natural and non-forcing.

The following version of Delta is described by Pekka Viitalsalo, Espoo, Finland. Its mean opening is 1.60.

Finnish Delta Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 no shortness

1D 0-7 any shape

1H 8-12 short hearts

8-12 short clubs, 5+ major

1S 8-12 short spades

1N 8-12 short diamonds, 5+ major

2C 8-12 short diamonds

2D 8-12 short clubs

2H 8-12 short clubs, 4441/5440

2S 8-12 short clubs, 5+ spades

Since it has a low mean opening, Delta has almost exclusively been used for responses after pass in other systems, most notably Regres.

Diamond Heart* 3.12

This system is a strong pass version of the Tangerine Club, where the bids pass, 1D, and 1H have been changed around, (see the description of Tangerine).

Dutch Spade* 3.42 (hcp)

This system was invented by Max Rebattu in 1982, while sitting at the beach one sunny day. The idea is simply to shift the openings from pass to 1S around to make 1S the weak bid, while pass replaces 1C, 1C replaces 1D, and so on. This can be done with any system as a base. The first version used Dutch Acol, and was played by Maas and Rebattu. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Dutch Spade BTC* 3.57 (hcp)

Another version of the Dutch Spade idea, based on the Blue Team Club and played by Rebattu and Sint. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Dutch Spade Volmac* 3.37 (hcp)

Yet another version of the Dutch Spade idea, based on the Blue Team

Club and played by Schippers and Pas. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Eclectic Symmetric Pass* 2.26 (hcp)

The Eclectic Symmetric Pass system, (ESP), uses relay bidding throughout. Information from the RGB archive.

ESP Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 4+ hearts

1D 8-12 4+ spades

1H 0-7 any shape

1S 8-12 44+ in minors

1N 8-12 balanced, no 4 card major

2C 8-12 6+ clubs

2D 8-12 6+ diamonds

2H 5-9 6+ hearts

2S 5-9 6+ spades

2N 5-9 55+ no clubs

Lai Forcing Pass* 1.66 (hcp)

A system developed by Ruey-Gang Lai. Information from the RGB archive.

Lai Forcing Pass Opening Bids

pass 0-8 any shape

15+ any shape

1C 9-14 1+ clubs

1D 9-14 5 diamonds

1H 9-14 5 hearts

1S 9-14 5 spades

1N 13-15 balanced

2C 6-9 55 in majors

8-11 54 in majors

2D 5-8 6 hearts or spades

5-8 55+ in minors

21-22 balanced

2H 12-14 5 hearts and 4 in a minor

2S 12-14 5 spades and 4 in a minor

2N any solid 7+ suit

After pass, 1C is an artificial relay, while 1D is 0-7. The subsequent bidding uses relays and asking bids.

Lambda* 2.31 (hcp)

Lambda is one of the systems presented by Lukasz Slawinski and Stanislaw Ruminski in their book Introduction to Weak Opening Systems. It includes guessing of partner's distribution in free tempo and has been played by Håkan Fransson and Jan Eric Larsson, Sweden. They later switched to Major, mainly because it seemed more efficient to concentrate the bidding towards showing major holdings.

Lambda Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 balanced or 4441

1D 0-7 any shape

1H 8-12 54+ in C+H or D+S

1S 8-12 54+ in C+S or D+H

1N 8-12 54+ in C+D or H+S

2C 8-12 5+ C

2D 8-12 5+ D

2H 8-12 5+ H

2S 8-12 5+ S

After pass, the "responder" reopens with similar bids, his limits being 6-10 points. After 1D the only forcing bid is 1N. After other opening bids, the nearest suit is a forcing relay bid while other bids are natural and non-forcing. In free tempo, the responder guesses the opener's distribution and bids based on this.

Major* 2.48 (hcp)

Major is one of the early systems presented by Lukasz Slawinski and Stanislaw Ruminski in their book Introduction to Weak Opening Systems. Major was played by Haa kan Fransson and Jan Eric Larsson in Sweden in the eighties.

Major Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 3-4 H, 3-4 S

1D 0-7 any shape

1H 8-12 3-4 H, 0-2 S

1S 8-12 0-2 H, 3-4 S

1N 8-12 0-2 H, 0-2 S

2C 8-12 5+ H, 3-4 S

2D 8-12 3-4 H, 5+ S

2H 8-12 5+ H, 0-2 S

2S 8-12 0-2 H, 5+ S

2N 8-12 5+ H, 5+ S

After pass, the "responder" reopens with similar bids, his limits being 6-10 points. After 1D the only forcing bid is 1N. After other opening bids, the nearest suit is a forcing relay bid while other bids are natural and non-forcing.

Mandarine Club* 3.13

This system is a strong pass version of the Tangerine Club, where the bids pass and 1D have been switched, (see the description of Tangerine).

Modified ESP* 2.26 (hcp)

Modified Eclectic Symmetric Pass is a version of Eclectic Symmetric Pass and uses relay bidding throughout. Information from the RGB archive.

Modified ESP Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 4+ hearts

1D 8-12 4+ spades

1H 0-7 any shape

1S 8-12 44+ in minors

1N 9-12 balanced, no 4 card major

2C 8-12 6+ clubs

2D 8-12 6+ diamonds

2H 8-12 55+ in majors

2S 8-10 55+ in minors

2N 8-10 55+ in reds

No Name System* 2.12 (hcp)

No Name is one of the systems presented by Lukasz Slawinski and Stanislaw Ruminski in their book Introduction to Weak Opening Systems. It is an ancestor to the Suspensor system. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

No Name Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 3-5 cards in both majors

1D 0-7 any shape

1H 8-12 0-2 or 6+ hearts

1S 8-12 0-2 or 6+ spades

1N 8-12 54 in SD or Hcl

2C 8-12 54 in HD or Scl

2D 8-12 45 in SD or Hcl

2H 8-12 45 in HD or Scl

2S 8-12 55+ in majors or minors

2N weak preempt in any suit

After 8-12 opening bids, the nearest suit is a forcing relay bid while other bids are natural and non-forcing. In free tempo, the responder guesses the opener's distribution and bids based on this.

Regres 2.21 (hcp)

Regres is the most successful of the systems presented by Lukasz Slawinski and Stanislaw Ruminski in their book Introduction to Weak Opening Systems. Additional information from Pekka Viitasalo, Espoo, Finland.

Regres Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape
1C 8-12 any singleton or void
1D 0-7 any shape
1H 8-12 3-4 hearts
1S 8-12 3-4 spades
1N 8-12 5-7 card major
2C 8-12 5-7 clubs
2D 8-12 5-7 diamonds
2H 8-12 55+ in rounded or pointed
2S 8-12 55+ in blacks or reds
2N 8-12 55+ in majors or minors

After pass, the "responder" reopens with bids according to the Delta system, his limits being 6-10 points. After 1D the only forcing bid is 1N. After other opening bids, the nearest suit is a forcing relay bid while other bids are natural and non-forcing.

Sandgroper* 2.25 (hcp)

Sandgroper was developed by Ian Casselton and played by Ian Casselton and Geoff Pocock, both "lads in their mid twenties, who have played for Australia, (youth), a couple of times". Sandgroper is a colloquial expression for a West Australian. Information from Dennis Yovich, Perth, Australia.

Sandgroper Opening Bids

pass 0-6 any shape
7-12 4333/4432/4441
17+ balanced or 4441
1C 13-16 unbalanced
1D 7-12 5+ hearts

17+ 5+ hearts
 1H 7-12 5+ spades
 17+ 5+ spades
 1S 7-12 5+ clubs
 17+ 5+ clubs
 1N 13-16 balanced
 2C 7-12 5+ diamonds
 17+ 5+ diamonds
 2D 7-12 5+ in diamonds and another
 2H 7-12 5+ without spades
 2S 7-12 5+ with spades
 2N weak preempt in clubs
 sound preempt in diamonds

The same type of multi preempts are used on the rest of the three level.

Schizo Club* 3.72 (hcp)

The Schizo Club was developed by Steve Starkey, Pecs, Hungary.

Schizo Club Opening Bids

pass 0-7 balanced
 16-20 any shape
 1C 8-11 unbalanced
 21+ any shape
 1D 0-7 unbalanced
 12-14 balanced
 12-15 4+ diamonds
 1H 0-7 unbalanced, 4+ hearts
 12-15 5+ hearts

1S 0-7 unbalanced, 4+ spades

12-15 5+ spades

1N 8-11 balanced

15-17 balanced

2C 12-15 5+ clubs

2D 8-11 5+ major

21-22 balanced

2H 8-11 44+ in majors

2S 8-11 any 6+ suit

2N 8-11 54+ in minors

Most responses are natural, but pass-1C, 1C-1D, and 1N-2C are
invitational relays.

Sigma* 2.80 (hcp)

Sigma is Ruminski's and Slawinski's "natural" system.

Sigma Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 4441 or 5440

1D 0-7 any shape

1H 8-12 4-5 hearts

1S 8-12 4-5 spades

1N 8-12 balanced

2C 8-12 5+ clubs

2D 8-12 5+ diamonds

2H 8-12 6+ spades

2S 8-12 6+ spades

2N 8-12 55+ in majors

After pass, the "responder" reopens with similar bids, his limits being 6-10 points. After 1D the only forcing bid is 1N. After other opening bids, the nearest suit is a forcing relay bid while other bids are natural and non-forcing.

Suspensor* 2.12 (hcp)

This system is similar to the No Name system, and was invented and played by Balicki and Zmudzinski. This is the version from 1990. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Suspensor Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 3-5 cards in both majors

1D 0-7 any shape

1H 8-12 0-2 or 6+ hearts

1S 8-12 0-2 or 6+ spades

1N 8-12 54 in SD or Hcl

2C 8-12 54 in HD or Scl

2D 8-12 45 in SD or Hcl

2H 8-12 45 in HD or Scl

2S 8-12 55+ in majors or minors

2N weak preempt in any suit

After 8-12 opening bids, the nearest suit is a forcing relay bid while other bids are natural and non-forcing. In free tempo, the responder guesses the opener's distribution and bids based on this.

Swan* 3.39 (hcp)

The Swan system was invented by Jan Eric Larsson. The name means

"System With A Name" and was inspired by the Polish No Name system.

Swan Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 8-12 4441 or 5440

1D 0-7 any shape

1H 8-12 3-4 hearts

1S 8-12 3-4 spades

1N 8-12 3-4 hearts and 3-4 spades

2C 8-12 5+ clubs

2D 8-12 5+ diamonds

2H 8-12 5+ spades

2S 8-12 5+ spades

2N 8-12 55+ in majors

After pass, the "responder" reopens with similar bids, his limits being 6-10 points. After 1D the only forcing bid is 1N. After other opening bids, the nearest suit is a forcing relay bid while other bids are natural and non-forcing.

Tape Relay* 2.01 (hcp)

This system was developed by Donald Evans. Information from the RGB archive.

Tape Relay Opening Bids

pass 13+ any shape

1C 0-7 any shape

1D 8-12 4+ hearts

1H 8-12 4+ spades

1S 8-12 minors

1N 8-12 balanced, one 4 card major
2C 8-12 6+ clubs
2D 8-12 4441 or 5440, short hearts
2H 8-12 4441 or 5440, short spades
2S 8-12 55+ in minors
2N 3-9 55+ no clubs

The responses use relays throughout.

Torpedo Teams* 2.87 (hcp)

This is the artificial version of Torpedo, developed and played by Dean Eidler and Murat Genc, New Zealand. Information from Dean Eidler, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Torpedo Teams Opening Bids

pass 15+ any shape
1C 9-14 various shapes
1D 9-14 4+ hearts
1H 9-14 4+ spades
1S 0-8 any shape
1N 12-15 no 4 card major
2C 9-14 6+ clubs
2D 9-14 6+ diamonds
2H 5-9 55+ in majors or minors
2S 5-9 55+ in blacks or reds
2N 5-9 55+ in rounded or pointed

After pass, 1C is 6-8, any shape, 1D is 0-5, and other responses artificial positives. The system uses symmetric relays throughout.

Tresboof* 2.41 (hcp)

Information from the RGB archive.

Tresboof Opening Bids

pass 14+ any shape

1C 8-13 4+ hearts

1D 8-13 4+ spades

1H 0-8 any shape

1S 9-13 balanced

1N 9-13 5+ diamonds

2C 9-13 5+ clubs

2D 5-8 6+ diamonds

2H 5-8 6+ hearts

2S 5-8 6+ spades

2N 9-13 55+ minors

The responses use Moscito relays.

Other Systems

Here is yet another group of systems. These systems have in common the simple property that they don't fit anywhere else. Some of them employ a fairly standard base, like pass 0-11, others 12+, but the openings clearly differ from those of the standard systems, by being either less natural than usual, or more!

Bludgeon* 2.57

Bludgeon was invented by Ian Wilson, USA. The idea is a system based entirely on limit bidding with no forcing bids. Information from Ian

Wilson, Irvine, California.

Bludgeon Opening Bids

1x 11-14 4+ suit

1N 11-14 balanced

2x 15-18 4+ suit or 8 tricks

2N 15-17 balanced

3x 19+ 4+ suit or 9 tricks

3N 18-22 balanced

There are no forcing opening bid and no forcing responses. The only conventions used are Stayman and Blackwood. The systems has produced respectable results in pairs events at various levels.

Bondage* 2.52 (hcp)

The Bondage system was invented by Tom Jacob, New Zealand. It was played at the Salismaggiore Olympiad 1992 and the Far East Championships in Wellington 1994. Information from Tom Jacob, Auckland, New Zealand.

Bondage Opening Bids

1C 12+ 4+ hearts

1D 12+ 4+ spades

1H 12+ 4+ clubs

1S 8-11 4(3)+ spades

1N 12-14 balanced

2C 17+ 4+ diamonds

22+ balanced

2D 12-16 4+ diamonds

2H 8-11 6+ hearts

2S 6-9 6+ spades

2N 20-21 balanced, no major

After 1C/D/H, the relay is an artificial negative and a bid in the shown suit the starting point of a symmetric relay exchange.

EHAA* 4.06 (hcp)

EHAA is an American system from the fifties, and it is very natural; so natural indeed that it is unusual. Because of its weak two openings, it has a very high mean opening. The name means "Every Hand An Adventure". Information from Eric Landau and Barbara Doran, Silver Spring, Maryland, USA.

EHAA Opening Bids

1C 13+ 4+ clubs

1D 13+ 4+ diamonds

1H 13+ 4+ hearts

1S 13+ 4+ spades

1N 10-12 balanced

2C 6-12 5+ clubs

2D 6-12 5+ diamonds

2H 6-12 5+ hearts

2S 6-12 5+ spades

2N 20-22 balanced

After 1N, 2C is the only forcing bid. The responses after one of a suit are highly natural.

Hole Transfers* 2.23 (hcp)

This is an English system. Information from Richard Lighton,
Wood-Ridge, New Jersey.

Hole Transfers Opening Bids

1C 13+ 4441

12-16 unbalanced

17+ balanced

1D 6-12/17+ 5+ hearts

1H 6-12/17+ 5+ spades

1S 6-12/17+ 5+ clubs

1N 13-16 balanced

2C 6-12/17+ 5+ diamonds

2D 6-11 hearts and minor

2H 6-11 majors

2S 6-11 spades and minor

2N 6-11 minors

Responder also uses transfers. For example, over 1D, 1H is for play against 6-12, 1S is 5+ spades and forcing, 1N shows clubs, 2C shows diamonds, and 2D shows heart support and game invitation against 6-12. Direct raises in H are final contracts, and jump shifts are natural and game-forcing.

Little Major* 2.11

This system was devised by Terence Reese in the sixties to demonstrate what could happen if artificial systems were to be allowed. It was played by Reese and Shapiro and Reese and Flint in the mid sixties. Information from Richard Lighton, Wood-Ridge, New Jersey. See Reese, *Bridge for Tournament Players*, 1968.

Little major Opening Bids

1C 12+ 4+ hearts

1D 12+ 4+ spades

16-19 balanced

1H 2-5 controlled psych

20+ any shape

1S 12-15 5+ in minors

1N 13-15 balanced

2C 12-15 5+ clubs

2D 12-15 5+ diamonds

2H 18+ 5+ in hearts and minor

2S 18+ 5+ in spades and minor

2N 7-11 6+ minor

18+ 5+ in minors

After 1C, 1D is either weak or strong, and after 1H responder uses a step response scale to show aces and kings.

Little Saffle Spade* 2.09 (hcp)

This is the latest version of a system that was created in Sweden in the late seventies, and then called Super Spade and later Super Saffle, with Einar Berg and Pontus Svinhufvud as main driving forces. Saffle is a small town in Dalsland, middle-west Sweden. The system became very popular in the early eighties and is still played. Information from Bertil G. Johnsson, Sweden.

Little Saffle Spade Opening Bids

pass 8+ 4+ spades

1C 8+ 4+ hearts

1D 0-7 any shape

1H 8+ unbalanced, no major
1S 8-12 balanced, no major
1N 13-18 balanced, no major
2C 8-12 5+ major and 4+ clubs
2D 8-12 5+ major and 4+ diamonds
2H 8-12 4+ hearts and 5+ spades
2S any solid 6 card suit
2N 19-21 balanced

Most responses are artificial and often similar to the opening bids, for example, pass-1C show 8+ and 4+ hearts, pass/1C-1D shows 0-7, any shape, etc.

Mafia Club* 2.45 (hcp)

The Mafia Club was invented by Kenneth L. Lindsay, 1981. Mafia stands for Majors First Always, and the main idea of Mafia is to open 1H/S as often as possible. In principle, Mafia is a strong 1C system, but since the openings 1H/S may be based on three cards only, it was placed among the artificial systems. Information from Rene Steiner, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Mafia Club Opening Bids

1C 16+ any shape, 16-19 if balanced
1D 11-15 different shapes
1H 10-15 3+ hearts, unbalanced
1S 10-15 3+ spades, unbalanced
1N 13-15 balanced
2C 16+ any 4441
 20+ balanced
2D 11-14 solid 7-card minor

13-15 6M331, 6M4m21, or 6M4m30

2H 6-9 6+ hearts or

11-15 6 hearts 322 or

13-15 5 hearts 332

2S 6-9 6+ spades or

11-15 6 spades 322 or

13-15 5 spades 332

2N 6-9 6+ minor

3C 13-15 6-7 clubs, no major

3D 13-15 6-7 diamonds, no major

3N 11-14 solid 7-card major

If the openings 1H and 1S are made on 3 cards, the suit is at least as strong as KTx.

Majeure D'Abord* 1.61

This system was invented by Jean-Rene Vernes. See Vernes, La Majeure D'Abord, 2nd edition, 1973. Information from Rene Steiner, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Majeure D'Abord Opening Bids

1C 12+ 4 spades

1D 12-21 max 33 in majors

1H 12-19 4 hearts

1S 12-17 5+ spades

1N 12-17 5+ hearts

2C 20+ 4+ hearts

2D 22+ max 33 in majors

2H 12-15 6+ hearts

2S 12-15 6+ spades

2N 20-21 balanced with 4+ hearts

3C 14-15 semi-balanced with 6+ clubs

3D asking bid

The system employs lots of canape sequences and relays.

Mini-Major* 1.69 (hcp)

This system was developed and played by Mats Nilslund and Bjorn Fallenius, Sweden. Information from Henk Uijterwaal, Hamburg, Germany.

Mini-Major Opening Bids

1C 14+ 3+ hearts

17+ 2+ hearts

1D 14+ 3+ spades

17+ 2+ spades

1H 8-13 4+ hearts

1S 8-13 4+ spades

1N 14-16 balanced

2C 8-13 5+ major and 4+ clubs

2D 8-13 5+ major and 4+ diamonds

2H 8-13 4+ hearts and 5+ spades

11-16 6 clubs

2S 11-16 6 diamonds

11-16 5+ in minors

2N 11+ 5+ in minors

The openings 1H/S can hide a canape.

Tranare '87* 0.98 (hcp)

Developed by D. and J. Hoffman. Information from the RGB archive.

Tranare '87 Opening Bids

1C 12+ 4+ hearts

1D 12+ 4+ spades

1H 12+ singleton heart

1S 12+ 6+ clubs

1N 12+ 6+ diamonds

2C 8-11 6+ diamonds

12+ 6+ clubs, freakish

20-21 balanced

2D 8-11 6+ hearts

12+ 6+ diamonds, freakish

22-23 balanced, not 4-5 spades

2H 8-11 6+ spades

12+ 6+ hearts, freakish

22-23 balanced, 4-5 spades

2S 12+ 6+ spades, freakish

2N 8-11 55+ minors

The responses use relays throughout.

WELOS* 3.37

WELOS was invented by Oren Webster/Eleaticus, and the name stands for Webster's extra-light opener system. Oren played the system with Ted Abbott, Don Lowry, Richard Holmes, and others. Information from Oren Webster/Eleaticus, Nashville, Tennessee.

WELOS Opening Bids

1C/D/H/S 8-11 4+ card suit

16+ 4+ card suit
1N 13-15 balanced
2C/D/H/S 12-15 4+ card suit
2N 22-24 balanced

The responses are natural limits, where trump support is always shown immediately. The three level openings are strong, and there is an optional version of the strong openings where 2N is used as the game-forcing bid.

Funny Systems

Here we present a few systems which are probably not to be taken seriously. Anyway, there is not enough information about them to make a full presentation or to calculate a mean opening. Read and enjoy...

Jehenger*

The Jehenger Transfer System popped up in a bar in Manchester, or so the rumor goes. Not the whole system though, only the main idea that every bid transfers to the next. Information from the RGB archive.

Jehenger Principles

pass transfer to 1C

1C transfer to 1D

1D transfer to 1H, etc.

X cannot defeat the contract

pass can defeat the contract

One possibility is of course that this is just a confused story about some Dutch Spade version...

No Peek*

In the No Peek system you never look at your own cards. Instead you try to deduce the correct contract from the opponents' bidding. Information from the RGB archive.

No System at All*

In this "system", the paramount idea is to have no agreements with partner, but just to bid. This does not mean that you must bid naturally and quantitatively, like in Bludgeon. Instead you may bid whatever you want, for whatever reason. Played with doubtful success by Haa kan Fransson and Jan Eric Larsson.

National Standards

Most countries have one or two most popular systems, often because some very influential Bridge personality and system inventor. For example, Charles Goren has been instrumental in the development of Standard American. Most of these national de facto standards are simply named Standard American, Swedish Standard, etc. Some are not, however, and the following table lists the system entry or entries for each country, (note that the entry may or may not be a single system).

Australia Australian Standard

Austria Blue Team Club

Denmark Danish Standard

Danish Trend

Finland Finnish Junior Standard

Finnish Standard

France Majeure Cinquieme

Holland Biedermeier

Dutch Acol

Hungary Hungarian Standard

Iceland Precision Club

"Standard American"

Vienna

Ireland Irish Standard

Italy Blue Team Club

Neapolitan Club

Poland Polish Club

Sweden Swedish Standard

UK Acol

Cambridge Standard

Crowhurst Acol

Rubber Bridge Acol

USA Standard American

Mean Opening Summary

The mean opening has been calculated for all the systems presented in this collection. The bids have been assigned values, (pass 0.0, 1C 1.0, 1D 2.0, etc.), and with the knowledge of the frequencies of the different opening bids, it is possible to calculate a mean or average opening bid.

It could be argued that a higher mean opening is better, since it has a preemptive or aggressive effect on the bidding. Of course, if a system has a high mean opening but a low bidding precision, this way of evaluation will be misleading. However, it seems that most of the systems presented in this report allow a high precision in the

bidding, and therefore, a ranking after mean opening bid is not uninteresting.

Note, though, that aggressive opening bids will only pay off against fairly good opponents. As Sven-Olof Flodqvist suggested, if your opponents aren't afraid to overcall with less than 10 points and little or no distributional compensation, it may even pay off to open lower, to encourage the opponents to give you valuable information on the overall distribution.

In the first group we have system with a mean opening of 3.00 or more. This means that on average, the pair will open 1H or higher in first or second seat, which makes for a difficult task for the opponents, who very often are forced to bid using their less precise defensive system instead of their standard constructive methods. As expected, some of these systems are artificial, strong pass systems, but EHAA and WELOS are natural systems, and Tangerine a standard weak/strong 1C system. The EHAA system has the highest mean opening of all, because of its weak two openings on 6-12 points and 5+ suits. It is unclear how efficient the constructive bidding is after these, but it certainly seems to be a good alternative system to investigate.

System	Opening
EHAA	4.06
Schizo Club	3.72
Dutch Spade BTC	3.57
Dutch Spade	3.42
Swan	3.39
Dutch Spade Volmac	3.37
WELOS	3.37

Mandarine Club	3.13
Diamond Heart	3.12
Tangerine Club	3.07

In the group of systems with a mean opening between 2.50 and 3.00 we find more artificial systems. However, the Science is a standard system. If you like light opening bids, check it out! Also, Bludgeon is a "supernatural" system with no forcing bids whatsoever, and Cablecar, Cranberry Club, and Ice Relay are standard strong 1C systems.

System	Opening
Cablecar	2.98
Cranberry Club	2.96
Aron-Rosa	2.96
Torpedo Teams	2.87
Awkward	2.85
Sigma	2.80
Alpha (WOS)	2.78
Antidelta	2.78
Ice Relay	2.61
Science	2.60
Bludgeon	2.57
Bondage	2.52

In the mean opening range 2.25 to 2.50 we find several different systems. Some of the artificial strong pass systems are here, as well as some strong 1C systems, (Moscito-D and Mafia).

System	Opening
Moscito-D	2.49

Major	2.48
Scientific Diamond	2.46
Carrotti with a Twist	2.45
Mafia Club	2.45
Tresboof	2.41
Carrotti	2.34
Lambda	2.31
Beta (WOS)	2.30
Power System	2.28
Aspro Symmetric pass	2.28
Eclectic Symmetric pass	2.26
Modified Eclectic Symmetric pass	2.26
Sandgroper	2.25

Between 2.00 and 2.25, we find a mix of systems. These can all be recommended because of their aggressivity.

System	Opening
Science with Flannery	2.23
Hole Transfers	2.23
Regres	2.21
Clement-Oliver	2.18
Relay Club	2.18
Bernier Big Club	2.15
Yovich's Carrot Club	2.12
No Name System	2.12
Suspensor	2.12
Little Major	2.11
Little Saffle Spade	2.09
Tape Relay	2.01
Reverse Benjaminised Acol	2.00

With the range 1.80 to 2.00 we have reached down to the standard system range. Here we find a mix of reasonably aggressive systems. Note that there are no artificial systems on this level.

System	Opening
Benjaminised Acol	1.98
Acol with Multi 2D	1.97
Cloudberry Club	1.97
1D Example System	1.94
Gamma	1.93
Yui-Bin-Had Club	1.92
Danish Trend	1.89
Kaplan-Sheinwold	1.89
COBRA	1.88
German Moscito	1.88
Carrot Club	1.88
Modern Standard Club	1.87
Beta	1.87
Viking Club	1.86
Hybrid Club	1.85
Medium Club Relay	1.84
Neapolitan Club	1.83
Vanderbilt Club	1.83
Big Beat	1.83
Cambridge Standard	1.82

In the range 1.70 to 1.80 we find a similar mix of standard, strong 1 C, and artificial 1C/D systems.

System	Opening
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Estonian Diamond	1.79
Schenken Club	1.79
Australian Standard	1.78
Finnish Junior Standard	1.78
Ultimate with Five Majors	1.78
Breakthrough	1.78
Crowhurst Acol	1.77
Newlands Moscito	1.77
Diamond Major	1.77
Honeymoon Moscito	1.75
Super Mixed Precision	1.75
Dutch Acol	1.74
Feldspar	1.73
Acol	1.72
Monaco	1.72
Mock Swedish	1.71
Torpedo Pairs	1.71
Aces Scientific	1.70
Eastern Scientific	1.70
Standard American	1.70

In the range 1.70 to 1.60 we find more standard and strong club systems. It is interesting to note that Ruminski and Slawinski judged the Delta system, (with mean opening 1.60), as too passive to use for first-hand opening bids. You can't expect to gain very much in the way of aggressive opening bids with the following systems.

System	Opening
Swedish Standard	1.69
Deuces Scientific	1.69
Protest	1.69

Mini-Major	1.69
BiederMeier	1.68
Bridge World Standard	1.68
Alpha	1.68
Rubber Bridge Acol	1.67
Reed-Horn Club	1.67
Majeure Cinquieme	1.66
Delta	1.66
Lai Forcing pass	1.66
Crazy Diamond	1.65
DESY Polish Club	1.65
Kentucky Club	1.65
Jacoby Modern	1.64
Bowman-Hancock	1.64
CAB	1.63
Finnish Standard	1.63
Stayman	1.62
Symmetric Club	1.62
Imprecision Club	1.61
Majeure D'Abord	1.61
Nottingham Club	1.60
MamiC	1.60
Svan	1.60
Finnish Delta	1.66

The following group of systems have mean openings from 1.50 to 1.60 and are thus even less aggressive.

System	Opening
Danish Standard	1.59
Power Precision	1.59

Volmac Precision	1.59
Lea	1.57
Roman	1.56
Goren '85	1.55
Roth-Stone	1.55
Walsh	1.55
Veejay System	1.55
Modern Polish Club	1.55
Symmetric Relay	1.53
New South Wales	1.53
Ultimate Club	1.51
Aces Club	1.50

The following systems, in the range 1.30 to 1.50, are quite passive. Thus, the advantage of using them, (if any), must come from high bidding precision instead.

System	Opening
Transfer Precision	1.49
Big Diamond	1.49
Polish Club	1.45
Romex	1.42
Universal Club	1.42
Whimsical Club	1.42
PRO	1.41
O'Carrot	1.40
Swedish Precision	1.38
Precision Club	1.34
Match Point Precision	1.31
Super Precision	1.31
Truscott Symmetric Relay	1.31

Arno 1.30

Finally, here are the systems with a mean opening lower than 1.30. It could be argued that these systems are too passive. However that might be, these systems use pass and 1C so often that these two opening bids are bound to be nebulous, and thus difficult to use, especially in competitive situations.

System	Opening
Blue Team Club	1.22
Efos	1.21
Vienna	1.20
Bangkok Club	1.16
Culbertson	1.10
Goren	1.05
Tranare '87	0.98

Calculations

The mean openings of all these systems were done by a small C program that I wrote one day. It also outputs the frequencies of the different opening bids of the systems. The program uses independent tables for the frequencies of hcp and distributions. For each system, a small subroutine was written, to calculate the opening bid for each combination of hcp and distribution, and then a simple loop was used to compute the opening bid frequencies and the total mean opening.

In fact, hcp and distribution are not independent, (more unbalanced hands are more likely to be close to 10 hcp), but some simple investigations of Monte Carlo generated tables show that this effect has no significance for the mean opening calculations. However, the

following factors do influence the mean opening:

- o Opening bids over 2N have been excluded from the calculations.
- o Several systems have demands on suit quality, which are overlooked by the program.
- o Different players use different ways of calculating distributional points, and for devaluating singleton and doubleton honors.
- o Finer points of, for example, in which order to choose between different opening bids, may not have been described properly.
- o Most probably, there are some programming errors in the system descriptions.
- o Players using a system vary in aggressiveness and personal style.

The reasons for excluding openings above 2N were threefold: first, these opening bids are almost always preemptive, and thus fairly similar from system to system; secondly, it simplified the work of entering the system description subroutines; and thirdly, the higher level opening bids are so infrequent that they have little influence on the overall mean opening anyway, (for example, all 7+ card suits with less than 9 hcp constitute no more than 1.51% of all hands, and would thus add an extra 0.23 percentage units to the mean opening; and far from all these hands are suitable for a preemptive bid.)

A main problem with calculating a mean opening concerns distributional points. In this report, two methods have been used. Some systems, for example, Precision, use hcp only. This has been indicated by adding '(hcp)' after the mean opening figure. Otherwise, distributional points are included, (calculated as 1 for a doubleton, 2 for a singleton, and 3 for a void), except for balanced notrump opening bids. No other additions or deductions have been used.

It is also important to note that the mean opening is far from a perfect indicator even of a system's aggressivity. For example, a balanced 20-21 is more frequent than a 5-9 with 55+ in the minors. Thus, the strong 2N adds more to the mean opening than the weak, while in practise, the weak 2N is aggressive while the strong only preempts partner, (when you hold 20-21 hcp, there is hardly any need for preempting the opponents).

This means that systems which open strong hands fairly high, (for example Bludgeon, EHAA, and WELOS), may sometimes preempt the partnership's own constructive bidding, while with systems with weaker two openings, (like Moscito-D and Tangerine), this will happen more seldom. Still, for all these systems, the value of preempting the opponents is probably greater than the risk of preempting yourselves.

In summary, the above means that the mean opening number is to be taken as a general indication of a system's aggressiveness, but little more. The Science, (2.60), is clearly more aggressive than the Little Major, (2.11), but when comparing, say, Standard American, (1.70), with Majeure Cinquieme, (1.66), factors like personal style, etc., certainly outweigh the calculated mean opening number.

A different side to this: if you want to design an aggressive system with a high mean opening, here are some important points:

- o The greatest impact comes from relatively balanced hands around 10 points. If you open these, your system will be aggressive, if not it will be passive. The Science, Tangerine Club, Ice Relay, and Moscito-D all get their high mean opening from opening on 10+ points. In the same way, a weak notrump is more aggressive than a strong one.

- o When designing weak two openings, frequency is important. For example, 55+ distributions are rare, while 6 card suits are more common, and 5 card suits abound. Thus, if you use 2D/H/S for 6-10 and 5+ card suits, your system becomes aggressive, while a whole army of weak twosuiters won't do very much. For example, compare German Moscito, (1.88), with Moscito-D, (2.49) to see the difference.
- o The preference order of opening bids is also important. If you open an 11 hcp 4333 with 1S you are more aggressive than if you use a "prepared" 1C.
- o Of course, five card major openings decrease the aggressivity of a system, (and delay the finding of major fits). When you have a five card major, they are an asset, but when you don't, five card major openings are a liability.
- o With some 15+ points, there is no point in opening high and waste bidding space. Thus, the aggressivity in your system should come from opening weak or intermediate hands.

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The following people have helped me to put this collection together. I am deeply grateful to them all. If you are interested in knowing more about a certain system, you may consider contacting them, (or me). A '*' means that the contributor is either the inventor or the system or one of its main users/proponents.

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