

# I/N News ... especially for you!

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## Bergen Tips...

### Inside This Issue:

Bergen Tips

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Always think about how many trumps the opponents have and how they are likely to divide.

When to lead a trump: RHO opens a major, his partner never supports him, opener bids a second suit, which becomes trump. Dummy is probably short in declarer's first suit so you should be eager to lead a trump.

How to Fill Out  
A Convention  
Card

4

Two of the most important principles of The Law of Total Tricks are: With 10 trumps, be eager to compete to the four level. When in doubt, bid 4 spades over 4 hearts.

Consider whether to draw trumps first. Unless you're 100 percent sure, don't do it.

If the Rule of 11 contradicts the cards in view, you can be sure partner has led top of nothing rather than 4th best.

If the defenders are not likely to ruff anything, postponing the drawing of trumps is not a problem.

When partner opens 1NT, do not get carried away when you have a flat 16 HCP. A raise to 4NT is enough.

Every player has heard, "When in doubt, lead trump." Obviously, if your other suits are "unleadable," you would lead a trump but the above statement is not very helpful. I much prefer the following guideline: The best time to lead a trump is when you are NOT in doubt."

Even when you're not taking a finesse, it often matters which hand leads the suit.

After partner overcalls at the one level, a new suit should not be forcing.

Play the honor from the short side first applies to the declarer AND the defenders.

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Applying the Rule of 11 after a fourth-best lead will frequently tell you a great deal about the hand.

If the thought of being passed out in 1 heart or 1 spade would make you ill, open 2 clubs.

If your partner invites a notrump slam with a leap to 4NT, you're welcome to bid a suit.

Because a player who preempts at the 4- or 5-level always has a very long strong suit, I recommend playing negative doubles at high levels. Personally, I play negative doubles through 5 diamonds.

If the opponents have the balance of power and a fit, your only hope may be to lead a short suit.

If partner doubles their slam, assume he has a void and try to "find" it.

If RHO bids or doubles after partner's Jacoby transfer, you don't have to bid.

Two things to try to memorize: The opening lead and dummy's distribution and honor cards.

The 10 is an honor card. Make sure you treat it with respect. If you have two accompanied tens in suits that are at least 3 cards long, you should add a point to the value of the hand.

If an opponent jumps to slam without bidding 4NT, he is likely to have a void.

Setting up 5-card suits is one of the keys to good declarer play.

When declarer's second suit becomes trumps, a trump lead is often best for the defense.

In general, make aggressive leads against a slam contract in a suit.

Remember "The worst analysts and the biggest talkers are often the one and same."

Setting up 5-card suits is one of the keys to success.

It makes sense to me is to agree that If RHO opens 1C, it is okay to overcall 1NT without a club stopper. No one rushes to lead clubs just because his partner opens 1C.

At matchpoints, regardless of vulnerability, you don't need to be super-aggressive in bidding game.

The worst distributions are 5-3-3-2, 6-3-2-2, and 7-2-2-2.

Bidding can be defined as an exchange of relevant information. You don't have to talk about every suit in your hand.

When on lead against a partscore in a suit contract, seriously consider leading trumps.

When playing matchpoints, overtricks can be crucial. This is especially true if you're in a normal contract that other players rate to reach. When the risk is minimal, declarer should even be willing to risk his contract in search of overtricks.

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Strive to play slams in a suit contract.

After partner supports you, add 1 point for a side suit with 4+ cards. When partner has good support, sometimes partner can ruff it. Sometimes partner will have enough length in the suit that it will eventually be a winner.

When you have a sure trump trick, don't use it for ruffs.

The only time you can give a signal is when you're free to do so because you are not involved in competing for the trick.

The best time to preempt is when the opponents have the balance of power. When your RHO passes, the opponents are less likely to have the majority of the strength. In second seat, you should NOT preempt with a questionable hand.

5-3-3-2 hands are not worth much if your 5-card suit is trump. Having no long or short outside suits is a liability in a suit contract. (From "Marty Sez...Volume 3")

The fact that dummy still has the ace is not a valid reason to avoid returning partner's lead.

When dummy is known to have a short suit, it is usually best to lead a trump.

·After a limit raise, opener should not consider slam without a singleton or void.

Never say anything to your partner unless you would want him to say the same to you. If you are unsure, don't.

Dummy has made a splinter bid. A trump lead may stop declarer from ruffing all of his losers in dummy's short suit.

Many players are so eager to win tricks that they forget that it's usually correct to "lose your losers early."

·  
"One advantage of bad bidding is that you get practice at playing atrocious contracts." Alfred Sheinwold

·  
Lead an honor for a finesse only if you are eager to see it covered.

Fourth hand should open if your high card points plus number of spades totals 15 or more.

An honor in partner's suit is not worth so much.

## How to Fill Out The ACBL Convention Card

The ACBL Convention Card is designed to be easy for players to use by making available pertinent information to opponents (a comprehensive overview of your system). It should provide players with a good idea of the methods they have chosen to play and make them more aware of calls that require an Alert (in red) or Announcement (in blue). If what you play is a modified version of something on the card, check the appropriate box and add a note (in the same place) that clarifies what is modified. If what you play is not similar, don't check any box, make a separate note about it in the same section. If you see something that is unfamiliar to you, you probably do not play it so skip it.

**NOTE:** It is your responsibility to make sure your methods are legal for the event. Check the appropriate convention chart, usually the ACBL General Convention Chart, occasionally the ACBL Mid-Chart or SuperChart. If there is any doubt, check with the tournament director.

### ACBL CONVENTION CARD REGULATIONS

First a few miscellaneous things about the use of ACBL Convention Cards in ACBL tournaments.

**NAMES:** On this line you enter the first and last names of each member of the partnership (ACBL regulation for sectional and higher-rated tournaments). The writing on this line, as well as all other lines on the card must be legible.

**TWO IDENTICAL COPIES:** Each player is required to have a Convention Card legibly filled out and on the table throughout the session. Both cards of a partnership must be identical.

**COMPLETE CARD:** If a director determines that neither player has a substantially completed card, the partnership may only play conventions listed on the *ACBL Limited Conventions* chart and may only play standard carding. This restriction may be lifted by the director at the beginning of the next round once two completed cards have been approved by the director. Beginning with the second round after being notified about inadequately filled-out cards, the director will impose penalties. If only one substantially completed Convention Card is produced by a partnership, the director may give warnings or penalties at his/her discretion.

### GENERAL APPROACH

In this section, you explain your general systemic approach. Several common systems can be specified just by checking a box. If your system cannot be easily explained by checking boxes, write it in on the line under "General Approach". If you play some version of Standard American, you can write that on the line.

### TWO OVER ONE:

If you play two over one (e.g., 1S-Pass-2C is a 2/1 response) game forcing or nearly so, you must check the appropriate box:

**Game Forcing:** Check this box if 2/1 is always game forcing except perhaps over an opponent's 1NT overcall or takeout double.

**Game Forcing Except When Suit Rebid:** Check this box if responder's rebid of the 2/1 suit is non-forcing. Check the box if 1S -2C; 2S -3 is invitational. If it is forcing, do not check this box. If there are exceptions to your general 2/1 style, check the appropriate box and write in the exceptions.

### VERY LIGHT:

Check any boxes that apply to your partnership.

**Openings:** If you routinely open hands with fewer than 11 high-card points (HCP) that are not especially shapely, check this box.

**3rd Hand:** If you frequently open flat hands with 10 HCP or fewer with one of a suit, but only in the third position, then check this box.

**Overcalls:** If you routinely overcall on hands with fewer than 8 high-card points, check this box.

**Preempts:** If your preempts are undisciplined, frequent five-card suits for weak two-bids and six-card suits for three-bids, then check this box.

If close, judge whether you would open a hand such as

S: Q 6    H: Q 9 5 4 3 2    D: J 8 5    C: 9 3

with 2H, or a hand such as

S: 7 3    H: J 8 4    D: 7 4    C: Q J 9 5 4 2

with 3C non-vulnerable versus vulnerable. If so, check the "Preempts" box.

### FORCING OPENING:

This section lists the strong bid(s) in your system. When you make this bid, partner is forced to respond with any hand. Check the one that applies to you: **1C, 2C, Natural 2 Bids**. If you have no forcing opening, write "none" on the red line to the right.

**Other:** If something else is forcing for you (1D for example), check this box and write that forcing opening on the red line to the right. If you play NAMYATS (a four level opening of 4C to show a stronger than normal 4H opening and 4D to show a similar 4S opening), do not list 4C and 4D here, list them in the **OPENING PREEMPTS** section of the card.

### NOTRUMP OPENING BIDS

Things are arranged differently on the new convention card - in three columns. The first two columns are concerned with **1NT** openings. The third column is where you describe your conventions and treatments after **2NT** and **3NT** openings.

### 1NT:

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Ranges:

List the range of your opening 1NT bid. If you play any type of variable 1NT opening range, put the different ranges on the card with a note to the right explaining when each applies.

**5-card Major common**

If you frequently open one notrump with a 5-card major, check the box.

**System on over:**

If opener's left hand opponent (LHO) takes action directly after the opening 1NT bid, and your agreement is that your systemic bids (Stayman, transfers, etc.) are still in effect, then on the line to the right, list when they apply (over Doubles, over Natural Bids, over Any Call, etc.).

**2C**

Check the appropriate box indicating the meaning of a 2C response to 1NT in your system.

**Stayman:** check this box to indicate a type of normal (non-forcing to game) **Stayman** (asking for a 4-card major)

**Puppet Stayman:** check this box if 2C asks for a 5-card major, 2D with a 4-card major, or 2NT with neither a 4-card or 5-card major.

If 2C has some other meaning in your system, write it on the red line to the right.

**2D**

Check the appropriate box indicating the meaning of a 2D response to 1NT in your system.

**Transfer to H:** Check this box if 2D is a transfer to hearts.

**Forcing Stayman:** Check this box if you play that a 2D response to 1NT is game-forcing, and asks opener for a 4-card major.

**2H**

**Transfer to S:** Check this box if 2H is a transfer to spades.

**2S & 2NT**

If you have conventional usages for 2S and/or 2NT, write that agreement on the lines to the right.

**3-Level Bids**

Starting at the top of the 2nd column, write in any conventional uses of 3-level bids. If you play these bids as natural and forcing you can just circle the symbol.

**4D, 4H Transfer:**

Check this box if playing Texas transfers (4D transfers to 4H, 4 transfers to 4S). If you play 4C transfers to 4H and 4D transfers to 4S, write this information on the line above, in the space below, or opposite "Other" at the bottom of the column. Remember, this latter usage requires an Alert.

**Smolen:**

Check this box if using this convention - responder rebids in the 4-card major when 5-4 (usually at the 3-level) after receiving a 2D answer to Stayman.

**Lebensohl:**

2NT over an overcall (1NT-2S -2NT, for example) forces opener to bid 3C, after which various continuations are possible. Either bidding 3NT directly (fast) or after first bidding 2NT (slow) denies a stopper in the suit overcalled. After checking the Lebensohl box, you should write in fast or slow as appropriate.

**Neg. Double:**

If you use the negative double after an overcall, check the box and write on the line to the right through what level it is used.

**Other:**

On this line you describe anything that can't be said with the boxes and lines elsewhere in the section. Put here things like special runouts over a double of 1NT.

**2NT**

Range

Put in the agreed range for an opening 2NT bid if playing this bid as natural.

**Puppet Stayman:**

Check this box if a 3C asks opener to rebid a 5-card major. If this box is not checked, it is assumed that you play regular Stayman. If you play some other conventional 3C responses, write it on the last line of the 2NT box (beneath the 3S line).

**Transfer Responses:**

Check **Jacoby** or **Texas** if you play 3-level and/or 4-level major suit transfers after a 2NT opening.

**3S:**

Describe any conventional usage of this response on the line to the right.

Other

The last line can be used to note other conventional responses to a 2NT opening.

**3NT**

Fill-in the range as appropriate. Use the additional line to describe any conventional responses to a 3NT opening.

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**Conventional NT Openings:**

If you play conventional openings such as 2NT showing a minimum 5-4 or 5-5 in the minors or Gambling 3NT, describe them here. If there is a point range, you can make use of the above point range areas with a distinct arrow pointing to the conventional description.

**MAJOR OPENING**

**Expected Min. Length**

The boxes about four-card and five-card majors clarify the minimum length that partner expects when you open one of a major.

Checking the **4** box for both **1st/2nd** and **3rd/4th** means you play four-card majors. If you only open 1H with a four-card suit, put "1H" over "4" and check "5" box for 1S.

Checking the **5** box for both **1st/2nd** and **3rd/4th** means you play five-card majors at all times. Your partner always expects you to have five cards in the major suit you open.

Checking the **5** box for **1st/2nd** and the **4** box for **3rd/4th** indicates that you relax the five-card major openings in 3rd and 4th seat to the extent that your partner only expects four cards in the major you have opened when in that position.

**RESPONSES** to One of a Major

**Double Raise:**

Check the box that applies:

**Force**

If playing strong raises

**Inv.**

If playing invitational (limit) raises

**Weak**

If playing preemptive raises

**After Overcall:**

List here what a double raise is after an intervening overcall. Fill this in if a double raise is different after a competitive bid by an opponent. See Over Opp's T/O Double if the intervening call is a double.

**Conv. raise:** (Conventional)

Check any box that applies.

**2NT:**

If you play that a 2NT response to a one of a major opening bid shows support for opener's major, check this box. If the 2NT bid also asks for a short suit in opener's hand (Jacoby 2NT), check the **2NT** box and alert opener's response.

**3NT:**

If three notrump shows an opening hand with support for opener's major, check this box. If 3NT shows a splinter with 10-12 HCP and an unspecified short suit, or if 3NT shows 4-3-3-3 with three-card support, write this on the **Other** line and draw a line to the **3NT** box.

**Splinter:**

Check this box if a suit bid at the four-level shows support for opener's major suit and shortness in the bid suit and values for game. If you play a different style of splinter bid (invitational strength), check the box and explain your agreement on the "Other" line near the "Splinter" box.

**Other:**

There is a line here to clarify your support-showing responses or to describe any other treatments/conventions that show support for opener's major.

**1NT:**

**Forcing**

Check this box if a 1NT response to one of a major is forcing, asking opener to clarify distribution. If you play 1NT forcing only by an unpassed hand, check the **Forcing** box and write "UPH" by the box.

**Semi-forcing**

If you play 1NT semi-forcing (opener can pass with a balanced minimum), check this box.

**2NT:**

If you play your 2NT response as natural (a notrump hand), either check **Forcing** or **Inv.** (invitational) as appropriate. When invitational is checked, you must indicate the HCP range.

**3NT:**

If 3NT is natural, indicate the HCP range.

**Drury:**

means you use an artificial 2C response to a third- or fourth-seat 1H or 1S opening to ask for the hand strength. If the weak response is to rebid the opened major, check **Drury** and the **Reverse** box. If the weak response is 2D, check **Drury** only. If both the 2C and 2D response are used to check hand strength, check **2-Way**. If you play that using Drury shows at least a 3-card fit with partner's major, check **Fit**.

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**Other:**

This is a line to put in other agreements in response to major openings.

**MINOR OPENINGS**

**Expected Min. Length**

Mark the expected minimum length for one-level minor openings. It is good to make helpful notes if you have specific understandings, such as:

1C is opened with 4-4-3-2 distribution (exactly).

If your 1D opening is part of a big club system and promises 0+ or 1+ diamonds.

If you open 1C with 3-3 in the minors, opening 1D with a three-card suit only if the distribution is 4-4-3-2 exactly, check the 3 box but write an arrow pointing to 4 for the 1D opening, noting that 1D normally shows 4+ diamonds.

If you play that 1C or 1D shows 5+ in the suit, check the other box and write "5+" or whatever applies adjacent to the box.

**RESPONSES** to One of a Minor

**Double Raise:**

Check the box that applies:

**Force**

If playing strong raises

**Inv.**

If playing invitational (limit) raises

**Weak**

If playing preemptive jump raises

**After Overall:**

List here what a double raise is after an intervening overall. Fill this in if a double raise is different after a competitive bid by an opponent. See Over Opp's T/O Double if the intervening call is a double.

**Forcing Raise:**

If a forcing raise is something other than a double raise, check the appropriate box:

**J/S in the other minor** (Jump Shift)

Check this box if you use Jump/Shift in the other minor (1C-2D or 1D-3C) to show strong support for opener's minor. If you have an agreement about the minimum length that this bid would show, write that on the same line, next to the box.

**Single Raise**

Check this box if playing inverted minor raises so that 1C-2C or 1D-2D shows a strong raise of opener's minor. Again, indicate any agreements as to minimum expected length.

**Other:**

On this line write any other special agreements you have for showing support for opener's minor opening.

**Frequently bypass 4+♦**

If your style is to bid suits up the line, do not check this box. If you may systemically bypass a diamond suit to bid a four-card major, check the box and be prepared to answer questions about your specific tendencies in this area, if you have any agreement. If 1C-1D is something special, write in the line to the right of **Other** at the bottom of this section.

**1NT/1C:**

Put in the applicable HCP range.

**2NT:**

**Forcing**

Check this box if a 2NT response to one of a minor is natural and game-forcing

**Inv.**

Check this box if 2NT is invitational and also fill in the point range.

**3NT:**

For a natural 3NT response, indicate the point range.

**Other:**

Use this line for any other conventions or treatments that you use in response to a one-of-a-minor opening bid.

**TWO-LEVEL SUIT OPENINGS**

For each opening, put the HCP range on the line to the right of the suit symbol for each two-bid. Then, describe what hand types make the opening in the **DESCRIBE** section. Put any response and follow-up information in the **RESPONSES/REBIDS** section. There are also boxes to check below the HCP range in each two-bid box to describe the meaning of the two-level opening.

**2C**

**Strong** - Check this box if 2C is strong for you, either strong and artificial or strong and natural.

**Other** - Check this box if 2C is not strong (Precision 2C, weak 2C, three-suited 2C, etc). Be sure to clarify the meaning on the line under the DESCRIBE heading.

**2D Resp:**

If you play a response of 2D to a 2C opening as Negative (bad hand) or Waiting (for partner to describe their hand), check the appropriate box.

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## 2D, 2H, and 2S

For these openings check **Natural** if four or more cards are shown in the bid suit; check **Conv.** if four or more cards are NOT promised in the bid suit. If weak two-bids can frequently be bid on five-card suits, note this under **DESCRIBE**. Also, note any suit-quality requirements or other notables. Under **RESPONSES/REBIDS** note any conventional responses to the opening 2-bid, or conventional rebids by opener. Also check any appropriate box:

### 2NT Force

Check this box if a response of 2NT is forcing and asks for a further description of opener's hand.

### New Suit NF

Check this box if a response of a new suit is natural but not forcing.

## OTHER CONVENTIONAL CALLS

Since new minor forcing, weak jump shifts, and 4th suit forcing are so common, there are boxes to check and lines to the right of the box to add a further description of the method. For new minor and 4th suit, make notes if some auctions are game-forcing and some aren't.

There are several other lines to put special understandings, such as defenses to Michaels cuebids or unusual notrump.

### New Minor Forcing:

Check this box if after opener's 1NT rebid you play that a rebid by responder of 2 of a new minor is artificial and forcing and asks for clarification about opener's support for responder's major. (e.g., 1C-1H; 1NT-2D.) After checking the box, write "Inv" on the line next to the box if you play New Minor Forcing as an invitational call, or "G.F." if you play it Game Forcing.

### 2-Way NMF:

If you play that both 2C and 2D are artificial and forcing, check this box instead and explain the differences between the two bids on the available line.

### Weak Jump Shifts:

If you play that a jump shift by responder shows a long suit with a weak hand, check this box and write your agreement ("Over Minors", "In Competition") on the line to the right of the box.

### 4th Suit Forcing:

If you play that in an uncontested auction, a bid of the fourth suit by responder is artificial and forcing, check the box to indicate if the bid is a **1 Round** force or a **Game** force.

**NOTE:** It is your responsibility to make sure your methods are legal for the event. Consult the appropriate convention chart, usually the ACBL General Convention Chart, occasionally the ACBL Mid-Chart or SuperChart. If there is any doubt, consult with the tournament director.

## SPECIAL DOUBLES

### Negative:

If you use Negative Doubles, check the box and write in after **thru** the level up to 4H through which you use them - show highest overcall that a double of which would be negative, i.e., "thru 3S" implies a double of a 4C overcall would be penalty (or "cards" if you make note of that somewhere in the Special Doubles section). If you use them over bids of 4S or higher, check the "**4S+**" box and note any higher level through which negative doubles are used. (Remember that negative doubles over bids of 4S or higher require an Alert.)

### Responsive:

Check and write in after **thru** as for negative doubles, if applicable.

### Maximal:

Double used artificially to show game interest in a bid-and-raised suit. Applies when opponents bid the maximal suit (the one just under three of agreed suit), i.e. 1S - Dbl - 2S - 3H - Dbl is an artificial game try in spades.

Check the **Maximal** if applicable.

### Support Dbl:

Double by opener at 2nd turn shows 3-card support for responder's major, i.e., 1C - Pass - 1H - 1S - Dbl shows 3-card support. Indicate if you use support doubles and the level thru which you use them.

### Redbl:

If you also use the support redouble indicate this by checking this box.

### Card-showing:

Checking this box means that you frequently make doubles that show values at low levels in situations where the unAlerted meaning of the double is penalty.

### Min. Offshape T/O:

Check this box if, by agreement, you make takeout doubles with minimum hands which do not show support for the unbid suits. For example, if your T/O of an opening 1S bid With S:KJx, H:d:xx, D:AQxx, C:Kxxx would not be unexpected to partner.

### Other:

On the blank line at the bottom of the **Special Doubles** section, write anything else about special doubles that

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doesn't fit elsewhere.

### **NOTRUMP OVERCALLS**

#### **Direct:**

Indicate the HCP range when you overcall RHO's opening bid with 1NT.

#### **Systems On:**

Check if you play the same responses to a 1NT overcall as to a 1NT opening bid.

#### **Conv.:**

Check this box and add a description the conventional meaning of a notrump overcall. For example, you may play a "Sandwich NT" where 1D - Pass - 1S - 1NT shows a weak hand with clubs and hearts.

#### **Balancing:**

Show range of a balancing 1NT overcall in this type of auction:

1H - Pass - Pass - 1NT: 15-17? 11-15? 9-11?

#### **Jump to 2NT:**

Check the type of two-suiter shown:

**Minors:** If 1C - 2NT or 1D - 2NT shows both minors, check **Minors**.

**2 Lowest:** If 1C - 2NT shows D's and H's and 1D - 2NT shows C's and H's, check **2 Lowest**.

#### **Conv.:**

Check this box and add a description the conventional meaning of a Jump to 2NT after RHO's opening bid. If you play any other conventional meanings of Notrump Overcalls, you may list them on this line.

### **SIMPLE OVERCALL**

#### **1 level:**

Show the expected, basic agreed HCP range for a one-level overcall.

#### **often 4 cards:**

Check this box if you frequently overcall at the one level with a 4-card suit.

#### **very light style:**

Check this box if, for example, you overcall aggressively with AQTx and nothing else.

#### **Responses to a Simple Overcall**

#### **New suit:**

Check the box that best describes your agreements if partner bids a new suit in response to your simple overcall.

**Forcing:** Check if new suit is forcing in response to an overcall. If sometimes forcing, sometimes not (other than by passed hand), do not check the box but be ready to answer questions.

**NFConst:** Check if the response is constructive but not forcing.

**NF:** Check this box if the response is non-forcing and also is not constructive. For example, check this box if you are likely to bid 2H with KT9xxx on an auction of 1C - 1S - Pass - You.

#### **Jump Raise:**

Check whichever box describes your agreement.

**Forcing:** Check this box if a jump raise in the overcalled suit is forcing to game.

**Inv.:** Check this box if a jump raise in the overcalled suit is invitational to game.

**Weak:** Check this box if a jump raise in the overcalled suit is preemptive, and just shows length in your suit. Remember that this treatment only requires an alert when rho passes in noncompetitive situations .

#### **Other:**

On the blank line at the bottom of the **Simple Overcall** section, list any other conventions/treatments that you play in response to a simple overcall.

### **DEFENSE VS NOTRUMP**

This area is designed to be as flexible as possible. There are two basic columns. The first line is noted only as **vs.**. On this line you may label each column to indicate a NT range ( weak - strong ) or use one column for direct and the other for balance or some combination. Write the meaning of the bids in that column on the first line.

If you play each two-level call as natural, you can just circle the suit symbols. Otherwise you write alongside what that call indicates. For example, opposite 2C you could write "At least 5-4 majors" or "Unspecified one suiter".

**Dbf:** On this line specify the meaning of a double in your defense to a 1NT opening.

**Other:** Use these 2 lines to note other defenses which were not described above. For example, negative doubles over 3-level interference.

### **JUMP OVERCALLS**

Check appropriately. If you have different treatments for different situations (position, vulnerability), write them above the box that applies to that situation.

**Weak:** Means less-than-opening strength is normally expected.

**Intermedate:** Means opening strength is expected;

**Strong:** Means at least a King better than a minimum opening bid is expected. Check more than one box if vulnerability or level or some other factor causes the agreement to change.

For anything relevant about jump overcalls not indicated above use the blank line at the bottom of this section (i.e.,

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"some jump overcalls show two-suiters").

### OPENING PREEMPTS

#### 3/4-bids:

**Sound:** Three and four-level preempts are roughly in accordance with the rule of 500 - you expect to take seven tricks vulnerable, six tricks non-vulnerable out of your own hand.

**Light:** Preempts are frequently below "sound" ones but better than "very light". Note if it varies with seat or vulnerability.

**Very Light:** Preempts at the 3-level would be made on

S:7 3 H:J 8 4 D:7 4 C:Q J 9 5 4 2

#### Conv./Resp.:

For any special conventional preemptive openings like NAMYATS (a four level opening of 4C to show a stronger than normal 4H opening and 4D to show a similar 4S opening), responses to partner's opening preempt or other pertinent details use the bottom two lines of this section.

### OVER OPP'S T/O DOUBLE

**New Suit Forcing:** Indicate at what level(s) you play this treatment.

If a new suit bid at the **1-level** is forcing (e.g., 1C - Double - 1S) check this box. If a new suit bid at the **2-level** is forcing, (e.g., 1S - Double - 2C) check this box.

**Jump Shift:** Check any boxes that apply.

**Forcing:** Check this box if a jump shift after the opponent's takeout double is strong and game forcing.

**Inv.:** Check this box if a jump shift after the opponent's takeout double is invitational to game.

**Weak:** Check this box if a jump shift after the opponent's takeout double is preemptive.

**Redouble implies no fit:** Check here if you tend to raise directly with a fit and reserve redouble for non-fitting hands.

**2NT Over:** Define 2NT over an opponent's takeout double - do so by checking the appropriate box

opposite the opening bid under the following categories: **Limit+** (limit raise or better), **Limit**(limit raise), **Weak**.

**Other:** Any other treatments.

### DIRECT CUEBID

In this section indicate the meaning of a bid of the suit opened by your RHO (right hand opponent). Check the appropriate box or boxes opposite **Natural, Strong T/O** (takeout) and **Michaels** under the headings **Minor**,

**Major** and **Artif. Bid** (artificial bid).

**Natural:** Check this box in the appropriate column if you play that a bid of the same suit bid by your RHO shows a desire to play in that suit. Note that this agreement is alertable for both Majors and Minors.

**Strong T/O:** If a cuebid shows a big hand short in the bid suit, check the box in the column for which this agreement applies.

**Michaels** Check the appropriate boxes and give details on the line below if you play Michaels (A cuebid of RHO's minor suit shows both majors, and a cuebid of RHO's major suit opening shows the other major and an unspecified minor suit. Usually this bid shows no more than a minimum opening hand, but some pairs play good-bad Michaels showing either a weak hand or a very strong one.) Other cuebids such as "top and bottom" (showing both the highest and lowest unbid suits) should be described on the blank line at the bottom of this section.

If 1C - 2 shows a club suit even if the 1C is a natural opening (also for 1D - 2D), check the **Natural** box under **Minor**. If you play this bid as natural only over artificial openings of 1C and 1D, check the **Artif. Bid** box.

Other cuebids such as "top and bottom" should be described on the blank line at the bottom of this section. You may also use this line to indicate if you have agreements for cuebids in the balancing position.

### VS OPENING PREEMPTS DOUBLE IS

Check **Takeout** and note the level of preempt through which the double is takeout if applicable. If a double of a preempt is for penalty, mark the **Penalty** box. If you play takeout through a certain level but penalty above that level (for example, takeout through 4H and penalty above), you should check the takeout box and write in 4H after **thru**, and then check the penalty box and write 4S+ by the side.

**Conv. Takeout:** If you play penalty or optional doubles, you normally would use some suit overcall as a takeout bid. If so, indicate here. "Cheaper minor" would describe one such convention.

**Lebensohl 2NT Response:** Check here if a 2NT response to a double of an opening two-bid is Lebensohl, requesting a 3C reply.

**Other:** On this line, add any other details such as two-suit overcalls over preempts.

### SLAM CONVENTIONS

#### Gerber:

If you ever use 4C to ask for aces, check this box. Since only unusual ace-asking conventions on the first round of bidding are Alertable, it is important to indicate when 4C is used as ace-asking.

#### 4NT:

Indicate the type of 4NT slam try that you use. Mark the appropriate box even if you frequently use a bid other than 4NT to ask for aces/key cards.

#### Blackwood:

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Check this box if you use regular Blackwood with standard responses (5C shows 0 or 4 aces, 5D shows 1 ace, 5H shows 2 aces, and 5S shows 3 aces).

**RKC:**

Check this box if you use Roman Key Card Blackwood with the king of trump counting as an extra "ace". 5C shows 0 or 3 aces, 5D shows 1 or 4 aces, 5H shows 2 or 5 aces without the queen of trump, and 5S shows 2 or 5 aces with the queen of trump. Remember to not alert this bid, but to explain it after the face-down opening lead.

**1430:**

Check this box if you invert the first two responses to Roman Key Card Blackwood with 5C showing 1 or 4 aces and, 5D showing 0 or 3 aces.

If you use Roman Blackwood (shows only aces, and shows which two of four aces are held), or declarative-interrogative (where 4NT is a general slam try), or Culbertson or any other use of 4NT, describe the 4NT variation on one of the blank lines in this section.

Also use these lines to indicate special ace-asking bids used: "Kickback" means that four of the suit over your trump suit is used as Roman Key Card (4S when hearts are trump, 4D when clubs are trump, etc). "Redwood" means that 4H or 4S can be used as Roman Key Card, the suit not in focus as a trump suit. If a raise to four of a minor is used as RKCB or for other understandings, indicate it here. There should be sufficient room to write an explanation of what you are playing rather than just "Kickback" or "Redwood".

**vs Interference:**

Check the appropriate box if you have any special ace-showing responses over interference over 4C or 4NT.

**DOPI**

means that double shows zero aces/keycards, and pass shows 1 ace/keycard, etc.

**DEPO**

means that double shows even number of aces/key cards while pass shows odd number of aces/key cards.

**Level:**

On this line indicate the level at which you play DOPI and DEPO. For example: "DOPI@5 lv1, DEPO@6 lv1".

**ROPI**

is used over a double and means that redouble shows zero, pass shows 1 ace/keycard, etc.

**CARDING**

**LEADS:** Circle card led from various holdings in each section - **versus Suits** and **versus Notrump**. No card circled announces standard leads (the card shown in bold type) - King from A-**K**-x, top card from an interior sequence (jack from K-**J**-10, 10 from K-**10**-9, etc). Circle any exceptions to standard leads.

**LENGTH LEADS:**

**4th Best**

If you lead the fourth best card from suits like Q-8-6-2 (lead the 2) or K-J-8-6-2 (lead the 6), then check the appropriate box(es). It is understood that you lead third best from three cards, and lead the appropriate honor from sequences or interior sequences when you choose to do so. Your leads from small-cards-only should be circled under previous section.

vs SUITS:

If you lead fourth-best against suit contracts, check this box.

vs NT:

If you lead fourth-best against notrump contracts, check this box.

**3rd/5th Best**

These boxes indicate that you lead third best from suits with an even number of cards and lowest from suits with an odd number of cards. e.g. lead the 6 from Q-8-6-2, lead the 3 from K-J-8-6-3, lead the 2 from Q-9-7-6-5-3-2.

vs SUITS:

If you lead 3rd/5th against suit contracts, check this box.

vs NT:

If you lead 3rd/5th against notrump contracts, check this box.

**Attitude vs. NT**

Check this box if you lead lower from stronger holdings and higher from weaker ones against notrump contracts. If you have other agreements, put them on the line at the bottom of this section.

**Primary signal to partner's leads:**

While many pairs may vary their primary signal to partner's opening lead depending upon dummy's particular holding and the auction, there is usually an agreed meaning except for special circumstances. Check your primary or normal agreement.

**Attitude**

Check this box if the card you play to partner's opening lead shows your attitude towards the suit lead (whether you play standard or upside-down signals).

**Count**

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Check this box if the card you play to the first trick shows your count in the suit that partner lead, whether your signal is standard (high from an even number, low from an odd number) or upside-down (low from an even number, high from an odd number).

**Suit preference**

If the card that you play to the first trick shows suit preference to the other two suits (other than trump and the suit partner lead) then check this box. If you only make this signal when there is a singleton or void in dummy in the suit partner lead, then do not check the box.

**DEFENSIVE CARDING:**

There are boxes to check for follow-suit signals (signals you give when you must follow suit.) You should check the combination of boxes that describe your defensive signalling against suit and notrump contracts. It may be necessary to write some clarification in addition to check the appropriate boxes.

**Standard:**

Count:

High-low shows an even number of cards in that suit, while low-high shows an odd number of cards.

Attitude:

A high card shows interest in that suit, low-high shows disinterest.

Suit preference:

Playing a low card shows preference for the lower-ranking offsuit (not trump and not the suit led); playing a high card shows preference for the higher-ranking offsuit.

If these definitions describe your agreement, check the boxes under **vs SUITS** and/or **vs NT**. If you have some exceptions, check the **Except** box and write them in the lines provided.

**Upside-Down:**

If your agreement is the opposite of standard, then you are playing upside-down. While it is permissible to play any combination of standard and upside-down signals against suits and notrump, you must mark your card correctly and CLEARLY. Check the appropriate boxes to indicate when you play these discards. Either note the upside-down portions as exceptions or draw a line from the **Except** box to the appropriately checked boxes under **Upside-Down:**.

**FIRST DISCARD:**

On these lines, describe your discards. If you check nothing, you are announcing standard discards, with the emphasis on attitude.

**Lavinthal**

Check this box if you tend to discard suits you don't like while giving suit preference for other suits.

**Odd/Even**

Check this box if you discard odd-ranked cards to encourage in that suit and even-ranked cards to discourage in that suit and possibly give suit preference.

Whatever it is you are playing, either check the appropriate boxes or write it on the line and check whether it applies **vs SUITS** and/or **vs NT**.

**OTHER CARDING:**

In this section, list other defensive signals that you play.

**Smith Echo**

This is a method to indicate encouragement (by either partner) for the suit initially led by echoing on declarer's run of a long suit in dummy or his hand. Lack of an echo implies a desire for a switch, check the appropriate box(es) to indicate if you play this signal **vs SUITS** and/or **vs NT**.

**Trump Suit Pref.** (Preference)

Check this box if you discard with three trumps to indicate a preference for one of the other suits.

**Foster Echo**

Check this box if your agreement is that partner of the opening leader follows suit with his second highest card when he cannot beat dummy's card or the card that was led.

**SPECIAL CARDING PLEASE ASK:** Check this box if you have agreements that are unusual and/or cannot be clearly noted on the card. As Declarer it is always a good idea to check a defender's card and ask questions when you see that this box has been checked.

**Always check the Convention Chart for permissible carding methods as some are not permitted.**

**Note: We are no longer snail mailing any issues of this newsletter. Snail mail has become cost prohibitive. The newsletters are available online only at the District 13 website.**

**To access the site and find the newsletters, go to:**

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