

# Opening Bids (Part 1)

[Mike@Wavada.org](mailto:Mike@Wavada.org)

## 1 Opening unbalanced hands at the one level in the first or second seat:

- 1.1 The first step is to determine whether the hand is balanced or not. Balanced hands will be addressed in a few weeks.
- 1.2 The second step is to determine whether to make the strong forcing bid (2♣).
- 1.3 The third step is to determine whether you want to preempt.
- 1.4 There are many ways to evaluate a hand – high-card points, losing trick count, etc.
- 1.5 Most people now use the rule of 20 for unbalanced hands:
  - 1.5.1 Add the number of high card points to the number of cards in the two longest suits. If the result is less than twenty, the hand should not be bid at the one level.
  - 1.5.2 Many people also require two quick tricks, or maybe 1.5.
  - 1.5.3 Marty Bergen recommends opening any hand with three aces, even 4-3-3-3 hands. Some people will also open hands with two aces and a king.

## 2 In the third seat:

- 2.1 The first two steps are the same as in the first two seats.
- 2.2 You can stretch to preempt, especially if not vulnerable. Five is the new six. 7?
- 2.3 If you play Drury, you can open one of a suit with as little as ten points. You can even open a good four-card major.
  - 2.3.1 Goal #1 is to make the opponent in the fourth seat uncomfortable.
  - 2.3.2 Goal #2 is to find a safe place to play if it comes to that.
- 2.4 If you take a second bid, you are promising a full opener. This means:
  - 2.4.1 If you opened light, you must pass any response at the one level.
  - 2.4.2 Before opening light, check each suit above the one you bid. Each should have at least three cards. Ex: If you open 1♣ light, you should have at least three in all suits.
  - 2.4.3 There is no shame in passing a ten- or eleven-point hand in the third seat.

## 3 Drury:

- 3.1 The ten-ten problem: When you and your partner find a fit in a major suit, and you each have ten or eleven points, the three level is dangerous.
- 3.2 Drury solves this problem by sacrificing one or both minor suit responses at the two level after a major suit opener in the third seat.
- 3.3 The convention card:
  - 3.3.1 “Reverse” means that opener rebids the major to show a weak hand.
  - 3.3.2 “Two-way” means that 2♣ shows three pieces and 2♦ shows four or vice-versa.
  - 3.3.3 “Fit” means that that 2♣ never actually means clubs.
  - 3.3.4 Almost everyone plays “Reverse” and “Fit” even if not marked on the card.
- 3.4 I like to play that Drury is on over doubles and overcalls of 1♠, 1NT, and 2♣.

Next week: Opening unbalanced hands in the fourth seat.