

Opening Bids (Part 3)

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1 Opening balanced hands in any seat:

- 1.1 What is a balanced hand? 4-3-3-3; 4-4-3-2; 5-3-3-2.
 - 1.1.1 Possible additions:
 - 1.1.1.1 4-4-4-1 or 5-4-3-1 with singleton ace or king.
 - 1.1.1.2 5-4-2-2 with good values in the doubletons.
 - 1.1.1.3 6-3-2-2 with good values in the doubletons.
 - 1.1.2 Possible subtraction:
 - 1.1.2.1 Five-card major.
 - 1.1.2.2 Worthless doubleton.
- 1.2 Opening bids for strong notrump (15-17):
 - 1.2.1 Less than 15: pass.
 - 1.2.2 15-17: 1NT.
 - 1.2.3 18-19: One of a suit; then bid 2NT. Alternative: Mexican 2♦.
 - 1.2.4 20-21: 2NT.
 - 1.2.5 22-24: 2♣; then bid 2NT.
 - 1.2.6 25+: 3NT. Alternatives: 2♣ and then bid 3NT or Kokish relay.
- 1.3 Opening bids for weak notrump (12-14):
 - 1.3.1 Less than 12: pass.
 - 1.3.2 12-14: 1NT. What about 12 with 4-3-3-3?
 - 1.3.3 15-17: One of a suit; then bid 1NT.
 - 1.3.4 18+: Same as above.

2 Notrump responses:

- 2.1 As soon as opener has limited his/her hand, responder becomes captain.
- 2.2 The first goal: determine whether an eight-card major-suit fit exists. Primary tools are Stayman and transfers, which will be discussed in detail starting next week.
- 2.3 The second goal: determine whether there is a game.
- 2.4 The third goal: find a safe place to land with no fit and too few points for game.
- 2.5 The fourth goal is to look for slam.

3 4♣=Gerber and 4NT=Quantitative:

- 3.1 Advantage of Gerber: stop at the four level. Disadvantage: confusion.
- 3.2 Criteria must be perfectly clear:
 - 3.2.1 First bid is notrump or last bid is notrump with no confirmed suit;
 - 3.2.2 Must be a jump? After 3NT?
 - 3.2.3 If 4♣ is Gerber, is 4NT always Quantitative?
- 3.3 Responses:
 - 3.3.1 Gerber: 4♦ for 0 or 4 aces; 4♥ for one; 4♠ for two; 4NT for three.
 - 3.3.2 Quantitative: Top of range: 6NT; bottom: pass; undecided: something else.

Next week: Stayman