

MAJOR OPENINGS -- Part 2

Date of publish: 5/1/2012 Level: All Levels

MAJOR OPENING	
Expected Min. Length	4 5
1st/2nd	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3rd/4th	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
RESPONSES	
Double Raise: Force	<input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/>
After Overcall: Force	<input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conv. Raise: 2NT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3NT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Splinter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other:	3-of-a-lower suit = Invitational
1NT: Forcing	<input type="checkbox"/> Semi-forcing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2NT: Forcing	<input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> _____ to _____
3NT:	_____ 13 to _____ 15
Drury	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> : Reverse <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2-Way <input type="checkbox"/> Fit <input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	_____ Jacoby 2NT, Splinter Bids

Last month we did the upper part of this section and now we focus on the encircled portion.

LC Standard uses **2/1 GF**. I've written a **64-page booklet** to summarize this system. At the end of this section is a check-list for a regular partnership on the **2/1 GF** style in use.

1NT Response

Notice that the Semi-forcing box is checked for a 1NT response. I don't think it is a big deal as to what you label the 1NT response. Really, it is just a catch-all bid to show 6-12. Responder doesn't have enough to go to the 2-level in a new suit (in the old days, 1NT was capped at 10).

Here is a quick view of the good and bad of playing 1NT as 100% forcing. **BAD:** If 1NT is truly forcing, then opener must bid again. If opener has a flat minimum, he has to rebid in a 3-card minor (he can't repeat a 5-card major). Though possibly the last making contract, it is impossible to play in 1NT. **GOOD:** If 1NT is 100% forcing, it allows responder to later show a 3-card limit raise (by jumping to 3-of-the-major) or to bid a new suit on the 2 level to show a weakish 1-suiter.

I prefer "semi-forcing." This means that opener can (and will) pass with a flat minimum. Accordingly, if opener does bid a new suit, he is not flat (he is at least 5-4). Here is a quick view of the good and bad of playing 1NT as semi-forcing.

BAD: If responder has a weak 1-suiter, he will end up unable to show it if 1NT gets passed. Also, responder might play 1NT when he actually holds a 3-card limit raise. In my experience, that's not so bad (often 1NT makes when 3-of-the-major would have failed). **GOOD:** Because opener's rebid is now "real," bidding is more accurate (opener's new suit is not one of those improvised 3-carders). Also, 1NT is often the correct contract and can now be played.

So, "Semi-Forcing" is what I recommend for **LC Standard**. I've had 30 years observing that it is slightly better (and much simpler) than the alternative of 100% forcing. If you and your partner want to play it completely Forcing, then mark the card accordingly.

Notes: The bottom range for any 1NT response is assumed to be 6 points, but, especially at favorable vulnerability, it could be a very weak tactical action. By a passed-hand, 1NT is never forcing.

2NT Response

Jacoby 2NT is used as marked in Red (also the 2NT box is checked--as discussed last month). Assume Standard **Jacoby 2NT** unless your partnership wishes to take on extra memory. **Jacoby 2NT** is not used by a passed hand or over any interference. For an advanced system of **Jacoby 2NT**, click [here](#).

3NT Response

LC Standard uses a 3NT response to show a flat 13-15 hand. Flat means 4-3-3-3. Typically, the four-card suit won't be in a major. It should be a "soft" 13-15 -- such as: ♠Q J 3 ♥Q 10 5 ♦K J 9 8 ♣K Q 2. Don't respond 3NT with a control-rich hand such as: ♠K 3 2 ♥A 3 2 ♦A 4 2 ♣K 7 4 2 (respond 2♣ and later raise the major). After a 3NT response, opener can pass, but usually will convert back to his major (or make a slam try).

Passed-Hand Bidding

Reverse Drury (nobody uses "regular" **Drury**) employs 2♣ by a passed-hand to show 3+ cards in trump and 10+ in support (counting distribution). Opener signs off in the major with a minimum. Example:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♠	weak

With any decent hand, opener does something other than signing off. If you wish to use 2-way **Drury**, make sure to discuss it and mark it accordingly (2♦ would show 4+ trumps and 2♣ would mean exactly 3 trumps). One-way **Drury** (reverse) is assumed in **LC Standard**. **Drury** is not used in any competition (off after double, off if there is an overcall).

A jump by a passed-hand is fit-showing (4+ trumps and values in the suit jumped into). The jump shows invitational values. So, after P-(P)-1♠-(P), jump to 3♦ with: ♠K 10 4 3 ♥3 2 ♦A Q 10 8 7 ♣4 2. Even if the opponents interfere, the passed-hand jump is still fit-showing. The partnership must play in the major opened--they are forced back to 3-of-the-major.

Splinter Bids

A jump above 3-of-opener's major is a **Splinter Bid**. This includes 1♥-3♠ and 1♠-4♥. **Splinter** bids are assumed to be approximately 12-15 points in support (and 4+ trump). **Splinter** Bids are not used in Competition. They are off after a double or an overcall. Use weak jumps in competition (so 1♠ [2♥] 4♦ shows something like: ♠7 6 ♥2 ♦K Q 10 8 7 5 4 ♣5 3 2). A jump to 4-of-the-opponent's suit is still (always) a **splinter** bid.

Game Tries

There are many fancy methods on the market, but **LC Standard** is simple here. A new suit after a raise is a plain-old natural game try. So, after 1♠-2♠, bid 3♣ with: ♠A Q 8 7 6 2 ♥A ♦K 2 ♣Q 6 5 4. Responder will know that high cards in clubs are useful. He will reject the game try with something like: ♠K J 5 ♥Q 7 6 2 ♦Q 4 3 ♣8 7 2. There is an optional upgrade listed [here](#).

In Competition

A jump raise in competition (after a double or an overcall) is weak (4+ trump and up to about 6 points in support).

All jumps in competition are weak (this isn't really my favorite way, but almost everyone plays it as weak, so I am giving in). So, after 1♠ (X), jump to 3♥ with: ♠8 7 ♥Q J 10 9 8 7 2 ♦7 6 4 ♣2.

After 1♥ (1♠), jump to 3♣ with: ♠4 ♥7 6 ♦5 4 2 ♣A J 10 7 6 5 2.

Of course, cue-bidding the opponent's suit shows a limit raise or better. Example: 1♠ (2♣) 3♣.

If the opponents make a takeout double, a limit (or better) raise is shown via 2NT (Jordan). Example: 1♠ (X) 2NT

Note: Experienced partnerships can add "transfers" after double or some form of BROMAD covered [here](#).

2/1 GF

Any experienced partnership will want to discuss the nuances of a 2/1 GF auction. [Here](#) is a partnership checklist to address the various treatments.

Extra Reading: [What Should we Play?](#) 2/1 GF by Larry Cohen