
Moss
Release 5.0

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CONTENTS

1	Executive Summary	1
2	Offensive Agreements	2
2.1	Style Choices	2
2.2	Major Raises	2
2.3	Special Doubles	2
2.4	When We Open 1N	2
2.4.1	Transfer Auctions	3
2.4.2	Special Rules For 5-4 Majors	4
2.4.3	Interference Over Our 1N	4
2.5	2♣ opener	4
2.6	Slam Bidding	4
2.7	2N Family	4
3	Defensive Agreements	6
3.1	Conventions	6
3.2	When They Open 1N	6
3.3	When They Overcall 1N	6
4	Convention Notes	7
4.1	Meckwell Escape	7
4.2	Puppet Stayman After 2N	7
4.3	1N - 3♣ Five-Card Stayman	8
5	Leads and Carding	9
5.1	Leads	9
5.1.1	Leads Against NT	9
5.1.2	Leads Against Suits	9
5.2	Carding	9
5.2.1	Attitude Details	10
5.2.2	Count Details	10
5.3	Discards	10
6	Change Log	11
	Index	12

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An exclamation point shows a bid that must be alerted. The alert text often follows as in “2N!(4 card raise, gf)”.

Summary:

- 1N 15-17; 2♣ Stayman promises 4M;
- 1N 4-way trans w/ range ask; Smolen, Garbage(can be either major)
- 1N 3♣ 5-card Stayman, 3♦ 5-5 minors, 3♥ 3=1=(54), 3♠ 1=3=(54)
- 2N 20-21; 3♣ Puppet; 3♦ / 3♥ transfers
- 2N 3♠ relay to 3N, then 4 of other minor slam try. 4N never keycard.
- Inverted minors; off over interference. On by a passed hand with no interference.
- Four-way transfers with range ask after 1N, in-between reply is negative.
- Takeout doubles through 4♥; equal-level conversion doubles.
- (4♠) 4N is takeout; X penalty-oriented.
- Negative doubles through 4♥.
- 2♥ bust over 2♣ opener. Parrish relay.
- Direct cuebid (1x) 2x is Michaels. 2N asks for the other suit.
- New Minor Forcing.
- Fourth Suit Forcing to Game.
- Unusual 2N.
- Sandwich 1N.
- Help Suit Game Tries.
- General Defense to Two-Suited Bids (UvU).
- 1N (X) Meckwell Escape
- 1N (2♣ or artificial X) System On
- 1N (2 definite suits) UvU
- Lebensohl on over 2-level bids showing ♦, ♥, or ♠, with or without an unknown suit.
- Lebensohl after partner doubles their 2-level preempt.
- Ingberman 2N after opener’s reverse to show minimum.
- Gambling 3N: solid 7 or 8 card minor, no outside A or K.
- 4♣ over 3N is Gerber if no suit has been agreed and at least one hand is still unlimited.
- Preempts:
 - Over 2♦ preempt, 3♦ is Michaels.
 - Over 2M preempt: - 3M is Western Cue; - 4♣ or 4♦ shows that suit and other major (Leaping Michaels)
 - Over 3-level preempts, double is takeout
- Carding is UDA and otherwise standard.
- Leads are standard; Lead count from small holdings (second highest from four).

OFFENSIVE AGREEMENTS

2.1 Style Choices

- Open 1♣ with four diamonds and five clubs almost always.
- Preempts are sound vul, light non-vul.
- Two-suited bids are *not* mini-max style.
- Walsh: After 1♣ - 1♦ bid 1N even with four-card majors. A major by responder next is game forcing.

2.2 Major Raises

- Jacoby 2N promises opening hand and at least 4 trumps or 3=4=3=3. Off by a passed hand.
- Bergan raises (3♣ constructive, 3♦ limit+). Off by a passed hand.
- Jordan 2 NT after 1M by partner and a TO dbl by LHO shows 3-card support of partner's M suit bid, invitational or better. Off by a passed hand.
- By a passed hand, we use reverse Drury 2♣. Any reply other than 2M is a full opener. Over interference, Drury is off, and 2♣ is natural.
- We use help suit game tries.
- We raise responder's major with 3 cards if we have an honor and an outside singleton.
- A bid of 3N after agreement on a major suit is an offer to play there, usually based on a flat hand with extra HCP above the minimum needed for game.

2.3 Special Doubles

- Negative doubles through 4♥.
- Support doubles / redoubles through 2 of our major.
- Responsive doubles / maximal doubles through 4♥, including when their two suits are different such as (1♦) X (1♠) X. (Larry Cohen write-up "Doubles part 2")
- Takeout over preempts through 4♥; (4♠) 4N takeout
- Equal-Level Conversion Doubles

A takeout double of a major can lack three-card support in clubs if it has good support for diamonds, usually five cards. If partner responds in clubs, the doubler bids diamonds *without showing extras*. To show extras doubler would have to jump in diamonds.

2.4 When We Open 1N

Our agreement is not to upgrade a 14 point hand. Paul does not like this agreement.

After opening 1NT:

- 2♣ Stayman, promises a four-card major. See 1N - 2♠ for why this is so despite the four-way transfers.
 - 1N - 2♣ - any - Pass shows a weak hand usually 4=4=4=1 or 4=4=5=0.
 - 1N - 2♣ - 2M - 3W(the other major) is a power raise, requests control bids.

- 1N - 2♣ - 2♥ - 2♠(forcing) shows 4 spades. Required with 4-way transfers to show that responder has spades but not hearts. Opener who does not have spades should bid 2N if he would not accept an invite. Anything else is game-forcing.
 - 1N - 2♣ Stayman promises a four-card major.
 - 1N - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥ shows 4=5 in the majors, to play(Garbage).
 - 1N - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♠ shows 5=4 in the majors, to play(Garbage).
 - See below for special rules when responder is 5-4 in the majors but not weak.
- 2♦! transfer to hearts
 - 2♥! transfer to spades
 - 2♠! range ask or clubs. Shows a balanced invite or a hand with long clubs.
- Opener bids 2N with a hand that would not accept a balanced invite, or 3♣ with a max or Qx or better in clubs.
- 2N! transfer to diamonds. Opener bids 3♦ with Qx or better in diamonds or a max; bids 3♣ otherwise.
 - 3♣!(5-card major?) requires GF values *and a three-card major*. Note you cannot be 4=4 in the majors.
 - Opener bids a five-card major if he has one; otherwise 3♦!, denying a five-card major. Opener does not ever bid 3N.

Next responder who has a four-card major “puppets” by bidding his *three-card major*; or lacking a four-card major, bids 3N. By this procedure the opener declares any major-suit fit.
- 3♦! shows at least 5-5 in the minors, gf.
 - 3♥! shows 3=1=(54) shape, gf (splinter)
 - 3♠! shows 1=3=(54) shape, gf (splinter)
 - 3N is to play.
- 4♣ is Gerber.
 - 4♦/♥ are Texas transfers.
 - 4♠ is not defined. (See however Namyats if you ever play that)
 - 4N is quantitative invite to 6N.
- Notes:
- If you don’t have an exactly 3-card major, or don’t have a GF hand, responder should use ordinary Stayman not 3♣.
 - If Stayman is doubled, opener passes unless he has a club stopper. If he does, he responds normally. Responder can redouble to ask for the major again. Opener could redouble with five good clubs.
 - Transfer to a minor and then bid above 3m other than 3N is a slam try in that minor. Such a bid shows shortness.
 - After 1N - 2♣ - 2♦ with slam interest:
 - 4N is quantitative,
 - 4♣ is Gerber, asking for Aces.
 - After 1N - 2♣ - 2M with slam interest:
 - 3W (the other major) is a power raise. Suit is agreed. Partner should control bid.
 - 4♣ is RKC in the suit bid. Suit is agreed.
 - 4N is quantitative.

2.4.1 Transfer Auctions

After a transfer, 4N is quantitative; 4♣ is Gerber (not RKC).

With a six-card major, transfer and bidding game is a mild slam try, since Texas was available with a minimal game-going hand. Cue bid to explore.

In the auction 1N - (P) - 2T(transfer to M), if the 2T bid is doubled for the lead, opener’s pass shows two cards in responder’s suit M, completing the transfer with 2M shows three-card support, while

opener's redouble shows at least five good cards in the transfer-bid suit T.

1N - (P) 2T(transf->M) - (X lead->directing in T)
P - (P) XX

requests the transfer again, even though opener only has two cards in the suit M. If responder is weak this is what he will do. Otherwise interest will center on whether the partnership has stoppers in T.

2.4.2 Special Rules For 5-4 Majors

We have special rules for responding to 1N when 5-4 in the majors. Note the choice here to simplify Garbage Stayman at the cost of no invite available if 5=4.

- With 5♠ and 4♥:
 - Weak: Garbage Stayman
 - Invitational: not possible to show shape; pick between Pass or Smolen or transfer-then-2N (transfer to spades and then 3♥ would be too high)
 - Game Forcing: 2♣ then if 2♦, bid 3♥! (Smolen)
- With 4♠ and 5♥:
 - Weak: Garbage Stayman
 - Invitational: transfer to hearts and bid 2♠.
 - Game Forcing: 2♣ then if 2♦, bid 3♠! (Smolen)

2.4.3 Interference Over Our 1N

- Meckwell Escape over a penalty double of our 1N. We always ask if the double is penalty.
- Systems on over any artificial bid or double that does not show a definite suit.
- Systems on over a bid showing ♣s with or without an unknown second suit.

- Lebensohl over a bid that shows ♦s, ♥s, or ♠s with or without an unknown second suit. A double of such a bid is penalty-oriented.
- A transfer overcall is treated as if they had bid the suit transferred to.
- If their bid shows two definite suits use the Unusual v. Unusual defense.

2.5 2♣ opener

We only open “tricks” hands 2♣ with substantial HCP, say 18-19, with 8.5 tricks in a major and 9.5 in a minor. Replies:

- 2♣ - 2♥ bust, shows no A, K, and not 2 Queens; other replies game forcing. - 2♣ - 2♥! - 2N can be passed - 2♣ - 2♥! - 2♠! is Parrish relay to 2N!, opener then passes or corrects to suit. - 2♣ - 2♥ - suit rebid is forcing

Opener often does not rebid a five-card minor in favor of NT.

2.6 Slam Bidding

- RKC 1430 but 0314 if clubs is trump.
- We use Italian cue-bidding (first and second round controls below 4 of trump)
- In response to an RKC action bid of 5N, bid number of Kings.
- 4♣ is Gerber over 1N or 2N.
- 4♣ is Gerber over 3N unless both hands have been limited.

2.7 2N Family

Opening 2N or 2♣ followed by 2N:

- 3♣ Puppet Stayman
- 3♦ / ♥ transfers

- 3♠ relay to 3N; then 4 of the other minor is a slam try. 4N is 5-5 minors. This bid is used sparingly.
- 4♣ Gerber
- 4♦ / ♥ Texas transfers

DEFENSIVE AGREEMENTS

3.1 Conventions

- Meckwell over their 1N opener. Details follow.
- A cuebid of their first-bid suit is Michaels.
- Unusual 2N:
 - A jump-overcall of 2N shows the lower two unbid suits.
 - 2N over a 2-level preempt is not unusual.
 - 4N as first overcall on our side is unusual, e.g. (4♥) 4N(minors)
 - When 3N cannot be natural, it is unusual, as in (1♥) P (3♥) 3N. There cannot be enough points for that to be natural.
- Mathe over a strong 1♣ or 2♣ (X=Majors, NT=minors). Bidder discretion advised.
- Over their major 2M preempt: 3M is Western Cue. Leaping Michaels: 4m shows that minor and the other major, 5-5.
- Diamonds is different: (2♦) 3♦! is Michaels. A strong club system where 2♣ opener shows clubs 11-15, we bid 3♣ over 2♣ as Michaels.
- Takeout through 4

3.2 When They Open 1N

Use Meckwell after opponents open a strong or weak 1NT, in either seat. Over a weak NT relax strength and shape requirements some.

After their 1N:

- X shows a minor(5+), or both majors (4-4+)

Partner bids 2♣(Relay), then doubler passes, corrects to 2♦, or bids 2♥ to show both majors

- 2 Clubs - Clubs and a Major (5-4 min)
- 2 Diamonds - Diamonds and a Major (5-4 min)
- 2 Hearts shows long hearts (5+).
- 2 Spades shows long spades (5+).
- 2NT shows both Minors (5-5 minimum length)

If 6-4 usually treat it as single-suited.

In the auction (1N) P (P) ? it is usually right to make a Meckwell bid with good shape.

3.3 When They Overcall 1N

When they directly overcall a suit opener by us with 1N, having a range such as 15-18, then responder must double with any hand containing 9+/10 or more HCP. We will not let them play an hand below 2♠ undoubled.

As a corollary, any bid over the 1N at the two level shows 9 or fewer points.

CONVENTION NOTES

4.1 Meckwell Escape

Meckwell Escape is used after we open 1 NT and there is a double for penalty by opps. If at any point in what follows, one of the opps bids, then we are off the hook.

After 1N (X), pretend the doubler is the one who opened 1N and use Meckwell. Pass (alert, forcing) takes the role of the Double showing a minor or both majors, and the now-available redouble shows responder thinks we can make 1N.

Other bids are the same as Meckwell. Our shape requirement may be only 4-4. With 4-3-3-3 shape, responder can either treat his four-card suit as a five-card suit, or he can treat his four-card suit and his best 3-card suit as a two-suiter. In these situations, pray that your opponents elect to introduce a suit of their own.

If it goes 1NT by us, Pass, Pass, Double, then opener should pass unless they have a five-card suit. If the double is left in, Responder makes any of the Meckwell bids or passes to sit for the double. If Responder redoubles, it says, partner pick your best suit and we can go up the line if necessary. Best is to hope the opps bid something.

4.2 Puppet Stayman After 2N

After each of the following openings, a 3♣ bid is game-forcing Puppet Stayman showing an exactly three-card major:

- Over 2N, or
- Over a 2N rebid after a strong 2♣ opener.

Puppet Stayman is game forcing because, lacking a major, the opener will reply 3N.

Over 2N, bid 3♣!(asking for a four- or five-card major) if you have a 3-card major.

Over 1N, bid 3♣!(showing a three-card major) when holding a game-forcing hand with a three-card major . If you do not have a 3-card major, but do have one or two four-card majors, bid regular Stayman.

The 3♣ bid over 2N need not be alerted, but the responses must be alerted.

Responses after 2N - 3♣ are:

- 3♦!(Opener has no five card major, has one or more 4 card majors)
 - 3♥! Responder has four SPADES <-major you do NOT have!
 - 3♠! Responder has four HEARTS <-major you do NOT have!
 - 3N! Responder does not have a four card major
 - 4♦! Responder has two 4 card majors. Opener has choice of games.
- 3M!(Opener has this five card major)
 - Responder normally chooses between 3N or 4M.
 - Responder with slam interest and 3+ card fit in M can bid the other major as a power raise of M.
 - 4♣ is natural with long clubs.
 - 4♦ is natural with long diamonds.
 - 4N is quantitative (M is not agreed as our suit)

– Suit bids at the five level are splinters.

- 3N!(Opener has no four or five card majors)

The name “Puppet” comes from the 3♥ and 3♠ re-bids after a 3♦ response, in which the responder bids the major he DOESN’T have, so that the strong hand becomes the declarer. He’s pulling the opener’s strings.

4.3 1N - 3♣ Five-Card Stayman

Opener’s reply to the 1N - 3♣ bid is to bid 3N directly if he has no four-card or five-card major; or 3♦! to mean, “does not have a five-card major”. Over 3♦!, responder who only had a 3-card major but not a four-card major bids 3N and whether or not opener has a four-card major remains unknown. This sequence does not work over 2N bids. Otherwise responder puppets his major as in Puppet Stayman.

If opener shows a five-card major, bidding the other major is a power raise.

LEADS AND CARDING

These are guidelines that may have to give way to circumstances. The 10 is an honor, the 9 is not.

5.1 Leads

From holdings that do not contain an honor, against suits or NT:

- If we have bid and raised the suit, lead top of nothing, bottom of something.
- From small holdings:
 - In a suit partner has bid and you supported, lead high.
 - Otherwise lead low except from a doubleton.

Note that leads below the King always deny the card above with the exception of the lead of the Q from KQT9(x) against notrump.

5.1.1 Leads Against NT

Standard leads as on the convention card:

- Against NT, honor sequence leads show three in the sequence such as QJT, or a defective honor sequence such as QJ9. Lead Q from QJ95 but 5 from QJ85.
- The lead of an Ace shows four honors, asks partner to unblock an honor if holding one; otherwise give count.
- Lead the King from KQJ, AKJx or KQJx. Lead the King from 3 cards KQx or AKx.
- Lead the Queen from QJT, AQJx, or KQT9. Partner drops the J if he has it.

- The lead of a Jack is from JT9, or AJT9.

5.1.2 Leads Against Suits

Standard leads as on the convention card:

- Fourth best from an honor.
- The top of 2 touching honors
- Lead A from AKx(x)(x) unless:
 1. After trick 1
 2. Against a contract at the five-level or above.
 3. You are leading a suit partner has bid (whether or not you supported)
 4. You are leading a suit you have bid and partner has supported

In those cases, lead the King.

- Lead K from KQx, AK doubleton, or Kx
- Lead Q from QJx, or Qx
- Lead J from Jtx, KJT_x, or Jx
- Lead the Ten from T9x, KT9x, QT9x, or Tx

5.2 Carding

- Upside-down attitude.
- Standard count.
- Often suit preference when leading from any situation where it does not matter which card you lead, such as when trying to get a ruff or knocking out declarer's last stopper in NT.

- Suit preference when a switch is obviously going to be necessary.

5.2.1 Attitude Details

We give attitude on first leads of a suit by partner, and when first discarding a suit.

- The primary job on a lead is to indicate whether one wants the suit continued or not. For example, partner leads an Ace to a suit contract. With Q753 play the 3 to show the Q – partner, it is safe to play the King next. With 753 play the 7; partner, I don't have third round control. With 73, play the 3, because we have third-round control – if you are willing and able to ruff.
- If it is clear to us and to partner that the suit should not be continued, give suit preference.
- On the lead of a King: * In a suit contract, give attitude. * In a NT contract, give count. Unblock a doubleton honor.
- If dummy has an K or Q in the suit but ducks, a positive attitude can show that 3rd hand has kept an honor over it. For example, partner leads 4th best and dummy contains Kxx and Declarer ducks it. Holding A72, play the 2 to show the retained Ace.
- If you had to play third-hand high, your remaining attitude in the suit may still be unknown. When your attitude is unknown your next play is attitude.
- When partner switches and leads a new suit, your signal is attitude in the new suit. There is no signal about the previous suit until you get a chance to discard.

5.2.2 Count Details

We give count when Declarer leads a suit, when partner clearly needs the count, and when our current attitude is known. Count is always CURRENT COUNT.

Once you've given count, you can give suit preference. Partner should take care in reading too much into this, as you may not have a preference, or may not have a suitable card.

Against NT, the lead of a K asks partner to give count.

The lead of a Q asks partner to drop the J if they have it or give count.

5.3 Discards

- No special first discard.
- If discarding from a solid sequence with some length, discard the highest.

CHANGE LOG

- Version 1.0 Initial document.
- Version 2.0 Clarifications; lead low from 4 small.
- Version 3.0 Range ask; remove Flannery

INDEX

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