

THOUGHTS ON BIDDING AGREEMENTS

DEFENDING 1NT OPENERS

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BIDDING GETS HARDER

- Lots more conventions to agree & remember
 - Bidding has developed hugely since my first bridge successes in the 1960s
- The memory isn't what it used to be
 - I used to remember every card for weeks, now some have gone before the session ends
- I play a lot less than I did in the 1960s
 - Rarer situations turn up less frequently to jog the memory

HOW TO COPE

- Be guided by principles
 - e.g. fast arrival, few penalty doubles, 4th suit forcing, 4m forcing in constructive sequences, “if in doubt it’s forcing”
- Avoid different meanings for similar sequences even when you can justify divergence
- Avoid making agreements for rare sequences
 - disaster when one of you forgets

ABOVE ALL

REUSE PIECES OF SYSTEM IN OTHER SITUATIONS WHENEVER YOU CAN

- Very valuable when frequently used mechanisms can be deployed in rarer situations
- I will illustrate this by showing you how John and I defend opening NTs – “Multi-Landy”
- We build on our use of Multi 2D and Lucas 2H/S opening bids

WHEN THEY OPEN 1NT

- X Penalty (even over strong NTs)
 - Good case for using X of strong NT differently, but that means a raft of different sequences to forget
 - All other bids imply limited by failure to double
- 2C Majors (at least 54, or 4414 or 4441)
- 2D One major (6+)
- 2H/S This major (5) & a minor (4+)
- 2NT Both minors
- 3C/D Natural

Treat 2D overcall like a Multi

2H Pass or correct

2S Pass or bid 3H or 4H

2NT Asks

- Overcaller shows suit, strength & suit quality (3Ma minimum, 3C/D indicates H/S with extra)
- Over e.g. 3C, 3D and 3H ask again. Now overcaller can show suit quality, shortages & strength. E.g.
(1N) 2D-2N-3C-3D-3S = good Hs & short S

3C/D Natural, forcing

More responses to 2D

3H Pass/correct preemptive

3S Pass or correct to 4H

4C/D To play in 4H or 4S

4H/S Natural, to play

If they double 2D, pass is long Ds, XX is long Cs

If they bid 2H or 2S over 2D, the overcaller's partner can double as pass or correct

All of this comes from our bidding opposite a Multi 2D opener

Responding to 2H/S overcalls

Everything we do after a Lucas 2 opener:

- 2S over 2H natural, NF
- 3H over 2S, NF but try for 4H
- 2NT asks
 - 3C/D show this suit & lower values
 - 3H/S show C/D with upper values
- 3C or 4C pass or correct
- Single raise preemptive
- 3NT, 4H/S all to play

Responding to 2C overcall

- Unfortunately no other system to draw on!
- 2D asks, overcaller bids 2H or 2S if Ss longer
 - then, 2S is mild game try, 3H/S game try, 2NT natural (will have 3 cards in the other major), 3C/D natural and forcing
- 2H/S and 3H/S to play; 2NT natural; 3D nat NF
- 3C artificial game force – 3D then shows 4441, 3NT shows 4414, 3H/S longer major, 4C/D is shortage at least 55 in majors

More reuse & consistency

- We used to play different methods after opponents start 1C or 1D – 1NT depending on the nature of the 1C or 1D opener
- Now we just use our defence to 1NT, whatever the 1C or 1D means

Even more reuse

- Lots of people still play “gambling” 3NT openers showing little but a long solid minor
- Notice the “30-point” pack effect – making our contracts more attractive, if a decent fit can be found. So needn’t be huge to bid
- We use our defence to 1NT two levels higher
 - 4C both majors
 - 4D one major (6+)
 - 4H/S this major (5+) and a minor (4+)