

## Negative Response Structure

### Positive and Semi-positive Responses

After a first- or second-seat 1 $\heartsuit$  opening, responder normally gives a positive response with a hand with 17+OP. With fewer values, or more with a hand with few controls, the correct response is 1 $\heartsuit$ . After a third- or fourth-seat 1 opening, the negative range is 7-14OP.

#### After 1 $\heartsuit$ -1

Opener may bid 1 $\heartsuit$  to describe any 27+OP hand (29+OP after a third- or fourth-seat 1 $\heartsuit$  opening) to continue the relay-style inquiry. The hands not strong enough for this 1 $\heartsuit$  bid are divided into 5-5 shapes, semi-balanced shapes and other. The 5-5 shapes describe themselves with bids of 2 $\heartsuit$  or higher (see below). The hands that are balanced rebid 1NT, as do those that are judged to be well described as balanced (e.g. some 5422, 6322, 5332, 4441 with good holdings in the "short" suits). Responder can then use normal Stayman and 4-suit transfers to continue the auction. **Option:** Keri after 1NT, or any other appropriate agreement, may be used by partnerships already familiar with a method.

When opener is not 5-5 or close enough to balanced to bid 1NT then he will bid 1 $\heartsuit$  with 4+ unless he has a strong longer side suit. With fewer than four Spades, opener bids his longest suit at the two level. The 1 $\heartsuit$ -1 $\heartsuit$ -1 $\heartsuit$  auction is forcing on responder unless they are very weak and have 2-3 $\heartsuit$ . A 1NT response denies 3 $\heartsuit$  or a suit worth bidding, a raise is similar to the 1 $\heartsuit$ -2 $\heartsuit$  and 1 $\heartsuit$ -2 $\heartsuit$  styles, and new suits are not forcing or constructive. Jump shifts are fit-showing and invitational. Similar agreements apply after the two-level rebids by opener.

When holding 5+ $\heartsuit$  and a side suit of at least 5 cards, opener rebids 2 $\heartsuit$ . Responder may bid 2NT to inquire about the side suit without creating a forcing auction. When not holding 5 $\heartsuit$ , opener bids 2NT with both Minors, 3 $\heartsuit$  with Clubs and Hearts and 3 $\heartsuit$  with Diamonds and Hearts.

#### After 1 $\heartsuit$ -1 $\heartsuit$ -1 $\heartsuit$

After a first- or second-seat 1 $\heartsuit$  opener, responder has a full negative hand when holding 7-13OP or slightly stronger with few controls. After a third- or fourth-seat 1 $\heartsuit$  opener, the range is 7-11OP. With a full negative hand, responder rebids 1 $\heartsuit$ . Otherwise, when holding a semi-positive hand, the responding scheme is identical to that used with a positive hand but shifted up **two** steps.

- 1NT unbalanced, 4+Spades.
- 2 $\heartsuit$  unbalanced, 4+Hearts, 0-3Spades.
- 2 $\heartsuit$  unbalanced, 4+Diamonds, 0-3Spades, 0-3Hearts.
- 2 $\heartsuit$  balanced, including a four- or five-card Major.
- 2 $\heartsuit$  balanced, 2-3Hearts, 2-3Spades.
- 2NT three-suited with a Major shortage.
- 3 $\heartsuit$  6+Clubs, 0-2Diamonds (Low shortage).
- 3 $\heartsuit$  6+Clubs, 0-1Hearts (Middle shortage).
- 3 $\heartsuit$  2236 (Even shortage).
- 3 $\heartsuit$  1336 (High shortage).
- 3NT 1327

4♣ 1237  
4 0337

The full relay structure is used as normal, with the control base established by the shape and the known HCP minimum as normal.

### After 1♣-1 -1 -1

Similar principles apply here as applied after 1♣-1. With extra values, opener bids 2♣ to continue forcing. Opener bids 1NT with a weaker hand that is well described as balanced (four-suit transfers and Stayman are available to responder). Opener bids their longest suit with 2, 2, 2, 2 or 3♣ when they are not 5-5 or better. With the 5-5 patterns, opener bids 2NT when **not** holding Clubs (responder asks with 3♣, and opener replies 3 = +, 3 = +, 3 = +) or 3 = +♣, 3 = +♣, 3 = +♣.

### After 1♣-1 -1 -1 -2♣

Responder may give a third negative when holding 7-10OP (after 1♣ openings in all positions) or bid as follows:

- 2 4M and 5+m (neither suit specified) then 2 asks with responses 2NT= +, 3♣= +♣, 3 = +, 3 = +♣.
- 2 Shows a hand describable with Puppet Stayman and transfers (all balanced, all long-Major hands, both Minors) and guarantees a rebid after any non-game bid by opener, who is not constrained to bid 2NT.
- 2NT Three-suited hand then 3♣ asks and the short suit is bid naturally (3NT = Club shortage).
- 3X Usually shows a single-suiter of at least 7 cards.

Notice that there is no question of right-siding hands once all the suit denominations have been bid at the one-level!

## Dealing with Interference

### Interference after 1♣-1

Doubles by both hands are takeout. Pass is non-forcing and suggests either a trap pass or a hand with no good bid, including strong notrump type hands with no stopper. Responder's double is takeout showing a semi-positive hand. Higher interference is dealt with using takeout doubles and Rubensohl (See: **Relay Structure**) in a manner similar to the treatment of interference over 1♣.