**SYSTEM NOTES: LEEDS BRIDGE CLUB STANDARD ACOL SYSTEM**

**Basic system: Acol with 4 card majors, weak NT, and weak twos in three suits.**

**1NT Opener is 12-14**

Any balanced hand (4333, 4432, 5332) with 12-14 should be opened 1NT. With a 5422 shape with a 5 card major, bid the major, but with a minor you can still bid 1NT. However, if all or most of the points are in two suits, e.g. AKxx, xx, xx, KQJXX open the 5 card suit intending to rebid the 4 card suit if possible.

**Responses**

2C Stayman (non-promissory)

2D transfer to hearts

2H transfer to spades

2S transfer to 3C

2NT transfer to 3D

3 level bids are single suited with slam interest

**Usage and continuations**

With a raise to 2NT without a 4 card major, bid 2C and then bid 2NT over the response.

After 1NT-2C-2H : bid 2S with a 4 card suit, this is forcing.

Using Stayman normally shows at least the values for a raise to 2NT. The exception is with a weak hand that is 5/4 or 5/5 in the majors, when responder will pass a rebid of 2H/S, or bid their 5 card suit after 2D

Transferring to a major and then bidding a new suit is game forcing. Transferring to a major and then raising it is invitational.

**Transfers and continuations**

**Major suit transfers**

These can be broken by opener with four card support and a maximum. If you have good values in another suit (e.g. AQJx), bid that suit, or with general values bid 3 of the major.

**Minor suit transfers**

These are different. If you have at least Kxx or better in the suit, you complete the transfer to show the fit. Otherwise you make the bid below the suit (i.e. after 1NT – 2S – bid 3C with a fit and 2NT without one.

With a weak hand with 5/5 in the minors, bid 2NT to transfer to diamonds. If partner has no fit, they will bid 3C which is likely to be a better spot.

**Action after opponents double 1NT**

XX shows a five card suit. Opener bids 2C and responder shows their suit.

Bidding a suit immediately shows that suit and the touching suit above – e.g. 1NT – X – 2D shows D and H.

Passing forces opener to XX. With 10 points or more responder can now pass. Bids would now show that suit and a higher non-touching suit – e.g. 1NT – X – P – P – XX – P – 2C would shows clubs and a major. If partner wants to play in the major they bid 2D and you bid your major.

Very occasionally you might get a hand that is 4333 shape. Then you have to pretend your four card suit has five (perhaps you have QJ10x), or you upgrade one of your three card suits to four.

When you are doubled in fourth position, opener will normally pass but could bid a suit if very good five cards, eg KQJ109. Responder bids as follows:

Pass – content to play in 1NTx

XX – shows a 5 card minor. Opener bids 2C and responder passes or bids 2D

2C – clubs and a higher suit (4+/4+ if D,4 if major)

2D – diamonds and a major

2H – both majors (4/4)

Principle is that responder will ALWAYS transfer with a five card major.

**TWO LEVEL OPENINGS AND RESPONSES**

2C – Game force or 23-24 balanced

2D/H/S – weak, 5-9 non-vulnerable, 7-11 vulnerable

2NT – 20-22 balanced

**Responses and continuations**

Over 2C: 2D is the normal bid with most hands

With a five card suit headed by two honours, bid that suit (3D with diamonds)

With at least six points including a K or A, bid 2NT

Openers rebids: 2C – 2D – 2NT shows 23-24 balanced

3NT shows 25+

Over a weak two, 2NT is an enquiry, usually showing 16+ points. Opener bids features (Q or better) if better than minimum; with a minimum just rebid your suit.

Over both a 2NT opener and a 2C opener followed by a 2NT rebid:

3C is Stayman

3D/H are transfers

3S shows both minors and slam interest

**ONE LEVEL OPENING BIDS**

With a balanced hand and 12-14 points, bid 1NT. Opening one of a suit means either a hand outside the 12-14 point range, or a distributional hand.

If you have a hand unsuitable to open 1NT, open one of a suit. Bid a five card suit before a 4 card suit. With 4/4 bid as follows: with both minors open 1C; with both majors open 1H; with a major and a minor open the major.

**4/4/4/1 shape hands**

With a singleton club, open 1H

With a singleton diamond, open 1C

With a singleton heart or spade, open 1D

In summary: with 3 touching suits bid the middle one; or bid the suit below the singleton

**Rebids:**

1NT shows 15-17

Jump to 2NT shows 18-19

2NT after a 2 level response shows 15-19

**Checkback after rebids of NT**

After a rebid of NT, 2C (3C over 2NT) is checkback. Opener shows relevant holdings going upwards, for example:

After 1H-1S-1NT-2C:

With 5H bid 2H if minimum or 3H if maximum; with 3S but not 5H bid 2S if minimum or 3S if maximum; without either 5H or 3S bid 2D if minimum and 2NT if maximum

After 1C-1H-1NT-2C: With 3H bid 2H if minimum and 3H if maximum; with 4S but not 3H bid 2S if minimum and 3S if maximum; without either 3H or 4S bid 2D if minimum and 2NT if maximum

**2NT response to opening one of a minor**

After 1C/D, this shows a balanced 11/12 points with no 4 card major

**Responses to one of a major**

2NT shows a strong raise to at least game

3NT shows a balanced raise to game: 12-14 points with 4 card support

3 of the major shows a distributional raise

3C shows a high card raise to 3 of the major (10-12 points)

**After 1H/S – 2NT, responses are:**

3 of the major is 15+ no shortage

3C shows any minimum (11-13/14)

3D/OM/NT shows shortage (singleton or void) in C/D/OM (OM = other major)

4 level bids show 5-5

4 of the major shows a minimum with good trumps

**Opponents double our opening bid of a major**

2NT shows a good raise to 3

3 of the major is pre-emptive

A jump in a new suit shows that suit and support for the major

With none of the above and 10+ points- redouble

**Two level responses to opening bids**

A response at the 2 level shows 10 or more points (or 9 points with a very good suit such as KQJ98x). A bid of 2H over 1S shows a five card suit. Bid 1NT with fewer points even with an unbalanced hand: it is important to keep the two over one response up to strength.

**DEFENSIVE METHODS**

**Simple overcall** – natural. A simple overcall at the one level shows a five card or longer suit, 9-17 HCP. At the 2 level it will be a good six card suit or a very good 5 card suit (e.g. KQ10xxx, AQJ10x). A hand such as Qxx/Kxx/xx/AKxxx is not strong enough for a two level overcall.

If upper range, the overcaller may bid again on the next round of the auction. With a fairly balanced hand containing a five card major, generally prefer to overcall in the major (rather than double) - if opponents compete further, and you are in the upper range, double on the next round.

**Jump overcall** – weak, about 5-9/7-11 HCP according to vulnerability and whether the bid is made at the two or three level, and show a six card suit; partner will assume the suit is fairly robust and there will be no more than one defensive trick outside. When red v green it will effectively show a strong hand. Green v red it can be as little as QJ10xxx and nothing outside.

In response to both a simple overcall and a jump overcall, direct raises are pre-emptive. With a fit for partner’s suit but little outside, bid to the “level of the fit” (e.g. jump to the three level if you believe the partnership has nine cards in the suit) at the first opportunity. A cue bid of the opponents’ suit shows a fit and is game invitational. A new suit or 1NT shows 8+ HCP and is either forcing or constructive according to partnership agreement.

**Double** - shows around 11 HCP up to 17/18 HCP, but should be shape suitable, particularly on minimum hands. Double on the first round and then a bid of a new suit on the next shows a very good hand with significant extra values (it is not just an attempt to scramble into a better contract).

In the protective position, after two passes, an overcall or double shows upwards of 8 HCPs. In sequences beginning with a protective overcall or double, both players use the “transferred king” principle, the responder generally bidding one level lower than they would have done opposite an opening bid.

The values required to overcall opponents’ 1NT vary according to length of suits, vulnerability and table position. A hand overcalling in fourth position after two passes can be about a king lighter than the minimum for an overcall in second position. Overcalls at the three level are pre-emptive usually showing a seven card suit.

**Cue bid of opponents opening bid is Michaels**.

Over a minor it shows both majors (5/5); over a major it shows the other major and a minor. When not vulnerable it can be quite weak (e.g. QJ1076, AJ1085, 82, 4 is a reasonable bid of 2C/D over 1C/D). Most of your points should be in your suits.

**1NT – direct** = 16-18 with at least one stop. **In protective position** = 11-15 but does not promise a stop. System is on after these overcalls, so 2C is Stayman, 2D/H/S/NT have their usual conventional meaning.

**2NT over opponents opening bid**

This shows the two lowest suits, at least 5/5. Strength can vary according to the vulnerability; when not vulnerable against vulnerable, it may be quite weak. Most of your points should be in your two suits.

2NT **in protective position -** shows a balanced 18-20. System is on after this bid.

**Over strong club** – natural (there are many defences to strong club – choose one if you wish to play it)

**Over short C/D** (i.e. it could be a 2/3 card suit), treat as natural (so 1C -2C would be Michaels)

**Defence to 1NT – both weak and strong NT**

**There are two options; pick the one you prefer**

**Multi Landy:**

2C = both majors

2D = single suited in a major

2H/S = 5 of that suit plus a minor

2NT = strong 2 suiter

3C/D = 6/7 card suit, pre-emptive

**Responses**

2C: bid your better major at the appropriate level (assume partner has between 9 and 14 points)

2D: with less than invitational values, bid 2H – partner will pass or bid 2S

With invitational values, bid 2NT (enquiry) – partner bids the suit if minimum, or the linked minor if maximum (ie 3C is good with H, 3D is good with S

2H/S: with less than invitational values, pass with at least a doubleton, or bid 3C (asking partner to pass or convert) to play in the minor

With invitational values, bid 2NT (enquiry) – partner bids 3C with any minimum (any minor); 3D shows D and maximum; 3 of the major shows C and maximum.

**Asptro**

2C = H and another suit (normally 5 H but can be 4 especially at green)

2D = S and another suit (as above)

2H = 6H

2S = 6S

2NT = strong 2 suiter

3C/D = 6/7 card suit, pre-emptive

With both majors, link to the shorter major; with 5S and 4H bid 2C, with 5H and 4S bid 2D

**Response**

With non-game going hands, bid the suit shown with 4 cards, and bid the next suit up with fewer than 4 cards. The exception is if you cannot risk partner passing – eg if partner bids 2C and you have 3H and 1D, bid 2H.

With stronger invitational hands, bid 2NT. This asks partner to show the other suit – at the three level if minimum, at the four level if maximum. (Exception: after 2C-2NT, bid 4H with a maximum with H and S)

**Defence to opponents weak two and weak three openings**: double is takeout, overcalls are natural and show at least an opening bid. If partner makes a change of suit response to an overcall, it is forcing. A jump overcall is strong, about equivalent to an Acol strong two opening bid. 2NT over a weak two shows a strong balanced hand, about 16-18 HCP, and the responses are the same as over a 2NT opening bid. With an even stronger balanced hand, double first and rebid in notrumps. 3NT over any two or three level pre-empt is to play.

**Defence to opponents’ four level openings**: double shows a good hand, assumed to be either balanced or three suited, short in the opponents’ suit. Responder may remove the double to a five card major or six card minor but otherwise leaves the double in for penalty. 4NT over the opponents four level opener shows two places to play, at least 5/5 shape. Responder bids the lowest suit that could be a fit.

**Over a Multi 2D** – X is takeout, normally 13-16 HCP or very strong ; 2NT is 17-19, and responses are the same as over a 2NT opening bid.

**SLAM CONVENTIONS**

4NT is Roman Key Card Blackwood. The king of trumps and all aces are key cards. Responses to 4NT are:

5C = 0 or 3 key cards

5D = 1 or 4 key cards

5H = 2 key cards without the trump queen

5S = 2 key cards with the trump queen

After 4NT and response, 5NT asks for kings outside the trump suit. 6C shows none, 6D =1, 6H = 2, 6S = 3

Gerber 4C – this only applies to an immediate bid of 4C after a 1NT opener. Responses are 4D = 0, 4H = 1, 4S = 2, 4NT = 3.

**Competitive auctions**

**After the opponents overcall**, bids are forcing.

Doubles of the opponents overcalls are takeout (negative) up to the level of 3S. If there is an unbid major, the double is assumed to show four cards in that suit, although sometimes this will not be the case. After 1C-(1D)-?, double is assumed to show four of both majors. After 1D-(2C)-?, double shows tolerance (at least three) in each major. A bid of a new suit, in a sequence where the responder could have made a negative double, is forcing.

If the opponents have bid and raised a suit at the two or three level, double is takeout – this applies whether the bidding has been opened by our side or the opponents.

Redouble of the opponents takeout double shows 10+ HCP and generally will not have length in the opener’s suit. If the opener rebids that suit it shows extra length and minimum values in high cards. The redoubler promises to bid again when the opener passes and one of the opponents removes the double into a new suit at minimum level. If either the opener or the redoubler doubles on the second round of the auction it is penalty.

Over the opponents’ takeout double, a jump raise of the opener’s suit is pre-emptive and a bid of 2NT shows a fit and values for a raise to the three level or higher. A new suit is forcing.

**After opponents double** our opening bid:

Redouble = 10+ points

Jump raise is weak

2NT shows a good raise to at least 3

A new suit is forcing. A jump in a new suit is forcing and shows support for the suit opened

**Unassuming cue bids**

After your side overcalls, a cue bid of the opponents suit shows 10+ points and 3+ cards in support of partners overcall. So after 1C – 1H – P -, 2H is a weak raise and 2C would show 10+ points with at least three hearts.

**OPENING LEADS**

4th highest, 2nd highest from 4 small, MUD from 3 small. Highest of touching honours

Strong 10 at trick 1 v NT: with A109, K109, Q109, AJ10, KJ10 lead the 10. From 109x(x) lead the 9. Lead of a J shows no higher honour.

At Trick 1, A/Q ask for attitude, K asks for count

**CARDING METHODS**

On partners lead: attitude or count, depending on dummy and card led by partner

On declarers lead: count

Discards: attitude or count. Normally the first discard will be attitude, with subsequent discards being count.

Either use standard methods (high to encourage or even number) or reverse (low to encourage or even number) according to your preference.

Suit preference when returning a spot card for partner to ruff. This applies when partner leads what you know or believe to be a singleton. Assuming you have a choice of cards to lead, the highest one indicates preference for partner to return, after ruffing, the higher ranking of the remaining suits and the lowest one preference for the lower ranking. A middle card is neutral.