

Weak 2-Bids and Partner's Responses To Them -1-

Definition: - Any Opening suit bid of “2D,” “2H,” or “2S” (**Note:** An opening bid of 2 Clubs is reserved as the only strong, artificial, and forcing opening 2-bid, and therefore, the cheapest Club preemptive bid available is an opening 3C. This latter preempt should usually be done with 7-pieces, not six.

Purpose: - These pre-emptive bids are defensive in nature! They attempt to preclude or, at the very least, inhibit the Opponents from finding their presumed suit fit, as well as their ability to find the proper level of play; whether it is a partial score, game or even a slam. These bids attempt to accomplish this by consuming several levels of bidding.

Restrictions: - Although *not* mandatory, such bids usually deny having four or more cards in either Major suit if the pre-empt is 2D, four or more cards in the other Major suit if the pre-empt is 2H or 2S, the presence of an outside void, and/or the presence of a singleton Ace. In addition, one never pre-empts over a previous pre-empt, either from one's own Partner or over the opposition's pre-empt.

Requirements: - Several prerequisites must be met in order for the hand to qualify for a valid 2-level pre-empt:

1. The hand usually contains a six (6) card suit.
2. The suit bid must contain at least two of the top three honors if the Partnership understanding is that pre-emptive bids are “sound” (“*disciplined*” or “*structured*”); as opposed to “light” (“*undisciplined*” or “*unstructured*”) where the need for two of the top three honors is *not* mandatory.
3. The high-card point strength of the hand is 5-11 HCP's, (MUST NOT BE MORE) not necessarily, but usually confined within the holdings of the suit bid. (Any 7-point spread is ACBL acceptable.)

Vulnerability: - This factor does concern some Partnerships but, for the most part, I do not let vulnerability effect my opening a weak 2-bid if the other requirements listed above are met. Opening preemptive 2-bids make bidding by the Opponents difficult and should be used as often as the requirements to do so are met.

Positional Considerations: - The third seat Player in the auction is in the best position to make an opening pre-empt. He/she knows that such a bid cannot pre-empt his/her Partner, the first position Player, since that Partner has already limited his/her hand by “*Passing*.” The fourth seat Player is almost sure to have the best hand at the table, since the previous two seat Players have already “*Passed*.” Since Partner's initial “*Pass*” makes game unlikely, a sub-minimum pre-empt is often very effective. Next to third chair, pre-emptive bids by the Dealer are the most attractive. Although they may present difficulty to Partner, there are two Opponents who may have good hands, and the odds favor that the hand belongs to the Opponents. Second chair is least desirable for opening a pre-emptive bid. One Opponent has already “*Passed*,” therefore, the odds are no longer two to one in favor of the Opponents having a good hand. Hence, marginal pre-empts should always be avoided in second position; i.e., they should be slightly stronger than pre-empts by the Dealer and by the third positioned Player. When opening with a bid in fourth chair, one obviously expects to get a plus score otherwise one would simply “*Pass*” the deal out for no score to either side. Therefore, fourth chair, “2-level,” opening bids generally suggest the values of a greater than minimum opening one-level bid, both offensively and defensively.

Responding to Partner's Pre-empt: - When responding to Partner's Preempt, the Responder automatically becomes the "**Captain**" of the hand. Since Opener has disclosed a holding with fewer than opening count (5-11 HCP's), Responder is required to hold no fewer than 15 HCP's in order to perceive the possibility of the Partnership having game values.

1. **Raises of the Opener's Suit** ("RONF") (**R**aise is the **O**nly **N**on-**F**orce), is a non-forcing attempt to further Partner's opening, defensive preempt. Such bids are ***never*** invitational to game. Alternatively, they are a furtherance of what is a pre-emptive interference with the Opponent's hand. Raises of Opener's preempt are rarely made with the intention of the contract being made, rather, alternatively, they are made with the presumption that the hand really belongs to the Opponents, and the score relinquished by being set, is less than the Opponents would have made if left alone to the contract presumably achievable by them.

Examples: 2S Db1. 3S **(or)** 3D P 4D **(or)** 3H P 5H

The level to which one raises Partner's preempt for this purpose is driven by (a) the lack of HCP's (fewer than 15), and (b) by the number of support pieces in Opener's suit held by Responder (With nine pieces of trumps held by the Partnership, raise to the 3-level; with ten to the 4-level; etc.). ***The number of tricks to which Responder commits with his/her raise in support of Opener is equal to the number of cumulative pieces of trump held by the Partnership.***

2. Since a raise in Opener's suit is the **only** non-forcing bid, **all other bids short of game level are forcing.** They ask Opener for additional information, as follows:
 - a. **The Bid of a New Suit:** - (Remember "RONF") – A new suit bid by Responder is ***absolutely forcing.*** It asks Partner for further information as listed below: ***Responses are mandatory as shown and are all alertable!***
Based upon Opener's response as in (1), (2), or (3) below, Responder will then place the contract.
 - (1) With 3-cards in new suit stated by Responder =
Raise Responder one level in Responder's suit
 - (2) With 2-cards in new suit stated by Responder =
Bid cheapest No-Trump
 - (3) With 1 card or a void in the new suit stated by Responder =
Re-bid Opener's suit

The Klinger Ogust Convention

Responses To Partner's Opening Weak 2-Bid

1. RAISES IN PARTNER'S SUIT:

- a. **A Single Raise in Partner's Suit** - "RONF" ("**Raise Only Non-Force**") A further defensive blocking bid especially effective when used after an Opponent's intervening take-out double. Such a bid is never invitational to game; rather, alternatively, it is a furtherance of what is assumed to be a pre-emptive interference with the Opponent's hand. It is rarely made with the intention of the contract being made, rather, alternatively, with the presumption that the hand really belongs to the Opponents.

Ex. 2S Db1. 3S (or) 3D P 4D (or) 3H P 5H

- b. **A Jump Raise to Game** - Made either preemptively (Same as in a. above) to further the pre-emptive block or with game-going values and a presumption that the contract is to be made.

Ex. 2H Db1. 4H (or) 3C P 5C

In both (a) and (b) above, when used preemptively, the responding Partner is likely to have multiple cards, (3 or more), in partner's pre-emptive suit and little additional outside strength. When used as a game-going bid, however, the strength necessary is obvious as it must be coupled with Partner's stated 6-card suit and 5-11 HCP's. It would, therefore, represent a better than opening HCP count since pre-emptive Opener has shown less than a full opening hand.

2. BIDS OTHER THAN RAISES IN PARTNER'S SUIT: Responder must have at least 15+ HCP's in order to justify any of the following bids since Opener holds up to (at most) a maximum of 11 HCP's.

- a. **A 3-NT or a Game Bid in the same Suit or a New Suit** – Such bids are **Sign-off Bids** spoken to play as stated.

Ex. 2S P 3-NT (or) 2H P 4S (or) 2H P 4H

- b. **Any Switch in Suit Below Game Level** (Remember "RONF") - **Absolutely Forcing.** Asks Partner for further information as listed herein: *Responses are mandatory as shown and are all alertable!*

- (1) With 3-cards in new suit stated by Responder = Raise Responder one level in Responder's suit.
- (2) With 2-cards in new suit stated by Responder = Bid cheapest NT.
- (3) With 1 card or void in new suit stated by Responder = re-bid Opener's suit.

Based upon Opener's response as in (1), (2), or (3) above, Responder will then place the contract.

- c. **“2-NT” – Klinger “OGUST” CONVENTION** – Absolutely Forcing - This Bid is an artificial Conventional bid requesting a further description of Opener's hand both as to the number of HCP's as well as the number of the top three (3) honors (A, K, or Q) held by Opener as follows: *The “2-NT” asking bid itself, as well as all of the below-listed responses are all alertable!*

- (1) With 5-7 HCP's and 1 of the top three honors in opener's suit = bid “3C” (artificial)
- (2) With 5-7 HCP's and 2 of the top three honors in opener's suit = bid “3D” (artificial)
- (3) With 8-11 HCP's and 1 of the top three honors in opener's suit = bid “3H” (artificial)
- (4) With 8-11 HCP's and 2 of the top three honors in opener's suit = bid “3S” (artificial)
- (5) With 8-11 HCP's and 3 of the top three honors in opener's suit = bid “3NT” (artificial)

Based upon opener's response as in (1), (2), (3), (4), or (5) above, Responder will place the final contract after receiving one of the five above-listed responses.

Above-Listed Responses in Visual Ladder Representation

<u>Bid</u>	<u>High-Card Points</u>	<u>Number of Top 3 Honors Held By Opener (A, K, or Q)</u>
“3-NT”	8-11	3
“3S”	8-11	2
“3H”	8-11	1

“3D”	5-7	2
“3C”	5-7	1

Responding to Preempts – “Mel’s Rule of 17”

The question as to whether or not to try for game when Partner has opened a weak 2-bid often comes into question. In general, conventional wisdom is that since Opener holds between 5-11 HCP's, Partner should hold no fewer than 15 HCP's to even consider the possibility that a game-level contract be possible.

A subsidiary principle to the above is Mel's “*Rule of 17.*” It states that, *“If the number of high-card points in your hand plus the number of cards you hold in Partner’s suit equals 17, or more, try for game.”*

Partner has opened 2S. Should you, holding the following, try for game?

- 5, KJ5, KQ7532, AQ7 (Pass! – The Rule of 17 is not, here, satisfied)
- K8, AQ84, A832, QJ6 (Try for Game!)