

December 2008 Polish Club Update

Overview

To quickly visualize what our style of Polish Club system is about begin with a Lawrence-style two over one and make these changes...

The **1C opening** shows either a (more or less) standard 1C hand **OR** a big hand – 19+ with a major or clubs or balanced, 22+ with diamonds.

The **2C opening** shows 12-15 points and either a six+ card club suit or five with a four card major. (This type of hand is therefore not opened 1C.)

The **1D opening** promises four+ cards. If it is in the 19-22 point range it will be unbalanced with six+ cards or five with a four card side suit.

The **1H and 1S openings** are standard, but limited to no more than 18 points.

1NT and 2NT openings show 16-18 and 22-23 points respectively.

Most auctions that ensue from these openings (except 2C) follow rather standard trajectories. The remainder of this document discusses the auctions that deviate from standard, plus several agreements we use that are not Polish Club per se.

1C Auctions

With 6+ points responder bids a four card major and the auction proceeds pretty much naturally except when opener has a big hand, for which see the next section.

With less than six points and a four card major, or up to 12 points without a four card major (but excluding balanced 9-12) responder bids 1D. Opener now rebids...

1H or 1S to start a scramble to a safe spot. This may not be a four card suit.

1NT with 19-21 balanced.

2C with 16-22 and a club suit.

2D with a game going hand that cannot be described any other way.

2H or 2S with 19-22 and a five+ card suit, usually six.

2NT with 24-25 balanced.

3C and 3D with game going hands with the suit bid.

The specialized continuations for these auctions are described below.

Big hands after 1C-1M

Strong hands with 4+ card support after 1C-1M rebid 2NT. This sets responder's suit as the trump suit. Partnerships may agree to cuebid at this point, or use Jacoby style rebids - bidding a singleton/void at the three level, or, if balanced, 4M with 6-9 hcp, 3NT with 9-11, 3M with 12+. A four of another suit rebid is undefined (but may be used to show a decent five card suit.)

Strong hands lacking four card support after 1C-1M, can rebid naturally...

1S shows 12+ and four or five spades and is forcing one round

2C shows 16-22 or so and is forcing one round. Responder forces artificially with 2D.

2 of the other major shows 19+ points and a five+ card suit

3 of a minor shows a long minor and four or fewer losers.

For strong hands where no other descriptive rebid is defined, rebid 2D. The auction proceeds ...

1C-1M, 2D-2M shows five, or six with a good hand (contrast next).

1C-1M, 2D-3M shows six and is weaker than 1C-1M, 2D-2M, any-3M.

1C-1M, 2D-2NT shows any 10+ hcp and denies five cards in the major.

1C-1M, 2D-2oM shows a balanced (or "4144") 6-9 hcp.

With 54xx rebid 2S, not 2H.

1C-1M, 2D-3m shows 6-9 and a five card minor.

1C-1D,2D Complex

1C - 1D, 2D shows a standard, game forcing 2C opening hand, however, with a strong minor suited hand it is better to **rebid 3C or 3D**, game forcing.

1C - 1D, 2D - 2H shows 0-5 points, any distribution. Opener's three level rebids are natural, the majors showing six, the minor's showing five. 2NT shows 24-25 balanced. 2S shows a hand that cannot do any of these and asks responder to further describe his hand. E.g. Holding AKx AKJxx x AKJx rebid 2S after 1C-1D, 2D-2H.

1C - 1D, 2D - 2S shows a 6-9 point hand, lacking, because responder didn't bid it initially, a four card major. Opener rebids a long suit naturally at the three level or 2NT with a balanced or three suited hand.

When opener rebids a minor over 2S responder's 3H and 3S rebids are cuebids signifying agreement. 3N (and 3D) deny support. Thus 1C-1D, 2D-2S, 3D-3S agrees to diamonds and shows a spade control.

1C - 1D, 2D - 2NT shows 10-12 and 55 in the minors.

1C - 1D, 2D - 3C/D shows 10-12 and at least five in the suit bid.

Opener's Big Two-Suiters after 1C-1D (optional)

Opener doesn't rebid 2D (after 1C-1D) with a big 5-5 or better two suiter because there isn't sufficient room left to fully describe it. With those problematic hands opener jumps to 3H to show a game going two suiter with hearts, 3S shows spades and a minor and 3N shows the minors. After 3H or 3S 3NT asks for the other suit and four of a suit is a cue bid agreeing to the known suit. 1C-1D, 3H-3S shows a spade preference, after which opener bids 3NT agreeing to spades, otherwise shows his minor. To summarize:

1c-1d, 3H	= game forcing two suiter including hearts.
1c-1d, 3H-3N	= asking for second suit, 4H shows spades.
1c-1d, 3S	= game forcing, spades and a minor, 3N asks.
1c-1d, 3h-3S	= spade preference.
1c-1d, 3h-3s, 3N	= accepting spades (so, hearts and spades).
1c-1d, 3h-3s, 4m	= second suit.
1c-1d, 3N	= game forcing, both minors, 4m at this point is minorwood.

Miscellaneous Treatments over 1C

Over **1C-1M, 3m** shows a one suited four loser or better hand. Game forcing. With three card support for responder it is probably better to start with a 2D rebid instead. Less strong hands rebid 2C (with clubs) or open 1D (with diamonds).

1C-1NT shows a balanced 9-12 without a four card major. (with 6-8 balanced start with 1D and rebid 1NT. The stronger 1C-1NT treatment saves space when opener is strong and gives the opponents more chances to bail us out when opener and responder are weak.) Any rebid by opener other than 2NT (invitational) or 3NT is natural and game forcing.

1C-2m shows the suit bid and is forcing to 3NT or 4m. Invitational strength hands start with 1D then rebid 3m.

1C-1M shows 4-5 points and a six card suit.

1C-2NT shows 13+. Opener rebids 3NT on all minimum hands. Again, this treatment saves space when opener is strong and needs to explore. Note: the system no longer defines 1C-3NT and it should never be bid.

Competition over 1C

Opener's rebid system is ON after 1C-(overcall)-1H/1S-(pass), **except** opener's 2C rebid no longer shows extra values (accommodating the fact that opener is forced and, lacking a stopper, may not be able to rebid 1NT). Opener's 3C rebid shows 16-18 and clubs.

Opener's rebid system is also on after partner's one-level negative double, with the above exception, and a bid in partner's implied major(s) are natural.

If fourth seat enters the auction with a double over partner's bid of ...

- 1H or 1S then opener's redouble is support and the system is on. Pass is an option.
- 1D or pass then opener passes weak openings, redoubles on big (semi)balanced hands, and bids a suit on a big unbalanced hand.

If fourth seat enters the auction with a non-double then the system is generally on. If partner bids...

- 1H or 1S then opener's double is support, with pass as an option for weak hands that lack a rebid. A cue bid of the opponent's suit (e.g. 1C-(pass)-1H-(1S), 2S) shows a big hand without a stopper.
- Double (negative) then the system is on as if partner had bid the other major(s).
- 1D or pass then any bid shows extras and 2D is the big hand (system on).

Development of Strong Balanced Hands That Start With 1C

Note that 22-23 point balanced hands begin with 2NT (or 2D if playing Multi.) The following table defines how the remaining big balanced hands proceed.

Auction Starts:	19-21	24+
1C-1D	1NT	2D (24-25); 2NT (26+)
1C-1H	2D 2NT with 4 hearts 1S (forcing) with 4 spades, then possibly XYZ	
1C-1S	2D 2NT with 4 spades	
1C-1NT (9-12)	3NT (19-20) 4NT (21-23)	6NT (24-25) 5NT (26-27) 7NT (28+)
1C-2m	probably minorwood 4m or 2N (forcing) or a raise	

1D Auctions

The 1D opening shows up to 22 or so points, unlike the more limited 1H and 1S. If 19 or more the hand will be unbalanced with long diamonds. This strength can be shown by rebidding with a jump shift or reverse, or rebidding 2NT (with a jump) to show a long diamond suit. Specialized responses to 1D include:

1D - 3C is a relay to 3D showing either a preemptive raise OR a game forcing raise of some sort. Opener rebids 3D except when holding a huge hand.

1D - 3D is a limit raise.

1D - 2H/S show a six+ card suit and something less than six points. These weak jump shifts are useful after 1D to protect against the possibility that opener is quite strong and could make game opposite less than a minimum standard response.

1D - 2C is a one round force. Opener rebids 2D or 2N with 11-13 point hands, other rebids are forcing to game. 1D-2C, 2D implies only one major suit is stopped and does *not* promise five diamonds.

1H and 1S Auctions

The **3C response** shows a limit raise with a singleton or void, or four card support.

The **3D response** shows a 16+ point balanced raise.

The **2NT response** shows a balanced hand of 13-15 points, possibly with support.

The **3NT response** shows a balanced 16-18 points and only two card support.

The **2C response by a passed hand** is Reverse Drury. Opener rebids his suit with less than a real opening hand and rebids 2D with 12-14. Any other non-game rebid is a slam try (cue bid).

The **1NT response** is "semi-forcing" - opener passes with 12-13 balanced. Opener prefers rebidding 2C with xx43 and xx32 in case responder has clubs and a weak hand. Optionally, after 1H-1NT,2m, responder's 3m can show an 8-9+ point raise and 2S, which is otherwise not particularly useful, can show more.

Notrump Auctions

16-18 point hands with a five card major open 1M and, after a 1NT response, rebid 2m or 2NT with a good 17-18. Hands that open 1NT or rebid 1NT after 1C-1D use the following methods.

2C, 2D and **2H** responses are the usual suspects. Note that 2C could be 54xx or 45xx. After transfer bids note that responder's subsequent jump to game is a mild, values based slam try – with less responder makes a Texas transfer (below). After 1NT-2H, 2S, heart bids show 5-5 with 3H having slam interest. To show the invitational 55xx start by transferring to hearts and rebidding 2S.

4D and **4H** are Texas transfers, intending to play the resulting game, or making some sort of strong slam push. Texas transfers are on over doubles and overcalls through 3C (i.e. Jumps).

2S is a weak transfer to one of the minors. Opener rebids 2NT as a notrump game try, otherwise rebids 3C which responder can correct.

3C and **3D** are invitational with a suit headed by AQ(J) or KQ(J) with little else.

3H and **3S** are natural and forcing with serious slam interest. These responses ask opener to cue bid (or raise with soft values) with three+ card support, otherwise bid 3NT.

When the **opponents double 1NT** the system is on and, redouble is a minor suit sign-off (opener rebids 2C and responder corrects with diamonds). When the opponents overcall 2C double is Stayman and the above system is on. We play lebensohl after 2D, 2H and 2S overcalls. After three level overcalls, doubles are for takeout but can tolerate opener leaving it in.

The same conventional principles apply after **opening 2NT**.

We use the same responding system when we **overcall 1NT** in direct seat.

Balancing 1NT overcalls may be considerably lighter. Our responses to these are natural except a cue bid is Stayman. Note that a **balancing 2NT (jump)** overcall is strong, afterwhich we use the normal 2NT responding structure.

Here is a summary of **Lebenshol** actions after a 2D, 2H or 2S overcall of 1NT...

2 of a suit is to play

3 of a suit is forcing

a **cue bid** of responder's shown suit is Stayman without a stopper

3NT with values but no stopper (opener scrambles if necessary)

2NT requires opener to rebid 3C whereupon responder...

passes or bids a suit unavailable at the two level to play,

cuebids the overcalled suit as Stayman with a stopper,

bids 3NT to play, with a stopper.

2C Auctions

Basic responses to 2C (details follow).

Note, xyM means x cards in one major and y cards in the other major.

- 2D** - invitational+, 4 card major OR NT invite OR eventual minorwood
- 2H** - natural, invitational, not forcing
- 2S** - natural, invitational, not forcing
- 2N** - relay to 3C, weak raise or majors or diamond suit or minorwood
- 3C** - limit raise
- 3D** - transfer to hearts, game force
- 3H** - transfer to spades, game force
- 3S** - forcing club raise, opener rebids 3N natural, or 4C weak or cue
- 3N** - to play
- 4C** - weak
- 4D,H,S** - splinter

With less than invitational strength choose a response from pass, 2N (with support), 4C or 5C. Invitational hands start with one of 2D, 2H, 2S or 3C. Game or slam going hands start with 2D, 2N (and continue), 3D, 3H, 3S, 3N or a splinter.

2C - 2D Details

2D is a Stayman-like response that is used also on invitational NT hands, hands wanting to minowood in clubs, and 54M and 64M hands, except invitational strength 45xx and 46xx which respond 2H (see below). Opener rebids a four card major; lacking that opener rebids to help responder deal with hands that include four hearts and longer spades with these rebids...

- 2N** - three spades (and necessarily six clubs), minimum
- 3C** - less than 3 spades, minimum
- 3D** - no three card major, maximum
- 3H** - three hearts, maximum (useful when responder is game going 45xx)
- 3S** - three spades, maximum
- 3N** - 33M, maximum

2C - 2H Details

2H shows at least five hearts and invitational strength. Opener passes minimums with heart tolerance. Responder may also have four (or five) spades which opener can accommodate when he opts to continue...

2S - four spades, fewer than three hearts, any strength so forcing

2N - three spades, minimum (and necessarily six+ clubs)

3C - less than 3 spades, minimum (and six+ clubs)

3D - less than 3 spades, less than 2 hearts, maximum (and six+ clubs)

3H - exactly two hearts, maximum and six+ clubs (forcing). Let's responder choose between 4H and 3NT

3S - three spades, less than 2 hearts, maximum and six+ clubs

4H - maximum, three or more hearts

2C - 2S Details

2S shows at least five spades, invitational strength and fewer than four hearts. (With four hearts responder would start with 2D.) Opener passes minimums with spade tolerance, otherwise...

2N - minimum, may have only five clubs if holding four hearts

3C - minimum, six+ clubs

3D - maximum, diamond stopper, no heart stopper

3H - maximum, heart stopper, no diamond stopper

3S - maximum, exactly two spades and six+ clubs (forcing). Let's responder choose between 4S and 3NT.

3N - maximum, red suits stopped, 0-1 spades

2C - 2N Details

2N shows either a weak club raise or a game going hand with 55M or long diamonds. Opener must rebid 3C then responder passes or rebids...

3D with 5-5 or better in the majors

3H with long diamonds and a heart stopper

3S with long diamonds and a spade stopper

3N with diamonds, H & S stopped, slam interest (otherwise 3N directly)

2C - 3D or 3H Details

These are game forcing transfers showing at least five cards. Opener rebids responder's suit with two card support, 3NT with 0 or 1, or raises to four or cue bids with 3-4 card support.

Miscellaneous Treatments

Landy

Over the opponent's 1NT opening, our overcalls are natural except 2C shows both majors and 2NT shows the minors. After 2C advancer bids his preferred major or bids 2D asking partner to pick his best major.

The XYZ Convention

The XYZ method applies after auctions where responder bid one of a major (the Y bid) and opener rebid 1S or 1NT (the Z bid.) (XYZ is off with any competition *except* in the case where there is a takeout double in second or fourth seat.) At this point responder selects from these possibilities ...

- **Notrump** bids are natural.
- **2H, 2S** (non-reversing), and 3C are to play.
- **3D, 3H** and **3S** are natural slam tries, showing either 5-5 (or better) when bidding a second suit, or setting the suit as trump when it is a rebid of the original suit.
- **2D** is an artificial game force.
- **2C** is a relay to 2D which can be passed on a weak hand. But more frequently 2C is the first move on invitational hands. After opener rebids 2D any non-passing rebid by responder shows an invitational holding. *Note that if responder rebids above two of his major he is showing a better than minimum invitational strength hand. A rebid of two of his major shows only a mediocre hand and allows the partnership to play in a 5-2 fit where 2NT might well be too high.*

This technique must be modified slightly for auctions where opener rebids 1S instead of 1NT. In these auctions opener's strength is less defined, and may, in the 1C case, be very strong. When opener rebids 1S it is generally prudent for responder with invitational or better values to continue with 2C or 2D (rather than leaping to 2NT or 3NT) to give opener room to articulate extras. So, when responder makes the XYZ 2C bid and opener has concealed strength it is important that he not just rebid 2D. Instead he must find some other (natural) bid that describes his hand.

Doubles

Negative doubles show either the other major *or* any good hand, allowing non-jump two and three level freebids to be non-forcing. (Over jump overcalls, freebids are forcing for one round.)

Support doubles - Opener's double or redouble rebid after RHO overcalls through 2H (excluding 1NT) shows exactly three card support for responder's major suit.

Responsive doubles show the other two (or three) suits when responding to an overcall or takeout double *and* responder has raised opener's suit, e.g. 1D-(1S)-2D-X shows hearts and clubs. Responsive doubles are on through 3S.

Minorwood

The follow-up inquiry after the ambiguous (0314) responses to a 4C/4D minorwood ask is a general slam/grand slam try. The cheapest uncommitted suit (not 4NT) asks about the trump queen and the responses to this are:

no queen	five of the agreed minor.
Q and no extras	5NT (passable).
Q and extra tricks	the suit containing the tricks.
Q and extra values	six of the trump suit.

Similarly after the minorwood response the suit above the trump suit asks for just the extras - presumably the trump queen is accounted for. Answers to this ask are largely as for the queen ask:

no extras	5NT (passable).
extra tricks	the suit containing the tricks.
extra values	six of the trump suit.

RKC

All this works for the follow-ups to RKC 4NT as well, with five of the cheapest unused suit being the queen ask and 5NT being the general ask.

Optional Treatments

These conventions are played by partnership agreement. Multi, at the time of this writing, is not allowed on the ACBL General Convention Chart. It is covered separately.

Slow Arrival (optional)

Auctions that arrive fast show specifically good trump support and no control in the unbid suits. (E.g. 1S-2D, 3C-4S shows nothing in clubs or hearts.) Slow arrival shows either garbage or some other type with slam interest.

CRaSh (optional)

This convention allows all two-suiters to be shown over strong 2C and Precision-like 1C openings:

Double	shows two suits with the same C olor
Diamonds	shows two suits of the same R ank (majors or minors)
NoTrump	shows two suits with the same s hape (S+D or H+C)

Interest Bids (optional)

After 1NT-2C, 2M, responder can bid three of the other major to cheaply agree to opener's suit and show slam interest. Cue bidding logically follows.

Serious 3NT (optional)

Cue bidding slam explorations can produce failing slams when the partnership simply doesn't have sufficient strength. This can be discovered after major suit agreement by bidding 3NT instead of a four level cuebid when you have serious slam intentions, not merely making courtesy cuebids.

Good-Bad 2NT (optional)

Competitive auctions often produce a situation where you want to bid at the three level but cannot distinguish between constructive and competitive holdings. Consider your bid holding A AQxxxx Kxx xxx after the auction goes 1H-(1S)-1NT-(2S). You would really like to compete in hearts but don't want partner to think you hold something like A KQJxxx KQx Qxx. The solution is to use the lebensohl principle and bid 2NT with the weaker hand, asking partner to bid 3C then correcting to hearts. The stronger hand is shown by bidding 3H directly.

In competitive auctions 2NT is Good-Bad (by either side) whenever partner has bid, you have not limited your hand to a narrow range, and it cannot logically or systemically be something else.

OBAR 2NT (optional)

Shows any two-suiter. E.g. 1S-pass-2S-**2NT**

Scrambling 2NT (optional)

In response to an OBAR double 2NT suggests doubler select his best suit.

Honor redoubles of negative double (optional)

Shows Ax(x) or Kx(x) in overcalled suit. Useful if we end up defending. On weak hands with good support prefer the preemptive jump raise over the honor redouble.