

A general idea about the system

Opening bids of one of a suit , generally show a 5 + cards suit and follow the principle of “ longest first “ .

As in any respectable bidding system , there are exceptions and 1♣ opening bid is one of them and could show a balanced hand with only 4 or fewer ♣ .

Opening bids of 1♦ , 1♥ o 1♠ promising at least a 5 carder in the mentioned suit , simplify the bidding process , mainly in case of weak hands where it is mandatory to stop the bidding as soon as possible .

Such bids give immediately a distributional feeling : to know after the first bid that partner's hand has a 5+ carder , allows responder to make a bid finalised to exploit strength points of such hand .

The fact to open ♦5th, does not make us loose any competitive advantage , on the contrary. When we have only 4 carders , we can always open 1♣ , without losing the possibility of finding a 4-4 fit in ♦ .

These opening bids have a quite broad points range , from 11 to 23 HCP and cover about 80% of all opened hands.

We are therefore dealing with very thick opening bids , including a great variety of hands , distribution as well as point range wise.

The 1♣ opening bid in particular is the largest of all opening bids , covering about 30% of all opened hands.

Such over crowded bids , need a very detailed bidding development in order to be able to give to partner an accurate description of what we have.

The lower the bidding level , the larger will be the number of possible hands because , at the same time , the greater will be the bidding space available to precisely describe the various possible hands .

The thickness of each opening bid at 1 level is therefore diminishing from 1♣, representing about 30% of all opened hands , down to 1NT covering only 11% of all opened hands .

Following the same principle , all 5 opening bids at 2 level , cover only 9% of all opened hands .

The obvious disadvantage of such a strategy , is the necessity to put together a set of very detailed bidding developments , in order to be able to identify strength and distribution of every bid. It is in fact not acceptable to give only an approximate description when we could have such a great hands variety.

As it often happens , a disadvantage also has a positive side .

The points range amplitude , 11-23 HCP , and the almost total variety of possible distributions , can act as a deterrent versus potential over-callers .

Instead of pre-empting , using the numerous gadgets available to take away bidding space from opponents , here we open entire prairies of bidding space in front of them , by using as frequently as possible , the lowest possible opening bids .

We take fewer risks , we leave opponents overcalls under the constant threat of our potentially strong hand , ready to punish the over enthusiastic bidder .

It has moreover to be noted that to pre-empt against an opening bid having a 11-23 HCP range , could have a counter effect . The risk is in fact to pre-empt against a modest 11 HCP bid , that should not deserve too much attention , with the only practical consequence to take away precious bidding space from our own line that might turn out to have the majority of HCP.

Advantages and disadvantages of the two above described strategies , that is , on one side a bidding system based on aggressive and well defined opening bids that tend to pre-

empt opponents action and , on the other side , a strategy like ours that almost invites opponents action , are of course opened for experts analysis .

We believe , having used our system over the years , that aggressive bidding systems tend to perform well against medium strength opponents . The relentless chain of opening bids and overcalls , often with a semi-destructive connotation, can in fact seriously damage the communication between not so strong opponents .

If the same technique is instead used against expert opponents , able to easily read the hand , results could be disappointing and punishments quite frequent.

All accurate information unveiled during the bidding process , could in fact frequently be used against us either during the bidding or in defence in case we would play against strong opponents.

A sort of wait and see attitude , like ours , has , according to our experience , more success probabilities against strong pairs .

After our first opening bid , information supplied are not accurate and rather nebulous in terms of HCP point range as well as distribution wise. Once the hand shape and strength are clarified , is often too late for opponents to chip in .

Our bridge world is never the less in a continuous evolution and , sooner or later , it is possible that a new bidding system , cumulating both school of thought advantages , will see the light

Transfer is extensively used , when feasible, throughout the system .

Such technique , very popular over 1NT opening with Jacoby and Texas transfers, can give various advantages .

A transfer response to partner opening bid of 1 of a suit , will make it possible to find a 4-3 fit at the lowest level that could represent a good salvage in case of weak hands . Such technique allows , furthermore , the stronger hand to become declarer and , therefore, to receive the lead.

In case opening bid is overcalled by LHO , a transfer response will make the overcaller to lead , avoiding thus the expected and often dangerous lead from the overcaller partner in the latter suit .

When we cue bid singletons or voids , we also use a transfer-like technique , that allows partner response to be diversified according to strength and fit .

To describe balanced hands , we mainly use 2 opening bids , 1♣ and 1NT , with a variable HCP range , according to vulnerability and position .

Weak NT has a well-known pre-emptive value and we did not want to give it up .

On the other hand , with unfavourable vulnerability, penalties paid in partial contracts are often heavier when you use weak NT instead of a common 1♣ opening bid .

We have therefore decided to use both 1♣ and 1NT with a variable HCP range, to describe balanced hands , in order to take advantage of weak NT pre-emptive power and , at the same time , to exploit 1♣ opening better defensibility with unfavourable vulnerability.

At a first sight , our bidding system can look complicated . Once you become familiar with it though , you'll notice that many bidding developments are repeated through out the system and therefore the mnemonic effort is not that great.

As Giorgino says “ *It is not like learning by heart Karamazoff brothers* “.

In this respect it is worthwhile noting that simple bidding systems , are very easy to learn but very difficult to be played. Lack of precise and accurate agreements between partners , create the need to improvise bids at the playing table , with imaginable consequences.

The mnemonic effort necessary to memorise more complex but more accurate systems Is paid back many folds by very easy dialogue with partner and by absence of painful and costly misunderstandings.