

- 2 suited 5 cards major bidding technique.

Over a one in a suit opening bids , responder has at his disposal a forcing relay.

The use of such relay tends to simplify the bidding process because any response different from the forcing relay can , by definition, be passed. In case of weakish hands is therefore possible to pull the brakes in time.

When instead the forcing relay is used , responder will keep on interrogating opener till opener shape is completely clear. At this point, responder will decide the final contract or ask for controls in case of slam possibility.

During this bidding process , responder with a forcing hand , will not unveil anything about his own shape so that only one hand will be known to opponents , the opening hand.

The same technique is used in responding to weak openings at the two level. Also in this case responder has a forcing relay available for each one of the weak openings . Such relay will start the interrogation chain that will be concluded by responder decision about the final contract.

In case of 2♣ opening , the only strong opening bid in the whole system, the process is still the same but this time with switched roles : in this case opener will be the one asking questions but the technique remains unchanged.

When we finally come to overcalls , the bidding technique is once again similar to what described above. Overcaller's partner can use a forcing relay that will initiate the interrogation chain that will be concluded by his final decision. Also in this case, at the end of the bidding process only one hand will be known to opponents , the overcaller hand.

This technique has quite a few advantages compared to the traditional bidding technique where information flows both ways :

Keeping the strong hand hidden . It is clear, beyond any reasonable doubt, that it is more difficult for opponents to organise their defence having no clue about the strong hand shape. This can produce , mainly on the lead but not only, an advantage of one trick.

Better clearness in bidders roles. The player having a strong or a forcing hand is the “ *captain* “ : he directs the bidding process with asking relays and, at the end, makes the final choice about the contract to be played. This setting allows the bidding to take place in a relaxed environment where both partners have a precise role within a standardised bidding process. In a traditional bidding process , each partner tries to stir the bidding towards the conclusion that better fits his own hand with possible and sometimes inevitable incomprehension.

Bidding space saving. Using forcing / asking relays as well as step responses, produces a sizable amount of bidding space saving that can be exploited to ask for controls at a very low level. Such low level controls asking can be done well below the traditional 4NT bid level and permits to investigate even those slams having a remote probability, because in case of a negative reply it is still possible to stop the bidding at game level.

No misunderstanding in case of weak hands. Any response different from a forcing relay is , by definition, passable. In case of opening bids or overcalls made with a minimum point count , a response different from a forcing relay allows opener to promptly stop in comfortable partial contract without having the danger of costly misunderstanding.

Bidding sequences after forcing relays made over opening bids of one in a suit or weak openings or overcalls always follow the same repetitive pattern

THE 2 SUITED 5 CARDS MAJOR

Whenever opener or overcaller is known to have a two suiter , the asking relay will start the chain of step responses according to Bic Sequence :

- 1st step = No S/V
- 2nd step = longer LRS with Low S/V (5+ - 4)
- 3rd step = longer LRS with High S/V(5+ - 4)
- 4th step = longer HRS with Low S/V (4 – 5+)
- 5th step = longer HRS with High S/V(4 – 5+)
- 6th step = minimum 5-5 with Low S/V (5+ - 5+)
- 7th step = minimum 5-5 with High S/V (5+ - 5+)

S/V = Singleton or Void , LRS = Lower Ranking Suit , HRS = Higher Ranking Suit

Whenever opener or overcaller is known to have a 5332 , the asking relay will ask for the doubleton (DBT) with 3 step responses :

- 1st step = Lower Ranking DBT
- 2nd step = Medium Ranking DBT
- 3rd step = Higher Ranking DBT

Knowing the DBT identity , provides also the identity of the 3-3 suits and this can be very important when we care to know whether partner has got a 3 cards major on the side.

Whenever opener or overcaller is known to have a 6+ cards one suiter , the asking relay will ask for a possible S/V with four step responses :

- 1st step = No S/V
- 2nd step = Lower Ranking S/V
- 3rd step = Medium Ranking S/V
- 4th step = Higher Ranking S/V

As we can see , the same identical pattern is applied throughout the whole system. Once the procedure is understood , it does not certainly require a big mnemonic effort.