

My Bridge and Yours



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Non-system bidding issues — part 11

Anticipation

A careful bidder resembles a chess player looking two moves ahead. He may plan how he will describe his hand, anticipate a competitive auction or make a bid that will give him an edge when the play starts.

A simple case of anticipation is planning a rebid when you open the bidding. A good player knows what he will do over any response.

♠ 8 5 ♥ K J 9 ♦ A J 9 3 ♣ A J 9 3

Expert opinion would be split on what to open. I would not consider treating this balanced hand as a two-suiter, so I would open 1♣, intending to raise a red-suit response or bid INT over 1♠. Many good players would open 1♦. (If the diamonds were strikingly strong, I might also.)

In some competitive situations, a 1♦ opening may work well:

<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>
♠ 7 5 3	♠ J 2
♥ A J 9 3	♥ 7 4 2
♦ Q 10 8	♦ A K 6 4
♣ K 10 4	♣ A Q 7 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1♣	2♠
Dbl	Pass	3♦	Pass
5♣	Dbl	All Pass	

East-West had a mix-up. East thought he was placing the contract when he bid 3♦; West thought East had reversed and held at least five clubs and extra strength. A 1♦ open-

ing would have let East-West stop at 3♦, but the 1♣ opening wasn't at fault. Blame the result on South's preempt, a slightly unprepared negative double by West and the fact that East-West hadn't discussed this sequence.

4-4-4-1 hands are troublesome. Some systems reserve a conventional opening bid for them.

♠ Q ♥ J 9 5 2 ♦ A J 7 4 ♣ K Q 9 2

I'd open 1♣ and rebid INT over a 1♠ response. If partner insists on spades, the singleton queen won't be a disappointment. If he has a weak hand with 5-4 in the majors such as:

♠ A 8 7 5 3 ♥ K 10 7 4 ♦ 5 3 ♣ 8 3

he'll bid 2♥ over INT and locate the heart fit. (I admit I'd rebid INT even with a low singleton spade, but I wouldn't like it as much.)

It's hard to describe some minimum hands with a five-card suit and a higher-ranking four-card suit.

♠ A J ♥ K 10 ♦ K Q 6 4 ♣ J 9 6 4 2

I'd open 1♣ and rebid INT after a major-suit response. A 1♦-then-2♣ sequence is troublesome because it fails to limit the strength quickly and distorts the distribution, as well. I avoid that sequence unless the diamonds look like a five-card suit.

If opener has enough extra strength for three forward-going bids, he can afford to go the 1♦-then-2♣ route.

For example, as opener, you pick up:

♠ A Q 6 ♥ 4 ♦ A K 9 3 ♣ K 10 8 4 2

<i>Opener</i>	<i>Responder</i>
1♦	1♠
2♣	2♦
2♠	

♠ 10 7 5 2 ♥ A K 5 ♦ A Q 7 3 ♣ 7 5

<i>Opener</i>	<i>Responder</i>
1♦	1♥
1♠	INT
?	

Pass. If you bid 2♥, you'd show game interest when game is impossible. A case exists for raising the 1♥ response to 2♥.

You open 1♦, partner responds 1♥. With:

♠ Q 4 ♥ 4 ♦ K Q 10 9 6 4 ♣ A J 9 3,

rebid 2♦. If partner raises to 3♦ or rebids 2♥, pass. If he bids 2NT, continue with 3♣ to suggest a minimum 6-4. Holding:

♠ K 4 ♥ 4 ♦ A Q J 6 4 2 ♣ A Q 7 3,

3♦ is an acceptable rebid, but 2♣ is flexible. You'll rebid the diamonds next, suggesting 6-4 with extra strength. □