Micro Bridge Lesson 15

Rationale

- When we first learn to play, it is common to learn **four card suits up-the-line**. i.e. When we plan to open with a four card suit, we always open with the **lower** suit. With only four card suits, partner is then obliged to bid the one closest to opener’s suit. This will work fine so long as (a) you don’t get dealt a 1444 hand with 15 HCP and (b) the opponents remain quiet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Card</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♠7</td>
<td>If we open 1C and partner responds</td>
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<tr>
<td>♥AQ76</td>
<td>1S, we are not well placed. A 2NT</td>
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<tr>
<td>♥54</td>
<td>rebid shows 18–20 HCP balanced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>♥AQ92</td>
<td>See Lesson 11. A rebid of 2D or 2H grossly distorts the hand. See Lesson 7. While no system hands this well, the mild underbid of 1D and rebid 2C is considered the most prudent action.</td>
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<tr>
<td>♦J74</td>
<td>If we open 1C &amp; it goes 1C–(1S)–X, we are not well placed. Personally, I don’t mind rebidding 1NT! without a stopper. However, it is not popular.</td>
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<tr>
<td>♥Q9</td>
<td>Here, the alternatives are terrible. Most would agree that a simple one level overcall should not send our bidding system into chaos. An opening bid of 1D leaves us much better placed. We simply rebid 2C and partner can decide further action.</td>
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- The **Better Minor** convention is popular because it focuses on the majors. It is a misnomer since the quality of the minor is not relevant. It would be better-named as “Longer Minor”. Here are the main features:

1.. With 4-4 in the minors, open 1D
2.. In response to 1C, prefer to show a major rather than diamonds unless having five diamonds, a four card major and enough strength to show the major on the next round. Responder will need an opening hand and 5-4.
3.. 1C – 1D! denies a 4 card major unless strong enough to show it on the next round. Opener will not rebid 1M unless holding 5 clubs and a 4 card major.
4.. Many pairs continue by playing that 1D and a rebid of 2C! is a minimum and can be 5–4 either way. Responder is expected to pass or correct with 3–2 in the minors.
5.. It follows that:- When opening 1C, diamonds will rarely be held unless opener is prepared to rebid them on the next round. Of course, open 1C and rebid 2D is a reverse. See Lesson 7.

- BOTH systems have the following features:-

1.. With 3 – 3 in the minors, open 1C
2.. With 3 – 2 in the minors, open the 3 card suit.
3.. It follows that 1D will be a four card suit except when 4432 shape. If opener fails to support 1M from responder, the diamond suit must be genuine.
4.. Most pairs show the diamond length as “3” on their system card. It should probably show “4(3)” since it is almost always 4.
5.. The 1C opening will be 3 whenever the shape is 4333, 3433 or 4423 shape.

Better Minor vs Up-the-line

6.. What can we conclude about opener’s hand after 1C – 1H and a rebid of 1NT? (a) Opener must hold 4 clubs. He doesn’t hold hearts, he doesn’t hold spades and he opened 1C. (b) Opener is either 3334 or 3235 shape.

- Check with your partner about your bidding styles “With 3–3 in the minors, which suit do we open?” “With 4–4 in the minors, which suit do we open?” That should help sort it out.

Try bidding these hands in your system. The auctions provided here will be under Better Minor. Dir: West

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