



Conventional Wisdom - part 4

In each of the next several issues, we'll break down a section of the new ACBL convention card. See pages 18-19 of the March issue for the complete card and a glossary of terms and abbreviations.

Two-level opening bids

The 2♣ box has something new that is important: **Very Strong vs Strong**. Some extra terms and options have been added to the new card to reflect this. The old card simply had options for 2♣ as "strong" and "other." There are now restrictions on 2♣ openers that didn't exist before. Not all events allow a **Strong** artificial 2♣ opening bid. If it is allowed, it must be Alerted.

Very Strong: A hand that contains: at least 20 HCP, or at least 14 HCP and is within one trick of game, assuming suits break evenly among the other hands, or at least 5 Control Points (Ace = 2 points, King = 1 point) and is within one trick of game, assuming suits break evenly among the other hands.

Strong: A hand that contains: at least 15 HCP, or at least 14 HCP and meets the Rule of 24 (number of cards in two longest suits plus number of high-card points must be at least 24), or at least 5 Control Points and is within one trick of game, assuming suits break evenly among the other hands.

Natural: Many strong-club systems such as Precision use a 2♣ opening bid to show a limited hand with a five-card or longer club suit.

Conventional: If your 2♣ opening bid is anything other than **Very Strong**, it must be Alerted and fully explained.

Responses to 2♣

2♦ Neg or Waiting: No Alert required.

Steps: There is a line next to the Steps box to indicate if you play steps showing levels of high card points or Control Points-showing steps.

2♥ Neg: If you play 2♥ as an artificial negative bid, then you must Alert.

Other Use this space for a general explanation of conventional responses to a natural or conventional 2♣ opening bid.

Weak two-bids

Weak two-bids do not require an Alert. **Intermediate** or **Strong** two-bids do.

2♦ Any conventional agreements such as showing an opening hand with both majors (Flannery) or opening strength with a three-suited hand (Mini-Roman).

2♥/2♠

There is an additional option to check if your 2♥/2♠ bid shows **two suits**.

2 LEVEL	2♣ ___ to ___	2♦ Neg <input type="checkbox"/> Waiting <input type="checkbox"/>
	Very Str <input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Nat <input type="checkbox"/> Conv <input type="checkbox"/>	Steps <input type="checkbox"/> ___ 2♥ Neg <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other _____	
	2♦ ___ to ___	New Suit NF <input type="checkbox"/>
Wk <input type="checkbox"/> Int <input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Conv <input type="checkbox"/>	Rebids over 2NT: _____ Other _____	
2♥ ___ to ___	New Suit NF <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wk <input type="checkbox"/> Int <input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Suits <input type="checkbox"/>	Rebids over 2NT: _____ Other _____	
2♠ ___ to ___	New Suit NF <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wk <input type="checkbox"/> Int <input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Suits <input type="checkbox"/>	Rebids over 2NT: _____ Other _____	

Rebids over 2NT

This space is to summarize your agreements about opener's rebid after a 2NT "asking" bid.

Responses to two-level opening bids vary. Over weak two-bids, many play 2NT as asking for a feature or Ogust (a method of describing opener's suit and hand quality which employs artificial step responses). If a **New Suit** by responder is non-forcing, that is an Alert and the box should be checked if that is your partnership agreement. **Other** is for any conventional response to a two-level opening bid.