

## Other Ways to Get Into the Bidding

### Rule of 20

Add the number of Cards in your two longest suits. Add this total to your HCP and if this yields a value of 20+, you may Open the Bidding. Examples:

- a) ♠AJ753 ♥KQ985 ♦3 ♣85 – 10 HCP + 5♠ + 5♥ = 20.....Open 1♠
- b) ♠A832 ♥KQ9854 ♦3 ♣85 – 9 HCP + 4♠ + 6♥ = 20.....Open 1♥ rather than 2♥
- c) ♠53 ♥Q985 ♦AK96543 ♣ -- 9 HCP + 4♥ + 7♦ = 20.....Open 1♦ rather than 3♦

In the last two examples the 1-level Opening allows for Partner to have in (b) 4♠'s or in (c) 4♥'s. In these cases you might in (b) find an 8-Card ♠ fit or a 9-Card ♥ fit and in (c) an 8-Card ♥ fit. If these alternate fits are found then your long suit becomes a valuable side suit.

### Rule of 22

Most people are more comfortable with this Rule compared to the Rule of 20. There are two ways to apply the Rule of 22. The easier method adds the number of Quick Tricks to the value achieved using the Rule of 20. Quick Tricks are A=1 and AK=2. In the examples above only (c) meets the Rule of 22. One can substitute Quick tricks with the notion of "Defensive tricks" to arrive at the number "22".

#### *Defensive Tricks*

We count defensive tricks as follows: To the Quick trick category of A=1 and AK=2 we add Kx = ½, KQ = 1, AQ = 1½, AQJ or AJT = 2 (note: any 3-Card suit with 3 honors including the T yields 2 defensive tricks).

### Rule of 15

While the Rules of 20 and 22 apply to any seat, the Rule of 15 applies only to 4<sup>th</sup> seat, the Pass-Out seat. For the Rule of 15: add your HCP to the number of ♠'s in your hand. If that value is 15 or higher Open 1♠. The rationale behind this Rule is that Opening 1♠ forces any opponent to have to bid at the 2-level to outbid you. If you bid any other suit an Opponent can outbid you at the 1-level; you have opened the possibility for an opponent who couldn't Open with a 10-11 HCP/5-Card suit hand to enter the bidding through an OverCall and possibly get the Contract. The Rule of 15 avoids having a hand capable of making a part-score from being Pass-Out.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Seat Light Opening

With a strong suit many experts recommend Opening that suit with only 10-11 HCP but only in the 3<sup>rd</sup> seat. The rationale: With two players already having shown less than Opening points and you holding this type of hand there are two likely situations. First, everyone at the table has a similar hand (perhaps without the strong suit). If that is the case then the HCPs are almost evenly distributed and your side has an equal (or better with your strong suit) advantage in finding a part-score Contract. The second possibility is that the two passed hands are indeed that weak in which case your LHO, sitting in 4<sup>th</sup> seat, has a very strong hand. If this is the case your LHO is going to OverCall, taking you off the hook. In the meantime you have given partner a "hint" at their best opening lead.

You should be aware of a singular danger in this strategy. Partner Passed because he didn't have quite enough HCP to Open, 10-11 HCP, and may like your suit and give you a **limit raise**. Not what you want after Opening light! To avoid this there is a Conventional bid for Partner to make, the Drury bid. But if you have not learned this Convention don't let it stop you from 3<sup>rd</sup> Seat Light Opening.