

## Two Club Relay after One Major Opening

In Standard system One of a suit Opening shows 12-21 hcp. When Opener opens the bidding with one Major, there are lot of conventions that deals if responder has 4 card support and game forcing values. However if responder has only 3-card support and relatively balanced hand of 15-16 hcp, generally it is difficult to show the hand. Also if opener has around 15 hcp, both opener and responder do not know combined assets of the partnership and therefore slam bidding is occasionally difficult.

Years ago playing in our Saturday bridge tournament, I came across a pair who were playing one major – two club relay asking for point range. 2♦ response showed 11-13 HCP and other bids showed 14-15 HCP. I was wondering what is the utility of such a bid until I came across 2♣ relay played by Italians. In my opinion this is one of the best convention tailor made for Standard system. There are various ways you can play this convention. We present one of the methods below (which we are playing):

### A) 2♣ Relay after One Heart Opening Bid

The Two Club response to One Major opening bid promises one of the following hand:

- 11+ HCP and 5+ card club suit
- Any balanced game forcing hand
- 3 or 4-card support for opener's major and GF hand
- 3-card limit raise hand (with this our 1NT response denies 3-card support with limit raise values and therefore allows us to play semi-forcing NT which we prefer over forcing NT)

The complete structure of responses and further developments over 1♥ Opening is as follows:

<p><b>1♥-2♣-?</b>                      2♦ = Min hand (upto 14hcp, denies other major)                      2♥ = 4-card Other major (♠), any strength                      2♠ = 4+-card ♣, 15+ hcp                      2N = Single suiter hand, 15+ hcp                      3♣ = 5♥s and 4♦s, 15+ hcp                      3♦ = 5♥s and 5♦s, 15+ hcp                      3♥/♠ = 6♥s and 4♦s, 15+ hcp, shortness in ♣/♠                      3N = 5-3-3-2 hand, 2 clubs, 15-17 hcp                      4♣/♦ = 6♥s and 5♦s, 15+ hcp, void ♣/♠</p>	<p><b>1♥-2♣-2♥ (4-card other major) - ?</b>                      2♠ = GF relay, opener to describe his hand                      2N = Natural, forcing with ♣ suit                      3♣ = Shows 6-card ♣ suit, non forcing                      3♦ = Forcing, like 4<sup>th</sup> suit force, may be natural                      3♥ = 3-card limit raise                      3♠ = Agrees spade, asks for cue bidding                      3N = to play                      4♦ = splinter, 4-card ♠ support</p>
<p><b>1♥-2♣-2♦ (Min hand) - ?</b>                      2♥ = GF relay, responses same as with 15+ hcp                      2♠ = Natural shows 5+ ♣s and 4+ ♠s                      2N = Natural, forcing with ♣ suit                      3♣ = Shows 6-card ♣ suit, non forcing                      3♦ = Natural, 5+ ♣s and 4+ ♦s                      3♥ = 3-card limit raise</p>	<p><b>1♥-2♣-2♥-2♠ (relay) - ?</b>                      2N = Min hand, 11-14 hcp (3♣-relay)                      3♣ = 4-5 hand with 3+ ♣s, 15+ hcp                      3♦ = 4-5 hand with 3+ ♦s, 15+ hcp                      3♥/♠ = 6♥s and 4/5♠s, 15+ hcp                      3N = 4-5-2-2 distribution, 15-17 hcp                      4N = 4-5-2-2 distribution, 18-19 hcp</p>
<p><b>1♥-2♣-2♠ (4+ clubs, 15+ hcp) - ?</b>                      2N = relay, opener describes his hand                      3♣ = 5♥s and 4 ♣s (3♦-relay)                      3♦ = 5♥s and 5♠s                      3♥/♠ = 6♥s and 4♠s, shortness in ♦/♠                      3N = 5♥s, 4♠s &amp; 4♦s                      4♣/♦ = 6♥s and 5♠s, shortness in ♠/♦                      3♣ = Natural, clubs agreed                      3♦/3♠ = Either stopper ask or advance cue bid                      3♥ = Hearts agreed, start cue-bidding                      4♥ = 3-card limit raise</p>	<p><b>1♥-2♣-2♥-2♠-2N-3♣ (relay) - ?</b>                      3♦ = 4-5 hand and 3-cards a minor (3♥=relay)                      3♠ = 4-5-3-1 hand, (singleton ♣)                      3N = 4-5-1-3 hand, (singleton ♦)                      3♥ = 6♥s and 4♠s                      3♠ = 6♥s and 5♠s                      3N = 4-5-2-2 hand, 12-14 hcp</p>
<p>1♥-2♣-2♠-2N-3♣-3♦-? or 1♥-2♣-3♣-3♦-? Or                      1♥-2♣-2♦-2♥-2♠-2N-3♣-3♦-? or                      1♥-2♣-2♦-2♥-3♣-3♦-?                      3♥ = singleton in other minor                      3♠ = singleton in ♠                      3N = 5-4-2-2 distribution</p>	<p><b>1♥-2♣-2N (single suiter, 15+ hcp) - ?</b>                      3♣ = Relay, opener to describe his hand                      3♦ = 6♥s and some singleton                      3♥ = 6♥s and no short suit                      3♠ = 5♥s and 3♠s, 17+ hcp                      3N = 5♥s and 3♠s, 15-16 hcp                      3♦ = 5+♠s and 4+♦s                      3♥ = Extras with ♥ fit, start cue-bidding                      3♠ = 5+♠s and 4+♠s                      4♥ = 3-card limit raise</p>

When playing 2♣ relay, 2NT Jacoby is no longer required and 2NT response can be put to a better use. We will conclude our discussion with responses after One Spade opening.

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## Two Club Relay after One Major Opening

So far we have discussed responses after One Heart opening. The developments after one spade opening are similar and works better.

### B) 2C Relay after One Spade Opening Bid

The complete structure of responses and further developments over 1♠ Opening is as follows:

<p><b>1♠-2♣-?</b></p> <p>2♦ = Min hand (upto 14hcp, denies other major)</p> <p>2♥ = 4+-card ♥, any strength</p> <p>2♠ = 4+-card ♠, 15+ hcp</p> <p>2N = Single suiter hand, 15+ hcp</p> <p>3♣ = 5♠s and 4♦s, 15+ hcp</p> <p>3♦ = 5♠s and 5♦s, 15+ hcp</p> <p>3♥/♠ = 6♠s and 4♦s, 15+ hcp, shortness in ♥/♠</p> <p>3N = 5-3-3-2 hand, 2 clubs, 15-17 hcp</p> <p>4♣/♦ = 6♠s and 5♦s, 15+ hcp, void ♣/♥</p>	<p><b>1♠-2♣-2♥ (4-card ♥) - ?</b></p> <p>2♠ = GF relay, opener to describe his hand</p> <p>2N = Natural, forcing with ♣ suit</p> <p>3♣ = Shows 6-card club suit, non forcing</p> <p>3♦ = Forcing, like 4<sup>th</sup> suit force, may be natural</p> <p>3♥ = Agrees ♥s, asks for cue bidding</p> <p>3♠ = 3-card limit raise</p> <p>3N = to play</p> <p>4♦ = splinter, 4-card ♥ support</p>
<p><b>1♠-2♣-2♦ (Min hand) - ?</b></p> <p>2♥ = GF relay, responses same as with 15+ hcp</p> <p>2♠ = 3-card limit raise (you can play game tries)</p> <p>2N = Natural, forcing with ♣ suit</p> <p>3♣ = Shows 6-card ♣ suit, non forcing</p> <p>3♦ = Natural, 5+♠s and 4+♦s</p> <p>3♥ = Natural shows 5+♠s and 4+♥s</p>	<p><b>1♠-2♣-2♥-2♠ (relay) - ?</b></p> <p>2N = Min hand, 11-14 hcp (3♣-relay)</p> <p>3♣ = 5-4 hand with 3+♠s, 15+ hcp</p> <p>3♦ = 5-4 hand with 3+♦s, 15+ hcp</p> <p>3♥ = 5+♠s and 5♥s, 15+ hcp</p> <p>3♠ = 6♠s and 4♥s, 15+ hcp</p> <p>3N = 5-4-2-2 distribution, 15-17 hcp</p>
<p><b>1♠-2♣-2♠ (4+ clubs, 15+ hcp) - ?</b></p> <p>2N = relay, opener describes his hand</p> <p>3♣ = 5♠s and 4♠s (3♦-relay)</p> <p>3♦ = 5♠s and 5♠s</p> <p>3♥/♠ = 6♠s and 4♠s, shortness in ♥/♦</p> <p>3N = 5♠s, 4♠s &amp; 4♦s</p> <p>4♣/♦ = 6♠s and 5♠s, shortness in ♥/♦</p> <p>3♣ = Natural, clubs agreed</p> <p>3♦/♥ = Either stopper ask or advance cue bid</p> <p>3♠ = ♠s agreed, start cue-bidding</p> <p>4♠ = 3-card limit raise</p>	<p><b>1♠-2♣-2♥-2♠-2N-3♣ (relay) - ?</b></p> <p>3♦ = 5-4 hand and 3-cards a minor (3♥=relay)</p> <p>3♠ = 5-4-3-1 hand, (singleton ♣)</p> <p>3N = 5-4-1-3 hand, (singleton ♦)</p> <p>3♥ = 5+♠s and 5♥s</p> <p>3♠ = 6♠s and 4♥s</p> <p>3N = 5-4-2-2 hand, 12-14 hcp</p>
<p>1♠-2♣-2♠-2N-3♣-3♦-? or 1♠-2♣-3♣-3♦-? Or</p> <p>1♠-2♣-2♦-2♥-2♠-2N-3♣-3♦-? - ? or</p> <p>1♠-2♣-2♦-2♥-3♣-3♦-?</p> <p>3♥ = singleton in ♥</p> <p>3♠ = singleton in other minor</p> <p>3N = 5-4-2-2 distribution</p>	<p><b>1♠-2♣-2N (single suiter, 15+ hcp) - ?</b></p> <p>3♣ = Relay, opener to describe his hand</p> <p>3♦ = 6♠s and some singleton</p> <p>3♥ = 6♠s and no short suit</p> <p>3♠ = 5♠s and 3♠s, 17+ hcp</p> <p>3N = 5♠s and 3♠s, 15-16 hcp</p> <p>3♦ = 5+♠s and 4+♦s</p> <p>3♥ = 5+♠s and 4+♥s</p> <p>3♠ = Extras with ♠ fit, start cue-bidding</p> <p>4♠ = 3-card limit raise</p>

We now see this convention in action with some real life examples.

### C) Examples :

North Opener	South Responder	West Opener	East Responder	West Responder	East Opener
♠ AKJ84	♠ T9	♠ 8	♠ AK56	♠ T7	♠ A9832
♥ 32	♥ KJ84	♥ A9764	♥ K8	♥ K984	♥ A6
♦ A	♦ KJT9	♦ A5	♦ J843	♦ AKT2	♦ QJ64
♣ QJT53	♣ AK6	♣ AKT85	♣ QJ9	♣ KT6	♣ AJ
North opens the bidding as 1S and the bidding should proceed as: 1S-2C-2S-2N-3D-3H and so on for an excellent slam. The normal bidding would go 1S-1N-2C-3N-P		West bids 1H and the bidding proceeds: 1H-2C-2S-2N-3D-3S-4D and so on. An easy little slam with the system. Without this, the normal bidding may be 1H-1S-2C-3N-P		East opens 1S and the bidding proceeds: 1S-2C-3C-3D-3N-4C and so on to reach excellent little slam.	

These are only few examples of this convention. We have come across many such examples which clearly shows the advantage of this convention. Highly recommended for all tournament players.