



AN HONORS eBook FROM MASTER POINT PRESS

Bruce Watson

Foreword by Eric Kokish

Strong Club, Unbalanced Diamond

With five-card majors and a weak notrump

Text © 2020 Bruce Watson
Cover image: 123RF/dolgachov

All rights reserved.

Honors eBooks is an imprint of Master Point Press. All contents, editing and design (excluding cover design) are the sole responsibility of the authors.

Master Point Press
214 Merton St. Suite 205
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M4S 1A6 (647) 956-4933
info@masterpointpress.com

www.masterpointpress.com
www.bridgeblogging.com
www.teachbridge.com
www.ebooksbridge.com

ISBN: 978-1-77140-326-9

Cover Design: Olena S. Sullivan/New Mediatrix

1 2 3 4 5 6 23 22 21 20

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Richard Lash, Randy Bennett and my wife, Maureen Volk, for playing Strong Club, Unbalanced Diamond (SCUD) with me and contributing several useful ideas. They also had to deal with my frequent changes, also called improvements, to the system and did so with alacrity.

A big thanks to Maureen, who was my editor. However, as it should be, any remaining mistakes are mine alone.

Unwitting contributors to this book were club players at Bridge on the Edge in St. John's and Adobe Bridge Center in Tucson. Thanks to them for suffering through all the alerts and helping to improve the product.

Finally, big thanks to the staff at Master Point Press for their professional support throughout.

Bruce Watson
St. John's, NL, Canada

Foreword

It will not come as a surprise that most system books are a labor of love for the author, who at some level believes that a serious partnership adopting his methods will see a significant gain in effectiveness. In an age when there is so much free material available on the internet and book prices are inevitably quite high, even the best package of treatments might not gain much traction in the marketplace.

It is not only because Bruce is a fellow Canadian that I would very much like to see his system opus well received, with the sales numbers to create some buzz in the bridge community. Unlike so many system books, “SCUD” is both a thoughtfully organized and a beautifully presented set of “living” system notes, carefully avoiding the dryness to which such projects are susceptible.

The author’s introduction will set the scene for you and touch on where he is going as the book moves forward. Inevitably, any complete system has many moving parts. By showing early in the book how and why these parts blend together logically, the author helps the would-be SCUD-launching partnership master the system without enduring a steep learning curve.

Anyone who knows me will understand my strong bias favoring the weak notrump, a SCUD feature that helped to attract my attention. Although the catch-all (and I use the term in its broadest sense) 1♦ opening is a staple of most strong-club systems, in large part because it allows opener an opportunity to get into the auction first with relative safety with a vast number of hands that would not otherwise be opened, I have never cared much for an unstructured 1♦. SCUD’s 1♦ does cover a fair amount of ground, but it is not an excuse to open hands that do not look like opening bids. You will find some interesting material in that chapter and in the other main system openings.

But apart from its presentation of many different treatments and ideas, SCUD is a system that you will find fun to play once you acquire a good feel for the methods. Perhaps there is no greater testimonial.

Eric O. Kokish

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Notation	4
Abbreviations	5
Counting Points	5
Balanced, Semi-Balanced, Unbalanced.....	6
Chapter One: SCUD Opening Bids	7
Opening Bid Summary	7
Opening Bid Details	8
Opening Bids Exercise Set	11
Answers to Opening Bids Exercise Set	12
Chapter Two: 1♦ Opening and Responses	13
Responses to 1♦	14
Auctions Starting 1♦ - 1M or 1♦ - 1NT	15
DMZ Auctions.....	17
Auctions Starting 1♦ - 2m.....	18
Handling Interference Over 1♦.....	19
1♦ Exercise Set	26
Answers to 1♦ Exercise Set	28
Chapter Three: 1♣ Opening and Responses	30
Responses to 1♣	31
Double-Barreled Birthright over 1♣ - 1♦	32
Other Continuations over 1♣ - 1♦	34
Auctions Starting 1♣ - 1M	35
Transfers and Relay Checkback (TARC).....	37
Scudzilli over 1♣ - 1M.....	40
Other Continuations After a 1♣ Opening	42
Handling Interference over 1♣.....	43
Optional Precision-Style Asking Bids.....	52
Summary Tables.....	55
1♣ Exercise Set.....	58
Answers to 1♣ Exercise Set	60
Example Hands: 1♣ and 1♦ Auctions.....	62

Chapter Four: 1NT Opening and Responses	67
Option 1: Stayman, Slam-Try Stayman.....	67
Option 2: Extended Transfers with Scramble Stayman.....	70
Contested Auctions over 1NT	75
1NT Exercise Set.....	82
Answers to 1NT Exercise Set.....	84
Chapter Five: 1♥/1♠ Openings and Responses.....	86
Responses to 1M	87
Major-Suit Raise Structure	88
Other Continuations.....	89
When the Opponents Compete over 1M	91
1♥/1♠ Exercise Set.....	95
Answers to 1♥/1♠ Exercise Set.....	97
Chapter Six: 2♣ Opening and Responses	99
When the Opponents Compete over 2♣.....	101
What to Open with Both Majors: A Summary	102
2♣ Exercise Set.....	103
Answers to 2♣ Exercise Set	105
Chapter Seven: 2♦ Opening and Responses	107
When the Opponents Compete over 2♦.....	109
2♦ Exercise Set	111
Answers to 2♦ Exercise Set	113
Example Hands: Other Opening Bids	115
Chapter Eight: TAPS and the Notrump Ladder	118
Transfers and Puppet Stayman (TAPS).....	119
If the Opponents Interfere with TAPS or TARC.....	124
Chapter Nine: 2♥/2♠ Openings and Responses.....	127
Option 1: KISS	127
Option 2: Ogust	128
Option 3: Flexi Two-Bids.....	128
Option 4: Fantunes	129

Chapter Ten: Three- and Four-Level Preemptive Openings	133
Chapter Eleven: Slam Bidding.....	135
Option 1: Roman Keycard Blackwood.....	135
Option 2: Kickback (KRKB).....	142
Option 3: Kickbo	144
Sequences Which Agree on the Key Suit.....	146
When is 4NT not RKB?	147
Cue-Bidding	150
Optional Slam-Bidding Tools.....	151
Example Hands: Slam Bidding with RKB	154
Chapter Twelve: Competitive Bidding	156
Takeout Doubles.....	156
Overcalls Over One of a Suit.....	159
Advancing Suit Overcalls.....	159
1NT Overcall.....	166
Competing with a Strong 6-4 or 5-4 Hand	168
Competing in Balancing Seat	168
Other Competitive Situations	169
Advancing Overcalls Exercise Set	171
Answers to Advancing Overcalls Exercise Set	173
Chapter Thirteen: Conventions and Defenses	175
Pivot: When the Opponents Open a Strong Notrump	175
When the Opponents Open a Weak Notrump	176
When the Opponents Open a Strong Club.....	177
Heart Attack: When The Opponents Open an Amorphous 1♦.....	179
When the Opponents Open a Flannery 2♦.....	180
When the Opponents Open a Multi 2♦.....	180
When the Opponents Preempt.....	181
Defense to Two-Level Jacoby Transfers.....	183

Chapter Fourteen: Defense	185
POST	185
The Opening Lead	186
Defensive Signals	190
Optional Defensive Treatments	196
Appendix 1: Selected Tables	200
Flip Sequences.....	200
Major-Suit Raises	200
What to Open with Both Majors	203
The Various Meanings of Redouble.....	203
Notrump Ladder	204
Standard Leads Against Notrump Contracts	205
Standard Leads Against Suit Contracts	206
Appendix 2: Conventional 2NT	207
Appendix 3: Executive Summary	210
Appendix 4: Auction Index	212
Opening Bids and First Response.....	212
1♣ Auctions	213
1♦ Auctions.....	216
1♥/1♠ Auctions	218
1NT Auctions	220
2♣ Auctions	221
2♦ Auctions.....	222
Transfers and Puppet Stayman (TAPS).....	223
Ripcord and Interference after a 1NT Opening	226
Interference after a 1♣ Opening	227
Interference after a 1♦ Opening.....	228
Convention Card	231
Bibliography	232
Index	233

Introduction

This book describes a complete strong-club system. Why learn a strong club? This is an oversimplification, but there are only two fundamental approaches to bidding. They are distribution first, strength second, and the reverse of that—strength first, distribution second. Standard and 2/1 are in the former category, while Precision and Strong Club, Unbalanced Diamond are in the latter. Neither approach is better than the other for everyone. I will say that strength followed by distribution is better for me. It suits my style and bridge temperament better. I prefer knowing almost immediately whether we are in the part-score, game or slam zone. But, even if a strong-club approach isn't to your liking, it's in your interest to see how it works, if only to help you defend against pairs using one.

This project began in 2013, when I started writing up system notes for a strong-club system that I liked and was trying to learn. The motivation came from a book by Marshall Miles entitled *My System, The Unbalanced Diamond* (Miles, 2007). Miles's book does an excellent job of explaining the logic behind his system. But when I found that I was having difficulty actually learning it from the book, I decided to write the notes.

For that reason, you may find *Strong Club, Unbalanced Diamond* (unimaginatively shortened to SCUD) to be a strange read. System notes are usually more abbreviated than a system book. There is very little here in the way of supporting justification for some of the choices. A lot of that is available in Miles's book. Much of this book consists of bidding sequences with explanations of what the last call in the sequence means or what other calls at that point should mean. In spite of a lack of explanatory text, this book may appeal to any partnership interested in learning a very effective bidding system that is a lot of fun to play. At the very least you may find a treatment in SCUD that you can graft onto your favorite system.

The core of SCUD is the same as in Miles's book—strong club, unbalanced diamond, five-card majors, weak notrump, strong 2♣ and strong 2♦. I have also retained his point-count ranges for those bids. But some things had to change. For example, Miles's 2♦ opening was, in my opinion, unplayable. His 2♣ opening had some problems as well. I also wanted to use transfer responses to the strong club but retain the negative one diamond. Finally, the end product had to comply with the General Convention Chart, now the Open Chart, of the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL).

My advice to any partnership that wants to try SCUD is to learn the 1♣, 1♦, 2♣ and 2♦ opening bids and responses first. These four bids are interconnected. Changing something in any one of them is likely to have a domino effect on the others. The Auction Index in Appendix 4, starting on page 212, may help reduce the learning curve for this part of the system.

I also recommend that you have firm agreements on what various calls mean when the opponents intervene. All systems are less effective in the face of serious preemption. The ease with which the opponents can enter the auction over 1♣ is regarded as a weakness of big-club systems. In addition, SCUD is a “light-opening” system. So, after your opening bid, the opponents will enter the auction more frequently than usual. You will need methods not only to cope with that interference, but to take advantage of it if possible. The tools you need are in these notes.

Beyond the core of 1♣, 1♦, 2♣ and 2♦, I give my personal choices for responding to the remaining opening bids and some suggestions for competitive tools, ace-asking methods and defense. Most partnerships already have responses they like to use after an opening 1♥, 1♠, 1NT or weak two-bid. You may like your methods better than mine, so by all means use your favorites.

For anyone trying to learn SCUD, the opening-bid structure is easy to remember. But, for the system to be really effective, you need the details. Here are some of the highlights.

In the 1♣ chapter, **Relay Checkback** is a version of Checkback Stayman modified to work with the major-suit transfer responses, which I call flips. A notrump rebid after a 1♣ opening could conceal a five-card major. With **Transfers and Relay Checkback (TARC)** after flips, all 4-4 and 5-3 major fits with invitational or better responding hands can be uncovered, while allowing the stronger hand to declare in most cases.

Another treatment after the 1♣ opening is **Double-Barreled Birthright**. Birthright is an idea of Eric Kokish. He applied it at the two-level, but Miles used it at the one-level. After an opening bid of 1♣ and a response of 1♦, Miles used a 1♥ rebid as a puppet to 1♠. Then rebids of 1NT or 2NT showed balanced hands of 18-19 or 26-27 HCP respectively. I expanded on this to show some other unbalanced 20+ distributions with different opener rebids. Finally, I added a parallel sequence (the “second barrel”) after the 1♣ - 1♦ start, using the 1♠ rebid as a puppet to 1NT to allow opener to show additional specific distributions and strengths. That left the (nice) problem of showing those 20+ Birthright hands when responder’s

first bid was 1M instead of 1♦. My solution was to add **Scudzilli**, a system-dependent variation of Gazzilli.

In the 1♦ chapter, there is a treatment denoted **DMZ**. This refers to responder's 2♣ and 2♦ rebids after the uncontested auctions 1♦ - 1M - 1♠/1NT. I call it DMZ because it has a vague similarity to the popular convention XYZ and only arises after a 1♦ opening (**D**) and a 1M response.

The **Transfer and Puppet Stayman (TAPS)** scheme described in the book has been cobbled together from a variety of different sources. There is nothing particularly new in it, although I haven't seen anything exactly like it elsewhere. One virtue is that it works more or less the same over 1NT as it does over 2NT. Another is that if you allow a notrump opening bid with 2-2 in the majors, TAPS will handle it.

My **Jacoby 2NT** response to a 1M opening has a different twist. After either of opener's likely rebids, responder can ask for shortness or show his own shortness.

Pivot, Heart Attack and **SDI** are my inventions. Heart Attack is new, but Pivot was published in *The Bridge World* (Watson, Pivot, 2013), and SDI appeared in the *Canadian Bridge Digest* (Watson, Canadian Premier Bridge League, 1987). SDI was the plot thread in my first and only attempt at writing bridge humor.

A way to quickly determine declarer's parity and unique suit from **Vinje's Distribution Signal** comes from a table in an article I wrote for *The Bridge World* (Watson, Distribution Signals and Symbols, 2014). It was posted on their web site in the "Esoterica" section in November 2014. The table in these notes is an improvement based on an idea by John Sheehan.

Transfer advances of partner's overcalls are not a new idea, but my motivation for using them is. As with Bergen-style raises, I think it important to let the overcaller know whether advancer's raise is based on three-card or four-card support. In the SCUD version of transfer advances, we can always distinguish a constructive three-card raise from a four-card raise of the same strength, whether or not the opponents bid directly after the overcall. The same transfer scheme is used after interference over our partner's 1M and 2M openings.

Strong Club, Unbalanced Diamond starts with a chapter on the opening bid structure. Eight of the remaining thirteen chapters discuss an opening

bid (or set of opening bids) and the response structure over that opening in both uncontested and contested auctions. The core of the system is chapters one, two, three, six, and seven. Since Puppet Stayman plays a major role, chapter eight is also important. The last four chapters focus on slam bidding, competitive bidding, some suggestions for conventions to try when the opponents open the bidding, and defense.

I've tried to indicate many of the situations where an announcement or an alert is required. I have no doubt missed some, or suggested making alerts where none are needed. The ACBL announcement and alert procedures were being revised as this book was being prepared, so some things will change. References herein are to the current (2020) procedure. No matter what I have indicated, you should announce or alert in whatever manner your National Bridge Organization requires. The Convention Card of the ACBL may also be under revision. The card included in this book uses the current style.

After his book appeared in 2007, Miles and his partner Stephen Goldstein used their version of Unbalanced Diamond in *The Bridge World's* monthly bidding contest. You can see his system in action in the September 2010 (Kokish & Kraft, Challenge the Champs, 2010) and October 2010 (Kokish & Kraft, Challenge the Champs, 2010) issues.

Notation

A distribution symbol like 3=1=5=4, for example, indicates a hand with precisely three spades, one heart, five diamonds and four clubs. But 3-1-5-4 indicates any of the twenty-four possible distributions with a five-card suit, a four-card suit, a three-card suit and a singleton. The symbol 3-1=5-4 means 3-1 either way in the majors and 5-4 either way in the minors.

In contested auctions, opponents' bids are in parentheses. For example, 1♣ - (pass) - 1M - (2♦) indicates that we have opened 1♣, first opponent has passed, partner has responded 1♥ or 1♠, and second opponent has bid 2♦. If no bracketed bids appear, assume the opponents have passed throughout.

In the tables, if a call is underlined, e.g., 1♣ - 2♦, the underlined bid will be explained in the right-hand column. If a question mark is underlined, e.g., 1♣ - ?, the right-hand column will describe the options for that call. For easy reference, each option is highlighted in boldface when it first appears.

Abbreviations

GF means game-force. **QGF** stands for a quasi game-force and means forcing to 3NT or four of a minor. **WQGF** is a weak quasi game-force and means forcing to 2NT or three of a minor. In slam bidding, **RKB** stands for Roman Keycard Blackwood, while **KRKB** is Kickback, a variation of RKB.

In addition to the usual suit symbols ♣, ♦, ♥, ♠, the symbols **NT**, **X** and **XX** stand for notrump, double and redouble respectively. **M** stands for either hearts or spades, **oM** is the other major, **m** denotes one of the minors, and **om** the other minor. In bidding sequences such as 1M - 2M or 1m - 2m, both bids in the auction refer to the *same* suit. A lower-case *s* refers to an unspecified suit, as in 2s, which means a two-level bid in any suit. A bid in a second suit is indicated by **os**, as in 2os, which means a two-level bid in any suit other than the suit indicated by *s*.

In the bidding sequences in the tables, “overcall” has been shortened to “**o**’call.” **RHO** and **LHO** stand for right- and left-hand opponent respectively.

Counting Points

HCP stands for 4-3-2-1 high-card points. There are more accurate ways of estimating the strength of a bridge hand than the one made popular by Milton Work. But the advantage of HCP is simplicity. In his book, Miles recommended the use of judgment in choosing opening bids. For example, a hand with a good spade suit might be opened 1♣ with fewer than the recommended 15 HCP. In most cases, I stick with defined point ranges for opening bids, leaving it to individual partnerships to decide when to deviate.

After the opening bid, use your favorite method of counting support (or dummy) points. For a potential suit contract, I add 3-2-1 shortness points with expected support (usually three-card) and 5-3-1 shortness points with unexpected support (four-card or better).

Balanced, Semi-Balanced, Unbalanced

The definitions here apply to opening bids only.

Balanced means any 4-3-3-3 or 4-4-3-2.

With 14 or fewer HCP, semi-balanced means 5-3-3-2 with a five-card minor or 2-2=4-5 with four cards in one minor and five in the other minor.

The definition of semi-balanced is different when opener has 15 or more HCP. Semi-balanced then means *any* 5-3-3-2 hand in addition to 2-2=4-5 hands with four of one minor and five of the other. A 2-4=2-5 hand *may* also be treated as semi-balanced to protect the doubletons.

Any hand that is not balanced or semi-balanced according to these definitions is unbalanced.

Chapter One: SCUD Opening Bids

Opening Bid Summary

Here is a top-down thumbnail summary of the non-preemptive opening bids in SCUD:

- 2♣** Either 20+ HCP unbalanced with a five-card or longer major, or 28+ balanced or semi-balanced.
- 2♦** Either 20+ HCP unbalanced with a five-card or longer minor, or 22-23 balanced or semi-balanced.
- 2NT** 20-21 HCP balanced or semi-balanced.
- 1♣** 15-19 HCP. A few infrequent 20+ hands are also opened 1♣. Excludes unbalanced 15- to 16-HCP hands without a four-card major.
- 1NT** 12-14 HCP. Balanced or semi-balanced. In this point-count range, hands with a five-card major and hands with 2-4=2-5 distribution are not opened 1NT. But 2-2=4-5 is fine.
- 1M** 10-14 HCP with five or more cards in M.
- 1♦** Unbalanced 11- to 14-HCP hands without a five-card or longer major. Also open 1♦ with unbalanced 15- to 16-HCP hands without a four-card or longer major. The opening guarantees a four-card or longer minor.

For the notrump ladder and follow-up sequences, see **TAPS and the Notrump Ladder**, starting on page 118.

For a summary of opening bids for hands containing both major suits, see **What to Open with Both Majors: A Summary**, on page 102.

Opening Bid Details

1NT 12-14 HCP. Balanced or semi-balanced without a five-card major. The semi-balanced distributions are 5-3-3-2 with a five-card minor or 2-2=4-5 with four cards in one minor and five in the other minor. Announce: “12 to 14.”

1M 10-14 HCP, a five-card or longer suit. With a hand in this point range and a five-card major, open 1M even if you have a longer minor. Some 15-HCP 5-5 or 6-5 major-minor hands may also be opened 1M. In addition, 15-HCP hands with four spades and five hearts should be opened 1♥ instead of 1♣. At the low end, a hand with exactly 10 HCP should have an ace and a king, or three kings.

1♦ 11-16 HCP (but only 11-14 with a four-card major) and *no five-card or longer major*. This opening shows a hand with either:

- (i) a six-card or longer minor,
- (ii) a singleton or void, and a four- or five-card minor, or
- (iii) 2-4=2-5 distribution where the five-card suit is a minor and the four-card suit a major.

This opening says nothing about diamonds (“0+”). Announce: “Could be short. Zero-plus.”

1♣ Shows:

- (i) 15-19 HCP (balanced, semi-balanced or unbalanced) with the exception of unbalanced 15- or 16-HCP hands without a four-card major that qualify for an opening bid of 1♦,
- (ii) any hand with 20+ HCP and 5-4 or 6-4 in the majors,
- (iii) any hand with 20+ HCP and 4-4-4-1 or 4-4-5-0 shape where the five-card suit is a minor, or
- (iv) any balanced or semi-balanced hand of 24-27 HCP.

See page 6 for definitions of balanced and semi-balanced.

Requires an alert. If asked, explain: “Artificial and forcing. 15+ HCP. Usually 15 to 19.”

2♣ Either 28+ HCP in a balanced or semi-balanced hand (see page 6), or an unbalanced hand with 20+ HCP and at least one five-card or longer major. However, hands with 20+ HCP and 5-4 or 6-4 distribution in the majors are opened 1♣.

A 2♣ opening with an unbalanced hand will show:

- (i) a six-card or longer major,
- (ii) a five-card major and another five-card or longer suit, or
- (iii) a five-card major and a four-card minor.

Any hand with 18-19 HCP mostly in aces and kings, along with a chunky six-card or longer major or two five-card majors, should be upgraded to a 2♣ opening.

I suggest you alert 2♣, although, apparently, no alert is required.

2♦ Either:

- (i) a balanced or semi-balanced hand (see page 6) with exactly 22-23 HCP, or
- (ii) an unbalanced hand with 20+ HCP and a five-card or longer minor.

The unbalanced 2♦ opening shows:

- (i) a six-card or longer minor, or
- (ii) a singleton or void and a five-card minor, or
- (iii) 2-4=2-5 distribution where the five-card suit is a minor and the four-card suit is a major. A 2-4=2-5 hand may be treated as semi-balanced to protect the doubletons.

2♦ requires an alert. Explain: “22 to 23 balanced or 20+ unbalanced with a five-card or longer minor.”

2M Weak. 6-9 HCP and usually a six-card suit. Denies four cards in the other major (oM). Depending on your choice of responding methods, some 5-4 or 5-5 hands, where the second suit is a minor, may also qualify.

2NT 20-21 HCP. Balanced or semi-balanced (see page 6).

- 3m** “Aggressive Rule of 123” (AR123).¹ A six- or seven-card suit is expected.
- 3M** AR123. A seven-card suit is expected.
- 3NT** Unspecified eight-card minor. AR123. Requires an alert.
- 4m** Namyats. Requires an alert.
- 4M** AR123. Shows an eight-card suit. Weaker than Namyats.

¹ This means not completely crazy, i.e., closer to the Rule of 123 than to the modern style.

Opening Bids Exercise Set

Assume you are in first or second position. What is your SCUD opening bid with each of the following? Answers are on the next page.

1. ♠ AQ74 ♥ A53 ♦ KQJ105 ♣ 8
2. ♠ K107 ♥ AJ7 ♦ Q98 ♣ K842
3. ♠ QJ94 ♥ A64 ♦ 2 ♣ A10752
4. ♠ AJ ♥ 8754 ♦ 53 ♣ AK1065
5. ♠ AK1053 ♥ K1096 ♦ AQJ ♣ 5
6. ♠ KQ853 ♥ 6 ♦ AQ10642 ♣ 5
7. ♠ KQJ853 ♥ A86 ♦ A106 ♣ 5
8. ♠ AKQJ853 ♥ AJ6 ♦ A6 ♣ 5
9. ♠ A8 ♥ 65 ♦ J9 ♣ AKQJ1043
10. ♠ AQJ5 ♥ A6 ♦ 10 ♣ AKQ873

Answers to Opening Bids Exercise Set

1. Open 1♣. With a four-card major, you are too strong to open 1♦.
2. Open 1NT. The hand is a classic weak notrump.
3. This is a 1♦ opening bid, just as it would be if the club and diamond suits were interchanged.
4. Open 1♦. I do not recommend opening the *weak* 1NT with a four-card major and a five-card minor. The 5-4-2-2 distribution with a five-card minor and four-card major is as balanced as the 1♦ opening bid gets in SCUD.
5. Open 1♣. There is a special rebid available for this one if partner bids 1♦.
6. Open 1♠. In SCUD you are not allowed to open 1♦ with a five-card or longer major.
7. There are only 14 HCP, but you should upgrade this hand and open 1♣. I opened one spade with this and we missed a good game.
8. A solid 2♣ opening bid. Only 19 HCP, but with nine playing tricks and some defense, you should upgrade. Open 2♣, even with a small spade instead of the jack.
9. Open 1♦. Although it has 15 HCP and a solid suit, in an unbalanced hand without a four-card major you need 17-19 to open 1♣. The plan is to rebid 3NT.
10. You have 20 HCP, no five-card major and an unbalanced hand. Open 2♦.

Bibliography

- Bennion, D. (2016). *Scramble Stayman*. Toronto: Master Point Press.
- Casselton, I. (2013). Kickbo. *The Bridge World* 85(1).
- Ewen, R. B. (1970). *Opening Leads*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
- Jacobs, B. (2012). *Fantunes Revealed*. Toronto: Master Point Press.
- Kantar, E. (2008). *Roman Keycard Blackwood, 5th Ed.* Toronto: Master Point Press.
- Kantar, E. B. (1974). *Defensive Bridge Play Complete*. North Hollywood, Calif.: Wilshire Book Company.
- Kelsey, H. (1966). *Killing Defense at Bridge*. New York City: Hart Publishing Company, Inc.
- Kokish, E., & Kraft, B. (2010). Challenge the Champs. *The Bridge World* 81(12).
- Kokish, E., & Kraft, B. (2010). Challenge the Champs. *The Bridge World* 82(1).
- Miles, M. (2007). *My System: The Unbalanced Diamond*. Toronto: Master Point Press.
- Munger, R. (2019). *Kickback: Slam Bidding at Bridge, 2nd Ed.* Toronto: Master Point Press.
- Neill, D. (2017). *Standard Modern Precision: Getting From Here to There*. Toronto: Master Point Press.
- Rosler, L., & Rubens, J. (1988). *Journalist Leads*. Roswell, Georgia: Pando Publications.
- Rubens, J. (1981). The Useful-Space Principle VI. *The Bridge World* 52(7), 27-31.
- Väliäho, T. (2018). Flexi Two-Bids. *The Bridge World* 89(12), 41-42.
- Vinje, H. (1980). *Defensive Play in Bridge*. New York, N.Y.: Sterling Publishing Co.
- Watson, B. (1987). Canadian Premier Bridge League. *Canadian Bridge Digest* 18(1), 29-31.
- Watson, B. (2013). Pivot. *The Bridge World* 84(7), 17-18.
- Watson, B. (2014). *Distribution Signals and Symbols*. Retrieved from The Bridge World:
<https://www.bridgeworld.com/index.php.php?page=/pages/readingroom/esoterica/VinjeRevisited.html>
- Woolsey, K. (1981). *Modern Defensive Signalling in Contract Bridge*. Port Chester, N.Y.: Barclay Bridge Supplies.

Index

- ◀, 67
- 3RC, 139
- AR123, 10
- Asking Bid
 - CAB, 52
 - SAB, 52
 - TAB, 52
- Birthright, 32, 33, 107
- Counting Points, 5
- Defense to
 - Big ♣, 178
 - Flannery, 180
 - Forcing 1NT, 170
 - Jacoby Transfers, 183
 - Multi, 180
 - Short diamond, 179
 - Strong 1NT, 175
 - Suit openings, 159
 - Weak 1NT, 176
 - Weak Twos, 181
- DMZ, 17
- Double
 - Card-showing, 94
 - Negative, 22, 48, 102, 110, 164
 - Penalty, 76, 131
 - Pre-penalty, 80
 - Responsive, 158
 - Support, 23, 50, 94, 170
- Drury, 87
- Either/or, 101, 222
- Example Hands
 - 1♣ and 1♦ Auctions, 62
 - Other Opening Bids, 115
 - Slam Bidding with RKB, 154
- Exclusion *Beta* Ask, 43
- Exclusion Keycard Blackwood, 151
- Exercise Set
 - 1♣, 58
 - 1♦, 26
 - 1M, 95
 - 1NT, 82
 - 2♣, 103
 - 2♦, 111
 - Advancing Overcalls, 171
 - Opening Bids, 11
- Extended Transfers with Scramble Stayman, 70
- Fantunes, 127
- Flannery, 31, 86, 180
- Flip, 31, 46, 48
- Gerber, 68
- GF, 5
- Ghestem, 159, 170
- Heart Attack, 179
- HELLO, 176
- Inverted 2♦ rebid, 18, 22
- Jacoby 2NT, 87, 88, 208
- Kickback, 142
- Leads
 - Hybrid, 188
 - Standard, 186, 205

Leaping Michaels, 180, 182
 Lebensohl, 75, 76, 80, 167, 208
 Mathe, 179
 Namyats, 133
 Negative free bid, 22
 Neutral Redouble, 164, 170
 Notation, 5
 Ogust, 128
 Opening bid
 1♣, 30
 1♥/1♠, 86
 1♦, 13
 1NT, 67
 2♣, 99
 2♦, 107
 Three- and Four-Level, 133
 Weak twos, 127
 Pass-or-correct, 14, 17, 22, 108
 Pick-a-slam, 152
 Pivot, 81, 175
 Puppet Stayman, 34, 119
 QGF, 5, 18, 36, 57
 Quantitative 4NT, 147
 Raptor, 167
 Redouble
 neutral, 164, 170
 Relay Checkback, 2, 38, 39, 40,
 45
 Reverse Flannery, 14, 28, 31,
 45, 218
 Ripcord, 78
 RKB
 Showing a void, 152
 Roman Keycard Blackwood,
 135
 Rusinow Leads, 188
 Scramble Stayman, 70
 SDI, 178
 SKA, 139
 Slam-try Stayman, 69
 Splinter, 17, 128, 129, 130
 System overview, 7
 Table
 Birthright, 56
 Both Majors, 102
 Flips, 55
 Hybrid Leads, 188
 Notrump Ladder, 118, 204
 RKB Continuations, 142
 Standard Leads, 186, 205
 TAPS, 34, 119
 Transfer advances, 159
 Transfer Landy, 176
 Transfer lebensohl, 75
 Truscott, 178
 Two places 4NT, 183
 Upside-down attitude, 190
 Upside-down count, 190
 Vinje Distribution Signal, 196
 WQGF, 5, 36, 57

The basis for the system described in this book was first suggested by Marshall Miles in *My System: the Unbalanced Diamond* (Master Point Press, 2007). The core of SCUD is the same as in Miles' book; that is, strong club, unbalanced diamond, five-card majors and a weak notrump. However, author Bruce Watson felt that the original treatments for the 2♣ and 2♦ openings needed to change. In addition, he wanted to use transfer responses to the strong club but retain the negative 1♦ response. And the end product had to comply with the Open Chart of the ACBL, so it could be played in all but restricted games.

SCUD will appeal to any partnership interested in learning a very effective bidding system that is fun to play. Or, whether you currently favor a strong club or a more natural approach, you may find a treatment in SCUD that you can graft on to your favorite system.



BRUCE WATSON (Canada) was an active tournament player in the 1970s, when he represented Canada in the World Pair Olympiad. After a thirty-year retirement from competitive bridge, he resumed playing in 2013. Always interested in the theory of the game, he has had several articles published by *The Bridge World*.

