

## ANOTHER LOSING TRICK COUNT APPLICATION

By Baloney Bill

### **TWO-CLUB Opening Bids and Responses**

When you open two clubs, your hand is very strong, typically possessing at least 22 points. My partners and I open those hands as well as with hands that possess a **losing trick count between 0-4**. For example, what is the LTC of the following hand? (Spades first, then hearts, then...)

A K 4      K Q 10 5 4 3      K Q J      7      LTC \_\_\_\_\_

How many points? \_\_\_\_\_ If you forgot to adjust those points by adding distributional points, do that now.  
What's your point count now? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you open his hand two clubs? Why or why not?

Do you think my partner and I would? Yes \_\_\_ (please put a check mark in the blank) Well done! You have earned a star.

#### Responses to two-club opening bids

Many response systems exist, but we will focus on one called "Two-Diamonds Waiting." After partner opens 2 clubs, YOU WILL FIRST IMMEDIATELY SAY OUT LOUD "Partner has 22+ points or a hand with a losing trick count of 0-4." Then you will *most likely* bid 2 diamonds.

This 2 diamond bid has nothing to do with your diamond suit. It is an artificial response asking partner to bid her suit after your LHO passes. In the above example, partner would then bid 2 hearts.

If your hand is miserable, e.g. 0-3 points or maybe even 4 points without any heart support, your next bid will be 3 clubs. Now partner knows your hand is miserable and will set the final contract with her next bid, for example, 3 hearts, or 4 hearts. You pass whatever she bids. All done!

If you have 4-9 points, you may wish to raise partner's hearts with 3+ cards in her heart suit; raise to 3 hearts. No need to rush to game. Partner might want to finish the bidding at 3NT and that won't be possible if you jump to 4 hearts. Without heart support (fewer than 3), bid 2NT or bid any five-card suit that you might have headed by an Ace or a King (in this example, perhaps 2 spades, or 3 clubs, or 3 diamonds). If partner rebids her hearts, showing six of them, then two hearts in your hand is sufficient to raise her to 4 hearts.

OK, so you will *most likely* respond to partner's two-club opener with 2 diamonds. Not always. I recommend that you bid 2 NT if you happen to have 10+ points. Now partner knows that your partnership might be able to bid and make a slam, so she can investigate accordingly. We will discuss investigation techniques at a later date.

#### ANOTHER EXAMPLE

Would you open 2 clubs with the following hand? \_\_\_\_\_

A K J 10 8 6 4 2      Q J 9 8 3      No diamonds      No clubs

Well, it passes the 0-4 LTC requirement. And, in this case, you may make a game in spades even if partner has zero points. I'd suggest that you talk this kind of situation over with your partner and come to some kind of agreement so that you are both "on the same page."

Isn't bridge fun? Uh huh (put a check mark in the box): \_\_\_\_\_