

LEVEL 2 and its use in Basic Bridge systems.

The details below are the complete extracts from the EBU Blue Book. You will see that there is an intention to aim this section to include novice events, and it is for that purpose that we reproduce it here.

The eagle eyed amongst you will soon note that much of it is in fairly complex legalese, for which we feel we must apologise. However, one has to have a set of rules for a game, and although the intention of this section is to try and make life simple, in trying to so do, the Powers that Be could be accused of frightening off some of you.

As alluded to in my main article, there has been a great deal of email correspondence amongst the members of the Tournament Committee as to whether or not we should refer to "Level 2" at all. We have opted to include it, but we did want you to know that we ourselves think that, for a "beginners system" it can be rather complex!

Never fear, help will always be at hand in our Welcome, Venture & Basic events, so please feel free to read on if you wish, but don't feel upset if, like me, you find the whole shebang rather confusing.

6 PARTNERSHIP UNDERSTANDINGS: LEVEL 2

6 A Introduction

6 A 1 This level is suggested for novice events, no fear events and events where there are several flights and a separate level is wanted for the lowest flight. The regulations are intentionally expository rather than prescriptive.

6 B General

6 B 1 Regulations apply only to calls made before opener's rebid. From opener's rebid onwards any understandings are allowed.

6 B 2 Any natural call is permitted, subject to the restrictions on the strength of opening bids in 6C1

6 C One Level Openings

6 C 1 A one-level opening bid in a suit must either show 11+ HCP, or show 8+ HCP and satisfy the Rule of 19. See 5C2 (extract below)

6 C 2 An opening 1NT must be non-forcing. It may show any agreed range with at least 10 HCP, with no singleton or void and no 7-card suit.

6 C 3 Within those constraints you may play any common English system e.g.: Natural one-level openings (such as Acol), including the possibility of a three-card minor suit opening on some balanced hands Five-card majors with better minor or a short club suit A strong club, possibly with a nebulous

1 ♦ opening (e.g. Precision, Blue Club, Nottingham Club). You must agree that the 1 ♣ opening satisfies ER24 (extract below). You can play all the standard responses, but (apart from negative responses to a Strong 1 ♣ opening, or a catch-all 1NT response) you cannot play artificial weak bids in response to a one level suit opening.

6 D Two Level Opening Bids

6 D 1 Any opening that shows 4+ cards in the suit opened is allowed (e.g. Acol Twos, Lucas or Weak Twos, a Precision 2 ♣ opening), as is any meaning or meanings showing a hand conforming to ER25 (extract below) (e.g. Benjamin 2 ♣ and 2 ♦ openings).

6 D 2 A two-level opening showing a three-suited (4441, 5431 or 5440) opening bid including length (three or more cards) in the suit opened is also allowed. Alternatively, two of a suit may show a three-suited opening bid short in the suit opened (such as the Precision 2 ♦ opening).

6 D 3 'Multi' style openings are not allowed, nor is a 2NT opening bid showing the minors.

6 E Other Conventional Openings

6 E 1 A 3NT opening may be used to show a solid minor.

6 E 2 4 ♣ and/or 4 ♦ may be used as 'South African Texas' (4 ♣ showing a good 4 ♥ opening, 4 ♦ a good 4 ♠ opening).

6 E 3 A 3 ♣ opening may be played as 5-5 in the minors, any strength; or alternatively as 6+ clubs with a four-card major, denying 3+ cards in the other major, any strength.

6 F Defensive Bidding

6 F 1 You may play any methods in second or fourth seat after:

(a) an artificial one-level opening (not promising at least three cards in the suit opened), or (b) any forcing opening, or (c) any two-level or higher opening

6 F 2 Second Seat – after a natural non-forcing one-level suit opening

A double of a natural opening bid or response must be either take-out or penalty.

A 1NT overcall or any suit bid must be natural, with the following exceptions: (a) A jump overcall in a suit, a no trump overcall (jump or not) or a cue-bid (jump or not) may alternatively be used to show a two-suited hand (any range, and any suits, as long as at least one of the suits is specified) (b) A 2NT overcall may alternatively be used to show any two-suited ER25 hand without specifying either suit (c) A 1NT overcall in second seat may alternatively be used as a takeout bid (d) A cue bid may be used to show any ER25 hand

6 F 3 In Fourth Seat – after a natural one-level suit opening

You may have any understandings in fourth seat after (a) an artificial response to a one-level opening bid, or (b) opener's suit is raised by responder, or (c) second seat overcalls 1NT, or (d) second seat overcalls showing a ER25 hand, or (e) second seat overcalls showing a two-suited hand

You may use a cue bid in fourth seat as a general force or to show a good raise of partner's overcall.

Overcalls and responses to second seat overcalls must otherwise be natural.

6 G Defending against 1NT

6 G 1 Double must, by agreement, be for penalties in second seat. In fourth seat or by a passed hand any defence is permitted.

6 G 2 Two-level overcalls must specify at least one suit (although 2NT can alternatively also be used to show an ER25 unspecified two-suiter). In addition, 2 ♣ can show a (semi)-balanced hand with three or more clubs ('Roche').

6 G 3 After a natural response to 1NT, double must be one of takeout, penalty, or showing a penalty double of an opening 1NT. Any defence is permitted against an artificial response such as Stayman or a transfer.

6 G 4 All other overcalls or responses to second seat overcalls must be natural (other than a cue bid of opener's or responder's suit to show a good hand).

6 H Leads, Signals and Discards

6 H 1 Any system of leads, signals and discards may be used as long as the system card gives reasonable detail, except that dual meaning signals and encrypted carding methods are not permitted (for details, see 7F2 and 7F3) (extract below).

5 C 2 Example

	(A)	(B)
	♥ J 8 4 3 2 ♥ 3 ♦ A 4 3 ♣ K 6 5 4	♠ A J 8 7 2 ♥ 6 ♦ K J 9 3 2 ♣ 8 6
High Card Points	8	9
No. of cards in longest suit:	5	5
No. of cards in 2 nd longest suit:	4	5
Total value by 'Rule of 19'	17	19

At Level 2, for example, it is permitted to agree to open on hands meeting the Rule of 19, so a partnership may agree to open 1 on (B), but not on (A).

5 C 3 Extended Rules of 24 or 25

Strong openings are often described as 'Extended Rule of 25' or 'Extended Rule of 24', which means the minimum allowed is any one or more of:

- (a) Any hand of at least 16HCP, or
- (b) Any hand meeting the Rule of 25 (or Rule of 24 where applicable) or,
- (c) Subject to proper disclosure, a hand that contains at least the normal high-card strength associated with a one-level opening and at least eight clear cut tricks.

Clear-cut tricks are defined as tricks expected to make opposite a void in partner's hand with the second best suit break.

♠ A K Q J x x x x ♥ x x ♦ x x ♣ x does count as 8 clear-cut tricks

♠ A K Q x x x x x ♥ x x ♦ x x ♣ x does not

Hands conforming to the 'Extended Rule of 25' are described as 'ER25'.

Hands conforming to the 'Extended Rule of 24' are described as 'ER24'.

Further examples:

AKQxxxx (7CCT), KQJxxxx (5), AQJ98xx (5), KQJTxx (3), KQJTxxx (6),
AKT9xxxx (8) KJTxxx (2)

7 F 2 Encrypted carding

No partnership understanding is permitted whereby the meaning of a lead, signal or discard is based in principle on information not available to declarer, so no form of 'encrypted' carding is permitted.

An agreement may arise typically where dummy has a long suit missing the Ace, and no outside entry, and involves the defender with the Ace of the suit giving a signal along Smith Peter or suit-preference lines, i.e. a signal concerning another suit, while the defender without the Ace gives a count signal. As an exception to the ban on encrypted signals, a count signal is permitted in place of a Smith Peter in such situations provided that the use of the method is fully disclosed.

7 F 3 Dual meaning signals

Dual meaning signals (when following suit) are not permitted.

Examples of prohibited dual meaning signals:

- (a) One message (typically attitude) is given according to whether the card played is odd or even; a different message (typically suit preference) is given according to whether the card played is high or low.
- (b) One message (typically attitude) is given if a specific card (say a 6 or a 7) is played; a different message (typically suit preference) is given if any other card is played. It is, however, permitted to use a particular category of card to express doubt or no preference. For example, when giving suit-preference a partnership may agree that a middle card shows no preference between the two suits.

Such dual meanings are permitted for discards.

To Summarise

These extracts are definitely not light bed-time reading. They are, as with so many Rules and Regulations, written to prevent any problem that might occur in the case where one partnership feels that action by the opposing partnership has damaged their score. The SCCBA Tournament Committee is cogniscent of the fact that, as a part of the EBU it should be seen to advise correctly. We do not think that it is necessary for you to understand all of the dotted i's and crossed t's in these rules to play in any of our Welcome, Venture or Basic Bridge events. So, we would like to say to you all

You're Welcome!

*Ros Wolfarth
SCCBA Tournament Manager*