

PARTNERSHIP BIDDING

A WORKBOOK



25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

MARY PAUL

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In memory of Maurice Paul

Foreword to the Second Edition

I first met Mary and Maurice Paul in the mid-1970s and started to play with Mary regularly around 1982, including in the 1984 Women's Olympiad. My first real set of system notes were created with her (mostly she talked while I typed) and covered many of the topics in *Partnership Bidding* in a similar order. Thanks to Mary, I still use that general format today.

Mary was one of the real characters of the bridge community. With her bright red hair — “You can't be too red” — and her exuberant personality she certainly stood out in a crowd. She had high expectations of her partners and was stubborn about her system preferences but equally generous with explaining options and theory. She never stopped reading, learning and incorporating new ideas into her system.

When she created this book she was very excited, giving back to the community which had been her family for so many years.

Mary has been inducted into the CBF Hall of Fame and her many successes are well-documented elsewhere.

Katie Thorpe
Toronto, 2020

Publisher's Note on the Second Edition

Since this book was first published, much has changed in bridge, and at the same time, little has changed. With the modern availability of online bridge, Mary Paul's remarks about partnerships that cannot practice together as often as they would like have become less appropriate. At the same time, the experts who reviewed the book for us twenty-five years after it was written, with a view to identifying areas where it needed to be updated, found remarkably little to change or add. Rather than being prescriptive, the author did a wonderful job in identifying common auctions which needed discussion, and allowing readers to insert their own agreements without restricting them to prevailing fashions in conventions and practices.

System discussions never end. A former world champion, who had been playing with the same partner for more than twenty years, once told me that they still had a one-hour system discussion by phone every evening. Most partnerships probably won't get that serious, but having a written record of your agreements, and a framework to build them on, is what this book is all about.

Foreword to the First Edition

Ray and Linda Lee first approached me late in 1991 to tell me about their new bridge magazine, *Canadian Master Point*, and to ask me to write some articles for it.

I had the idea of writing a series of questionnaires on partnership agreements that would be helpful to people in system discussions. The articles in *Canadian Master Point* were enthusiastically received, and it is with the encouragement of *CMP* readers that I have gone on to expand them into this book.

Without detailed system discussions, any bridge partnership is going to experience misunderstandings, inevitably leading to arguments, bad feelings, and unnecessary bad results. The questionnaire method is one that is used by many top-flight pairs in preparation for international competition, and can be particularly useful in a partnership that is unable to practice regularly. I myself played internationally for many years with Francine Cimon, who lived in Montreal, while I was resident in Toronto. Unable to play together as often as we wished, we made great use of the questionnaire method to refine our system agreements.

As you work through the questionnaires in this book, you will find that the alternatives suggested will give you ideas for changing and improving your methods. If you work carefully through the detailed sections, you will find at the end that you have created a set of system notes for your partnership, thereby reducing the effort required to make your 'system book' — effort that can certainly be better directed towards system discussions. In addition, by working through the questionnaires step by step, you will be certain that nothing has been left undiscussed.

I hope this book will stimulate many hours of interesting exchanges with your partner, and help you both enjoy our favorite game even more.

Mary Paul
Toronto, August, 1994

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How to use this book

There are several ways to use this book: you can work through it with your partner, or you can each buy a copy and work through it separately, comparing your answers for discrepancies. Perhaps best of all is for each of you to mark up a separate copy as you work through the questions; then you will each end up with a completed system booklet for reference. There isn't a right way or a wrong way — whichever works for you.

Start by working through the first section, entitled “General Approach”. This need not take long, and is similar to filling out a standard Convention Card with a new partner. Use the check-boxes to indicate system agreements, or use a colored marker to highlight the key points. This process will establish the broad framework of your system, and enable you to start playing immediately. With many casual partners, this will be all the discussion you will ever need.

If you are working on a more serious partnership, however, you will need to go through the rest of the book in detail, section by section. Even well-established partnerships will benefit from this, as they will undoubtedly come across many sequences that are undiscussed, or where the partners will find they have differing understandings or assumptions. There are three main sections: “Constructive Auctions” (we open the bidding), “Competitive Auctions” (they open the bidding) and “Carding Agreements”.

At the end of the process, you will have a marked-up copy of this book which will be a detailed record of your system agreements for that particular partnership.

Note — within the book the following abbreviations are used:

1maj – 2maj means 1♥ – 2♥ or 1♠ – 2♠

1maj – 2suit means any auction such as 1♠ – 2♣ or 1♥ – 2♦ i.e. a 2-level new suit response to an opening bid of 1♥ or 1♠.

1maj – 1NT
2♣ – 2maj is a simple preference auction such as
1♠ – 1NT
2♣ – 2♠

General Approach

System

This book is intended for those playing a more-or-less natural system — if you are playing e.g. a forcing club system, it may not be as useful to you.

Standard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acol	<input type="checkbox"/>
2/1 game forcing	<input type="checkbox"/>
other	<input type="checkbox"/>

1NT Opening Range

	nv/nv	nv/v	v/nv	v/v
1st seat
2nd seat
3rd seat
4th seat

Responses to 1NT

2♣	Stayman	<input type="checkbox"/>
	puppet Stayman	<input type="checkbox"/>
2♦	forcing Stayman	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Baron Corollary	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Transfers</i>	2-suit	<input type="checkbox"/>
	4-suit	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Texas	<input type="checkbox"/>
2♠	minor-suit Stayman	<input type="checkbox"/>
3min	forcing <input type="checkbox"/> invitational <input type="checkbox"/> to play	<input type="checkbox"/>
3maj	forcing <input type="checkbox"/> invitational <input type="checkbox"/> to play	<input type="checkbox"/>
other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Responses to 1NT over interference

<i>over double</i>	pass	forcing to redbl	<input type="checkbox"/>
	redbl	penalty <input type="checkbox"/> rescue	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2-suit	transfers <input type="checkbox"/> natural	<input type="checkbox"/>
	other	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>over overcalls</i>	Lebensohl 2NT		<input type="checkbox"/>
		fast arrival = no stopper	<input type="checkbox"/>
	other	<input type="checkbox"/>

2NT Opening

natural (range)

other

Responses to natural 2NT (or 2♣-2♦-2NT)

3♣ Stayman

3♦, 3♥, 3♠ puppet Stayman

3♠ 4-suit

transfers 3♦ and 3♥ only

3♦, 3♥, 3♠ Texas

3♠ natural

other minor-suit Stayman

relay

.....

.....

3NT Opening

gambling define

natural range

other

Responses to strong 3NT (or 2♣-2♦-3NT)

4♣ Gerber

4♦ Stayman

transfers describe

4NT invites

other

1♥ and 1♠ Openings

guarantees 5 (1st/2nd seat) ♥

guarantees 5 (3rd/4th seat) ♠

Responses to major-suit openings

single raise constructive (range)

1NT forcing

limit raises

4+-card support 3+ trumps

- preemptive jump raises
- in competition
- in competition by passed hand
- Bergen raises
- 2NT Jacoby (range)
- splinters
- help-suit game tries
- 3NT = balanced game raise
- other
- Over 3rd/4th seat opening
- Drury
- reverse Drury
- jump shift = fit
- 1NT still 100% forcing

1♣ Opening

- clubs promised: <3 3+ 4+
- 1NT rebid: range

1♦ Opening

- diamonds promised: <3 3+ 4+
- 1NT rebid: range

Responses to natural 1♣ and 1♦

- bid suits up the line
- Walsh over 1♣ (bypass longer ♦ on weak hand)
- 1NT range: (over 1♣) (over 1♦)
- inverted raises
- single raise GF invit.+
- standard raises
- single raise strong in competition
- double raise weak in competition
- jump in other minor = strong raise
- 2NT balanced (range)
- 3NT balanced (range)
- splinters
- other

2♣ Opening

strong, artificial
other

Responses

2♦ waits
negative (.....)
2♥ negative (.....)
2NT positive response with hearts
controls
cheaper minor 2nd neg.
other

Weak 2-bids

2♦ 2♥ 2♠
range
describe variances by position and vulnerability.....
.....
.....

Responses to weak 2s

2NT asks about feature
2NT asks about suit/hand quality
3♣ asks about singleton
raise only non-force
other
.....

Other 2-bids

2♦ opening

Flannery
Acol
Roman (3-suited) (range)
Multi
other

2♥ opening

Flannery
Acol
other

By working through the questionnaires in this book with their partner, readers will be able to refine their bidding system, select conventions and agreements that suit their style, define their defensive carding agreements, and give their game a winning edge. The first book ever published by Master Point Press, *Partnership Bidding* has been revised and updated to include today's bidding methods.



MARY PAUL (d. 2019) was born in Romania and moved to Canada in 1950. In 1977, Mary was the first woman to win the open Canadian National Teams Championship (CNTC). She won the event again in 1993. In addition, she won seven of the nine Canadian Women Teams Championships (CWTC) held between 1980 and 1991. She represented Canada ten times in World Championships, winning two bronze medals.

