

AN HONORS BOOK FROM MASTER POINT PRESS

Richard Granville
and David Burn

The MOSSO
Bidding
System

SECOND EDITION

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This is the first of two volumes relating to the MOSSO bidding system. This volume contains a full definition of MOSSO in the form of bidding tables and supporting text. The second, entitled “MOSSO: Example Auctions and Quizzes” [2], provides additional guidance.

The quiz questions in volume 2 allow readers to assess their knowledge of the system, with the answer sections providing useful examples of many MOSSO bids. The example auctions are all complete and serve to illustrate how the bidding can develop beyond the initial sequences shown in the tables.

Volume 2 also describes how the main features of MOSSO combine to form a complete and coherent bidding system. It is therefore recommended that newcomers to MOSSO read the two volumes concurrently.

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Authors' FOREWORD

One of the difficulties associated with writing books on new bidding systems is that these tend to evolve over time. Any publication can only be a “snapshot” of the developing system, rather than the finished version.

This was certainly true of the first edition of “The MOSSO Bidding System” that was published in April 2019. In practice this version of the system turned out to be soundly based, without any major deficiencies. During the last three years MOSSO has been used successfully by an increasing pool of players.

Even so, the additional experience gained from these sessions has inevitably uncovered several areas where the system is poorly defined, particularly for countering intervention. In addition, the authors have considered alternative approaches and made many improvements, especially after a 1♣ opening. Further ideas have come from players who have taken up MOSSO more recently. Not all of these changes have made the system more complicated: some areas have been simplified with little or no reduction in efficiency.

MOSSO is now a mature and effective bidding system.

The differences between versions 1 and 2 of MOSSO are summarized in Section 1.11.

FOREWORD to the first edition by Barry Rigal

I am not sure whether I should be more flattered or surprised that I have been asked by David Burn and Richard Granville to write a foreword for their book, MOSSO. Why should I be surprised? It is because I went to Oxford and David and Richard went to ‘the other place’. I suspect that their secret veneration for the older and in all ways superior University has overcome the sense of hostility to the enemy that will doubtless have festered in them for the last 40 years as it has in me.

Seriously, I first met and was impressed by David when our paths crossed at school – when his alma mater Dulwich College beat up my school at bridge. Richard had just left Cambridge when I arrived at Oxford, but he was soon to be justly well known for having been part of the first British team to win the European Junior Championship. Alas for him there was no world junior event in those years; had there been I have no doubt his squad would have taken the title.

Richard and Graham Kirby had left their names on GTKsys, the version of Cambridge Precision that represented mainstream for the Young Turks in the early 1980s (much of which I borrowed or adapted for my book “Precision in the 90s”). After leaving University, Richard decided to work for a living and focus on Go rather than bridge while David opted to work at BT while majoring in bridge. He and I were partners and teammates many times in the early 1980s, then David went on to regular partnerships with Dave Price and Brian Callaghan that led in 2000 to England’s best finish in a world championship for 15 years. In the last 10 years David has performed an outstanding task as coach and npc of open and women’s teams, helping them with system, correcting some of their wilder ideas and generally managing to prevent any partnership from inflicting bodily harm on each other or their teammates. In the meantime, Richard started to return to serious bridge in 2010 and was able to adapt successfully to the evolution of bidding that had occurred during his absence,

Both players have left their marks on bridge in the world of system, notably in the area of asking bids. David created a specialized extension that became known as the Burn Gamma Asking Bid, while Richard invented so many asking bids after a Precision 1♣ opening that he almost ran out of Greek letters! Fortunately, only one of these has survived into the MOSSO system ...

After damning Richard and David with such faint praise, you may wonder whether I am going to recommend this book, and why. The answer is an enthusiastic “yes”. The idea of playing one-level forcing actions that started with the Fantunes system has been modified to use a strong no-trump base and a variety of Polish Club that may include strong hands with a black suit. Thus the 1♠ opening is non-forcing but the red suit openings are unlimited, an idea that has something in common with natural system, something in common with Little Major.

What sets this system and this book apart from other methods is also the thoroughness with which the authors have discussed follow-ups and the plusses and minuses of their methods. In my view the merits of the approach are at the very least worth considering and debating. And the completeness of the description means that even if one does not adopt the whole system, everyone will find something worth discussing with their favourite partner.

Part 1: MOSSO Essentials

Chapter 1 Introduction

Section 1.1 The evolution of bidding systems

The game of contract bridge has been in existence for about 100 years, during which time the approach to bidding has changed enormously. The sophisticated bidding systems of today would be almost unrecognizable to those early contract bridge players who were making their first attempts to adapt from auction bridge.

Bidding methods have evolved continuously since 1926, but when the various improvements are considered in general terms, there are few that could be described as truly revolutionary. Some people would argue that there were only two such developments during the next 70 years:

1. The introduction of the “approach forcing” principle by Ely Culbertson around 1930. Prior to this time (and for some time afterwards, in some places) bidding consisted of a series of quantitative, non-forcing bids.
2. The introduction of “strong club” systems in the 1960’s. Of these, Precision (first suggested around 1970) has developed into a mainstream bidding system.

The principles of “approach forcing” were successfully applied to the construction of the Acol system in the late 1930’s. Since that time, virtually all bidding systems have adopted this philosophy. For at least 30 years, there was always at least one forcing bid at the two level. Opening bids at the one level were non-forcing, but a new suit response was forcing for one round. This approach is still used by the majority of today’s bridge players.

By contrast, strong club systems have not proved to be universally popular. One reason may be that strong club systems can be difficult for club players to learn. Another is that many players perceive them to provide marginal benefit: the effort involved in learning them might (for some people) be better applied to gaining more definition in a “Standard” system. Many players accept that strong club systems can be more accurate in an unopposed auction, but that this is offset by the disruption that may be caused by intervention over the 1♣ opening.

Bidding systems have continued to evolve, but there was one startling new development that took place around 1997. A prominent Italian player, Carlo Mosca, started to define an entirely different bidding system based around the following concepts:

1. All opening bids of two of a suit were natural, showing an unbalanced hand of 10–13 points.
2. All opening bids of one of a suit were unlimited and forcing for one round. They were also natural except for 1♣, which might also have been based on a balanced hand.

When combined with a weak (12–14) 1NT opening, a useful consequence of this system was that the minimum strength for all suit opening bids at the one level became about a king more than that in systems such as 2/1 (Two over One Game Forcing), SAYC (Standard American Yellow Card) or Acol. This system was known as “Fantunes”, a combination of the surnames of an Italian pair that later developed the system further.

Section 1.2 The Fantunes approach

Although it was played in important competitions from 2005 to 2015, little information about the Fantunes system was available until early 2013, when the book “Fantunes Revealed” [1] was published. Even this led to a limited take-up of the system, perhaps for the following reasons:

1. The full system was quite complicated.
2. Many treatments within the Fantunes system were significantly different from the corresponding treatments within a standard system.

Some readers of the book must have asked themselves whether it was possible to play a more natural form of Fantunes. The internet has been used to publish various ideas [18] and one author modified the system as follows:

1. The strength of the two-level opening bids was reduced from 10–13 to 9–12. Opening bids at the one level therefore became 13+.
2. In response to the 1♣ opening there was a 1♦ negative, thus allowing the system of responses to be essentially natural.

These changes didn't affect the general philosophy of Fantunes, but they did make the resulting approach more like that of a standard system. The 2/1 system is a particularly good basis for these modifications, which were used by the authors to derive the SWIFT system [15]. This also embodied a strong (15–17) 1NT opening, thereby making a SWIFT 1♣ similar to that opening in the Polish Club system. That system is outlined in the next section.

Section 1.3 The Polish Club System

The opening bid of 1♣ provides the maximum amount of bidding space for investigation, so reserving it to show a strong hand (as in the Precision system) can be advantageous. It is also possible for a bidding system to utilise the 1♣ opening for a variety of hands, not all of them strong. One of the most popular systems of this type is known as Polish Club [3]. In this system the opening bid of 1♣ shows one of three distinct kinds of hands:

- 1 12–14 balanced;
- 2 15–17 unbalanced with 5+ clubs;
- 3 18+, any distribution.

The rest of the Polish Club system is similar to Precision in some ways, in that opening bids of 1♦, 1♥, 1♠ and 2♣ are natural and limited. 2♦, 2♥ and 2♠ are all available to show weak hands.

Over the 1♣ opening, responder bids 1♦ with virtually all hands of 0–6 points. 1♦ is also the response on unbalanced 7–11 point hands with no 4-card major. In this way responder generally keeps the bidding low so that opener can clarify the nature of his hand.

The strengths of Polish Club include the following:

- 1 The 1♦ opening always shows 4+ diamonds, which makes life particularly easy for responder (as compared with the nebulous 1♦ opening in Precision).
- 2 A 1NT opening shows 15–17 points, the same as in many natural systems.
- 3 Opponents must be a little careful when attempting to disrupt the 1♣ opening because they need to be able to bid constructively when opener is 12–14 balanced, the most common of the three options shown above.

The main problem with the Polish Club system is that a 1♣ opener can sometimes find it difficult to describe strong hands, even when the opponents are silent. Despite this, the system is popular in Northern and Eastern Europe and has been employed successfully by Poland in many international events.

Section 1.4 The properties of the spade suit

Most systems treat major suit opening bids in consistent fashion. For example, in nearly all systems the meaning of a 1♥ opening is identical to that of a 1♠ opening, except for the location of the long suit. Pre-emptive openings of 2♥ and 2♠ are also treated in the same way. The main reasons for this would seem to be convenience and simplicity.

In practice, the properties of the spade suit are significantly different from those of the heart suit, mainly because spades is the highest-ranking suit. While it can often be useful to pre-empt in spades, a more gradual approach may work just as well because the opponents might well end up being outbid anyway. Also, constructive bidding after a spade pre-empt is significantly more difficult than after a heart pre-empt, especially when the pre-emptor's partner has length in the other major.

This property was particularly relevant to the Fantunes system [1], in which opening bids of 2♥ and 2♠ showed either a 6-card suit or a 5-card suit and a 4+ card minor. Constructive bidding was sometimes difficult over this 2♠ opening. It was often easier to develop the auction after a Fantunes 2♥ opening because there was one extra bid between the opening bid and 3NT and two extra bids between the opening bid and 4 of the other major. Also, there was potentially more to gain from the pre-emptive nature of a 2♥ opening than from the pre-emptive nature of 2♠.

It can be seen that spade pre-empts are most effective when they are tightly defined, such as a standard Weak Two. The authors therefore had an idea: would it be possible to retain a Fantunes approach in clubs, diamonds and hearts, but revert to a standard system in spades? The answer is outlined in the next section.

There is another useful property of the spade suit, in that it is affected less by the opponents' pre-emption than any other suit, including hearts. This is another key factor that is relevant to the design of the new system.

Section 1.5 Combining the best features of Fantunes and Polish Club

If an opening 2♠ is to be played as a standard Weak Two within a Fantunes framework, it is necessary for all stronger hands with spades as the main suit to be opened at the one level because the opening bids of 2♣, 2♦ and 2♥ are all natural and limited. This implies that very strong spade hands will be opened 1♣. In practice it is most effective to limit a 1♠ opening to about 16 points and to open 1♣ with 17+ points and 5+ spades.

The 1♣ opening now becomes a 3-way bid:

- 1 13+ unbalanced with clubs;
- 2 Balanced outside the ranges of 1NT and 2NT openings, i.e. 12–14, 18–20 or 23+;
- 3 17+ (or a good 16) with 5+ spades.

This is in some ways similar to a 1♣ opening in standard Polish Club, but there is an important difference: this 1♣ opening is only strong when opener has length in a black suit. With 13+ points and length in a red suit the opening bid is 1♦ or 1♥, regardless of the strength of the hand.

Although the 3-way nature of a 1♣ opening means that it can be affected by adverse intervention, this is less important when opener's main suit is spades. Much of the time opener will be able to show this type of hand by bidding 2♠ or 3♠ on the second round. If the opponents are silent there is plenty of room for opener to distinguish between his various hand types.

This system has been named MOSSO: MOsca with Standard Spade Openings.

Section 1.6 Outline of the MOSSO bidding system

Red suit opening bids in MOSSO follow the principles of the Fantunes system with 1♦ and 1♥ being natural and forcing, while 2♦ and 2♥ are available for weaker hands. The 1NT and 2NT openings are as in 2/1. A 2♣ opening is also natural and intermediate, but 2♠ is a standard Weak Two. The 1♠ opening is limited to 16 points, while most other hands of opening bid strength start with 1♣. In more detail:

A 1NT opening is 15–17 balanced and will frequently include a 5-card major. A 3♣ response to 1NT is 5-card (Puppet) Stayman, thus allowing 5–3 fits to be found when appropriate.

Opening bids of 2♣, 2♦ and 2♥ show 9–12 points and at least 5 cards in the bid suit. The 2♥ opening denies 4 spades, but apart from this all shapes except for 5–3–3–2 are permitted. The next suit up (e.g. 2♥ over 2♦) is a relay.

A 1♠ opening shows a 5+ card suit and is limited to a maximum of 16 points. This upper limit makes it reasonable for the minimum to be 2 points fewer than in a standard system, so a MOSSO 1♠ opening is appropriate on most reasonable unbalanced 9-point hands. A standard 2/1 framework may be employed.

A 2♠ opening is a Weak Two, again slightly weaker than standard. The range for a 2♠ opening is 4–9 points, but 4-point hands may be passed and most 9-point hands would be opened 1♠.

The 2NT opening shows 21–22 points and may include a 5-card major.

The 1♣ opening covers nearly all unbalanced hands where the longest suit is clubs. 1♣ is also opened with 17+ points and 5+ spades. Finally (and most commonly) 1♣ is the opening bid on balanced hands with 12–14, 18–20 or 23+ points. Balanced 12–14 point hands may include 5 hearts (but not usually 5 spades) because a 1♥ opening is not available for these hands. Responder bids 1♦ on most hands with 0–6 points, but this bid may also be made on some stronger hands without a 4-card major. The 1♦ response keeps the bidding low and allows the opener to rebid 1♥ or 1♠ with a minimum balanced or unbalanced hand. Most other rebids distinguish clearly between a club suit, a spade suit and a balanced hand.

The 1♦ opening covers all unbalanced hands of 13+ points where the longest suit is diamonds, or with equal length in the minors. 1♦ is also opened with 4=5 in the minors and 18+ points. There is no conventional negative over 1♦, so weak hands must respond 1♥ or 1♠ (0+ points) with 4+ cards in that suit or 1NT (0–8) with no 4-card major. At first sight, it might seem that with 13+ points facing 0+ points (i.e. both hands unlimited), auctions starting 1♦–1♥ or 1♦–1♠ could be inaccurate or unsafe. In practice, opener's 1NT rebid is not needed in a natural sense and is therefore reserved for strong hands, thus enabling the partnership to stop at a safe level when responder is very weak.

The 1♥ opening is also natural and unlimited. It shows a 5+ card suit but denies 5–3–3–2 shape unless too strong for a 1NT opening. The minimum strength is usually 13 points, but 1♥ is also opened with 11–12 points and 4 spades (known as the weak variant). A weak responder without heart support may respond 1♠ (0–12 points, fewer than 5 spades) or 1NT (0+ points with 5+ spades), an approach that is based upon the Kaplan Interchange. Continuations after these and other responses follow the principles of 2/1, with some additional treatments that enable weak responding hands and very strong opening hands to be handled effectively.

To reiterate: MOSSO opening spade bids are fairly standard, with the 1♠ opening limited to between 9 and 16 points. Apart from this, MOSSO bids of 2 of a suit show 9–12 points, an opening 1NT is 15–17, while other opening 1-bids are unlimited and forcing. Some developments after 1♣ are like Polish Club, but other areas of MOSSO have been designed to be as similar to 2/1 as possible. This approach also makes it reasonably easy for players to convert to MOSSO from other systems.

It is a little difficult to summarize the nature of MOSSO because it is essentially an amalgam of parts of Fantunes [1], Polish Club [3] and 2/1 [4]. MOSSO aims to utilize the best areas of these three systems, while providing an effective interface between them.

Section 1.7 Why play MOSSO?

Section 1.7.1 General

At this stage some readers are likely to be asking a question: why play MOSSO? The simple answer is: because on balance it's an improvement on "standard" systems such as 2/1. But it's not possible to appreciate all the advantages of MOSSO without a more detailed understanding of the system.

This book therefore explains the advantages of MOSSO in two stages:

- in general terms, within this section;
- in detail, near the end of the book (Chapter 43). In practice it's only the MOSSO 1♣, 1♦ and 1♥ openings for which the specific advantages need to be covered in this way.

There are many reasons for playing the MOSSO system. All the opening bids are at least as effective as the equivalent opening in a standard system such as 2/1. Furthermore, the system has no major drawbacks.

Section 1.7.2 to Section 1.7.7 cover the various MOSSO opening bids except for 1NT and 2♣, which are essentially the same as in 2/1. Section 1.7.8 summarizes some general advantages of MOSSO. Section 1.7.9 describes how a partnership may readily switch from 2/1 to MOSSO.

Section 1.7.2 Advantages associated with the MOSSO 1♣ opening

Although the MOSSO 1♣ opening is a three-way bid with all variants being unlimited, there is plenty of bidding space for investigation and opener can indicate the nature of his hand on the second or third round of bidding. Furthermore, the negative 1♦ response allows the partnership to stop at a low level when responder is weak.

The 1♦ negative has a useful corollary, in that higher responses show sound values and don't need to be "stretched", as they can be in 2/1 and other systems. In particular, the 7-point minimum

for the 1♥ and 1♠ responses allows opener to describe his hand more easily. Opener's 5+ spade option doesn't cause a problem after any response and he can show strong hands with clubs more simply than in 2/1. This is particularly beneficial on hands that would have opened a strong 2♣.

Another advantage for MOSSO is that when the 1♣ opening is based on a club suit, the minimum is 13 points (rule of 22). This allows responder to force to game with as few as 11 points.

Section 1.7.3 Advantages associated with the MOSSO 1♦ opening

The 1♦ opening is one of the strengths of MOSSO, partly because the minimum for 1♦ is about a queen more than in a standard system. Responder is therefore often better placed than in 2/1, even with limited values. A balanced 11 points is sufficient to drive to game.

The MOSSO 1♦ opening in MOSSO has no upper limit, so opener can show a diamond suit on the first round even with game-going values. This is particularly useful because opening a strong 2♣ with a diamond suit often leads to a difficult auction. Furthermore, naming a suit on the first round provides useful protection against pre-emptive bidding. The unlimited nature of the 1♦ opening means that responder must find a bid with a very weak hand, but the system of responses and rebids is arranged so that this very rarely causes a problem for the opening side. It's more often the opponents who are affected by a wide-ranging response.

The MOSSO 1♦ opening also guarantees an unbalanced hand, which is useful in many ways, particularly when the opponents intervene. Against silent opponents the 1NT rebid isn't needed in a natural sense, thus providing many more sequences for opener to describe his hand.

Section 1.7.4 Advantages associated with the MOSSO 1♥ opening

Just as in 2/1, the MOSSO 1♥ opening shows 5+ hearts. Although it may be made with 11–12 points and 4 spades, the 1♥ opening usually shows 13+ (about a queen more than in 2/1), which is helpful when the opponents intervene.

The MOSSO 1♥ opening also has no upper limit. The consequences of this are similar to those associated with the 1♦ opening, but responder is better placed over 1♥ because the 1♠ response is available as an unambiguous negative.

Section 1.7.5 Advantages associated with the MOSSO 1♠ opening

The MOSSO opening bid of 1♠ is very similar to 2/1, but its 8-point range (9–16) is tighter than that associated with most standard systems (about 11–21). A weak responding hand therefore doesn't have to stretch to bid over a MOSSO 1♠ opening, thus reducing the risk of finishing too high. Routinely opening 1♠ with 9 or 10 points provides a further advantage for MOSSO because it can make life awkward for the opponents when they have the balance of strength.

Section 1.7.6 Advantages associated with the MOSSO 2♣, 2♦ and 2♥ openings

The 2♣, 2♦ and 2♥ opening bids in MOSSO can cause serious problems for the opponents, as compared with a standard system where the same hands would be passed or opened at the one level. They show approximately an average strength hand, so therefore occur quite frequently. Although it is easy to specify a defence to these bids (double for takeout, other bids natural), the loss in bidding space is often significant. The book "Fantunes Revealed" [1] contains many examples of world-class opposition reaching the wrong contract after a two-level opening.

It's fair to say that these opening bids can also cause problems for the opening side, but experience has shown that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, albeit only marginally. The main reason for having the MOSSO 2♣, 2♦ and 2♥ opening bids is to improve bidding accuracy when opener has a stronger hand.

Section 1.7.7 Advantages associated with the MOSSO 2NT opening

As in most systems the MOSSO 2NT opening shows a strong balanced hand but its range is 21–22 points, rather than the usual 20–22. This makes subsequent bidding more accurate. More importantly, opening 20-point hands with 1♣ provides more room for investigation.

Section 1.7.8 Some general advantages of MOSSO

MOSSO is a major improvement on the Fantunes system, for which many responses and rebids after the 1-level opening bids were quite different from those in 2/1. The commonality between 2/1 and MOSSO allows a partnership to maintain a more familiar 2/1 style, which often works better because of the tighter ranges in MOSSO. It's also easy to incorporate further definition based upon 2/1, for competitive auctions as well as unopposed ones.

Several MOSSO sequences are similar to the same sequences in 2/1, but the higher opening strength requirements in MOSSO and other features of the system mean that some NF sequences in 2/1 become FIR in MOSSO and that some FIR sequences in 2/1 become GF in MOSSO. Both kinds of change make subsequent MOSSO bidding more comfortable than in 2/1.

Section 1.7.9 It's easy to switch from 2/1 to MOSSO

We've seen that the 2/1 and MOSSO systems are broadly similar in several areas, so 2/1 partnerships could switch to MOSSO without abandoning their detailed understandings or general style. Chapter 2 of this book outlines a simple version of MOSSO that is as close to 2/1 as possible. Once a partnership has become familiar with this basic approach, they can start to incorporate some of the details in subsequent chapters.

A straightforward 2/1 approach to MOSSO could be sufficient for some players, but others would prefer a more sophisticated system in order to gain accuracy. For this reason, much of this book is aimed at "serious" partnerships that are prepared to incorporate some conventional machinery. The full version of MOSSO makes careful use of available bidding space (e.g. via switching bids), following the principles espoused by Roy Hughes in his book "Building a Bidding System" [9].

Most of the chapters define bidding sequences in detail and for some of the more complex areas of the system the full approach is supplemented by a simpler approach. Partnerships that play 2/1 should therefore find it easy to switch to a standard version of MOSSO, by stages if necessary. Players familiar with Polish Club will find it even easier, but knowledge of this system isn't a prerequisite for reading this book, which assumes only a basic knowledge of 2/1.

Some MOSSO situations (e.g. after a 1NT opening) are essentially the same as 2/1. A partnership could therefore retain their existing 2/1 approach, but the book takes the opportunity to describe modern approaches to 2/1 situations that are equivalent in MOSSO. These are presented as suggestions: there's no obligation to use them because they're independent from the rest of the MOSSO system.

Section 1.8 Why not play MOSSO?

Although MOSSO aims to be a reasonably natural system, there are major differences from 2/1. Some players may be reluctant to switch to such a new system, especially with the loss of some familiar approaches to bidding. The following table summarizes the major reservations that people might have about MOSSO, together with reasons for why they should not be concerned about these aspects of the system.

Reservation	Response
<p>I don't like the idea of opening at the one level on game-going hands.</p>	<p>Why not? Suppose that you have game-going values and your longest suit is a minor. In 2/1 the auction will probably start 2♣–2♦–3♣/3♦, after which subsequent bidding could be difficult for both players. In MOSSO, however, the auction is likely to start 1♣–1♦ or 1♦–1♥/1♠. These and similar sequences allow opener to show a very strong hand at an economical level.</p> <p>The situation with a major suit in the strong hand isn't so bad after a strong 2♣ opening, but MOSSO can unambiguously force to game by opening 1♥ and rebidding 2NT (or sometimes 2♠) after a negative response, or by opening 1♣ and jumping to 2♠ over the negative 1♦ response.</p> <p>Regardless of the location of opener's long suit, MOSSO also gains when responder can make a positive response to the one level opening bid, or if the opponents pre-empt.</p> <p>If opener's hand is just short of being game-going, it may be described economically by MOSSO in a number of ways. MOSSO doesn't suffer from the dilemma of shading a 2♣ opening and possibly finishing too high or starting with one of a suit and perhaps playing there. In MOSSO, the 1♣, 1♦ and 1♥ openings are all 100% forcing.</p> <p>Section 4.2 of this book brings together the various ways of showing a very strong hand after opening one of a suit.</p>
<p>I don't like opening 1♣ when my shape is 5–3–3–2 with 5 hearts.</p>	<p>This is one consequence of playing strong NT in conjunction with unlimited 1-level openings. The wide range of a 1♥ opening means that it's not opened with balanced hands of fewer than 18 points. It is therefore only 12–14 point balanced 5–3–3–2 heart hands that need to be opened 1♣.</p> <p>In practice, opening 1♣ rarely causes a problem because the MOSSO system pays particular attention to these hands. Several unopposed sequences are reserved for 12–14 point balanced hands with 5 hearts, together with a few specific competitive sequences.</p>
<p>I don't like having to pass many Weak Two hands.</p>	<p>This doesn't apply for the spade suit. For the red suits you only need to pass Weak Two hands at the lower end of the range because MOSSO can open at the 2-level with 9 points (or 8 points and 6–4 distribution). Also, these restrictions only apply in first or second seat: MOSSO can open all Weak Twos in third seat (at any vulnerability) because the requirements here are flexible. Finally, in MOSSO you can make these weak/intermediate bids in three suits other than spades, rather than just one or two.</p>

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THREE BIDDING SYSTEMS COMBINED INTO ONE

For the last six years, Richard Granville and David Burn have been developing MOSSO, a revolutionary bidding system derived from Two-over-One, Fantunes and Polish Club. MOSSO brings together the best features of its parent systems, while providing an effective interface between them. The system has been employed successfully by the authors and others in a number of tournaments, some at national level. This is the first volume of a two-book series and describes the full system in detail. The second volume provides supplementary information, including a large selection of example auctions and quizzes.



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