

## BRIDGE – INTERMEDIATE LESSONS I – 04

### Exercising the Roles of the “Captain” and the “Crew”

1. As we discussed in Lesson #1, during the “*Captaincy*” Phase, once one Player has limited his/her holdings as to its size and shape, his/her Partner automatically becomes the “*Captain*.” It is then the “*Captain’s*” responsibility to manage the bidding process further to carry the Partnership to its final contract in both denomination and level.

#### 2. The Role of the “Captain”:

- a. *Once it is clear what the final contract will be*, the “*Captain*” simply bids directly to the final denomination and level. Example auctions showing this process are as follows:

1H – 2H	1H – 2H	1D – 1H	1D – 1S
P	4H	1-NT – 4H	3D – 3-NT

1-NT – 4S	3S – 4S	1-NT – 3-NT	1-NT – 6-NT
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In each of the cases shown above, the last call is a “shut-out,” effectively ending the auction because the previous Player has limited his/her holdings.

- b. *If it is not clear what the best final contract will be*, the “*Captain*” seeks more information from Partner (“*Crew*”). Typically, this is accomplished by asking specific questions about the size and shape of the “*Crew’s*” hand.

- (1) For size, the question is usually, “*Do you have minimum or maximum points within your previously-promised range?*”

1-NT – 2-NT	1H – 2H	1-NT – “2C”
	3H	2H – 3H

- (2) For shape, the question is usually about the length of a specific suit.

1-NT – “2C”  
2H – 3S (“*Do you have at least 3-Spades?*”)

1D – 1H  
1-NT – “2C” (“*Do you have 3-Hearts?*”) (“NMF”)

- (3) It is even possible for the “*Captain*” to ask two questions, one about shape, and the other about size.

1-NT – “2C” (“*Do you hold a 4-card Major?*”)  
“2D” – 2-NT (“*Are you minimum or maximum?*”)  
 (“*Do you have 15- or 16/17 HCP’s?*”)

- (4) In some instances there is a specific set of answers from which the “*Crew*” must select the one that best applies.

**1-NT – “2C”** (“*Do you hold a 4-card Major?*”)

The answers, here, are only “2D,” 2H, or 2S

**1H – “4-NT”** (“*How many Aces {Controls} do you hold?*”)

The answers, here, are only “5C,” “5D,” “5H,” “5S,” “5-NT,” & “6V”

- (5) Lastly, the “*Captain*” might choose not to issue a question, but rather to issue a command, mostly to force the “*Crew*” to bid again or to take a preference.

**1H – 1S**

**2C – “2D”** (“*Bid again. Tell me more about your hand!*”)

**1S – 1-NT**

**2D** (“*Take a preference between Spades and Diamonds,*”  
 (“*or, bid an undisclosed 6-card or longer, as-yet, un-bid suit!*”)

### 3. The Role of the “*Crew*”:

- a. If the “*Captain*” sets the contract, the “*Crew*” is obliged to “*Pass.*”

**3C – 3-NT** (A Pre-emptor is barred from bidding again, unless the “*Captain*” introduces a request for further information (“2-NT” or a new suit).

- b. If the “*Captain*” asks a question, the “*Crew*” is obligated to respond, but must stay within a prescribed set of answers.

**1-NT – 2-NT**

? = **P** (Minimum) or **3-NT** (Maximum)

**1H – 2H**

**3H – ?** = **P** (Minimum) or **4H** (Maximum)

**1-NT – “2H”** = **2S** (In all but one instance) or

? “**3S**” (A “**Super-Acceptance**”  
 (4-Spades + Maximum Count)

**1H – 1S**

**2H – 3D** = **3S** (To show 3-Spades) or  
 ? **3-NT** (To show a Club stopper) or  
**4C** or **4D** (To show a 4-card suit) or  
**3H** (To show 7{+} Hearts)