

OBC Alerting/Announcing Quiz

ANSWERS

For current guidelines see:

<http://www.ebu.co.uk/publications/ConventionCards-SystemsInformation/Announcements%20Table.pdf>

The one thing that this quiz is trying to do is educate (in a friendly manner). People at the bridge table feel constrained to talk once they make an announcement.

The rules are that you shouldn't say anything more than the announcement or alert UNLESS ASKED.

If you announce "spades" in response to a transfer bid, that is all you need say.

If you alert a short club, you have no need to say anything, because you have alerted.

If your opponents want more information, they can ask. In fact, as one of the questions later on specifies, they should really wait until the end of the auction, because unless they are intending to bid, that question is most safely answered then (either to prevent Unauthorised Information being passed between defenders or, more importantly, to prevent the bidders telling each other what they *think* the bid means).

Misunderstandings can be clarified before the play starts. This is the only time you are allowed to consult your own convention card – after the bidding and before the opening lead.

Your mantra should be: say as little as possible, as politely as possible, but explain fully when asked.

1) You open 1NT (playing *Standard English*). Should your partner:

- a. Alert
- b. Say nothing
- c. **Announce "12 to 14"?**

Do not say anything else unless asked – in fact, no further questions *need* to be asked. If your opponents state their range, you should not ask any further questions.

2) You respond 2C to your partner's *Benjaminised Acol 1NT*. Should your partner:

- a. **Announce "Stayman"**
- b. Say nothing
- c. Alert?

2C is usually four card Stayman. This is a conventional bid below the 3NT level so needs to be drawn to the attention of the opponents. This is done via an announcement, not an alert. Do not say anything else unless asked.

3) The opposition are playing *Standard Acol with 5 card majors*. LHO bids 1C. What should RHO do if they're playing:

- a. Better minor (showing at least three cards in the suit)? **Announce/Alert/Nothing**
- b. Prepared club (less than three cards in the suit)? **Announce/Alert/Nothing**

A 3 card suit opening bid is unusual, but not conventional. Therefore, nothing needs to be said or done when this bid is made. A 2 card suit opening bid is conventional (you don't hold the suit specified). This needs to be alerted.

4) You don't fully understand the opposition's bidding and have a flat hand with 9 points. RHO is declarer. When is the best time to ask clarification?

- a. During the auction.
- b. **Before you select your opening lead.**
- c. After Dummy has gone down.

Opening leader can ask questions before selecting a lead. Any questions asked should try not to give partner any clues as to questioner's holding in any suits. Please put your lead FACE DOWN. This prevents problems if the wrong defender leads.

5) You don't fully understand the opposition's bidding and have a flat hand with 9 points. LHO is declarer. When is the best time to ask for clarification?

- a. During the auction.
- b. **After your partner puts their lead face down.**
- c. After Dummy has gone down.

Partner of opening leader must not ask questions before leader has selected their card, placed it face down and has said "Any questions, partner?" Opening leader can change their lead if information is obtained which was not apparent before. The clarification of a conventional bid may change leader's choice.

- 6) Your opponents are playing *Benjaminised Acol*. RHO opens 2H. What should LHO do before you bid?
- Alert.
 - Nothing.
 - Announce "Weak".

A "Weak 2" is a standard conventional bid – either 5-9 or 6-10 points and 6 cards in the suit. Opponents need to know whether an opening-2 bid is weak, intermediate or strong. This is shown by an announcement. Don't say anything else unless asked.

- 7) You are playing *Standard English*. Your partner bids 2C. What should you do?
- Nothing.
 - Alert.
 - Announce "Strong".

2C shows 23+ points in Standard English. It says nothing about clubs, so is conventional. It is not announced, it is alerted.

2D/2H/2S as strong bids in Standard English are announced as "Strong".

- 8) The opposition have had the following bidding sequence: 1NT:2C. The 2C bid is alerted. Does this mean that:
- They are playing normal Stayman
 - They are playing an unusual version of Stayman
 - They are playing weak takeouts?

1NT:2C is almost always four card Stayman, which is announced "Stayman". If this bid is alerted instead, it means that it is not four card Stayman, but something slightly (or completely) different. If you're intending to bid, you can ask about this at the time, but if not bidding, it is better to wait until the end of the auction to ask.

- 9) The opposition have had the following bidding sequence: 1NT:2H. What should happen before your side next bids?
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. They are playing transfers | Nothing/Alert/Announce "Spades" |
| b. They are playing weak takeouts | Nothing/Alert/Announce "Weak" |

A transfer bid over 1NT should be announced as the suit to which the transfer refers: if it shows hearts, say "Hearts". If it shows spades, say "Spades". You shouldn't (and needn't) say anything else.

- 10) The opposition have the following bidding sequence: 2NT:3C. What should have happened after the 2NT bid...?
- Nothing.
 - Alert.
 - Announce "Strong".

2NT is always a strong bid, showing around 20-22 points and at least a semi-balanced hand. This is a natural bid and nothing needs to be said or done.

- 11) ...and what should happen after the 3C bid?
- Nothing.
 - Alert.
 - Announce "Stayman".

Over 2NT, 3C is usually a four card Stayman bid. However, since it is conventional and not so common as 2C over 1NT, it is alerted, not announced. You shouldn't (and needn't) say anything unless asked.

- 12) You have had the following bidding sequence (you are responder): 1C:1S, 3C:4NT. What should your partner do before the opposition bids again?
- Nothing.
 - Alert.
 - Announce "Blackwood" or whichever system you are playing.

Once the bidding gets further than the 3NT level, no announcements nor alerts are required. In fact, you shouldn't do anything to show your partner that you believe their bid is conventional (or not!).

- 13) You have made a conventional bid which your partner has neither alerted nor announced. Should you:
- Say "That was a conventional bid, partner"
 - Do nothing and, if declarer or dummy, conclude the auction as though partner has responded correctly
 - Conclude the auction and, if declarer or dummy, mention the conventional bid to the opponents and explain the meaning?**

Once the auction is over, declarer and dummy are required to tell the defenders (preferably before the opening lead is faced) that a mistake has occurred or misinformation has been given. Your own convention cards can be consulted at this point in the hand. Declarer and dummy cannot pass UI, because declarer will see (and play) Dummy's hand anyway.

- 14) You have made a conventional bid which your partner has neither alerted nor announced. Should you:
- Say "That was a conventional bid, partner"
 - Do nothing and, if defender, conclude the auction as though partner has responded correctly**
 - Continue the auction and, if defender, mention the conventional bid to the opponents and explain the meaning?

Once the auction is over, defenders **MUST NOT** tell their opponents about any mistakes or misinformation before the end of the play. Once the play is over, defenders should tell Declarer that there was a mistake and that if Declarer feels damaged the Director can be called for clarification. Please do call the Director, as this is an important part of what the Director does – ensuring equity if mistakes occur during the bidding and/or play.

- 15) Your partner doubles in this sequence: (1C), P, (1H), P, (2H), X and the double is for penalties. What do you do?
- Nothing.
 - Announce "That's a penalty double".
 - Alert.**

At such a low level and with partner having passed, a double for penalties is very unusual. At this level, double is mainly for takeout, so the fact that it is for penalties means it should be ALERTED. You will almost certainly be asked at this point, in which case you would say "That's for penalties" and not much more. You shouldn't speculate about your partner's hand so keep your utterances to a minimum – PLEASE!

- 16) Your opponents are playing *Benjaminised Acol*. The bidding is: (2H), P, 2NT. What should opener do at this point?
- Alert.**
 - Nothing.
 - Announce "OGUST, asking me about my hand".

After a weak-2, 2NT requests opener to give more information about their hand. This bid and the reply to it are conventional, so must be ALERTED – these bids should not be announced.

This quiz was intended to be a bit of fun to make you think about how you should approach alerting and announcing at the table. Most people got at least one question wrong, so a bit of brushing up needs to be done. Follow the link (if it still works) to the EBU website to get a handy guide to what is announced and most of what is alerted. I still have to think about this at the table, and I wrote the quiz!

Max Booker