

Rifle



After 1 minor-1 major-2NT, opener has typically shown 18-19(20) points and balanced distribution. Here, there is insufficient space for Shotgun, nor is it necessary. Instead, we use an artificial/multipurpose 3♣ relay bid (the single barrel of the Rifle); **all other bids are natural and game forcing**. The Rifle is a version of Wolff sign-off bids. The following is an example in which opener bids 1♣:

| <i>Opener</i> | <i>Responder</i> |
|---------------|---|
| 1♣ | 1♥ |
| 2NT | 3♣ = relay, demands 3♦ by opener * |
| | 3♦ = 5+♥ + 4+♦, game forcing |
| | 3♥ = 5+♥, game forcing |
| | 3♠ = 5+♥ 4+♠, game forcing |
| | 3NT = to play |
| | 4♣ = RKC in ♣ |
| | 4NT = In this sequence, direct jump to 4NT should be quantitative |

* Responder could have various different goals by first bidding 3♣:

- To look for 4-4 fit in majors with 4♠ and 4♥
- To stop in a part-score
- To invite to a ♣ slam
- To prepare for Blackwood

The goal of responder is clarified in the next bid:

| <i>Opener</i> | <i>Responder</i> |
|----------------------|--|
| 1♣ | 1♥ |
| 2NT | 3♣ |
| 3♦ (<i>forced</i>) | Pass = Weak hand with long ♦ suit (e.g. 2=4=6=1) |
| | 3♥ = Weak hand with ♥, opener should pass |
| | 3♠ = 4-4 in the majors, game forcing |
| | 3NT = Slam invitation in ♣ (opener can pass lacking such interest) |
| | 4♣ = To play, only way to stop in a part-score ♣ contract |
| | 4NT = Blackwood (no trump suit) |