

MELLOW YELLOW TWO SPADES

I don't know who originated the ACBL's official "Standard American Yellow Card" bidding system, but whoever devised it wisely left his name off the system, lest he live the rest of his years in infamy. Perhaps the silliest part of the system is its 2♠ response to 1NT, a puppet to 3♣ that shows either a club bust (responder passes next turn) or a diamond bust (responder "corrects" to 3♦).

Mike Savage suggested a modification that allows this 2♠ response to be used also for weak minor 2-suiters: let opener rebid 2NT instead of 3♣ when he has more diamonds than clubs, so responder will know in which minor to play with a weak 5-5. Mike's modification suffers from only one defect: it usually wrong-sides 3♣ when responder has a club bust (opener is likely to have more diamonds than clubs and will usually bid 2NT).

With or without the Savage Adjunct, the Yellow Card 2♠ encompasses far too narrow a class of hands, and leaves all of responder's rebids beyond 3♦ idle. Let's expand its uses. *Mellow Yellow* adds these rebids to responder's repertoire:

3♥. A strong *club* one-suiter.

3♠. A strong *diamond* one suiter.

3NT. A strong 5-5 in the minors. Opener may pass, or force to game by bidding four of either minor. Of course with a hand like ♠A93 ♥A84 ♦AQ102 ♣Q73, a fit and *five working cards*, opener won't settle for anything less than a small slam in diamonds.

4♣. A Roman Key-Card Ask in clubs.

4♦. A Roman Key-Card Ask in diamonds.

4♥. A fragment bid, showing three hearts, 5-5 in the minors, and slam interest.

4♠. A fragment bid, showing three spades, 5-5 in the minors, and slam interest.

4NT. A slam-invitational 5-5 in the minors. Opener may pass or place the contract.

5♥. A fragment bid, showing three hearts, 5-5 in the minors, and forcing to slam.

5♠. A fragment bid, showing three spades, 5-5 in the minors, and forcing to slam.

5NT. A slam-forcing 5-5 in the minors. Opener places the contract.