



GOLDEN RULES OF ACOL

- 1 Always **open 1 NT** holding 12-14 H.C.P., no singleton or void and only one doubleton. Do *not* worry about having a 'stop' in every suit! You should also open **1NT** when holding a five card *minor suit*.
- 2 Do not open 1 NT holding a **5 card major** suit.
- 3 **Never raise** a weak take-out from partner, following a 1 NT opening bid.
- 4 **Never overcall** in a suit with fewer than **five** cards: either double or use a convention.
- 5 Always treat a **change of suit** response by partner as forcing, *however* weak your opening bid may have been - the only exception being if your partner has already passed **and** you have tolerance for partner's new suit.
- 6 As **Responder** always show your **4 card major** before your **5 card minor** suit.
- 7 Only **respond 2 hearts** to partner's opening bid of 1 spade when you hold **5 hearts and 9+ points**: with only 4 hearts, either bid one of the minor suits (need only be a 4 card suit), or bid in NT.
- 8 Treat '**length**' as more important than 'strength'.
- 9 Treat a '**high - low**' opening bid and rebid as 'normal' : hence '**low - high**' bidding by the opener is 'a **reverse**' and is strong and forcing.
- 10 As declarer, when playing, try to lead *from* 'nothing' *towards* 'something'.
- 11 The '**Rule of 20**' may be used to decide whether or not to open on a weak hand. If the *combined number* of cards in the **two longest suits** added to the number of **high card points** in the hand adds up to 20, then the hand **may** be worth an opening bid.
- 12 If partner opens with a *minor* suit, offer a **major** suit if possible, *even when* you can support partner's minor suit.