

EGCC Opening 4441 Hands

What's so special about 4441?

4441 hands are difficult to play (you have no long suit to develop but you have a suit that you may be forced in).

They are similarly difficult to bid. You cannot open or rebid a no trump (because of the singleton), you cannot open a suit and rebid it (because that would guarantee five), so you must open one suit and rebid another – strongly implying 5 in the first suit.

“Hot and Cold” (H&C)

With 4441 hands: Open whichever of 1H and 1C (H&C) is the opposite colour to the singleton. The reason is that you always have a rebid, and it gives you the maximum chance of finding a major fit. So with

♠ QT32
♥ 3
♦ K724
♣ AKQ3

Open 1♣: rebid 1♠ over 1♥, and raise any other suit bid.

Sneaking a NT rebid

If your partner bids your singleton, and you are strong enough, you can “lie” a little about your hand and rebid NT. After partners bid you are no longer worried about losing tricks in that suit. Beware though – partner will assume you have 2 of his suit. With:

♠ 3
♥ AT32
♦ K724
♣ AKQ3

Open 1♥. If partner responds 1♠ bid 1NT, showing 15-16 points.

Compare that to:

♠ AT32
♥ 3
♦ K724
♣ AKQ3

Open 1♣ and if partner responds 1♥, bid 1♠.

The difference is in the first case you are not missing a major fit, but in the second you may be. It is more important to show your spades than to show your points.