

# Gazzilli

Playing Standard system, you open one of a Major and partner responds 1NT. Now if you have a single suiter major Game forcing hand, there is no convenient bid. You might jump to 3 of a minor to force the bidding that means responder will not know whether the new suit is of 3 or 4 or 5 cards. Also when you jump to three level with 5-4-3-1 Game forcing hands, it becomes difficult to find the fit in your 3-card suit if the responder has that suit in a weak hand. The jump has taken away the space, which is of paramount importance for exploring and finding the right contract.

Similarly another problem area for Standard Bidders is balanced hand of 15-17 HCP with a 5-card major. If you open one of a major, there is re-bid problem with these hands. Many of the players today open 1NT with 5-card major to solve this problem. However this creates a further problem as you miss out on 5-4 or 5-3 major suit fits on borderline hands.

To solve all these difficulties and also to allow non-forcing jumps to the three level with lower HCP (14-16), Italians (as far as I know), play what is called Gazzilli.

Gazzilli makes most sense in a 2/1 system where the 1NT response to a major opening can be a wide range. Note that all 17+ hands go through Gazzilli.

## Priorities.

Responder with a weak hand should first look to bid a 7+ suit of their own then two of opener's major with 2+ support finally a shorter suit or three-suited hand.

After opening 1♥ and hearing 1♠ from partner opener rebids like this.

The structures if partner responds 1NT to either major opening are identical:

1NT is 11-14 HCP balanced.

2♣ is Gazzilli (17+ HCP. Explained below)

2♦ is 11-16 HCP with 3+ diamonds

2♥ is 11-16 HCP with 6+ hearts

2♠ is 14-16 HCP with 6 hearts and 5 spades

2NT is 14-16 HCP with 6 hearts and 4+ minor.

Opener has shown a 6-4 shape with a better than minimum hand. Responder can now bid:

3♥ to play

3♣ pass or correct

3♦ game forcing asking for the minor.

3♥ should show clubs and 3♠ should show diamonds.

3♣ is 14-16 HCP with 5 hearts and 5 clubs

3♦ is 14-16 HCP with 5 hearts and 5 diamonds

3♥ is 14-16 HCP with 6+ hearts (great suit)

## Gazzilli Responses are as follows:

1♥ Pass 1♠ Pass  
2♣ Pass  
2♦ shows 8+ HCP with any shape (see below)  
2♥ shows 5-7 HCP and 2+ hearts  
2♠ shows 5-7 HCP with 6+ spades  
2NT shows 5-7 HCP with a 3 suited hand with short hearts  
3♣ shows 5-7 HCP with 6+ clubs  
3♦ shows 5-7 HCP and 6+ diamonds

1♥ Pass 1NT Pass  
2♣  
2♦ shows 8+ HCP with any shape (see below)  
2♥ shows 5-7 HCP with 2+ hearts  
2♠ shows 5-7 HCP with a 3 suited hand with short hearts  
2NT shows 5-7 HCP with 5+ clubs and 5+ diamonds  
3♣ shows 5-7 HCP with 6+ clubs  
3♦ shows 5-7 HCP with 6+ diamonds

1♠ Pass 1NT Pass  
2♣  
2♦ shows 8+ HCP with any shape (see below)  
2♥ shows 5-7 HCP with 5+ hearts  
2♠ shows 5-7 HCP with 2+ spades  
2NT shows 5-7 HCP with a 3 suited hand with short spades  
3♣ shows 5-7 HCP with 6+ clubs  
3♦ shows 5-7 HCP with 6+ diamonds

When responder bids 2♦ opener either rebids their major showing the weak option or any other bid 17+ GF.

If responder makes another bid they have a tight range of hands and opener is usually well placed to pick the contract or invite.

## 2NT and 3NT rebids

If opener rebids 3NT after Gazzilli it shows 18-19 balanced, 5M332.

The 2NT rebid can be used in one of two ways:

To show 15-17 balanced (if you don't like 5M332 in your 1NT)

or like the immediate 2NT rebid to differentiate a sixth card in the major suit.

### Examples

1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass

3NT

Opener shows 17+ points, 5+ hearts, 4+ clubs and a diamond stop.

Responder has shown 4+ spades and 8+ points.

The auction may be over at this point or Responder can bid on.

1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	

Opener has a natural 2♣ rebid. Responder shows 8-9 points by signing off in 3♣. 2NT would have been invitational.

1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♣	

At 3♥ Opener has shown 14-16 HCP with a 6-4 shape in spades and clubs.

Responder has agreed clubs and is waiting for a cue.

1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass

3NT

Opener has 18-19 points balanced. Responder has shows 5-7 HCP with 2 or possibly 3 hearts.

Responder has denied a long suit.

1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	

**Responder has shows 5-7 HCP with 6+ spades. Opener has a natural 2♣ rebid or a poorly fitting 17 count.**

## Other Gazzilli Auctions

After:

1♠ Pass 1NT Dbl

I believe Gazzilli should not apply. Opener can always redouble to show a strong 17+ hand in place of rebidding 2♣. You might however wish to retain the limited 5-5 jumps and the limited artificial 6-4 2NT rebid. A rebid of 2♣ however should show at least 4 clubs.

If the opponents double the Gazzilli 2♣ rebid (presumably showing clubs), responder's pass should show 5+ clubs, 2♦ should be non forcing with 5+ diamonds, and redouble would be used to show 8+ HCP, triggering the normal relay rebids. Opener would have an additional rebid of 2♦ available showing 5332 shape precisely and fewer than 17 HCP.

If the opponents compete over 2♣ with an overcall at the two level, double by responder would be takeout with 8+ HCP (or more if the safety level of 2 of opener's major had been bypassed). Any rebid by opener over the double is natural, rebids above 3♣ show 17+ HCP, jumps in new suits are definitely game forcing, when nothing else is clearly forcing opener cue bids the overcaller's suit to show a strong hand.

If responder's 2♦ relay is doubled, opener's pass shows minimum with 3 diamonds, redouble shows 16+ balanced with 3 diamonds, other rebids retain their normal meaning. If they overcall the relay opener makes his normal rebid if possible, double shows a 16+ balanced hand (convertible), pass is either minimum or a penalty double of the overcall (responder is expected but not required to protect with a double if the bidding is below 3 of opener's major). In any cases where they double higher level relay responses pass by responder is neutral. If they double an artificial relay by responder of 2♠, opener's pass is neutral, no trump bids confirm good stoppers in suit doubled, redouble shows a stopper in suit doubled but doubt as to the best contract. If they overcall at the three level or higher, opener's doubles show strong hands, not penalty but convertible, and are presumed to show a stopper in the suit doubled. Responder may pass or convert to 3NT if he believes that will score better.

## Assessment of Gazzilli

Overall Gazzilli handles more hand types more precisely than other methods including those involving a combination of Bart and the Meckwell adjunct. The rebids showing 6-4 and 5-5 hands are inherently aggressive, it is not clear whether some of those hands might be bought at a lower level. Responder needs to exercise caution and not stretch to rebid 3NT over these bids, opener's hand is likely to require losing the lead several times before all the tricks are established. In addition, since the defenders know opener's exact shape, the defence may be better. However the Gazzilli approach does allow confident bidding of some low point count slams and games, it seems therefore better suited toimps than matchpoints. The relay auctions do involve a lot of alerting and perhaps allow the defenders opportunities to make lead directing bids or even enter auctions they might not otherwise come into. Going slow on the strong 5-4 hands however has some real advantages, and the method of sorting out the best minor part score is clearly superior to Bart or standard (using the artificial 2♠ and 2NT rebids over 2♣). The only hand types where Bart seems to have the edge are hands where responder has a weak hand with 4 hearts or 5 bad hearts. These hands could end up playing in 2♠ in Gazzilli where there is a superior 3-4 or 3-5 fit in hearts detectable via Bart. Since the convention is virtually unknown in North America, it may also not be allowed in all ACBL events.