Unbalanced continuations - Summary Sheet

The continuing auction – opener is unbalanced

Opener has not made a natural bid in no trumps on either his first or his second bid.

Opener started with one of a major

With 4-card support or better

5-9 pts - raise to the 2-level
10-12 pts – raise to the 3-level
13+ pts – raise to the 4-level

Lacking 4-card support

Change suit
you need 5+ points - for a new suit at the 1-level
rule of 14 - for a new suit at the 2-level.
You can bid a new 4-card minor at the two-level, but 2♥ in response to 1♠ promises at least a 5-card suit.
If you have a choice of bids, bid:-
your longest suit;
higher of two 5-cards suits;
lower of 2 or more 4-card suits.

Opener started with one of a minor

With 1 or more 4-card majors

start with a natural and forcing change of suit.
5+ points – bid at the 1-level;

Lacking a 4-card major

Change suit if possible.
You need 5+ points - for a new suit at the 1-level
rule of 14 - for a new suit at the 2-level;
6-9 pts and 4-card support – raise to the 2-level;
10-12 points – raise to the 2-level;
13+ points – force to game.
6-9 points and no alternative bid – bid 1NT.

Rule of 14

Add your points to the length of your longest suit.
If it comes to 14 or more then you are strong enough to respond with a lowest-level bid in a new suit.
In practice this means you should hold 10 points and a 4-card suit, or 9 points and a 5-card suit.

Opener's rebid

With at least 5-4 shape

Rebid in your second suit with up to 18 points, then make a further bid with 17 or 18.
Jump in your second suit with 19+ - game-forcing.

With a six-card major

Keep the bidding open to the 3-level with 16+ points.

Responder's rebid

With 10-12 points keep the bidding open to 2NT or 3 of a suit.
Force to game with 13+.

Opener started with 2♣

For the moment always respond with 2♦.
Openers rebid in a suit is 5-card and forcing.
Continue naturally.

Opener started with a weak two

Raise to the level of the fit with weak support.
Bid a game if you can see one, but remember partner is weak.
Otherwise 'Pass' - never rescue.