

LESSON 6

The Subsequent Auction



General Concepts

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Sample Deals

GENERAL CONCEPTS

The Subsequent Auction

This lesson covers bidding methods used in the middle of the auction. Students often encounter situations where they are not sure whether a bid is forcing or not. They need to know whether they can pass partner's last bid, and they also need to know whether the bid they are about to make can be passed by partner. Standard bidding situations, such as jump shifts and reverses, are discussed because many players are uncertain about these concepts. In addition, the concept of fourth-suit forcing is introduced.

The Bidding

While most of the sequences introduced in this lesson will be familiar to more experienced students, there are still some concepts that may prove useful to them. The convention being introduced is fourth-suit forcing, but there are many conventional methods that can be used in the middle auction. This is an important part of bidding, and the focus of the lesson should be on distinguishing forcing bids from non-forcing bids. If the students can come away feeling more comfortable in this area, the lesson will have accomplished its purpose.

Here are the topics covered and comments on which sections you might want to include or skip.

Opener's Non-Forcing Rebids

This is mostly review. At this point in the lessons, it's assumed that students aren't playing two-over-one, so they need to be familiar with which sequences are forcing and which are not after a new-suit bid at the two level. Two-over-one is covered in the next course, *More Commonly Used Conventions*.

Opener's Jump Shift

This is a brief review of a familiar topic. One reason for including this material is so that the students can distinguish between the different hand patterns that result in a jump shift versus a reverse. A jump shift is generally used when the second suit is lower ranking than the first. A reverse is generally used when the second suit is higher ranking than the first.

Opener's Reverse

Even more experienced players can find the concept of the reverse an area of confusion. While a reverse doesn't necessarily require as strong a hand as a jump shift, the style recommended here is to treat a reverse as forcing for one round. It can include maximum-strength hands as well as medium-strength hands, and there is no need for a "jump shift reverse." The style of responses recommended in this section should prove useful even to those familiar with reverses.

Responder's Rebid after a Reverse — Lebensohl over Reverses

This covers the most common partnership agreement used after a reverse, sometimes referred to as the Ingberman convention or Lebensohl over reverses. This gives responder a way to show both good and bad hands. The topic is rather complex, so go slowly.

Responder's Non-Forcing Rebids

This is more review to make sure the students are familiar with concepts such as jump preference. With an experienced group, you can point out that there are other possible treatments of these sequences. Some partnerships, for example, like to treat responder's jump rebids to the three level in an old suit as forcing.

Fourth-suit forcing

This is the only convention in this lesson, so you may want to focus on this section with a more experienced group. The concept is very important, especially when you contrast the bidding sequences with those in which fourth-suit forcing is not used.

After a 1NT Rebid by Opener

This is an area that needs clarification for students who want to treat a new suit by responder as always forcing. Standard bidding treats a non-reverse by responder after opener's 1NT rebid as non-forcing. For more experienced students, you can direct their attention to the discussion of new-minor forcing and checkback Stayman in the Appendix of the student text.

After a 2NT Rebid by Opener

The idea that opener's jump rebid of 2NT is not forcing may be new. Because of the notrump structure we are using, this bid shows 18 or 19 points. Again, the more experienced students could be referred to the Appendix of the student text for a discussion of checkback Stayman and Wolff sign-off.

Play & Defense

The deals have examples of the bidding concepts discussed in the lesson: jump shift, reverse and fourth-suit forcing. It's likely that the students will deviate from the recommended auction, and they may reach a different contract or play it from a different side. That's fine. Let the students bid and play as they see fit. During the discussion after the deal, go through the recommended auction and go through the play as though everyone is in the recommended contract.

The deals include examples of:

- Safety play in a suit.
- Creating an entry.
- Loser on a loser.

The first deal contains a safety play in a suit. It's actually just good technique in handling a suit, but it's something that can be missed if the students automatically play "high card from the short side" when taking tricks in a suit.

In the second deal, declarer has to contend with a blocked suit by creating a side entry to dummy. It's easy for declarer to miss the key play on the first trick. Unfortunately, it's also easy for the defenders to slip up and give declarer the necessary entry. This deal should provide an interesting discussion for even the more experienced students.

The fourth deal involves a loser on a loser play to maintain control of the trump suit. This is likely to be missed by even the experienced players. Go over the deal carefully, since the defenders have to play well to defeat the contract if declarer gives them a chance.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The topics covered in this lesson are important areas of bidding. The students are usually uncomfortable during the auction when they don't know which bids are forcing and which are not, so you can use that as the focus of the lesson.

"Most of the tension during the auction usually comes from deciding whether to bid, rather than what to bid. If you know partner's last bid is forcing, then you'll bid something, and the auction will keep going.

"The bidding can become uncomfortable if you are afraid that partner might pass your next bid. If you're not sure if a certain bid is forcing, you might feel compelled to make a unilateral decision, perhaps by jumping to game or slam. You don't want to hear partner pass in the middle of the auction when you thought you were headed for a game or slam. You also don't want to have to fold up your cards and place them on the table to send the message that you don't want partner to bid any more! To be comfortable, you need to know which bids are forcing, which are invitational and which are sign-offs.

"So, we're going to review various bidding sequences and discuss which bids are forcing and which are not. At the same time, we'll introduce some conventional approaches that should help you."

GROUP ACTIVITIES

Opener's Non-Forcing Rebids

Introduction

“After a one-level response, opener’s rebid is not forcing if it isn’t a jump shift or a reverse ... which we’ll come to shortly. The situation is different after a two-level response. After a two-level response, a new suit by opener is forcing, and any jump rebid is forcing to game. Let’s run through a few examples.”

Instructions

“Let’s start by constructing a hand for opener. The cards are sorted into suits. Give each player one suit and construct the following hand for South.

“In spades: the king and two low cards.

“In hearts: the ace, the jack and two low cards.

“In diamonds: the queen, the jack and a low card.

“In clubs: the king and two low cards.

NORTH	SOUTH	SOUTH
1 ♠	1 ♣ 1NT	♠ K x x ♥ A J x x ♦ Q J x ♣ K x x

“Remember. We want the cards in neat straight lines, with the high cards toward the edge of the table.”

Check that each table has the correct starting hand set up dummy style in front of South.

“**What would you open with this hand?** (1 ♣.) With a balanced hand and 14 high-card points, you are too weak to open 1NT. Playing five-card majors, open 1 ♣ with three cards in both minors.

“**Suppose responder, North, bids 1 ♠. What would you rebid?** (1NT.) You can finish describing the hand by rebidding 1NT. This shows a balanced hand of 12 to 14 points. It’s more descriptive than raising partner’s spades. Although opener needs a five-card suit to open 1 ♠, responder could bid 1 ♠ on a four-card suit. Only raise with three-card support when you have shortness in a side suit.

“**Is your 1NT rebid forcing?** (No.) The 1NT rebid limits your hand to a narrow three-point range and is very descriptive. Responder can assume you have 13 points and never be inaccurate by more than 1 point. Responder is well positioned to decide where the partnership belongs. If responder feels 1NT is the best contract for the partnership, responder can pass and leave you to play there.

“What if you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♥. What is your rebid? (2♥.) Showing four-card support for partner takes priority over describing a balanced hand.

“Is the raise to 2♥ forcing? (No.) The single raise of responder’s suit shows a minimum-strength hand of 12 to 15 points. Once the fit has been found, the next step is up to responder. Responder can pass, bid game or make a try for game ... by bidding 3♥, for example.

“Suppose you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♦. What’s your rebid? (1♥.) The standard approach is to continue bidding suits up the line, looking for a fit. Responder could have five diamonds and four hearts, for example. If you were to rebid 1NT, the heart fit might get lost.

“Is the 1♥ rebid forcing? (No.) A new suit by opener at the one level is not forcing. It covers a wide range of hands, from 12 to 18 points, but responder can pass with a bare minimum and a preference for hearts as the trump suit.

“Change the South hand

“In spades: take away a low card and add the ace.

NORTH	SOUTH	SOUTH
1♠	1♣	♠ A K x
	2NT	♥ A J x x
		♦ Q J x
		♣ K x x

“What would you open the bidding with? (1♣.) With 18 high-card points, you are too strong to open 1NT if the partnership range is 15 to 17.

“If partner responds 1♠, what’s your rebid? (2NT). A jump to 2NT shows a balanced hand with 18 or 19 points: too strong for an opening bid of 1NT; too weak for an opening bid of 2NT.

“Is the jump to 2NT forcing? (No.) The 2NT rebid has accurately described your hand. Responder is now the captain. With only 6 points, partner can pass.

“Suppose you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♥. What do you rebid? (3♥.) With four-card support for partner’s major, you want to show a fit. A jump raise shows 16 to 18 points.

“Is the jump to 3♥ forcing? (No.) Again, you have limited your hand to at most 18 points. Responder can pass with a bare minimum.

“What would you rebid if you open 1♣ and partner responds 1♦? (2NT/1♥.) It’s a matter of style. Some players might bid the four-card heart suit, continuing to bid suits up the line, but this doesn’t describe the hand very accurately. Partner won’t know whether you have a balanced or an unbalanced hand. Partner also won’t know whether you have a minimum-strength hand or a medium-strength hand. Most players would rebid 2NT.

That tells partner you have a balanced hand and 18 or 19 points. Now partner is well-positioned to decide what to do. There's still room at the three level to find a heart fit if partner holds a four-card heart suit."

With a more experienced group, you can refer them to the description of checkback Stayman in the Appendix of the student text. That is a common method of handling the search for a major-suit fit after opener's 2NT rebid.

"What would you rebid if you open 1♣ and partner responds 1NT? (2NT.) A raise to 2NT would show 18 or 19 points. There's no need to show the heart suit since responder would have bid 1♥ with a four-card or longer heart suit.

"Would the raise to 2NT be forcing? (No.) It would be invitational. Responder could pass with only 6 or 7 points.

"What if responder raised your 1♣ opening to 2♣? (2NT.) Again, a rebid of 2NT should be sufficient. It shows a balanced hand of 18 or 19 points and responder can pass with a bare minimum for the raise to 2♣. If you held a minimum-strength balanced hand, you would simply pass 2♣.

"Change the South hand.

"In spades: take away the ace.

"In hearts: add two low cards.

"In diamonds: take away the jack.

NORTH	SOUTH	SOUTH
	1♥	♠ K x
1♠	2♥	♥ A J x x x x
		♦ Q x
		♣ K x x

"What would you open with? (1♥.) With 13 high-card points plus 2 length points for the six-card suit, you have enough to open at the one level.

"If partner responds 1♠, what is your rebid? (2♥.) With an unbalanced hand — two doubletons — you rebid your six-card suit.

"Is the 2♥ rebid forcing? (No.) Your rebid shows a minimum hand of about 13 to 15 points. Partner doesn't have to bid again with a minimum response.

"Suppose partner were to respond 2♦ over your 1♥ opening. What would you rebid? (2♥.) Again, you would show the six-card suit and a minimum-strength opening bid by simply rebidding the heart suit.

"Is the 2♥ rebid forcing? (No/Yes.) The situation is slightly different when partner responds at the two level instead of the one level. A one-level response shows 6 or more points. For a two level response in a new suit, responder needs 10 or more points. Nonetheless, without a partnership agreement to the contrary, the 2♥ rebid is not forcing. Opener has shown a minimum opening bid. If responder feels that there is little chance for game, responder can pass."

With a more advanced group, you can point out that there are other possible agreements. Some partnerships have an agreement that the bidding cannot stop below 2NT, in which case the 2♥ rebid would be forcing. The agreement presented above is the “modern” version of Standard, when the partnership is not playing two-over-one as a game force. The two-over-one style is discussed in the next course, *More Commonly Used Conventions in the 21st Century*.

“Change the South hand.

“In hearts: add the queen.

“In clubs: take away a low card

NORTH	SOUTH	SOUTH
	1♥	♠ K x
1♠	3♥	♥ A Q J x x x x
		♦ Q x
		♣ K x

“You open 1♥ and partner responds 1♠. What is your rebid? (3♥.)

This hand is worth 18 points ... 15 high-card points plus 3 length points for the six-card suit. To show a medium-strength hand of about 16 to 18 points, you can jump rebid in a six-card or longer suit.

“Is the jump rebid to 3♥ a forcing bid? (No.) You have made a descriptive rebid, limiting your hand to 16 to 18 points. With a minimum response, responder can pass.

“Change the South hand.

“In spades: add a low card.

“In hearts: take away the queen and a low card.

“In diamonds: add a low card.

NORTH	SOUTH	SOUTH
	1♥	♠ K x x
2♣	2NT	♥ A J x x x
		♦ Q x x
		♣ K x

“What would you open with? (1♥.)

“If partner responds 2♣, what would you rebid? (2NT.) The modern style is that a rebid of notrump at the cheapest available level doesn’t promise anything extra. Even though you have to bid 2NT to show the balanced nature of the hand, you are still showing a hand too weak to open 1NT. A rebid of 2NT is the most descriptive bid you can make. You’ve already shown the five-card heart suit when you opened 1♥.

“Is the 2NT rebid forcing? (No.) Since you’ve described a minimum-strength balanced hand, partner can pass with a minimum for the 2♣ response (10 or 11 points).”

This assumes the partnership has no other agreement, such as two-over-one game forcing.

“Change the South hand.

“In spades: take away a low card.

“In diamonds: add the jack.

NORTH	SOUTH	SOUTH
1 ♠	1 ♥	♠ K x
	2 ♦	♥ A J x x x
		♦ Q J x x
		♣ K x

“**What would South open the bidding?** (1 ♥.) With an unbalanced hand, open the longest suit.

“**If partner responds 1 ♠, what would South rebid?** (2 ♦.) South shows a second suit. This is more descriptive than bidding 1NT or rebidding hearts. Partner will know nine of the cards you hold ... at least five hearts and at least four diamonds.

“**Is the 2 ♦ rebid forcing?** (No.) A new suit rebid at the two level is not forcing if it is in a lower-ranking suit than opener’s first bid suit. We’ll be discussing the rebid of a higher-ranking suit in a moment. With a minimum hand, responder can pass 2 ♦ or *give preference* back to 2 ♥. Responder won’t need to go beyond the two level to choose between opener’s two suits.

“**What would you rebid if responder bid 2 ♦ over your 1 ♥ bid?** (3 ♦.) You can show a minimum hand with support for responder’s suit by raising to 3 ♦.

“**Is the raise to 3 ♦ forcing?** (No.) Since you are showing a minimum hand with the simple raise to the three level, responder can pass with a bare minimum of 10 or 11 points for the 2 ♦ response.

“Change the South hand.

“In diamonds: add the ace.

“In clubs: take away the king.

NORTH	SOUTH	SOUTH
1NT	1 ♥	♠ K x
	2 ♦	♥ A J x x x
		♦ A Q J x x
		♣ x

“**What would South open with?** (1 ♥.) With two five-card suits, open the higher-ranking.

“**What would South rebid if partner responded 1NT?** (2 ♦.) South would show the second suit.

“Is 2♦ forcing? (No.) As before, after a one-level response, a new suit by opener at the two level is not forcing if it is lower ranking than opener’s first-bid suit. The difference between this hand and the previous one is that this is a medium-strength hand, not a minimum-strength hand. There are 15 high-card points plus 1 point for each of the five-card suits ... a total of 17. Opener’s rebid of a new suit, whether at the one level or the two level, covers a wide range of strength, 13 to 18 points.”

Responder doesn’t have to bid again after making a one-level response. With only 6 or 7 points, responder can pass, since game is unlikely. Even with 8 or 9 points, responder can pass with a preference for diamonds over hearts. There’s some possibility of missing a game when opener has a medium-strength hand, so responder should stretch to bid again when possible ... but responder doesn’t have to bid.

“What would South rebid if partner responded 2♣ over the 1♥ opening? (2♦.) South still would show the second suit by bidding 2♦.

“Is 2♦ forcing in this situation? (Yes.) This is the first forcing bid we have encountered so far. After a two-level response, the bid of a new suit by opener is *forcing*. This is because the rebid of a new suit by opener covers such a wide range ... up to about 18 points. Since responder has at least 10 points to bid a new suit at the two level, the partnership could easily have enough for game. It may not, if opener has a minimum, but responder must bid again, just in case.”

Summary

“After a one-level response, opener’s rebid is not forcing if it is:

- A simple rebid or jump rebid of opener’s suit;
- A simple raise or jump raise of responder’s suit;
- A notrump bid ... 1NT, 2NT or 3NT;
- A new suit at the one level;
- A new suit at the two level that is lower-ranking than opener’s first-bid suit.

“After a two-level response, opener’s rebid is not forcing if it is:

- A simple rebid of opener’s suit at the two level;
- A simple raise of responder’s suit to the three level;
- A notrump rebid ... 2NT or 3NT.

“However, after a two-level response, a new suit by opener is forcing.”

Opener's Jump Shift

Introduction

“Most of opener’s rebids are not forcing after a one-level response. Opener, however, sometimes wants to make a forcing bid. In standard methods, responder’s jump shift shows a strong hand and is forcing to at least game. Responder is probably interested in a slam. Opener also can make a jump shift. Opener’s jump shift shows a maximum-strength hand for the opening bid, 19 to 21 points. Opener’s jump shift is forcing to game and shows interest in reaching a slam. Let’s look at some examples.”

Instructions

“Change the South hand.

“In hearts: take away a low card and add the king.

NORTH	SOUTH	SOUTH
	1 ♥	♠ K x
1 ♠	3 ♦	♥ A K J x x
		♦ A Q J x x
		♣ x

“**What would you open with?** (1 ♥.) There are 18 high-card points plus 1 point for each of the five-card suits. The hand isn’t quite strong enough to open with a strong two-bid, so start at the one level. With a choice of five-card suits, open the higher-ranking, 1 ♥.

“**Partner, North, responds 1 ♠. Now what?** (3 ♦.) This is the standard situation for a jump shift. You show a maximum-strength hand by jumping in the second suit—a jump and a shift of suits.

“**What’s the purpose behind the jump shift?** (Descriptive/forcing.) The jump shift takes up a lot of bidding room, so it needs to serve a useful purpose. It’s partly to describe your hand. You want to tell responder about the second suit and see which suit responder prefers. You also want to describe your strength, to let partner know you have a maximum-strength hand of 19 to 21 points. That will help partner decide whether the partnership belongs in game or slam. Finally, you want to make a forcing bid. As previously discussed, a rebid of 2 ♦ would not be forcing. With a minimum hand and a preference for diamonds as the trump suit, responder could pass.

“**How many points does responder have?** (6 or more.) Responder has at least 6 and could have a lot more. Since you have 20, the partnership has 26 or more combined points. You belong at the game level or higher. That’s why you want to make a forcing bid at this point. You don’t want responder to pass and leave the partnership in partscore.

“Change the South hand.

“In diamonds: take away the jack.

“In clubs: add a low card.

NORTH	SOUTH
1 ♠	1 ♥
	2 ♦

SOUTH
 ♠ K x
 ♥ A K J x x
 ♦ A Q x x
 ♣ x x

“**You are the dealer. You open 1 ♥, and partner responds 1 ♠. What now?** (2 ♦/3 ♦.) It’s close, but this hand is probably not worth a jump shift. You have 17 high-card points plus 1 for the five-card suit. You have 18 points and partner could have as few as 6. 24 combined points are probably not enough for game. You should rebid 2 ♦. If partner can’t bid again, you are unlikely to miss a game contract. The rebid of 2 ♦ sounds like a minimum-strength hand, but can also be based on a medium-strength hand.

“Remember, a jump shift commits the partnership to game. So, the real criterion for using it is whether you want to be in game if partner wouldn’t normally bid again over a non-forcing rebid. If partner passes 2 ♦, then partner prefers diamonds to hearts and will have only one or two hearts. Game is unlikely. If partner bids over 2 ♦, you will get an opportunity to show your extra strength.”

You might skip the next example with a basic class.

“Change the South hand.

“In spades: add a low card.

“In clubs: take away a low card.

NORTH	SOUTH
1 ♠	1 ♥
	3 ♦

SOUTH
 ♠ K x x
 ♥ A K J x x
 ♦ A Q x x
 ♣ x

“**The high-card strength hasn’t changed, but what would you rebid after opening 1 ♥ and hearing partner respond 1 ♠?** (3 ♦.) With spade support and a singleton club, this hand is probably worth a jump shift to 3 ♦. You plan to show spade support next. The hand is worth 20 points in support of spades — 17 high-card points plus 3 dummy points for the singleton. However, you don’t want to jump to 4 ♠ with only three-card support. Responder could have only four spades. By jump shifting and then supporting spades, you show the strength of the hand without promising four-card support for partner’s suit.

“Suppose you open 1♥ and partner responds 2♣. What do you bid now? (2♦/3♦.) When responder bids a new suit at the two level, you don’t have to jump shift to make a forcing bid. Responder has 10 or more points and, as discussed earlier, a new-suit bid by you is forcing. If you bid 2♦, responder will bid again.

“Some players may jump shift to 3♦, but it’s a waste of bidding space. Most partnerships prefer to bid 2♦ with this type of hand and reserve the jump for conventional purposes — perhaps to show a club fit and shortness in hearts.”

Experienced students can be referred to the section on splinter bids in the Appendix of the student text.

Summary

“Opener’s jump shift is forcing to game and shows a maximum-strength opening bid after a one-level response. Opener doesn’t need to jump shift after a two-level response to force responder to bid again, since any new suit by opener would be forcing for at least one round.”

Opener's Reverse

Introduction

“Opener doesn’t always have to jump in a new suit to show extra strength. When opener bids one of a suit and partner responds in a new suit, opener’s bid of a new suit that prevents responder from returning to opener’s original suit at the two level is called a reverse. The term reverse seems to cause a lot of confusion, so let’s look at some examples.”

Instructions

“Construct a hand for South.

“In spades: the king and two low cards.

“In hearts: the ace, the king and two low cards.

“In diamonds: the ace, the queen and three low cards.

“In clubs: a low card.

NORTH	SOUTH	
	1 ♦	SOUTH
1 ♠	2 ♥	♠ K x x
		♥ A K x x
		♦ A Q x x x
		♣ x

“**What is South’s opening bid?** (1 ♦.) Start with the longer suit, diamonds.

“**Partner responds 1 ♠. What is your rebid?** (2 ♥.) This is a strong hand in support of spades, but with only three-card support, you don’t want to raise spades right away. It would be awkward to make a jump shift in your second suit as a forcing bid. A jump to 3 ♥ would leave little room to explore for the best contract. If partner were to rebid 3NT, you would be nervous about passing without having shown spade support.

“Bid your second suit at the two level, 2 ♥. This is a reverse, since it prevents responder from returning to your original suit, diamonds, at the two level. If partner prefers diamonds to hearts, partner would have to bid 3 ♦.

“**When you make a reverse bid, what does responder know about the relative length of the two suits?** (First suit is longer.) If you held more hearts than diamonds, you would have opened 1 ♥, the longer suit. If you held five hearts and five diamonds, you would have opened the higher-ranking suit, hearts. If you held a balanced hand with four hearts and four diamonds, you would have rebid in notrump. So, responder can infer that your first suit is longer than your second suit.

“**What sort of strength does opener need to make a reverse bid?** (A medium-strength hand, preferably 17 or 18 points.) Responder knows that opener’s first suit is longer than opener’s second suit. With a preference for

opener's first suit or equal support for both suits, responder will be forced to go to the three level to put the partnership in its best fit. Since responder can have as few as 6 points, opener should have at least 17 or more points to reverse.

“Is opener's reverse bid forcing? (Yes/No.) Most partnerships agree that a reverse is *forcing for at least one round of bidding*. Since opener could have only a medium-strength hand, the reverse isn't forcing to the game level when responder has a minimum hand, but responder must take at least one more bid.”

Some of the participants might come from a background in which a reverse shows a good hand but is not forcing. Treating the reverse as forcing is the modern approach.

“Treating a reverse as forcing allows opener to use it with both medium and maximum-strength hands. Opener knows that there will be at least one more round of bidding.

“For example, a reverse bid gives opener a way to describe this type of hand. You open 1 ♦, partner responds 1 ♠ and you reverse into 2 ♥. If responder rebids 2 ♠, you can raise to 3 ♠ and complete the description of your hand. You opened diamonds and then bid hearts, showing longer diamonds than hearts. Then you showed support for spades. Responder can infer that you have shortness in clubs ... probably 5-4-3-1 distribution ... and a good hand. Responder is now well-positioned to pick the best contract.

“Jump shifts and reverses aren't exactly similar. The jump shift is forcing to game and always shows a maximum-strength hand. The reverse isn't always forcing to game, since opener could have a medium-strength hand rather than a maximum-strength hand. It's only forcing for one round, unless opener subsequently shows a maximum-strength hand.

“Change the South hand.

“In spades: take away the king and a low card.

“In clubs: add the king and the jack.

NORTH	SOUTH	SOUTH
	1 ♦	♠ x
1 ♠	2 ♥	♥ A K x x
		♦ A Q x x x
		♣ K J x

“What would you open with this hand? (1 ♦.) Start with the longest suit.

“Partner responds 1 ♠. What would you rebid? (2 ♥.) The hand is strong enough to make a reverse bid and show your second suit.

“If partner now bids 2♠, what bid can you make to finish describing your hand? (2NT.) Even though you have an unbalanced hand, you can now suggest notrump as a contract. Responder will know that you don’t have a balanced hand since you have already shown at least a five-card diamond suit and a four-card heart suit. With a balanced hand, you would have bid notrump at your first or second opportunity.

“Change the South hand.

“In hearts: take away the ace and add a low card.

NORTH	SOUTH	SOUTH
1♠	1♦	♠ x
	2♦	♥ K x x x
		♦ A Q x x x
		♣ K J x

“What’s your opening bid? (1♦.) No reason not to open your longest suit.

“Partner responds 1♠. What is your rebid? (2♦.) With a minimum-strength hand, it would be dangerous to make a reverse bid. Since a reverse is forcing, responder would have to bid again and the partnership may get too high. If responder prefers diamonds to hearts and has only 6 points, for example, the partnership will be at the three level with a combined total of 20 points. To avoid reversing, opener can simply rebid the first suit, diamonds.”

A participant might suggest rebidding 1NT. That is a reasonable choice, but with an unbalanced hand and a reasonable five-card diamond suit, rebidding the diamonds is probably the better description of the hand.

“Could the partnership miss a heart fit if opener doesn’t show the heart suit? (Possibly.) Responder would bid *up the line* with four cards in both major suits. So, responder will only have four hearts when also holding five or more spades. If opener rebids 2♦, responder will have an opportunity to bid 2♥ and the partnership could find a fit. It’s possible, however, that responder is too weak to bid again and the partnership might miss its best spot ... but that’s a small risk compared to the larger risk of getting the partnership too high by reversing.”

Summary

“A reverse by opener shows at least a medium-strength hand, and is forcing for one round.”

➡ “Let’s do Exercise 1 in the student text to review what we have just discussed.”

Exercise One — Opener's Rebid

As West, what do you rebid with each of the following hands after the auction starts:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1 ♦ ?	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1) ♠ 4 ♥ A 5 ♦ K Q 9 7 2 ♣ A Q 8 6 3 _____		2) ♠ 3 ♥ K 9 6 3 ♦ A J 10 8 4 ♣ A 6 2 _____	3) ♠ Q 7 ♥ J 9 4 ♦ K J 6 3 ♣ A Q 5 4 _____
4) ♠ K J ♥ A K 10 5 ♦ A Q 9 8 3 ♣ 7 3 _____		5) ♠ Q 5 ♥ 8 2 ♦ A K Q 7 5 ♣ A K J 7 _____	6) ♠ K 5 ♥ Q J 7 ♦ A K J 8 7 ♣ A 8 3 _____

Exercise One Answer — Opener's Rebid

- 1) 2♣. Show the second suit at the two level. The hand isn't strong enough for a jump shift — 15 high-card points plus 1 point for each of the five-card suits puts it in the medium-strength category.
- 2) 2♦. With a minimum-strength opening, you aren't strong enough to reverse. Rebid the first suit.
- 3) 1NT. Showing a balanced hand takes priority over bidding a second suit at the two level.
- 4) 2♥. 17 high-card points plus 1 point for the five-card suit puts this in the medium-strength category. That's strong enough for a reverse, forcing for one round.
- 5) 3♣. Make a jump shift with a maximum-strength hand, committing the partnership to game. A rebid of 2♣ would be non-forcing.
- 6) 2NT. This shows a balanced hand of 18 or 19 points, too strong to open 1NT.

Responder's Rebid after a Reverse – Lebensohl over Reverses (Ingberman)

Introduction

“If the partnership plays a reverse as forcing for one round, then responder needs a way to show a weak hand other than by passing. Some partnerships treat any bid of an old suit by responder as a weak bid — a rebid of responder’s suit at the two level or a raise of one of opener’s suits to the three level. The modern style is to use a conventional set of responses to the reverse. The agreement we’ll suggest is referred to as Lebensohl over reverses and sometimes called Ingberman — after Monroe Ingberman of New York, who made many contributions to bidding theory.

“Playing the Lebensohl over reverses convention:

- Responder’s rebid of a suit at the two level shows a five-card or longer suit, but doesn’t promise any extra strength;
- A rebid of 2NT is artificial, showing a weak hand with only four cards in responder’s suit;
- Any other rebid by responder shows more than a bare minimum and commits the partnership to at least game.

“Let’s see how this works in practice.”

Instructions

“Construct the North hand.

“In spades: the ace and four low cards.

“In hearts: two low cards.

“In diamonds: three low cards.

“In clubs: the queen and two low cards.

“Change the South hand.

“In spades: add the queen and a low card.

“In hearts: take away a low card and add the ace.

“In diamonds: take away a low card and add the king.

“In clubs: take away the king and the jack.

NORTH
 ♠ A x x x x
 ♥ x x
 ♦ x x x
 ♣ Q x x

NORTH	SOUTH
	1♦
1♠	2♥
2♠	4♠

SOUTH
 ♠ Q x x
 ♥ A K x x
 ♦ A K Q x x
 ♣ x

“**How does South start the auction?** (1♦.) South has 18 high-card points plus 1 point for the five-card suit. South opens in the longest suit.

“After South opens 1♦, what does North respond? (1♠.) North shows the spade suit.

“What is South’s rebid? (2♥.) South reverses into 2♥, forcing for one round. South doesn’t want to raise spades right away with only three-card support.

“What does North do now? (2♠.) Since South’s reverse is forcing, North has to say something. North can rebid the spades to show a five-card or longer suit without promising any extra strength.

“What does South do? (4♠.) With a maximum-strength hand in support of spades and the knowledge that the partnership has an eight-card spade fit, South puts the partnership in a game contract of 4♠.

“Change the South hand.

“In spades: take away the queen and add a low card.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ A x x x x</p> <p>♥ x x</p> <p>♦ x x x</p> <p>♣ Q x x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: left;">NORTH</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: left;">SOUTH</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♠</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass/4♠</td> <td>3♠</td> </tr> </table>	NORTH	SOUTH	1♠	1♦	2♠	2♥	Pass/4♠	3♠	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ x x x</p> <p>♥ A K x x</p> <p>♦ A K Q x x</p> <p>♣ x</p>
NORTH	SOUTH									
1♠	1♦									
2♠	2♥									
Pass/4♠	3♠									

“Now South has a medium-strength hand — 16 high-card points and 1 length point.

“If the bidding started the same way — 1♦-1♠-2♥-2♠ — what would South do next? (3♠.) South could make an invitational raise to 3♠. The final decision would be up to North. 4♠ is a reasonable contract and may make if the spades divide favorably, but there’s nothing wrong with 3♠ if North decides to pass.

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: take away a low card.

“In clubs: add the jack.

“Change the South hand.

“In hearts: take away a low card and add the jack.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ A x x x</p> <p>♥ x x</p> <p>♦ x x x</p> <p>♣ Q J x x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: left;">NORTH</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: left;">SOUTH</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2NT</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass/3NT</td> <td>3♠/3♦</td> </tr> </table>	NORTH	SOUTH	1♠	1♦	2NT	2♥	Pass/3NT	3♠/3♦	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ x x x</p> <p>♥ A K J x</p> <p>♦ A K Q x x</p> <p>♣ x</p>
NORTH	SOUTH									
1♠	1♦									
2NT	2♥									
Pass/3NT	3♠/3♦									

“The auction begins the same way. South opens 1♦, North responds 1♠, and South reverses into 2♥. What does North say this time? (2NT.) With a minimum hand but only a four-card suit, North bids 2NT.

“What does South do now? (3♦/3♠.) South might decide to show the three-card spade support or return to 3♦. The 2NT bid is artificial and doesn’t promise any strength in the unbid suit, clubs. Since it is a weak bid, opener usually returns to the first bid suit without support for responder’s suit.

“With some strength in clubs, North may then choose to bid 3NT. 3NT is the best game contract. It may not make, but it has a good chance. South knows the partnership doesn’t belong in 4♠, since North has only a four-card suit.

“If responder does something other than bid 2NT or rebid the major suit, the partnership is forced to the game level.

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: add the king.

“In diamonds: add the jack.

“In clubs: take away the queen and a low card.

“Change the South hand.

“In spades: take away a low card.

“In diamonds: add a low card.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ A K x x x</p> <p>♥ x x</p> <p>♦ J x x x</p> <p>♣ J x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">NORTH</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">SOUTH</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">1♠</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">3♦</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">(4♠)</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">(4♦)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">(5♦)</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">(4NT)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">(Pass)</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">(6♦)</td> </tr> </table>	NORTH	SOUTH	1♠	1♦	3♦	2♥	(4♠)	(4♦)	(5♦)	(4NT)	(Pass)	(6♦)	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ x x</p> <p>♥ A K x x</p> <p>♦ A K Q x x x</p> <p>♣ x</p>
NORTH	SOUTH													
1♠	1♦													
3♦	2♥													
(4♠)	(4♦)													
(5♦)	(4NT)													
(Pass)	(6♦)													

“What would South open? (1♦.) South’s hand isn’t quite strong enough to open with a strong 2♣ bid, so South would settle for 1♦.

“What does North respond? (1♠.) North makes the natural response of 1♠.

“What does South do? (2♥.) South can reverse into 2♥. It’s nice to have the comfort that this is a forcing bid. Jump shifting to 3♥ would take away a lot of bidding room.

“What does North do over the 2♥ rebid? (3♦.) North could rebid the spades, but knowing that South has at least five diamonds, North can let partner know about the diamond support.

“Notice that it’s important for North to know that the preference to 3♦ is forcing. Otherwise, North would know the partnership has enough for game but not know which game to bid. Once the diamond fit is found, the partnership is well on the way to the best contract. Whether the partnership

has the methods to reach the good 6♦ contract remains to be seen. We'll talk more about slam bidding in another lesson, but at least the partnership should avoid the disastrous 3NT contract and play game in diamonds. Even 4♠ is a better contract than 3NT."

With an experienced group, you can suggest that the auction might proceed 1♦-1♠-2♥-3♦-4♦-4♠-4NT-5♦-6♦ or 1♦-1♠-2♥-3♦-4♣-4♠-4NT-5♦-6♦. If the students are unfamiliar with cuebidding toward slam, leave any further discussion for the next course (*More Commonly Used Conventions in the 21st Century*).

Summary

"After a reverse by opener:

- Responder can rebid a five-card suit without promising any extra strength;
- Responder can bid 2NT to show a weak hand with only a four-card suit;
- Any other bid by responder, including preference to one of opener's suits, is forcing to game."

➡ "Let's do Exercise 2 in the student text to review what we have just discussed."

Exercise Two — Responding to a Reverse

As East, what do you bid with each of the following hands after the auction starts:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	?	

1) ♠ Q 10 9 5 4
♥ 8 6 5
♦ J 3
♣ K 6 4

2) ♠ K 10 8 4
♥ Q 6 3
♦ 5 2
♣ Q 8 5 3

3) ♠ A J 10 5 3
♥ K J 9 6
♦ 6 4
♣ 9 2

Exercise Two Answer — Responding to a Reverse

- 1) 2♠. Partner's reverse is forcing for one round. A rebid of 2♠ shows a five-card or longer suit, but doesn't promise any extra strength.
- 2) 2NT. With a minimum-strength response, no five-card suit and no particular fit with partner's suit, 2NT is the weakest bid you can make.
- 3) 3♥. Raising partner's suit after a reverse commits the partnership to game. It isn't necessary to jump to the game level — partner may have more to say.

Responder's Non-Forcing Rebids

Introduction

“Let’s turn our attention to responder’s rebid. Responder usually puts the hand into one of three categories:

- A minimum hand of 6 to 9 points;
- A medium hand of 10 or 11 points; or
- A maximum hand of 12 or more points.

“Some players use a range of 6 to 10 for a minimum hand and 11 or 12 for a medium hand when opener can open 12-point hands. Don’t let a point or two come between friends.”

Note to teachers: Please adjust these ranges based upon whether your students open 12- or 13-point hands. Remember the goal is to bid game with 25 points.

“Let’s take a quick look at responder’s options after a minimum rebid by opener.”

Instructions

Responder’s rebid with a minimum hand

“Pick up all of the cards and sort them into suits. Construct the following hand for North.

“In spades: the ace and two low cards.

“In hearts: the jack and three low cards.

“In diamonds: the jack and a low card.

“In clubs: the queen, the jack and two low cards.

NORTH
 ♠ A x x
 ♥ J x x x
 ♦ J x
 ♣ Q J x x

NORTH	SOUTH
	1♦
1♥	1NT
Pass	

“Let’s suppose this is your hand and partner, South, opens the bidding 1♦. What do you respond? (1♥.) You can show the four-card major suit at the one level.

“Suppose partner rebids 1NT. What do you do? (Pass.) Partner has shown a minimum-strength balanced hand, and you have no reason to disturb the 1NT contract.

“Suppose partner opens 1♦, you respond 1♥ and partner rebids 1♠. Does partner’s 1♠ rebid show a minimum-strength hand? (Maybe.) Partner is most likely to have a minimum-strength hand, but could have a

medium-strength hand — but not enough to jump shift to 2♠. In this situation, you assume partner has a minimum-strength hand and bid accordingly. With extra strength, partner can describe it at the next opportunity — if there is one.

“What do you do now? (1NT.) You don’t want to leave partner in 1♠ or go back to partner’s first suit, so you bid 1NT. Taking a second bid doesn’t show any extra strength. The bid of 1NT or an old suit at the two level shows a minimum hand for responder.

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: take away the ace and a low card.

“In hearts: add the queen and a low card.

NORTH	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">NORTH</td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">SOUTH</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">♠ x</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">♥ Q J x x x</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">♦ J x</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">♣ Q J x x</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	NORTH	SOUTH	♠ x	1♦	♥ Q J x x x	1NT	♦ J x		♣ Q J x x	
NORTH	SOUTH										
♠ x	1♦										
♥ Q J x x x	1NT										
♦ J x											
♣ Q J x x											

“Partner opens 1♦ and you respond 1♥. Partner bids 1NT. What do you do? (2♥.) An old suit at the two level is not forcing and shows a minimum hand. You would make the same bid if partner had bid 1♠ instead of 1NT.

“Change the North hand.

“In hearts: take away a low card.

“In clubs: add a low card.

NORTH	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">NORTH</td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">SOUTH</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">♠ x</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">♥ Q J x x x</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">♦ J x</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">♣ Q J x x x</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	NORTH	SOUTH	♠ x	1♣	♥ Q J x x x	1NT	♦ J x		♣ Q J x x x	
NORTH	SOUTH										
♠ x	1♣										
♥ Q J x x x	1NT										
♦ J x											
♣ Q J x x x											

“Suppose partner opens 1♣, what do you respond? (1♥.) Although you have support for clubs, you give priority to showing the major suit.

“Suppose partner now bids 1♠. What do you rebid? (2♣.) You can return to an old suit at the two level, 2♣.”

Responder’s rebid with a medium hand

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: add a low card.

“In hearts: add the ace.

“In diamonds: take away the jack and add a low card.

“In clubs: take away the jack and a low card.

NORTH	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">NORTH</td> <td>SOUTH</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♠ x x</td> <td>1 ♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♥ A Q J x x x</td> <td>1 ♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♦ x x</td> <td>3 ♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♣ Q x x</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	NORTH	SOUTH	♠ x x	1 ♦	♥ A Q J x x x	1 ♠	♦ x x	3 ♥	♣ Q x x	
NORTH	SOUTH										
♠ x x	1 ♦										
♥ A Q J x x x	1 ♠										
♦ x x	3 ♥										
♣ Q x x											

“Partner opens 1 ♦. What do you respond? (1 ♥.) Your hand is worth 11 points — 9 high-card points plus 2 for the length in hearts.

“Suppose partner rebids 1 ♠. Now what? (3 ♥.) A jump to 3 ♥ is invitational, showing 10 or 11 (12) points. (If partner can open 12-point hands, an invitational bid by responder shows 11 or 12 points.)

“What if partner opened 1 ♦ and rebid 1NT over your 1 ♥ response? (3 ♥.) Same thing. With a weak hand, you would sign off in 2 ♥. With an invitational hand like this, you jump to 3 ♥. With a stronger hand, you would jump all the way to 4 ♥. You would do the same thing if partner opened 1 ♦ and rebid 2 ♣ or 2 ♦ over your 1 ♥ response.

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: add the king and a low card.

“In hearts: take away the queen and a low card.

NORTH	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">NORTH</td> <td>SOUTH</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♠ K x x x</td> <td>1 ♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♥ A J x x</td> <td>1 ♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♦ x x</td> <td>3 ♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♣ Q x x</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	NORTH	SOUTH	♠ K x x x	1 ♦	♥ A J x x	1 ♠	♦ x x	3 ♠	♣ Q x x	
NORTH	SOUTH										
♠ K x x x	1 ♦										
♥ A J x x	1 ♠										
♦ x x	3 ♠										
♣ Q x x											

“Partner opens 1 ♦. What do you respond? (1 ♥.)

“Partner bids 1 ♠. Now what? (3 ♠.) With an invitational hand — 10 or 11 (12) points — you make a jump raise. The bid of an old suit at the three level by responder is invitational over a minimum rebid by opener.

“Suppose partner opens 1 ♦, you respond 1 ♥ and partner rebids 1NT. What now? (2NT.) Partner didn’t support your hearts and didn’t show a four-card spade suit, so there is no major-suit fit. Raise to 2NT with 10 to 12 points. With more, you would raise to 3NT; with fewer points, you would pass 1NT.

“Suppose the bidding started 1 ♦ by opener, 1 ♥ by responder, and 2 ♦ by opener. Now what? (2NT.) Again, you can bid 2NT as an invitational bid, showing a medium-strength hand for responder of 10 to 12 points.

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: take away a low card.

“In diamonds: take away a low card and add the jack.

“In clubs: add a low card.

NORTH
 ♠ K x x
 ♥ A J x x
 ♦ J x
 ♣ Q x x x

NORTH	SOUTH
	1♣
1♥	1♠
3♣	

“Suppose this is your hand and partner opens 1♣. What do you respond? (1♥.) You have 11 high-card points and start by showing your heart suit at the one level.

“Partner now bids 1♠. What do you do when the bidding comes back to you? (3♣.) With 11 points, you want to make an invitational bid. With nothing much in diamonds, you don’t want to jump to 2NT. The best choice is to bid 3♣. That’s an old suit at the three level — an invitational bid.”

Responder’s rebid with a maximum hand

“Change the North hand.

“In hearts: take away a low card and add the king.

NORTH
 ♠ K x x
 ♥ A K J x
 ♦ J x
 ♣ Q x x x

NORTH	SOUTH
	1♦
1♥	1NT
3NT	

“Partner opens 1♦, you respond 1♥ and partner rebids 1NT. What is your rebid? (3NT.) With 14 points, responder knows the partnership belongs at the game level even if opener holds a minimum hand. Since the partnership hasn’t found a fit, 3NT should be the best contract.”

Summary

“When opener shows a minimum-strength opening hand — or makes a bid that could be made with a minimum hand — responder must decide whether to sign off, invite game or bid game.

- With 6 to 9 points, responder can sign off by:
 - Passing;
 - Bidding 1NT; or
 - Bidding an old suit at the two level.
- With 10 or 11 points, responder makes an invitational bid by:
 - Bidding an old suit at the three level, or
 - Bidding 2NT (10 to 12 HCP).
- With 12 or more points, responder makes sure the partnership gets to game.”

Remember to adjust these ranges if the partnership has agreed to open 12-point hands.

Fourth-suit forcing

Introduction

“The guidelines for responder’s second bid cover most situations, but not all. With 13 or more points, it’s responder’s responsibility to get the partnership to the game level, even if opener has a minimum hand. That’s fine if responder knows the best contract for the partnership, but there are times when that may not be clear. Responder will need to make a forcing bid to get more information from opener before making the decision.”

Instructions

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: take away a low card.

“In hearts: add a low card.

NORTH
 ♠ K x
 ♥ A K J x x
 ♦ J x
 ♣ Q x x x

NORTH	SOUTH
	1 ♣
1 ♥	1 ♠
2 ♦	

“Here’s a hand with 14 high-card points and a five-card suit. You plan to open the bidding 1 ♥ but partner is the opener and beats you to the draw by opening 1 ♣.

“**What do you know for sure about how high you are headed?** (Game.) Unless the opponents come into the auction and give you an opportunity to collect a penalty, you are headed for at least the game level. An opening bid opposite an opening bid equals a game contract. There might even be a slam if partner has a big hand.

“**What don’t you know?** (Strain.) You don’t yet know what the best game contract will be. You could belong in hearts, in notrump or even in clubs.

“**What’s your first move with this hand?** (1 ♥.) Start by showing the heart suit. There’s no need to jump. A new suit by responder is forcing. So far so good. You are waiting for a further description of opener’s hand.

“**Things might go very easily if you find a fit right away. What would you do if opener raised to 2 ♥?** (4 ♥.) You would know that the partnership had a fit in hearts and that opener was limited to a minimum opening bid. Put the partnership in game in hearts and settle back to concentrate on declarer play.

“**Suppose, however, things don’t go quite as smoothly. Over your 1 ♥ response, opener’s rebid is 1 ♠. What’s the challenge you face?** (Don’t know the best contract.) Although opener has made two descriptive bids, the best game contract is unclear. You haven’t yet agreed on a suit, and it would

be dangerous to jump to 3NT. Neither one of you may have a diamond stopper. You could belong in hearts. Partner might not have raised immediately with three-card support. You also would like to tell partner about the club support. Clubs could be the best contract.

“Before settling on the best contract, you need more information about opener’s hand. Can you jump to 3♣ to show club support? (No.) The problem with a jump to 3♣, or a jump to 3♥, is that those are invitational bids, not forcing bids. So is a jump to 2NT. Opener might pass, and you already know that the partnership belongs in a game contract.

“You need to make a forcing bid. What bid is available? (4♣/2♦.) A jump to 4♣ might be forcing but it would take you past 3NT, one of your likely contracts. In situations such as this, most partnerships agree to play that the bid of the fourth suit — 2♦ in the example — is artificial (conventional) and forcing.

“This is commonly referred to as fourth-suit forcing. That’s a bit of a misnomer since the bid of the fourth suit by responder would be forcing — but natural — when playing standard methods. The real significance of the agreement is that the bid of the fourth suit is artificial — it says nothing about the holding in the fourth suit. The 2♦ bid with this hand says nothing about diamonds. By agreement, it is a conventional bid, asking opener to make a further descriptive bid. Responder may or may not hold a diamond suit.

“Partnerships can have different agreements about whether the fourth suit is forcing for only one round or whether it’s forcing to the game level. If the fourth suit is bid at the two level or higher, the popular style is to treat it as a game-forcing bid. Responder has ways to make an invitational bid at this point. That’s the conventional approach we will use ... *a bid of the fourth suit at the two level or higher is artificial and forcing to game.*

“This convention makes a hand such as this much more comfortable for the partnership. Once responder bids 2♦, the partnership no longer has to worry about which subsequent bids are forcing and which are not. They are all forcing until the game level is reached.”

Opener’s rebid after fourth suit

“Let’s look at fourth-suit forcing from opener’s side of the table. Leave the North hand as it is and construct a hand for South.

“In spades: the ace and three low cards.

“In hearts: the queen and two low cards.

“In diamonds: two low cards.

“In clubs: the ace, the king and two low cards.

NORTH ♠ K x ♥ A K J x x ♦ J x ♣ Q x x x	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> NORTH 1♥ 2♦ 4♥ </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> SOUTH 1♣ 1♠ 2♥ Pass </td> </tr> </table>	NORTH 1♥ 2♦ 4♥	SOUTH 1♣ 1♠ 2♥ Pass	SOUTH ♠ A x x x ♥ Q x x ♦ x x ♣ A K x x
NORTH 1♥ 2♦ 4♥	SOUTH 1♣ 1♠ 2♥ Pass			

“**What would South open the bidding?** (1♣.) With a minimum hand and no five-card major suit, South opens the longer minor suit, 1♣.

“**What does North respond?** (1♥.) North shows the heart suit. A new suit by responder is forcing.

“**What is South’s rebid?** (1♠.) Since North is only promising four hearts with the 1♥ response, South should probably continue bidding four-card suits up the line. North might have four hearts and four spades. South wants to find the eight-card fit.

“**Let’s suppose South bids 1♠. What does North do now?** (2♦.) This is the time to drag out fourth-suit forcing to game. As you saw earlier, North knows the partnership belongs in game, but isn’t sure of the best game contract.

“**What does South bid now?** (2♥.) The 2♦ bid is totally artificial, saying nothing about diamonds. So South can’t bid notrump with no length or strength in diamonds. Instead, South has a perfect opportunity to finish describing the hand. South shows heart support by bidding 2♥. North knows South doesn’t have four-card support for hearts, since South didn’t raise right away. After the delayed raise, North will only expect three-card support from South.

“**What does North do now?** (4♥.) North has all of the information necessary to put the partnership in the best contract, 4♥. North now knows that South has a minimum-strength opening bid and three-card support for hearts.

“Notice that the partnership might not have fared too well if North had unilaterally jumped to 3NT after the 1♠ bid. The opponents are very likely to find a diamond lead, and that would be that.

“Change the South hand.

“In hearts: take away the queen.

“In diamonds: add the queen.

NORTH ♠ K x ♥ A K J x x ♦ J x ♣ Q x x x	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> NORTH 1♥ 2♦ 3NT </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> SOUTH 1♣ 1♠ 2NT Pass </td> </tr> </table>	NORTH 1♥ 2♦ 3NT	SOUTH 1♣ 1♠ 2NT Pass	SOUTH ♠ A x x x ♥ x x ♦ Q x x ♣ A K x x
NORTH 1♥ 2♦ 3NT	SOUTH 1♣ 1♠ 2NT Pass			

“The auction would start the same way. South opens 1♣, North responds 1♥ and South bids 1♠. North bids 2♦, fourth-suit forcing. What does South bid this time? (2NT.) North hasn’t promised anything in diamonds, but South does have some length and strength in that suit. Having shown the clubs and spades, South’s most descriptive bid is 2NT at this point, showing a minimum balanced hand without support for hearts.

“What does North do? (3NT/3♣.) North has a couple of options. North could show club support at this point by bidding 3♣. Since the 2♦ bid was forcing to game, any bid that North makes below the game level is still forcing. However, slam is unlikely opposite a minimum opening bid, and taking nine tricks should be easier than taking 11 tricks. Knowing that South has something in diamonds, North would probably make the practical choice of 3NT at this point. Looking at the combined hands, 3NT is a better spot than either 4♥ or 5♣.

“Change the South hand.

“In diamonds: take away the queen.

“In clubs: add the jack.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ K x</p> <p>♥ A K J x x</p> <p>♦ J x</p> <p>♣ Q x x x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>2♦</p> <p>4♣</p> <p>Pass</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♣</p> <p>1♠</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>5♣</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>2♦</p> <p>4♣</p> <p>Pass</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♣</p> <p>1♠</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>5♣</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ A x x x</p> <p>♥ x x</p> <p>♦ x x</p> <p>♣ A K J x x</p>
<p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>2♦</p> <p>4♣</p> <p>Pass</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♣</p> <p>1♠</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>5♣</p>			

“The auction would still start the same way. South would open 1♣, North would respond 1♥, South would rebid 1♠, and North would bid an artificial 2♦. What would South say at this point? (3♣.) South doesn’t have support for hearts and can’t bid notrump with nothing in diamonds. Remember. North’s 2♦ bid doesn’t promise anything in diamonds. Having already shown the spade suit, South can simply rebid clubs, 3♣. That’s a good descriptive bid anyway. South might have held only a three-card club suit for the opening bid of 1♣. At least North will know that South has a real club suit.

“What will North do at this point? (4♣.) Since South didn’t bid notrump, North should be wary of suggesting a notrump contract when neither partner has anything in diamonds. South also hasn’t shown any support for hearts, so it looks as though clubs is the best trump suit.

“North can raise to 4♣. Is that forcing? (Yes.) Since your partnership agreement is that bidding the fourth suit is forcing to game, a bid of 4♣ by North at this point would still be forcing. If the partnership did not have that agreement, a 4♣ bid by North wouldn’t be forcing and North would have to find some other bid.

“What’s the advantage of North bidding 4♣ rather than 5♣ at this point? (Other possible contracts.) It leaves open other possibilities. If North jumps right to game, there’s no room to explore other contracts, and it will usually end the auction. By bidding 4♣, North leaves open the possibility of reaching slam, or perhaps stopping in 4♥, rather than 5♣. If one of South’s diamonds were a club, for example, the auction would start the same way, but 6♣ would be an excellent contract. If one of South’s low hearts were the ♥Q, a contract of 4♥ on the 5–2 fit would be a possibility — especially at duplicate scoring.

“On the actual hand, the partnership most likely will play the hand in 5♣. It’s unusual to play minor suit games, but 5♣ is certainly a much better contract than 3NT on these two hands. Science at work!

“Fourth-suit forcing is useful on many types of hands — whenever responder needs to find a forcing bid but doesn’t have anything else available. Here’s another typical example.

“Change the North hand.

“In hearts: add a low card.

“In clubs: take away the queen.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ K x</p> <p>♥ A K J x x x</p> <p>♦ J x</p> <p>♣ x x x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>2♦</p> <p>3♥</p> <p>Pass</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♣</p> <p>1♠</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>4♥</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>2♦</p> <p>3♥</p> <p>Pass</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♣</p> <p>1♠</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>4♥</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ A x x x</p> <p>♥ x x</p> <p>♦ x x</p> <p>♣ A K J x x</p>
<p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>2♦</p> <p>3♥</p> <p>Pass</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♣</p> <p>1♠</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>4♥</p>			

“Discuss with the others at your table how the auction might go with these two hands. (1♣–1♥–1♠–2♦–3♣–3♥–4♥–Pass.)

“What would South open the bidding? (1♣.)

“What would North respond? (1♥.) With 12 high-card points plus 2 points for the six-card suit, North starts by responding 1♥.

“What would South rebid? (1♠.) South rebids 1♠, showing the spade suit.

“What does North rebid? (2♦.) A jump to 3♥ — an old suit at the three level — would not be forcing. It would show an invitational hand of about 10 or 11 (12) points. With a minimum opening bid, South would probably pass. A jump to 4♥ might put the partnership in the wrong game contract. South might not have any hearts. It’s possible that the partnership belongs in notrump or clubs. Needing to make a forcing bid, North trots out the fourth suit bid of 2♦, asking South for a further description of the hand.

“What does South say? (3♣.) South doesn’t have anything in diamonds and doesn’t have support for hearts. South rebids the clubs, 3♣.

“What does North say at this point? (3♥.) Now North can afford to bid 3♥. Once North has used fourth-suit forcing, any subsequent bid below game is forcing. It’s safe for North to show the excellent heart suit, and there’s no worry that South will pass.

“What does South do? (4♥.) South has already shown a good club suit and the spade suit. South has denied four-card heart support by not raising 1♥ to 2♥. South has denied three-card heart support by not bidding 2♥ over the artificial 2♦ bid. Since North’s 3♥ bid is still expressing an interest in playing with hearts as trumps, South can raise to 4♥. North isn’t going to expect too much help in the trump suit, but 4♥ should be a reasonable contract.

“So, the partnership arrives at the best spot. North eventually corners partner into showing some preference for hearts. If South were void in hearts, South would presumably be able to find some other descriptive bid over 3♥.

“Fourth-suit forcing also can be used when responder has interest in reaching a slam contract. We’re going to leave slam bidding for another time, but if North held a much stronger hand — too strong to sign off in game — North could start with fourth-suit forcing to keep the bidding going, and that would leave lots of room to explore slam possibilities.”

➡ “Let’s do Exercise 3 in the student text to review what we have just discussed.”

Exercise Three — Responder's Rebid after Bidding a New Suit at the One Level

As East, what do you rebid with each of the following hands after the auction starts:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH						
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass						
2♣	Pass	?							
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 1) ♠ K 10 8 7 4 ♥ 6 3 ♦ J 8 2 ♣ Q 9 3 _____ </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 2) ♠ A J 10 7 ♥ K J 8 ♦ 8 6 4 ♣ Q 3 2 _____ </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 3) ♠ A 10 7 4 2 ♥ 9 5 ♦ Q 10 8 3 ♣ K 3 _____ </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 4) ♠ A K 10 9 5 ♥ 8 3 ♦ Q 4 ♣ A J 6 2 _____ </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 5) ♠ J 8 6 5 3 ♥ K 7 5 ♦ 5 ♣ Q 9 7 3 _____ </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 6) ♠ K Q J 9 7 5 ♥ J 3 ♦ A J ♣ K 6 2 _____ </td> </tr> </table>				1) ♠ K 10 8 7 4 ♥ 6 3 ♦ J 8 2 ♣ Q 9 3 _____	2) ♠ A J 10 7 ♥ K J 8 ♦ 8 6 4 ♣ Q 3 2 _____	3) ♠ A 10 7 4 2 ♥ 9 5 ♦ Q 10 8 3 ♣ K 3 _____	4) ♠ A K 10 9 5 ♥ 8 3 ♦ Q 4 ♣ A J 6 2 _____	5) ♠ J 8 6 5 3 ♥ K 7 5 ♦ 5 ♣ Q 9 7 3 _____	6) ♠ K Q J 9 7 5 ♥ J 3 ♦ A J ♣ K 6 2 _____
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4) ♠ A K 10 9 5 ♥ 8 3 ♦ Q 4 ♣ A J 6 2 _____	5) ♠ J 8 6 5 3 ♥ K 7 5 ♦ 5 ♣ Q 9 7 3 _____	6) ♠ K Q J 9 7 5 ♥ J 3 ♦ A J ♣ K 6 2 _____							

Exercise Three Answer — Responder's Rebid after Bidding a New Suit at the One Level

- 1) 2♦. Give preference to partner's first suit. Partner might have spades, but partner should have at least five diamonds.
- 2) 2NT. This is invitational, showing 10 or 11 (12) points.
- 3) 3♦. Jump preference to opener's first suit shows an invitational-strength hand of about 10 or 11 (12) points.
- 4) 2♥ (fourth suit forcing). A raise to 3♣ would only be invitational, and a jump to 4♣ would get the partnership beyond 3NT, making it difficult to uncover a spade fit. The bid of the fourth suit commits the partnership to game and allows you to show club support on the next round of bidding.
- 5) Pass. A raise would be invitational, so it's best to settle for partscore right here.
- 6) 2♥. A jump to 3♠ would be invitational, and a jump to 4♠ might get the partnership to the wrong spot. Start with the fourth suit; you can show the good spade suit on the next round of bidding.

Fourth suit at the one level

“There’s one situation in which bidding the fourth suit is not forcing to game. A bid of the fourth suit at the two level or higher is forcing to game. A bid of the fourth suit at the one level, however, isn’t forcing to game. It’s forcing for one round but not necessarily forcing to game.

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: add two low cards.

“In hearts: take away the ace, the king and two low cards.

“In diamonds: add the ace and a low card.

“Change the South hand.

“In hearts: add the king and the queen.

“In clubs: take away the king and a low card.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ K x x x</p> <p>♥ J x</p> <p>♦ A J x x</p> <p>♣ x x x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>1 ♦</p> <p>1 ♠</p> <p>Pass</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>SOUTH</p> <p>1 ♣</p> <p>1 ♥</p> <p>2 ♠</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>NORTH</p> <p>1 ♦</p> <p>1 ♠</p> <p>Pass</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1 ♣</p> <p>1 ♥</p> <p>2 ♠</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ A x x x</p> <p>♥ K Q x x</p> <p>♦ x x</p> <p>♣ A J x</p>
<p>NORTH</p> <p>1 ♦</p> <p>1 ♠</p> <p>Pass</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1 ♣</p> <p>1 ♥</p> <p>2 ♠</p>			

“**If South is the dealer, what would be the opening bid?** (1 ♣.) With no five-card major suit, South would start with the longer minor, 1 ♣.

“**What would North respond?** (1 ♦.) While some partnerships agree to skip diamonds in order to show a four-card major, the standard approach is to bid four-card suits up the line. North would respond 1 ♦.

“**What does South bid?** (1 ♥.) South continues bidding up the line in search of a fit by bidding 1 ♥.

“**Now what?** (1 ♠.) North wants to continue the search for an eight-card fit by bidding 1 ♠. That wouldn’t be practical if the partnership played this bid of the fourth suit as forcing to game. However, the standard agreement is that 1 ♠ is forcing at this point, but not forcing to game.

“**After North bids 1 ♠, what does South do?** (2 ♠.) South raises to 2 ♠ to show the fit.

“**What does North do?** (Pass.) South has shown a minimum opening bid and North has only 9 high-card points. North can pass, and the partnership is in its best contract.

“The bid of the fourth suit at the one level can still be used as an artificial forcing bid.

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: take away the king and a low card.

“In diamonds: add the king.

“In clubs: add the king.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ x x</p> <p>♥ J x</p> <p>♦ A K J x x</p> <p>♣ K x x x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>1 ♦</p> <p>1 ♠</p> <p>(3NT)</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>SOUTH</p> <p>1 ♣</p> <p>1 ♥</p> <p>2 ♠</p> <p>(Pass)</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>NORTH</p> <p>1 ♦</p> <p>1 ♠</p> <p>(3NT)</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1 ♣</p> <p>1 ♥</p> <p>2 ♠</p> <p>(Pass)</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ A x x x</p> <p>♥ K Q x x</p> <p>♦ x x</p> <p>♣ A J x</p>
<p>NORTH</p> <p>1 ♦</p> <p>1 ♠</p> <p>(3NT)</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1 ♣</p> <p>1 ♥</p> <p>2 ♠</p> <p>(Pass)</p>			

“The auction would begin the same way. South opens 1♣, North responds 1♦ and South bids 1♥. What does North do now? (1♠.) North has 12 high-card points plus 1 point for the five-card suit. That’s too much for a jump to 3♣ or 3♦, which would show an invitational hand of 10 to 12 points. Jumping to 3NT with only two small spades would be very risky. So, North bids the fourth suit, 1♠. At least that’s forcing.”

With an experienced group, you can mention the possibility of using a jump to 2♠ as artificial and forcing at this point — leaving the 1♠ bid as natural and forcing. However, that’s not a standard agreement with most partnerships.

“What will South do over the 1♠ bid? (2♠.) Since South doesn’t know the 1♠ bid is artificial, South will raise to 2♠, as before.

“What does North do now? (3NT/3♣/3♦.) North now has a lot of choices. Having discovered that South has a four-card spade suit, North can jump safely to 3NT. Instead, North could show club support by bidding 3♣. That would now be forcing, since North could have jumped to 3♣ over 1♥ with an invitational hand. With only a three-card club suit, South would probably bid 3NT next. North could bid 3♦, forcing. Again, the partnership most likely would play the hand in 3NT, the best game contract on these two hands.”

Summary

“After the partnership has bid three suits, responder’s bid of the fourth suit is forcing and may be artificial. If the fourth suit is bid at the two level or higher, it commits the partnership to at least the game level.”

➔ “Let’s do Exercise 4 in the student text to review what we have just discussed.”

Exercise Four — Responder's Rebid after Bidding a New Suit at the Two Level

As East, what do you rebid with each of the following hands after the auction starts:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH						
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass						
2♦	Pass	?							
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 1) ♠ 9 3 ♥ 10 5 ♦ Q 7 4 ♣ A Q J 7 6 4 _____ </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 2) ♠ K J 7 ♥ 8 3 ♦ Q 4 2 ♣ K J 10 7 5 _____ </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 3) ♠ J 9 ♥ 6 4 ♦ A 9 7 5 ♣ K Q 10 8 4 _____ </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 4) ♠ A Q 9 ♥ J 6 ♦ 10 7 4 ♣ A Q J 9 5 _____ </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 5) ♠ 9 6 2 ♥ 5 ♦ A J 4 ♣ A K J 9 7 4 _____ </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding-bottom: 10px;"> 6) ♠ 6 4 2 ♥ K 8 3 ♦ Q 7 ♣ A J 8 6 2 _____ </td> </tr> </table>				1) ♠ 9 3 ♥ 10 5 ♦ Q 7 4 ♣ A Q J 7 6 4 _____	2) ♠ K J 7 ♥ 8 3 ♦ Q 4 2 ♣ K J 10 7 5 _____	3) ♠ J 9 ♥ 6 4 ♦ A 9 7 5 ♣ K Q 10 8 4 _____	4) ♠ A Q 9 ♥ J 6 ♦ 10 7 4 ♣ A Q J 9 5 _____	5) ♠ 9 6 2 ♥ 5 ♦ A J 4 ♣ A K J 9 7 4 _____	6) ♠ 6 4 2 ♥ K 8 3 ♦ Q 7 ♣ A J 8 6 2 _____
1) ♠ 9 3 ♥ 10 5 ♦ Q 7 4 ♣ A Q J 7 6 4 _____	2) ♠ K J 7 ♥ 8 3 ♦ Q 4 2 ♣ K J 10 7 5 _____	3) ♠ J 9 ♥ 6 4 ♦ A 9 7 5 ♣ K Q 10 8 4 _____							
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Exercise Four Answer — Responder's Rebid after Bidding a New Suit at the Two Level

- 1) 3♣. A new suit by opener is forcing after a two-level response. Rebid the clubs, promising nothing extra.
- 2) 2NT. This is an invitational bid, showing 10 or 11 (12) points.
- 3) 3♦. Raising opener's second suit shows an invitational-strength hand.
- 4) 3NT. A rebid of 2NT or 3♣ would not be forcing. Make sure the partnership gets to game.
- 5) 2♠ (fourth suit forcing). A rebid of 3♣ would not be forcing, and a jump to 4♣ would get the partnership beyond 3NT. Bid the fourth suit. This is an artificial game-forcing bid. After hearing opener's rebid, you will be better placed to know what to do. If opener rebids 2NT, you can bid 3♣ as a forcing bid.
- 6) 2♥. You've already promised 10 or more points by bidding a new suit at the two level. You don't need to jump to the three level to show an invitational hand with support for partner's major suit.

After a 1NT Rebid by Opener

Introduction

“Fourth-suit forcing is very useful, but it isn’t always available when responder wants to make a forcing bid. If opener’s rebid is 1NT, there are two suits still available. The partnership needs to know what bids are forcing in this situation. The standard agreement is that a jump shift or a reverse by responder is forcing. Other rebids are not forcing. Let’s look at some examples.”

Instructions

“Change the North hand.

“In hearts: add three low cards.

“In diamonds: take away the ace, the king, the jack and a low card.

“In clubs: add the queen.

“Change the South hand.

“In spades: take away a low card.

“In hearts: take away the king and the queen.

“In diamonds: add the king and the queen.

“In clubs: add a low card.

NORTH ♠ x x ♥ J x x x x ♦ x ♣ K Q x x x	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;">NORTH</td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;">SOUTH</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">1♥</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">2♣</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Pass</td> </tr> </table>	NORTH	SOUTH	1♥	1♦	2♣	Pass	SOUTH ♠ A x x ♥ x x ♦ K Q x x ♣ A J x x
NORTH	SOUTH							
1♥	1♦							
2♣	Pass							

“**With South as the dealer, what would be the opening bid?** (1♦.) With 14 high-card points and no five-card major suit, South opens a minor suit. With a choice of four-card minor suits, the standard opening bid is 1♦.

“**What does North do?** (1♥.) North can show the heart suit at the one level, 1♥.

“**What is South’s rebid?** (1NT.)

“**What does North do now?** (2♣.) There is a guideline that a new suit by responder is forcing. However, most partnerships do not play a bid of 2♣ by North as forcing in this sequence. Over a 1NT rebid, only a jump shift or a reverse by responder is forcing. Preferring clubs to hearts, South can pass North’s 2♣ bid and the partnership is in its best contract.

“Change the North hand.

“In hearts: take away two low cards and add the ace and the king.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ x x</p> <p>♥ A K J x x</p> <p>♦ x</p> <p>♣ K Q x x x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>(5♣)</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♦</p> <p>1NT</p> <p>(4♣)</p> <p>(Pass)</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>(5♣)</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♦</p> <p>1NT</p> <p>(4♣)</p> <p>(Pass)</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ A x x</p> <p>♥ x x</p> <p>♦ K Q x x</p> <p>♣ A J x x</p>
<p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>(5♣)</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♦</p> <p>1NT</p> <p>(4♣)</p> <p>(Pass)</p>			

“The auction would start the same way. South opens 1♦, North responds 1♥ and South rebids 1NT. What does North say now? (3♣.) Since 2♣ would not be forcing, North has to jump to 3♣ — a jump shift. South has to bid again. South most likely will raise to 4♣, and the partnership will reach a good 5♣ contract. 4♥ would require a little luck in the heart suit, and 3NT would be in danger after a spade lead.

“Change the South hand.

“In hearts: add a low card.

“In clubs: take away a low card.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ x x</p> <p>♥ A K J x x</p> <p>♦ x</p> <p>♣ K Q x x x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>4♥</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♦</p> <p>1NT</p> <p>3♥</p> <p>Pass</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>4♥</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♦</p> <p>1NT</p> <p>3♥</p> <p>Pass</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ A x x</p> <p>♥ x x x</p> <p>♦ K Q x x</p> <p>♣ A J x</p>
<p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>3♣</p> <p>4♥</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♦</p> <p>1NT</p> <p>3♥</p> <p>Pass</p>			

“Discuss with the others at your table how the auction should go with these two hands. (1♦–1♥–1NT–3♣–3♥–4♥–Pass.)

“South opens 1♦, North responds 1♥ and South rebids 1NT. North jumps to 3♣ as a forcing bid. What does South do? (3♥.) Having denied four-card support by not raising hearts right away, South can show heart support by bidding 3♥. North has the necessary information to put the partnership in 4♥. If 3♣ weren’t available as a forcing bid, North would be guessing. A rebid of 2♥ would be a sign-off. A jump to 3♥ would be invitational, and a jump to 4♥ might land the partnership in a seven-card fit.

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: add the king and the queen.

“In diamonds: add a low card.

“In clubs: take away the king, the queen and a low card.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ K Q x x</p> <p>♥ A K J x x</p> <p>♦ x x</p> <p>♣ x x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>2♠</p> <p>4♥</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♦</p> <p>1NT</p> <p>3♥</p> <p>Pass</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>2♠</p> <p>4♥</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♦</p> <p>1NT</p> <p>3♥</p> <p>Pass</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ A x x</p> <p>♥ x x x</p> <p>♦ K Q x x</p> <p>♣ A J x</p>
<p>NORTH</p> <p>1♥</p> <p>2♠</p> <p>4♥</p>	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♦</p> <p>1NT</p> <p>3♥</p> <p>Pass</p>			

“Discuss how the auction would go after South opens 1♦. (1♦–1♥–1NT–2♠–3♥–4♥–Pass.)

“**Over South’s 1♦ bid, what does North respond?** (1♥.) North bids the longer suit, 1♥. What does South rebid? (1NT.) South bids 1NT to show a minimum balanced hand.

“**What does North do now?** (2♠.) North has to find a forcing bid, since the partnership belongs in a game, but North isn’t sure of the best contract. A bid of 2♠ by North is forcing because it is a reverse by responder. This is like a reverse by opener. To give preference to North’s first suit, South has to go to the three level. If North had bid 2♣, that wouldn’t be a reverse since South could return to hearts at the two level.

“**The reverse by responder is forcing to game. Is North interested in finding a spade fit by bidding 2♠?** (No.) The partnership won’t have an eight-card spade fit. With four spades, South would have rebid 1♠ rather than 1NT. North is making a forcing bid to get more information from opener.

“**What does opener do over 2♠?** (3♥.) Opener can show the three-card heart support. North can now bid 4♥, confident that the partnership has an eight-card fit. If South couldn’t show any support for hearts over 2♠, North would probably settle for 3NT.”

Summary

“After a 1NT rebid by opener:

- Responder’s reverse or jump shift is forcing;
- Other bids by responder are not forcing.
- A jump to the three level in an old suit is invitational, showing 10 or 11 (12) points, but not forcing. A raise to 2NT shows 10 to 12 HCP.”

➔ “Let’s do Exercise 5 in the student text to review what we have just discussed.”

Exercise Five — Responder's Rebid after Opener Rebids 1NT

As East, what would you rebid with each of the following hands after the auction starts:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♦ 1NT	Pass Pass	1♥ ?	Pass
1) ♠ 7 5 ♥ K J 7 6 4 3 ♦ J 9 2 ♣ Q 5 _____		2) ♠ Q 9 3 ♥ A 10 7 3 ♦ K J 8 4 2 ♣ 4 _____	3) ♠ 6 ♥ A J 9 6 3 ♦ K 4 ♣ K Q 8 7 2 _____
4) ♠ A Q 8 5 ♥ K Q 9 6 3 ♦ Q 8 5 ♣ 2 _____		5) ♠ A K J 7 ♥ K J 9 3 ♦ 6 ♣ J 8 6 5 _____	6) ♠ K 6 ♥ A J 10 8 6 3 ♦ 9 4 ♣ K 8 3 _____

Exercise Five Answer — Responder's Rebid after Opener Rebids 1NT

- 1) 2♥. The bid of an old suit at the two level is a sign-off.
- 2) 3♦. This is invitational, showing 10 or 11 (12) points.
- 3) 3♣. A jump in a new suit is forcing.
- 4) 2♠. This is forcing since it is a reverse by responder; opener would have to go to the three level to give preference to hearts.
- 5) 3NT. There's no point in making a forcing bid. Opener didn't raise hearts and didn't show a four-card spade suit.
- 6) 4♥. Opener should have at least two hearts for the 1NT rebid.

After a 2NT Rebid by Opener

Introduction

“The situation is a little different if opener jumps to 2NT. This shows a balanced hand and 18 or 19 HCP. It is not a forcing bid, so responder can pass with 6 or 7 points. If responder does bid, the standard approach is to treat any bid below the game level as forcing, even an old suit at the three level. Let’s look at a couple of examples.”

Instructions

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: take away the king and add a low card.

“In hearts: take away the ace.

“In clubs: add a low card.

“Change the South hand.

“In hearts: take away a low card.

“In diamonds: add the ace.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ Q x x x</p> <p>♥ K J x x</p> <p>♦ x x</p> <p>♣ x x x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">NORTH</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">SOUTH</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1♥</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2NT</td> </tr> </table>	NORTH	SOUTH	1♥	1♦	Pass	2NT	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ A x x</p> <p>♥ x x</p> <p>♦ A K Q x x</p> <p>♣ A J x</p>
NORTH	SOUTH							
1♥	1♦							
Pass	2NT							

“South is the dealer. Discuss with the others at your table how the auction would proceed. (1♦–1♥–2NT–Pass.)

“**What is South’s opening bid?** (1♦.) South has 18 high-card points plus 1 point for the five-card suit. That’s too much for 1NT and not enough for 2NT. South would start with 1♦.

“**What does North respond?** (1♥.) With 6 points, North has enough to respond and would start bidding four-card suits up the line, 1♥.

“**What does South do now?** (2NT.) South now jumps to 2NT to show a balanced hand and 18 or 19 points. Since this is not forcing and North has nothing extra, North can pass and leave South to try to take eight tricks.

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: take away the queen.

“In hearts: add the ace.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ x x x</p> <p>♥ A K J x x</p> <p>♦ x x</p> <p>♣ x x x</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">NORTH</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">SOUTH</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1♥</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">3♥</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Pass</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3NT</td> </tr> </table>	NORTH	SOUTH	1♥	1♦	3♥	2NT	Pass	3NT	<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ A x x</p> <p>♥ x x</p> <p>♦ A K Q x x</p> <p>♣ A J x</p>
NORTH	SOUTH									
1♥	1♦									
3♥	2NT									
Pass	3NT									

“The auction would start the same way. 1♦ by South, 1♥ by North, 2NT by South. What does North do now? (3♥.) With 8 high-card points plus 1 for the five-card suit, North wants to be in game when South shows 18 or 19 points.

“Does North know whether the partnership belongs in 3NT or 4♥? (No.) North can’t tell for sure, but North can bid 3♥ to find out. Although this is an old suit at the three level, any bid over the jump to 2NT is forcing.

“What will South do over 3♥? With only two hearts, South will elect to play in 3NT. With three-card support, South would raise to 4♥.

“Why does South assume that North has only a five-card suit? (Could bid 4♥, otherwise.) With a six-card heart suit, North would know there was an eight-card fit and could jump to 4♥ right away.”

With an experienced group, you can clarify that North’s forcing 3♥ bid shows doubt about the best contract — either the strain or the level. With a stronger hand, North might be interested in slam.

“Change the North hand.

“In spades: take away two low cards and add the king.

“In diamonds: add the jack and a low card.

“In clubs: take away a low card.

NORTH

♠ K x
♥ A K J x x
♦ J x x x
♣ x x

NORTH	SOUTH
1♥	1♦
3♦	2NT

SOUTH

♠ A x x
♥ x x
♦ A K Q x x
♣ A J x

“The auction would start the same way: 1♦ by South, 1♥ by North, 2NT by South. Now what? (3♦.) With 12 high-card points, support for diamonds and two doubletons, North might be interested in the possibility of a slam. North can bid 3♦, showing a fit, since that is forcing. The partnership might now reach the excellent 6♦ contract. Even 7♦ is possible on these combined hands. We won’t go into the details of slam bidding at this time. Nevertheless, you can see how important it is to have an agreement on whether 3♦ is forcing or not after the 2NT rebid.”

Summary

“After a jump rebid to 2NT by opener, any bid by responder is forcing in standard methods. The only way for responder to stop in partscore is to pass.”

➔ “Let’s do Exercise 6 in the student text to review what we have just discussed.”

Exercise Six — Responder's Rebid after Opener Rebids 2NT

As East, what would you rebid with each of the following hands after the auction starts:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	?	
1) ♠ Q 9 7 5 ♥ J 8 3 ♦ K 5 4 ♣ 7 4 2 _____	2) ♠ K Q 8 7 4 ♥ 9 4 2 ♦ 6 5 ♣ K 9 5 _____	3) ♠ Q 10 8 5 4 ♥ K 9 6 3 ♦ 6 4 ♣ Q 6 _____	

Exercise Six Answer— Responder's Rebid after Opener Rebids 2NT

- 1) Pass. Opener's rebid shows a balanced hand of 18 or 19 HCP and is non-forcing.
- 2) 3 ♠. Any bid over 2NT is forcing. 3 ♠ shows the five-card suit and asks opener to choose between 3NT and 4 ♠.
- 3) 3 ♥. A new suit over the 2NT rebid is forcing. With 7 high-card points plus 1 length point for the five-card spade suit, you have enough to commit the partnership to game. Opener will know you have at least five spades and four hearts.

NOTE: Sample Deals Review the instructions on page 44.

Suggested Bidding

“Turn up all of the cards and put each hand dummy style at the edge of the table in front of each player. Let’s review the bidding first and agree on a final contract.”

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	1 ♦	Pass
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

“East opens the higher-ranking of two five-card suits. South doesn’t have enough to enter the auction. With a choice of four-card suits, West responds *up the line* by bidding 1 ♥. North passes, and the auction comes back to East. East wants to show the second suit, but can’t afford to bid only 2 ♣. West could pass that rebid — and might do so on the actual hand. With 18 high-card points plus 1 point for each of the five-card suits, East has enough to commit the partnership to the game level by making a jump shift to 3 ♣.

“Despite holding only 7 points, West is forced to bid again over the 3 ♣ rebid by opener. With some strength in spades and hearts, West’s best choice is 3NT. East could rebid the clubs to show a five-card suit, but there’s no reason to believe that 5 ♣ or 5 ♦ will be a better spot than 3NT. Having described the hand reasonably accurately, East should pass 3NT.”

Suggested Opening Lead

“Now that we have agreed on a contract of 3NT by West, let’s review the play and defense.

“North is on lead and should elect to lead spades, the unbid suit. With no sequence, North starts with the ♠3, fourth highest.’

Suggested Play

“Declarer has one sure winner in hearts, two in diamonds and three in clubs. With the spade lead, West is sure to get a trick with the ♠K. Two more tricks are needed. These should come from the club suit, if the missing clubs divide 3–2 or the ♣J can be trapped.

“Declarer should play the ♠J from the dummy. This may win the trick if North has both the ♠A and ♠Q. South wins with the ♠A and returns a spade. West can hold up winning the ♠K, but the defenders can continue leading spades to drive it out.

“If the missing clubs divide 3–2, declarer will have no difficulty making the contract. When taking winners, it’s usually a good idea to play the high card from the short side first. However, the clubs are not necessarily all winners in this situation since the ♣J is missing. Declarer can’t do anything if South holds four or more clubs including the ♣J, but declarer can take a precaution against North holding four clubs headed by the ♣J.

“West should start by playing one of dummy’s high clubs, then winning the second round with the ♣K. If both opponents follow suit, it doesn’t matter whether the ♣J has appeared. The defenders clubs are divided 3–2, and West can simply take the rest of the tricks in the suit. On the actual hand, South discards on the second round of the suit. West now knows that the clubs have divided 4–1 and North holds the ♣J. By winning the second round of clubs in the West hand, declarer can lead a low club toward dummy and take the finesse. North’s club holding doesn’t prevent declarer from making the contract.

“If North were to play the ♣K and then win the second round of clubs in the dummy, it would be too late to do anything when South discards. There’s no entry back to the West hand to take the finesse. Declarer will have to give up a club trick to North’s ♣J and can no longer make the contract.”

Suggested Defense

“When North leads a low spade, South should win the ♠A — third hand high — and lead back the ♠9, top of the remaining doubleton in partner’s suit. The defenders should establish three winners in the spade suit without difficulty. That doesn’t leave much for the defenders to do but sit back and hope that declarer doesn’t find the winning play in the club suit. If declarer does give up a trick to North’s ♣J, South should eventually get a diamond trick to defeat the contract.”

Bid and Play — Deal 2: Plan Before You Play

Guidelines for Teachers: On this second deal, declarer has to contend with a blocked suit by creating a side entry to dummy. It's easy for declarer to miss the key play on the first trick. Unfortunately, it's also easy for the defenders to slip up and give declarer the necessary entry.

Introduction

“Let's play a deal where the contract could be in jeopardy if both declarer and defender aren't careful.”

Instructions

“West is the dealer. Take your hands and start the bidding. Play out the final contract when you have completed the auction.”

(E–Z Deal Cards: #6, Deal 2 — Dealer, East)

Dealer: East	♠ A													
Vul: N–S	♥ A 10 7 5													
	♦ A Q 7 5 2													
	♣ K 7 3													
♠ 10 9 6 4 3		<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S			♠ 8 2	
	N													
W		E												
	S													
♥ Q 9				♥ K J 8 3										
♦ K J 9 8				♦ 10 4										
♣ 6 4				♣ A J 9 5 2										
	♠ K Q J 7 5													
	♥ 6 4 2													
	♦ 6 3													
	♣ Q 10 8													

Suggested Bidding

“Turn up all of the cards and put each hand dummy style at the edge of the table in front of each player. Let's review the bidding first and agree on a final contract.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		Pass	Pass
Pass	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

“After three passes, North starts the auction by bidding the longest suit, 1♦. East doesn’t have enough strength to introduce the club suit at the two level. South shows the spade suit, and the bidding comes back to North. North rebids 2♥. This is a reverse, showing at least a medium-strength hand with longer diamonds than hearts. It’s forcing for one round.

“South’s most descriptive rebid is to show the good five-card spade suit. Using the lebensohl over reverses (Ingberman) style of responses to a reverse, a rebid of 2NT would show a weak hand and deny a five-card spade suit. With no real fit for spades, North now tries 2NT. Knowing North has at least a medium-strength hand of 17 or 18 points, South takes the partnership to game.”

Suggested Opening Lead

“Now that we have agreed on a contract of 3NT by South, let’s review the play and defense.

“West’s opening lead would be the ♣5, fourth highest from the longest and strongest suit.”

Suggested Play

“The play to the first trick is often crucial, and this deal is a typical example. If the ♣8 is played from dummy, West can’t produce a higher card. Declarer’s first instinct might be to win the trick as cheaply as possible by playing a low club from the North hand, but appearances can be deceiving. Before deciding what to do, declarer should plan the entire play.

“Declarer can count four sure tricks in spades, one in hearts and one in diamonds. Declarer is going to get one club trick for sure after the opening lead and can establish a second winner in that suit. There will be an extra trick from the spade suit if the defender’s spades divide 4–3, and there’s always the possibility of a successful diamond finesse if West has the ♦K.

“The complication in all of this is that there’s no sure entry to the dummy. The spade suit is *blocked*. South’s ♣Q is the only possible entry, and North must be careful to make use of it. From the opening lead and West’s inability to play a club higher than the ♣8, it would appear that East has the ♣A. Consequently, declarer should win the first trick with the ♣K, keeping two low clubs in the North hand. After winning the ♣K, declarer plays the ♠A to unblock the suit and then leads a low club toward dummy. East can’t prevent declarer from getting to dummy with the ♣Q to take the spade winners. When the spades fail to divide favorably, declarer has to take the diamond finesse for nine tricks — four spades, one heart, two diamonds and two clubs.

“What happens if declarer lets dummy’s ♣8 win the first trick? After the ♠A is played, the defenders can prevent declarer from getting to dummy. If declarer leads the ♣K, East can duck. That gives declarer a second club trick, but no entry to dummy. If North tries leading a low club instead, East can win the ♣A and lead a third round, forcing declarer to win with the ♣K in the North hand. Without the spade winners, declarer can’t make the contract if the defenders hold on to the right cards.”

Suggested Defense

“The defenders’ best chance of defeating the contract is to prevent declarer from reaching dummy. If declarer does win the first trick with dummy’s ♣8 or ♣10, East can work out that North holds the ♣K. If North tries the tricky play of leading a low club toward dummy’s ♣Q after unblocking the ♠A, East must hop up with the ♣A to prevent declarer from reaching dummy. East needs to be alert to find this play.

“It’s a little easier if North leads the ♣K after playing the ♠A. East should see the importance of ducking this trick so that the ♣Q doesn’t become an entry. Ducking the club won’t cost a trick, since declarer is always entitled to two tricks in the suit.”

Bid and Play — Deal 3: Fourth Suit Forcing – Part 1

Guidelines for Teachers: North and South use fourth-suit forcing to find the best final contract. Sometimes game in the minor suit is the best spot.

Introduction

“Let’s play a deal where game in a minor offers the best contract.”

Instructions

“South is the dealer. Take your hands and start the bidding. Play out the final contract when you have completed the auction.”

(E–Z Deal Cards: #6, Deal 3 — Dealer, South)

Dealer: South	♠ K 4										
Vul: E–W	♥ A 9 6 2										
	♦ A Q 10 7 2										
	♣ 6 3										
♠ J 9 7	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 10 8 5 2
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ Q 8 7 5		♥ J 10 4									
♦ 6 5		♦ 9									
♣ K J 9 2		♣ A Q 10 7 4									
	♠ A Q 6 3										
	♥ K 3										
	♦ K J 8 4 3										
	♣ 8 5										

Suggested Bidding

“Turn up all of the cards and put each hand dummy style at the edge of the table in front of each player. Let’s review the bidding first and agree on a final contract.”

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

“After South’s opening bid of 1♦, North’s priority is to look for a major-suit fit. North bids the heart suit, and South continues bidding *up the line* by

showing the spade suit. North now has to find a rebid. North has the values to take the partnership to game, but the best contract is unclear. A preference to 2♦ would show a minimum-strength response of 6 to 9 points, and a jump to 3♦ would be invitational, showing 10 or 11 (12) points. To make a forcing bid, North bids the fourth suit, 2♣.

“North’s 2♣ bid is artificial, so South can’t bid notrump without some strength in clubs. Instead, South rebids the diamonds. North can show diamond support by raising to the three level. This is still a forcing bid — with an invitational-strength hand and a diamond fit, North would have bid 3♦ on the previous round. Still unable to bid notrump, South can continue in diamonds, and North, with nothing in clubs, will settle for game.

“Alternatively, South, having previously denied four-card or three-card support by failing to raise hearts on either of the last two rounds of bidding, might bid 3♥ over 3♦ to show some help for hearts. North could make one more try for 3NT by showing some strength in spades, but South would return to diamonds, and North would settle for game with diamonds as trump. Neither partner has strength in clubs.”

Suggested Opening Lead

“Now that we have agreed on a contract of 5♦ by South, let’s review the play and defense.

“West is on lead and, having listened to the auction, should choose a club, the suit in which neither North nor South has shown any strength. North’s 2♣* bid was artificial (fourth-suit forcing), saying nothing about clubs. West should lead the ♣2, fourth best.”

Suggested Play

“There is little to the play in 5♦ after the defenders take the first two club tricks. Declarer can win the next trick, draw trumps and ruff the spade loser in the dummy.”

Suggested Defense

“The defense can’t do anything to defeat 5♦. If West doesn’t find an initial club lead, declarer can discard one of dummy’s clubs on the third round of spades and wind up taking 12 tricks.

“If North–South wander into 3NT, the defenders can defeat that contract by taking the first five club tricks. After the opponents have bid diamonds, hearts and spades, it shouldn’t be too difficult to find a club lead no matter which defender has to make the opening lead.”

Bid and Play — Deal 4: Fourth Suit Forcing – Part 2

Guidelines for Teachers: Again the partnership will use fourth-suit forcing to find three-card major suit trump support. This deal involves a loser on a loser play to maintain control of the trump suit. This play may be missed even by experienced players. Go over the deal carefully, since the defenders have to play well to defeat the contract, if declarer gives them a chance.

Introduction

“Let’s play another deal where fourth-suit forcing comes in handy to show a hand that is interested in game but needs more information to select a final contract.”

Instructions

“West is the dealer. Take your hands and start the bidding. Play out the final contract when you have completed the auction.”

(E–Z Deal Cards: #6, Deal 4 — Dealer, West)

Dealer: West	♠ J 9 7				
Vul: Both	♥ 8				
	♦ A 7 4				
	♣ 9 6 5 4 3 2				
♠ A 10 6 3		♠ K 5 2			
♥ Q 7 3	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♥ A K J 10 4
N					
W E					
S					
♦ K Q 10 5		♦ J 8 6 3			
♣ Q 8		♣ J			
	♠ Q 8 4				
	♥ 9 6 5 2				
	♦ 9 2				
	♣ A K 10 7				

Suggested Bidding

“Turn up all of the cards and put each hand dummy style at the edge of the table in front of each player. Let’s review the bidding first and agree on a final contract.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

“With no five-card major suit, West opens the longer minor. East responds 1♥. West chooses to show the spade suit rather than raise hearts with only three-card support. This is the correct procedure, since East could have four hearts and four spades and be responding *up the line*.

“East now has to find a suitable rebid. East knows the partnership has enough combined strength for game, but doesn’t know the best choice of game. A jump to 3♥ would be non-forcing and show a six-card suit. A jump to 4♥ would be a wild guess, since West could be short in hearts. A jump to 3♦ also would be only invitational. Holding a singleton club, East doesn’t want to jump to game in notrump. East needs more information from West before deciding on the best contract. So, East bids 2♣, fourth-suit forcing. The 2♣ bid says nothing about clubs. Instead, it asks West for a further descriptive bid. When West shows belated support for hearts, East knows where the contract belongs and bids the game.”

Suggested Opening Lead

“Now that we have agreed on a contract of 4♥ by East, let’s review the play and defense.

“East’s 2♣ bid is artificial and doesn’t promise any length or strength in clubs. South can treat clubs as the *unbid* suit and lead the ♣A, top of touching honors.”

Suggested Play

“The contract looks fairly straightforward. There’s one loser in spades, one in diamonds and one in clubs. Whenever the contract looks easy, declarer should consider what might go wrong. There is a danger that the defenders can get a diamond ruff before trumps are drawn if the missing diamonds divide 4–1. There’s not much declarer can do if that’s the case. A more subtle danger is if the defenders’ trumps divide 4–1.

“Suppose South continues with the ♣K after winning the first trick, and declarer ruffs. Declarer starts to draw trumps and gets the unfortunate news that South has four trumps. If all of the trumps are drawn, East will have none left when the time comes to establish the diamonds. When the defenders win the ♦A, they can take all of their club winners. On the other hand, if declarer doesn’t draw all of the trumps, South may be able to get a diamond ruff when declarer tries to knock out the ♦A. The defenders don’t have to win the ♦A on the first round, so South may get a ruff even though the diamonds divide 3–2.

“To avoid this dilemma, declarer shouldn’t ruff the second round of clubs. Instead, declarer can discard a spade loser. A spade trick must be lost anyway, so discarding doesn’t cost anything. It does make a big difference, however. If South leads another club, declarer can ruff in dummy and retain five trumps in the East hand. Declarer can then draw all of South’s trumps and still have one left when the defenders get a trick with the ♦A.

“Discarding a spade on the second round of clubs risks going down, if the diamonds are divided 4–1 while the trumps are divided 3–2. It’s still the best play, however. The defenders may not find the diamond ruff if East discards a spade — South may lead another club or switch to a spade. If there is an immediate diamond ruff, the defenders could have defeated the contract anyway. Finally, if South held a singleton diamond, South may have led it instead of continuing with the ♣K.”

Suggested Defense

“If declarer does ruff the second round of clubs, the defenders will have to be careful to take advantage of their opportunity. If declarer draws all of the trumps, the defenders should have no difficulty taking their club winners when North wins the ♦A. If declarer stops drawing trumps after playing two rounds and discovering the 4–1 break, the defenders must be more careful.

“When declarer leads diamonds, North must duck the first round and win the second round. North then leads a third round of diamonds for South to ruff. How does North know to do this? On the first round of diamonds, South should play the ♦9, starting a high-low sequence to show an even number. North may be able to figure out what’s going on from the way declarer is playing the hand. In that case, North can give South a diamond ruff to defeat the contract.

“It’s not easy to find the winning defense if declarer makes a slight misstep, but at least the defenders have a chance.”