# Fourth-Seat Opening Bids

#### Beyond the Rule of 15

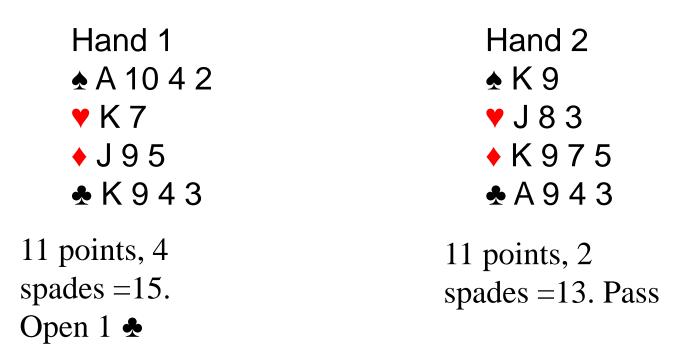
## You Are in the Fourth Seat

- How often can you expect to see 3 passes?
- Bridge odds say perhaps about 10% of the time.
- Should you open?
- Or pass?
- When you are in doubt, use the rule of 15.

## The Rule of 15

- If your high-card points, plus your spades equal 15, open the bidding.
- If not, pass.

#### Rule of 15 Examples



If that was all there is to consider in 4<sup>th</sup> seat opening, there would be no need for this lesson.

- 13 points, 1 spade =14.
- Does not make the rule of 15.
- You would open this hand in any other seat.
  - 1 quick trick
  - Scattered points
  - Best to pass.

Hand 4 ♠ 9 ♥ A J 8 3 ♦ 9 7 5 ♣ A K 10 4 3

- 12 points, 1 spade =13.
- Does not make the rule of 15.
- Nevertheless, you should open this hand.
  - 3 quick tricks
  - A good suit
  - You would open this hand in any seat.

Hand 5 ▲ K Q 10 9 6 ♥ A J 8 ♦ 9 7 ♣10 4 3

- 10 points, 5 spade =15.
- Makes the rule of 15.
- You should open this hand.
  - 2 quick tricks
  - A good suit
  - Stacked points

Hand 6 ▲ 9 5 4 3 ♥ K J ♦ Q J 5 2 ♣ K Q 9

- 12 points, 4 spades =16.
- Make the rule of 15.
- You should not open this hand.
  - 1 quick trick
  - Downgradeable hand with quacks
  - This is a bad 12.

Hand 7 ▲ K Q 10 4 3 ♥ 6 5 2 ♦ A 10 8 7 ♣ J

- 10 points, 5 spades, borderline hand
- Assume partner has about 10 points and 2 or 3 spades.
- Partner's share of what's out there
- Should be able to make 2 spades or 2 diamonds

# **Opening Above the 1-Level**

Hand 8 ♦ K 4 3 **A**Q 10 9 5 2 ♦ 7 ♣ K 7 3 Hand 9 **♦** 4 3 **7**952 • A ♣ K Q J 8 6 3 2

- A good, long suit is an advantage.
- Don't open with a long weak suit.
- If you open in 4<sup>th</sup> seat, you expect to go plus.
- Open hand 8, 2 ♥.
- Open hand 9, 3 **\***.

# **Opening Above the 1-Level**

- Hand 10
- ♠ K 8
- **7** 5 4
- K Q 10 9 5 3
- ♣ K J 10

- This hand should be opened 2
- You have a good suit.
- Close to opening bid count.
- When you open 4<sup>th</sup> seat (2 ◆, 2 ♥, 2 ♦) yOu should have a good hand and almost opening count.

# **Opening Above the 1-Level**

Hand 11 ▲ A 8 ♥ Q 4 ♦ Q 9 7 5 3 2 ♣ K J 10

- In 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> seat you would open this hand 1
- In  $3^{rd}$  seat,  $2 \blacklozenge$ .

♦.

• In the 4<sup>th</sup> seat, you probably should pass.

#### Other 4<sup>th</sup> Seat Considerations

Hand 12 ▲ K Q 3 ♥ K ♦ K 6 4 3 ♣ A J 8 7 3

- This hand has plenty of points to open, but what should you open?
- If you open 1 ♣, after partner's 1 ♥, what will you rebid?
- You might open 1
- I suggest opening 1nt.

#### Other 4<sup>th</sup> Seat Considerations

- Hand 13
- ♠KJ
- ♥ J 6 3
- Q J 5 4
- ♣ A J 9 8

- This hand makes the rule of 15.
- But it is a quacky hand.
- If you passed, I would not say you were wrong.
- If you open, open 1 **♣**.

#### Other 4<sup>th</sup> Seat Considerations

- Hand 14
- **♦** K 2
- 🕈 A K 6 3
- A J 10 4
- ♣A42

- 19 points
- In any other seat, you would open 1 
  , then rebid 2nt.
- In 4<sup>th</sup> seat, it's probably best to just open 2nt.
- 3 aces and a quality 
   suit
- Up grade 1 point.

## **Final Point**

- When you open the bidding in 4<sup>th</sup> seat, your prime concern is that your side gets a plus score.
  - If the auction becomes competitive and you push your opponents to the level that they go down, that's good.
  - But if they get into the auction and make a plus, your opening was an error.
  - Conversely, if the opponents come in and push you to the point you go down, your bid was an error.