



Adventures in Bridge

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This Week in Bridge

(85) Solid Suits

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Level: 3

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General

One of the important parts of bidding is looking for and finding a fit. This is generally our primary goal. But when you (or partner) hold an incredibly powerful suit, we may not need a fit from partner to have this as a trump suit. We call these self-sufficient or solid suits. Hands that have these suits will play incredibly well and be able to take a lot more tricks than hands with similar distribution but lesser suit quality. These suits will massively affect our hand evaluation – which game to play or whether to play a slam. Thus, we want to have good agreements about how to show these valuable aspects of our hand.

What is a Solid Suit?

Before we talk about how to show a *Solid Suit*, we will want to make sure we know what a solid suit is. A solid suit is one that will generally play for at most 1-loser opposite a void. That means we expect it to play for at most 1-loser if partner is void and the suit breaks reasonably (not perfectly.)

Example Suits

Solid	KQJ10xxx	4-2 break only 1-loser (6 Tricks)
Not Solid	KQJxxxx	3-3 break only 1-loser. 4-2 break 2-losers. (Only 5 Tricks)
Solid	AQJ10xxx	4-2 break only 1-loser. (6 Tricks)
Solid	AKQxxxx	4-2 break only 1-loser. (6+ Tricks.)
Solid	AKQJxx	4-2 break, no losers. (6 Tricks.)
Solid?	AKQxxx	4-2 break only 1-loser. (Only 5 Tricks, maybe not enough)

2/1 GF Solid Suits

In a 2/1 GF auction, we do not need to be in a hurry – we are in forcing auction, partner cannot pass. This allows us to apply an important general principle in forcing auctions – “good hands go slow.” When we have extra values, we do not need to jump around eating up valuable bidding space. Instead, we bid slowly and try to get as much information from partner as possible. This opens up our jumps to be used for different hands. We will use jump rebid by opener to show a quality solid suit instead of showing extra values.



1♠ 2♣
3♠ Solid ♠ suit (at most 1-loser) sets ♠ as trump and asks partner to start cuebidding.

Since partner has shown their solid suit (they have generally set it as trump – certainly for game), although they have not shown extra HCP, their long strong suit gives them extra playing strength and they are interested in exploring slam. Thus, we bid on by starting a cuebidding auction – showing our controls.

We also should be aware that a similar auction exists and is standard after a 2♣ opening:

2♣ 2♦
3M Since 2M would be forcing, then 3M has a special meaning.

This shows a solid suit, sets trump, and asks Responder to start cuebidding.

Conclusion

Showing this solid suit, setting trump (letting partner know trump is taken care of) and starting the cuebidding process lets us quickly set the direction of the auction toward slam and puts us in a good position to cuebid, Keycard, or use other tools to explore slam.