

THINKING BRIDGE - - By Eddie Kantar -
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Responder's rebid Most of us can get past the first three bids if we are the opener or the responder. However, a blip often occurs when it comes to responder's second bid. How would you handle the following eight responding hands as South after this start at matchpoints, neither side vulnerable.

North	East	South	West
1 Diamond	1 Heart	1 Spade	Pass
2 Club	Pass	?	

1	♠A J 7 6 4	♥8 6 5	♦K 4	♣J 10 4
2	♠K Q 8 4	♥A J 9	♦3 2	♣K 7 6 2
3	♠A J 8 4 3	♥A 7 6	♦-	♣Q J 7 3 2
4	♠K Q 5 4 3	♥J 4 2	♦7 6	♣Q 8 4
5	♠A J 10 8 4 2	♥A 6 5	♦Q 8	♣5 3
6	♠A K 7 6 5	♥7 6	♦2	♣K Q 7 6 4
7	♠K J 9 8 7	♥6 5 2	♦A K 10 4 2	♣10
8	♠A K 7 6 5	♥7 6 3	♦A 6	♣Q 10 8

Here are my answers:

1. 2♦. Too strong to pass 2♣, spades not good enough to rebid, and not enough clubs to raise. In the lingo, it's called a false preference.

2. 3NT. Too strong for a non-forcing 2NT or a non-forcing 3♣.

3. 4♣, forcing. There is a likely slam on this one if partner makes a forward move.

4. If there is one thing I should have learned by now is not to present a problem I don't know the answer to! I can be talked into any of three possibilities: :-

Pass. This is a little conservative with 8 HCP as partner often has 17, even 18, in this sequence when holding a singleton spade, but game does look far away.

2♣. This is supposed to show a six-card suit or at least five very good spades. Much better spades than what I am looking at.

2♦ Another false preference to keep the bidding alive in case partner has the goods.

I'm going with 2♦, but with great reluctance. Maybe partner will bid 2♣ or 2NT, either of which I will pass, hoping that we will be in a better contract than 2♦, particularly at matchpoints.

5. 3♣, invitational. To force in spades, bid 2♥, the 4th suit, and then 3♣, 100% forcing. Using the fourth suit is a neat way of creating forcing sequences.

6. 4♣ again, forcing. If partner cuebids 4♥, slam is looking good. At times, partner will take charge after this jump raise.

7. 3♦, invitational. To force in diamonds, bid the fourth suit - 2♥ - and then bid diamonds.

8. 2♥, the ubiquitous fourth suit, asking for more information. You hope partner will bid 2NT (or 3NT) to show a heart stopper(s). If so, you will have found a home.