

ADVANCING OVER AN OVERCALL

Mrs.Gomathi's Question :-

Myself and my husband were playing Team event tonight. We had an argument on Bidding. Also give your opinion if it is pair event MP.

We play SAYC. Deal 11.

N	E	S	W
		1 Heart	2 Club
Pass	Pass	2 Heart	All Pass

	♠ QJ103, ♥ 7 ♦ A6 ♣ Q109652	
♠75 ♥ 8 ♦ K1042 ♣AKJ83		♠ 86 ♥A10532 ♦ J987 ♣ 72
	♠ A942 ♥ KQJ964 ♦ Q53 ♣ Void	

Partner said I should double to show Spade

I said partner need not have 4Spades and Partner should Double especially with void in Club..

Gomathi Srinivasan.

Sridhar's views :-

First let us take North's problem over the 2C overcall ; the options are PASS and DOUBLE – I find two objectionable points to the DOUBLE (1) It prevents the partnership from defending 2C X for a profitable penalty; (2) you have 4-2 in the two unbid suits ; what happens if your partner does NOT have 4 cards in spades ? Say, he has ♠AX ♥KQJXX ♦QXXX ♣XX ? over his 2D rebid, what do you do ?

Therefore, any negative DOUBLE at 2 level must address the question –“ what if opener's rebid shows a lack of fit ? “ For eg if you held a doubleton heart you can prefer 2H over 2D and opener can play in a 5-2 fit ; Or if you held 11 Hcp you can rebid 2NT safely over 2D by opener ; none of these exist here .

For the above two reasons, I advise a PASS by North over 2C. Please note that we have not yet lost the 4-4 fit in spades if it exists; opener can reopen with a DOUBLE and North still has the option of bidding spades !

Secondly, let us address South's reopening bid over 2C-P-P - ?

The options are DOUBLE and 2H ; I rule out 2S since it may possibly show reverse values that South does not hold; I also rule out a PASS since the shape suggests possibility of more profitable contracts for NS including 2C X.

DOUBLE –(1) It has the advantage of collecting a huge penalty ;

(2) In the event of partner (admittedly a rare event) holding a hand like ♠KQXXX ♥XX ♦XX ♣JXXX , we can now find a miraculous Game in 4S !

(3) it also retains options to compete for part score .

The only risk in Doubling is if partner PASSES , expecting South to produce 3 or more defensive winners he will be disappointed , the Ace of spades and one heart trick are the only winners; eg North will pass the double holding ♠KXX ♥XX ♦XXX ♣QJXXX it may not be a success. But 2C X made against us is not a disaster when compared against missing a 500 Number in defense to 2C X .

2 HEARTS – rules out defending 2C X , seems an unilateral decision to take ; hides the spade suit , for no particular reason . In short it is right only when the hands are dealt for 2H to make and no other profitable result for NS – very improbable !

In view of this I advise a DOUBLE by South .