

BIDDING IN 4TH SEAT

Gautam's question: After 1H opening by LHO and two passes I hold
AKQJ8xx
Qxx
xx
x

What should I bid (Playing Standard) ?

Sridhar's views :

After an opening bid by LHO, followed by 2 passes, Suit bids with a single Jump show a single suitor hand with about 12 to 15 HCP; It is not forcing. Here I find the bid of 2S appropriate; it is descriptive, accurate and partner is well placed to judge the further auction right. I recommend this bid.

The Alternative bids are (a) 1S and (b) 4S ; any non-spade bid is ruled out as the hand is all spades and nothing but spades ; a take out double is unthinkable

In evaluating the 2♠ bid Vs 1♠ and 4♠, let us consider what are the possible final contracts here :-

1 We belong only in a part score – if partner has soft values in a hand like ♠XX ♥JXX ♦KQXX ♣KJXX , 2♠ is the limit ; partner will pass our 2S bid with this hand ; it also makes it difficult for them to bid again as they are forced to enter at 3 level ; this is my objection to 1S in place of 2S . Of course a bid of 4S will register a minus score here.

2 We belong in Game – In view of partner's pass over 1H , I can see only two possible games , 4S and 3N . QXX in H persuades us to seriously consider 3N as there could be defensive Heart ruffs in 4S . A bid of 2S clearly tells partner about the source of tricks in spades and he can easily decide between 3N and 4S , if we belong in game . Here the alternatives fare poorly – 4S dismisses partner from the Auction, while 1S leaves him guessing about the availability of tricks in 3N.

3 We belong in Slam (!) – why not ? Slam, though remote, is certainly not ruled out , partner can easily hold a hand like ♠X ♥AXXX ♦KQJX ♣AXXX Even here, a descriptive bid of 2S will certainly fare better.