

WASHINGTON BRIDGE LEAGUE

We offer our thanks to Washington Bridge league as we, present a copy from their 2012 May -June bulletin on Major Suit Bidding by columnists > Ron Zucker and Shawn Stringer. Read original - [Here](#)

Reverses and Jump shifts

In previous articles about minor suit openings, we first focused on what strain opener should rebid, the options being to support responder's suit, to rebid the suit opened, to bid some number of NoTrump, or to bid a new suit. We also discussed how high to bid to show various strengths -minimum, invitational or Game Forcing.

There are two specific opener rebids in a NEWSUIT that you need to be familiar with: Reverse and the Jump Shift. Both of these rebids are forcing and show bigger than average hands. We discuss each below.

Reverses

A Reverse occurs when opener's second bid is not a jump, but is the bid of an unbid suit that is higher in rank than the suit first bid. For example, in the sequence 1♦-P - 1♠-P, opener's rebid of 2♥ is a reverse. By definition, a Reverse forces partner to take a preference at the 3-level if partner prefers opener's first bid suit.

The basic characteristics of a Reverse are: Opener's first suit must be longer than his second bid suit; opener should have a good 16 HCP to reverse; and opener usually has a singleton somewhere. Also, a Reverse is forcing for one round. Let's see a typical Reverse hand: x/AQxx/ AQJxx/Kxx. Note that the diamonds are longer than the hearts, the hand has 16 HCP, and there is a stiff spade. If the hand were xx/AQxx/ AQJx/Kxx, would you open 1♠ and rebid 2♥? No - you would have opened 1NT. That is why a Reverse generally promises a singleton.

Note that a bid of 2♠ in the above auction is NOT a reverse. Spades are not a new suit, because partner has already bid them. Note also that if you open 1♠ and partner responds 1♥, 1♠ is NOT a Reverse since partner can still support clubs (your first bid suit) at the two level.

After opener reverses, responder must bid one more time. Responder can make an on-forcing rebid of her suit, showing five cards in the suit, and at most 8 HCP (for example, 1♦-1♠-2♥-2♠). Opener, with a minimum reverse and a tolerance for responder's suit, can pass. So if responder has 9+ HCP, she must force to game.

A popular convention which allows responder to show a bad hand is to play that the cheaper of the fourth suit or 2NT is artificial and asks opener to make the next cheapest bid. After that, responder places the contract. Thus, in our previous example, after 1♦-1♠-2♥, 2NT would be forcing. Opener usually rebids 3♠, and responder can then pass (which would be very unusual) or bid 3♦ or 3♥. Opener should not bid again unless his or her hand is too good to pass. After the following Reverse - 1♠-1♠-2♦, 2♥ is the conventional bid responder uses to show a weak hand and try to end the auction.

Any other bid by responder is forcing to game, which allows responder to set trumps cheaply while still forcing. Thus, 1♦-1♠-2♥-3♦ is forcing to game. Responder might have AJT4/K32/ Q85/T63. She can't bid NoTrump, as she doesn't have clubs stopped, but she does have support for diamonds and a game forcing hand of 10 HCP opposite about 16 HCP. After the Reverse and responder's second bid, opener bids naturally.

Jump Shifts

A Jump Shift, not surprisingly, consists of a bid that includes a jump in level and a shift to a new suit. It is a bid in a new suit one level higher than is required. All the following sequences (no opponent bidding) are Jump Shifts:

- 1♥ - 1♠ - 3♦
- 1♠ - 1NT - 3♠
- 1♠ - 1♥ - 2♠

A Jump Shift generally promises at least 19 HCP (or a great 18 HCP) and a hand strong enough to play in game even if partner has scraped up a response. Opener may be 5-4 or 5-5, and if 5-5, may Jump Shift on slightly less HCP - 17 is sufficient if 5-5, particularly if all of your points are in your suits. Also, opener should have no wasted values - no doubleton queens in the HCP count.

A Jump Shift is 100% forcing to game, so please do not pass partner's Jump Shift. Support one of opener's suits if you can, or rebid your own suit. If you can't support either of opener's suits and your suit is only four cards, then look at your holding in the unbid suit. If you have a stopper in that suit, bid 3NT. Without a stopper, choose one of opener's suits, even with minimal support.

Opener may have the unbid suit stopped and can bid 3NT. Opener may have extra length in his second suit and may rebid that suit. Keep describing, as best you can, until you reach game.

Let's see how these ideas play themselves out. In all of the following, you open 1♦ and partner responds 1♥. You hold:

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| ♠QT3 ♥AQJ8 ♦AKT52 ♣8 | Bid 2♥. This is a minimum reverse. If partner bids 2♠, promising 5, you'll be happy to support spades. Otherwise, show your strength and shape. If partner bids 3♦ or 3♥, game forcing, you can still show your three card spade support by bidding 3♠ next |
| ♠QT3 ♥QJ84 ♦AKT52 ♣8 | Bid 2♠. You would love to bid 2♥ to show your shape, but you are not strong enough. Partner might be in a 4-3 spade fit, but you don't have enough diamonds to rebid them, and your small singleton club suggests that NT is wrong. 2♠ is the best description of the hand. (Note: discuss with partner ahead of time. Some players never support without 4 cards.) |
| ♠K3 ♥9 ♦AQJ42 ♣KQT42 | Bid 2♠. It's a very nice hand, with 15 HCP, good suits and the king of partner's first bid suit, but you can't force to game. If partner has a minimum response with no fit, you want to get out as cheaply as possible. If partner holds ♠QJ852 ♥KJ73 ♦T73 ♣5, there is no play for game. Over partner's 2♠, you will bid 3♦, to show some extra values. |
| ♠AJ ♥9 ♦AKJ93 ♣AQJT8 | Bid 3♠. You want to be in game opposite any hand that can scrape up a 1♠ response to your 1♦ opening bid. You have 20 HCP and two excellent suits. If partner wants to play in 3NT with good hearts, you have two good suits he can set up, and your high card strength will make it a reasonable contract. |