

Bidding Strong Hands By Steve Moese

Our “Let’s Talk Bridge” question brought up the topic of REVERSES and JUMP SHIFTS by opener – tools for very strong hands. Let’s review the tiers for an opening hand:

HCP Bidding Plan

12-14 Normal, minimum opening hands

15-17 1NT balanced

Jump suit rebid (1-3) with good 6-card suit.

18-21 Balanced: 1 bid then jump to 2NT or open 2N.

Reverse or Jump Shift (usually 4-5 losers) Unbal.

22+ 2♣ (≤4 losers and 4+ Control cards).

(Some 19-21 HCP hands with long minor suit)

Bidding system designers will say the balanced 1NT opener is usually 15-17 but if you choose 12-14 then the 1N rebid is used for 15-17 balanced hands.

Looking at the 18-21 HCP Very Strong hands, our tools for balanced hands are simple: open 1 of a suit and make the jump rebid of 2N with 18-19, or open 2N with 20-21. Most players open 2N with a 5-card major and 20-21 HCP as long as the shape is 5332. With 54, you have a 2nd suit and it’s better to open 1 of the major and plan to jump shift into the 4-card suit.

With unbalanced very strong hands, we always open the long suit first. So with the following pattern:

♠** ♥***** ♦***** ♣** (2=4=5=2) and 18-21 HCP, open 1♦ and reverse into 2♥ at your next turn. A reverse always shows the 1st suit is **LONGER** than the 2nd suit. ← REPEAT THIS.

Can the reverse be weaker, that is fewer HCP? YES under one condition: the hand has a 5=6 pattern like this: ♠* ♥***** ♦***** ♣*. Now any working 14 HCP hand (points in long suits plus side aces are working), you can open 1♦ and rebid ♥ TWICE (♦-♥-♥ shows 6♦ and 5♥). The extra length in 2 suits is work an ACE!

With 11-13 HCP, 5=6 pattern and more than 5 losers, open 1 of the Major then rebid your longer minor. NOTE: rebidding your 2nd suit at the 3-level after partner makes a WEAK response (1NT) shows 15-17 HCP and 5+=5 shape (that is, the 1st mentioned suit is equal or longer than the 2nd)! The 3rd bid invites a weak partner to bid game if they are at the top of their

9/16 – Future Master Leaders

1st OA: **Janet & Al Venosa** (65.8%)

2nd OA: **Susan De Roos & Lisa Eisenstein** (57.1%)



Bring your Questions, Hands, Ideas. Let’s learn together!

Tues Eve 6:30 PM Sharp!

CBA Newcomer Games – Play Often!

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Sat PM NLM (Homestyle 2nd 4th)

Events at the Cincinnati Bridge Center

- **Fri Sep 19** 11 PM Open & NLM International Fund games. Extra MPs. Call Kay for partners 513-631-8070.
- **Sat Sep 20** – 1 PM International Fund Game Extra MPs. Open & NLM. Call Kay for partners 513-631-8070.
- **Sat Sep 20** - Supervised Bridge 10 AM – 12 Noon @ CBC. Contact Mike Purcell for reservation mikpur@cinci.rr.com
- **Wed Sep 24** – Int’l Fund Homestyle Game & Pot Luck.
- Thursday Evenings and Last Tuesday in September are **SWISS TEAM** games. Beginning in October Thursday Evening will be an Under 2500 MP Pairs Game.
- **September CBA Flyer** – CBC, NKy, and Anderson offer games with EXTRA MASTERPOINTS!

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range (6-10 1N suggests game if 8+ - 10 HCP).

Jump Shifts are the close cousins of Reverses – except they always show the first suit **Longer or Equal** to the second. ← REPEAT THIS. Both Jump Shifts and Reverses are Game Forcing unless you respond with very light hands (4-5 HCP). Then you need special agreements to handle those very weak hands.

The Problem Hands: If we choose to bid 1♦ -P-1♠ -P-3♦ as 15-17 HCP with a 6-card suit (many do) then we have to have a way to bid the 18-21 HCP hands with this shape. The standard solution is to allow a wide range for the 2♦ rebid (12-17 HCP) so that the 3♦ rebid shows 18-21 HCP and a very strong hand. This treatment has become less popular because it puts a burden (wide range) on the 2♣ or 2♦ rebid. Instead, many experts

make a reverse with a hand like: ♠9 ♥AK10 ♦AQ9 ♣AQJ1093 (open 1♣ plan to rebid 2♦ on a 3-card suit) or a jump shift with ♠9 ♥AK10 ♦AQJ1093 ♣AQ9 (open 1♦ and jump shift into 3♣). A useful alternative is to open these very strong minor suit hands 2♣ using the 4-loser criteria.

To recap – a reverse always shows the 1st suit longer than the 2nd, no exceptions and is either a game force or very high playing strength equivalent (5-loser 5=6 pattern) that will be defined by opener’s 3rd bid. A Jump shift shows the same very strong range (4-5 losers) and is also game forcing.

A jump to 2N shows 18-19 HCP. (Did you know that when responder passes opener’s 1 bid and RHO balanced at the 1 level, a free double or 1N by opener shows 18-19 HCP? IT DOES!

1♣ - P - P - 1♠

X/1N shows 18-19 HCP (X suggests no stopper, 1N shows a stopper).

2♦ / ♥ shows a reverse or Jump shift hand (no 3-card suits here)!!!

2♠ shows a very strong hand (asks responder to bid NT with a stopper or their longest/best suit).

2NT – Does not exist!

2♣ - Usually 15-17 – what 3♣ would have said had partner not passed!

Pass – most hands that are not strong enough for the above action. Note: with a ♠ stack over RHO, pass and hope partner reopens with a double!)

There is a very good discussion on reverse bidding on BBO at this URL:

<http://www.bridgebase.com/forums/topic/18177-a-primer-on-reverse-bidding/>

Newcomer News – by Steve Moese

This Saturday we return to 10am – Noon Supervised Play. Join us for FUN!

Board 5 ♠ A 4
North Deals ♥ 8 6 5
N-S Vul ♦ K J 10 3
♣ 10 8 4 2

| | |
|-----------|--------------|
| ♠ KQJ1072 | ♠ — |
| ♥ 7 4 3 | ♥ K Q J 10 9 |
| ♦ A 6 | ♦ Q 8 7 |
| ♣ Q 7 | ♣ A K 9 5 3 |

W 6♥; E 5♥;
EW 3N; 5♣; 3♠;
2♦

♠ 9 8 6 5 3
♥ A 2
♦ 9 5 4 2
♣ J 6

Tuesday Evening September 16

Hands that do not fit well often lead to trouble. When you have a good suit of your own in a weakish hand with a modest fit for partner, prefer the fit over playing in your own suit.

Bidding – North passes. East opens 1♥ (15 HCP + points for the ♠ Void). South passes. West responds 1♠. This is slightly discouraging. HCP in ♠ are not valuable given East’s void. East can rebid 2♣, comfortable that if partner passes they are so weak that EW will be in the right spot. Playing Standard American, West can jump rebid to 3♠ if and only if 3♠ is game forcing. If a 3♠ rebid by responder is invitational (most play that way) then West has to make a game forcing

bid here. The ideal choice is 2♦ - an artificial game force called “4th Suit Forcing”. Now EW know they are on their way to game and can focus on finding the right fit. East will rebid 3♣ to show a 5-5 hand. West will now jump to game in ♥ with a minimum game force hand. West knows that East does not have interest in the ♠ suit. The 10 cards in ♣ and ♥ make it unlikely East has 3 or even 2 ♠ cards on this auction. While East has extra values, the ♠ void is a concern, and so is the ♦ suit.

The Opening Lead – Against a ♥ game, leading a ♠ might give partner a ruff. However in a 4th suit forcing auction, leading the 4th suit (here ♦) is always attractive as partner likely holds values in that suit. A ♦ lead creates a 2nd loser and holds the contract to 11 tricks. Any other lead gives declarer time to develop the ♠ suit and 12 tricks will come home. Note that if we could get West to declare, 6♥ can’t be beat because NS cannot attack ♦ from the North hand on opening lead without giving up a trick!

Post Mortem – Should EW bid the slam? The ♦ suit is problematic. The fact that half of West’s hand is in ♠ opposite East’s void makes bidding this slam a poor proposition, especially since West jumped to 4♥ showing a minimum game force. Improve West’s hand by adding either red King and then West can rebid 3♥ instead of 4♥, allowing a control bid auction and RKB for ♥. Now EW reach a good slam with good bidding!

| Bd 5 | Scores | | MPs | |
|-------|--------|------|------|----|
| | NS | EW | NS | EW |
| 6♥ E | 100 | | 4 | 0 |
| 3NT E | 400 | | 3 | 1 |
| 3NT W | 430 | | 2 | 2 |
| 4♥ E | 450 | | 1 | 3 |
| 4♥ E | 480 | | 0 | 4 |
| 4♠ W | 420 | 3.25 | 0.75 | |
| 4♠ W | 420 | 3.25 | 0.75 | |
| 5♥ E | 450 | 1.38 | 2.63 | |
| 4♥ E | 480 | 0.13 | 3.88 | |