

14. Bidding a second suit when you shouldn't (2)

There's a somewhat contentious situation where the showing of a second suit is unwise even though you have a five-four shape. If you have minimum opening values, it is a dubious idea to bid your second suit when to do so forces partner to the dreaded Three-level to give a preference back to your first suit.

I should say that players can get overly fixated about this "reverse" issue (going above your "barrier" — the rebid of your suit). There is something to be said for simply showing your second suit regardless of strength (after all, the key to good bidding is showing your shape).

However, after opening 1♥ and hearing partner respond 2♦, it is probably sensible to rebid 2♥ rather than 2♠ with these.

♠ J743 ♠ A632
♥ KQ1095 ♥ AQJ92
♦ 7 ♦ J2
♣ AQ3 ♣ J2

Note, if the spades and hearts were swapped round, it would clearly be right to bid 1♠-then-2♥. Also, note that you should rebid a five-card suit only in a cramped auction. In the auction 1♥-1♠-2♥, you should never have five hearts.

What Happened

South's 2NT was an unhappy affair. East won West's ♣10 lead with ♣K and returned ♣J (top of two), which won, then ♣4, West scoring ♣A9. At trick five, West switched brightly to ♠2, East winning ♠J, returning ♠4 to West's ♠A then scoring ♠K9 over

Dealer: North, Vulnerability: Neither

♠ Q876
♥ AKJ92
♦ Q2
♣ 62

♠ A32
♥ Q7
♦ J1084
♣ A1098

N		E
W		S

♠ KJ94
♥ 8654
♦ 97
♣ KJ4

♠ 105
♥ 103
♦ AK653
♣ Q753

What Happened

S	W	N	E
		1♥	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠(1)	Pass
2NT	end		

(1) Although this rebid shows North's shape, it is too likely to cause the partnership to bid past their last making contract.

Contract: 2NT (by S), Opening Lead: ♣10

What Should Have Happened

S	W	N	E
		1♥	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥(1)	Pass
Pass(2)	Pass		

(1) Practical rebid. On such a cramped auction, partner should be aware the sixth heart is not guaranteed.

(2) Whether or not partner has a sixth heart, his minimum-level rebid shows at most 15 points, so game values are not present.

Contract: 2♥ (by N), Opening Lead: ♦9

dummy's ♠Q8. The defence had garnered the first eight tricks — down three.

What Should Have Happened

With ♥Q sitting pretty, you'll make the requisite eight tricks in 2♥. andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk