

# Begin with One

Rebidding strong hands that open one of a suit

Ipswich & Kesgrave

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# Limits on opening one

- ▶ From a recent club game / Summer League match, dealer, your side only vulnerable:

♠ KJ

♥ AKQ876

♦ AQ752

♣ ---

- ▶ What's your choice?

a) 1♥

b) A strong 2♣

c) A not-quite-as-strong 2♦

# Limits on opening one (2)

♠ AKJ8652

♥ AKQJ

♦ 4

♣ 2

▶ 1♠ or 2♣?

▶ 2♣ – 2♦

2♠ – 3♠

4NT...

# Limits on opening one (3)

♠ AJ9762

♥ A

♦ AK8

♣ A104

▶ 1♠ or 2♣?

▶ 2♣ – 2♦

2♠ – 3♠

??

♠ 854

♥ K983

♦ 53

♣ KQ92

▶ How good is slam?

▶ About 57% so worth bidding.

# Limits Summary

- ▶ A 2♣ opener is not defined by “23 points” – that’s only the balanced types
- ▶ Don’t open borderline complex hands 2♣:
  - Three-suiters
  - Two-suiters
  - Hands with a weak main suit
  - Strong minor or short spades
- ▶ Be wary when vulnerability suggests opponents might pre-empt
- ▶ Don’t play two strong artificial openings

Who is this man?



# The Rules

- ▶ Rule 5: Never pass a forcing bid
- ▶ Even if it works out well – it will erode partner's confidence and anyway, he will hate you for being 'right'.
- ▶ It is not your fault you have a bad hand – partner thought that a risk worth taking – and anyway, how can you be sure it's bad?
- ▶ The most important thing to recognise is whether the last call was forcing or not. All partnership methods must make this clear.

# Rule Five

- ▶ Why play more sequences as forcing – either **one-round forces** or **game-forces**?
- ▶ It relaxes auctions – the big money is in getting to the right game and slam. Knowing that the auction will not suddenly stop provides time to describe multiple features.
- ▶ But the less experienced fear the force...



# What is Forcing?

- ▶ Opener's no-trump rebids, even with a jump, are non-forcing.
  - $1\clubsuit - 1\heartsuit$ ; 2NT : whether that is 18-19 or 17-18, responder can pass
  - $1\heartsuit - 2\clubsuit$ ; 2NT : 'old school' 15-16 can be passed but as responder promises 9+ HCP, almost never does.
  - But... **If you have agreed** that after a two-over-one 2NT is forcing, Rule Five applies!
- ▶ Opener's 'old' suit rebids, even those with a jump, are non-forcing. That goes for both opener's and responder's first-bid suits.
- ▶ Opener bids a new suit:
  - That allows return to the first-bid suit at the 2-level,  $1\diamond - 1\spadesuit$ ;  $2\clubsuit$  or  $1\spadesuit - 1NT$ ;  $2\heartsuit$ , these are **simple rebids** and are non-forcing.
  - That force partner to the 3-level with a jump,  $1\diamond - 1\spadesuit$ ;  $3\clubsuit$  or  $1\spadesuit - 1NT$ ;  $3\heartsuit$ , these are **jump-shift rebids** and are **game forcing**.
  - That force partner to the 3-level without a jump,  $1\diamond - 1\spadesuit$ ;  $2\heartsuit$  or  $1\heartsuit - 1NT$ ;  $2\spadesuit$ , these are **reverse rebids** and are **forcing for one round**.

# Yellow Slide

- ▶ Somewhere they play...
- ▶ 1-major – 2-minor as game-forcing
- ▶ ... and, unable to bid at the 2-level with 9/10 HCP, the 1NT response carries a lot of weight. So much so that...
- ▶ 1-major – 1NT is also forcing

# Levels of 'strong'

23	<b>Very Good</b>
22	
21	
20	
19	
18	<b>Good</b>
17	
16	
15	<b>Standard</b>
14	
13	
12	
11	

# Rebids that show strength

- ▶ **Balanced**
  - Rebid in no-trumps
  - Consider 1NT = 15-17, 2NT = 18-19 and after a two-level response, 2NT = 15+.
- ▶ **Single-suited**
  - Jump in opened suit – or improvise
- ▶ **Two- and three-suited**
  - Bid another suit...
- ▶ **Super-fit**
  - Jump support, splinters and hand-type raises – some other time perhaps?

# Rebids that show strength (2)

- ▶ All those deny responder a return to opener's first-bid suit at the 2-level.
  - 1♥ – 1♠; 2NT – the minimum level in hearts is 3♥
  - 1♦ – 1♥; 2♠ – the minimum level in diamonds is 3♦
  - 1♠ – 1NT; 3♠ – obviously...
  - 1♦ – 1♥; 2♥ – but here the fit means we can stop
  - 1♣ – 1♠; 3♠ – extras as we've reached the 3-level
  - 1♦ – 1♠; 2♥ – no jump but critically, preference is 3♦
- ▶ In the modern teaching parlance there is a 'barrier' at two-first-bid suit; bidding above that without a fit shows extra strength.

# Balanced

♠ AJ6  
♥ AKJ62  
♦ 65  
♣ KQ10

▶ 1♥ - 1♠  
??

▶ 2NT

♠ AQ  
♥ A6  
♦ AKJ65  
♣ 10952

▶ 1♦ - 1♥  
??

▶ 2NT

♠ Q3  
♥ AJ  
♦ AK9  
♣ K97632

▶ 1♣ - 1♠  
??

▶ 2NT

# Balanced Summary

- ▶ Choose a no-trump rebid appropriate to your point-count when:
  - You are balanced! Don't worry about doubletons
  - The alternative would be to rebid a poor suit and your honours are in short suits
  - The alternative would be to jump in a poor suit – and your honours are in short suits
- ▶ But avoid bidding no-trumps on shapely hands – for example with a singleton in partner's suit.

# Single-suited

♠ J6  
♥ AKJ1062  
♦ 65  
♣ AQ10

▶ 1♥ - 1♠  
??

▶ 3♥

♠ A  
♥ A6  
♦ KQJ9532  
♣ 765

▶ 1♦ - 1♥  
??

▶ 3♦

♠ 3  
♥ J6  
♦ AK9873  
♣ AK32

▶ 1♦ - 1♠  
??

▶ 2♣



# Single-suited (2)

♠ J6

♥ AKJ1062

♦ 65

♣ AQ10

▶ 1♥ - 2♦

??

▶ 3♥

♠ AQ10

♥ 6

♦ AKJ1062

♣ Q65

▶ 1♦ - 1♠

??

▶ ??

♠ 4

♥ AKJ1085

♦ KQ6

♣ AJ10

▶ 1♥ - 1♠

??

▶ 3♣

# Single-suited (3)

♠ AKQJ9543

♥ AQ3

♦ 102

♣ ---

► P (P) ??

► 2♣ 16

1♠ 6

4♠ 3

♠ K7

♥ J

♦ K5

♣ AKQ98532

► 1♣ - 1♠

??

► 2♦ 16

3♣ 7

3NT 5

♠ A

♥ QJ3

♦ AK8

♣ KJ9865

► 1♣ - 1♦

??

► 1♥ 7

3♣ 5

3♦ 5

2♥ 5

2NT 4

# Single-suited (4)

♠ Q43

♥ 9

♦ K82

♣ AKJ632

▶ 1♣ - 1♠

??

▶ 2♠ 14

2♣ 12

♠ K8

♥ KQJ1082

♦ AQ3

♣ K6

▶ 1♥ - 1♠

??

▶ 2NT 8

3NT 6

4♥ 5

3♥ 3

3♦ 2

3♣ 1

♠ J1073

♥ A7

♦ J85

♣ AK86

▶ 1♦ - 1♠

3♦ - ??

▶ 4♦ 11

6♦ 5

3NT 5

4NT 3

4♣ 2

# Single-suited Summary

- ▶ The jump-rebid of opener's suit shows at least six cards and 'about' 16 HCP.
  - Devalue unsupported queen and jacks
  - Value minor honours in the main suit and extra length.
  - Value partial fits with partner – but don't suppress 4-card support.
- ▶ But... the jump-rebid is non-forcing and limited on the upside: to about a 'bad 18' HCP.
  - Find a forcing bid if you are too strong.
  - With a super suit and aces and/or ace-king combinations outside, consider opening 2♣

# Opener's Simple Rebid

- ▶ A simple new-suit rebid is one that allows responder to give preference back to opener's first bid suit at the 2-level.
  - After a 1-level response it is non-forcing
  - After a 2-level response – it's controversial...
    - ▶ Modern treatments are that it opener expects another bid, that is, it is **forcing for one round**
    - ▶ New players are often taught that  $1\heartsuit - 2\clubsuit; 2\diamond$  can be passed, just like  $1\heartsuit - 1\spadesuit; 2\diamond$ .
    - ▶ ...The EBU course – which we teach – is silent on the matter.

# Opener's Simple Rebid (2)

- ▶ With a simple rebid available, these are the options:
  - A. Make the simple rebid – which is non-forcing after a one-over-one – but is wide range.
  - B. Make a jump-shift rebid which is game forcing.
  - C. There is no third way...
- ▶ For example after 1♥ – 1♠; with clubs opener can bid,
  - 2♣ – and responder can pass
  - 3♣ – and the partnership **must play in game**

# New-suit Rebid Strengths

23	<b>Jump in New Suit</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
22		
21		
20		
19		
18	<b>Simple New-Suit Rebid</b>	<b>Good</b>
17		
16		
15		<b>Standard</b>
14		
13		
12		
11		

# Opener bids a new suit

♠ J6  
♥ AK1062  
♦ 65  
♣ AQ103

▶ 1♥ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♣

♠ 10864  
♥ A6  
♦ KQJ95  
♣ Q5

▶ 1♦ – 1♥  
??

▶ 1♠

♠ 3  
♥ A  
♦ AJ9873  
♣ KQJ87

▶ 1♦ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♣



# Opener bids a new suit (2)

♠ J6  
♥ AK1062  
♦ K4  
♣ AQ103

▶ 1♥ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♣

♠ J942  
♥ ---  
♦ AKQ  
♣ AKJ973

▶ 1♣ – 1♥  
??

▶ 1♠

♠ KJ7  
♥ K  
♦ AKQ73  
♣ K632

▶ 1♦ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♣

# Opener bids a new suit (3)

♠ J  
♥ AK1062  
♦ AK4  
♣ AQ103

▶ 1♥ – 1♠  
??

▶ 3♣

♠ AKJ94  
♥ 4  
♦ 6  
♣ AKJ973

▶ 1♣ – 1♥  
??

▶ 2♠

♠ AKQ87  
♥ KQ1064  
♦ K6  
♣ 2

▶ 1♠ – 1NT  
??

▶ 3♥

# New-suit Summary

- ▶ The jump-shift rebid – a new suit bid with a jump – is game forcing and many of the caveats already mentioned apply:
  - Don't bid bad suits on good hands.
  - Don't stretch holding honours in short suits.
  - Don't stretch when short in partner's suit.
  - If in doubt, stay low – you very often get another chance.
- ▶ But a good hand is a good hand:
  - Do upgrade with great suits and partial fits with partner.
  - When you hold an unbid 5-card major – especially at teams.
- ▶ I like to treat a jump-shift rebid as “I thought about opening 2♣” type of hand.

# The Reverse

- ▶ A reverse is a new-suit rebid that forces responder to the 3-level to give preference to opener's first suit.
- ▶ That is, a non-fit bid above the barrier of 2-opener-suit.
- ▶ Why does it require extra values?
  - The partnership cannot keep bidding without a fit and without sufficient high cards.
  - Arriving in 2NT with 11 HCP opposite 6 isn't going to score well.
  - After  $1\spadesuit - 1\heartsuit$ ;  $2\heartsuit - 3\spadesuit$  isn't going to play well with only 17 HCP and seven or eight trumps.
- ▶ Opener's reverse is a **one-round force**. It promises more cards in the first-bid suit.

# Reverse Strengths

23	<b>Jump in New Suit</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Reverse: force to 3-level or 2NT</b>
22			
21			
20			
19			
18	<b>Simple New-Suit Rebid</b>	<b>Good</b>	
17			
16		<b>Standard</b>	
15			
14			
13			
12			
11			

# Opener's reverse

♠ J6  
♥ AK102  
♦ 65  
♣ AQ1063

▶ 1♣ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♣

♠ K6  
♥ A10 82  
♦ KJ954  
♣ Q5

▶ 1♦ – 1♠  
??

▶ Rewind!

♠ 3  
♥ 5  
♦ AJ987  
♣ KQJ873

▶ 1♣ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♣

# Opener's reverse (2)

♠ K6  
♥ AKQ6  
♦ 65  
♣ AQ1063

▶ 1♣ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♥

♠ K6  
♥ KQ864  
♦ ---  
♣ AK9875

▶ 1♣ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♥

♠ 3  
♥ A  
♦ AJ987  
♣ KQJ873

▶ 1♣ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♦

# Opener's reverse (3)

♠ K96  
♥ K1076  
♦ 6  
♣ AQ1063

▶ 1♣ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♠

♠ KQ6  
♥ AQ6  
♦ 7  
♣ AK9875

▶ 1♣ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♥

♠ A  
♥ 72  
♦ KJ9  
♣ AKQJ873

▶ 1♣ – 1♠  
??

▶ 2♦



# The Reverse Quiz

1. 1♣ - 1♠ 2♦	✓	2. 1♣ - 1♦ 1♠	✗	3. 1♣ - 2♦ 2♠	✗
4. 1♣ - 1NT 2♦	✓	5. 1♦ - 1♥ 3♣	✗	6. 1♥ - 2♦ 3♣	✓
7. 1♣ - 1♦ 2♦	?	8. 1♥ - 1NT 2♠	✓	9. 1♥ - 2♣ 2♠	✓
10. 1♣ (1♥) 2♦ (P) 2♠	✗	11. 1♣ (1♥) 1♠ (P) 2♦	✓	12. 1♣ (1♥) X (P) 2♦	✓
13. 1♣ (1♥) X (P) 1♠	✗	14. 1♦ (2♣) X (P) 2♥	✗	15. 1♥ (P) P (2♦) 2♠	✓

# Bidding after a Reverse

- ▶ Under 'No System' responder's options are:
  - Any already-bid suit is non-forcing ( $1\clubsuit - 1\spadesuit$ ;  $2\diamond - 3\clubsuit$ ; opener will pass without extra extras)
  - 2NT is non-forcing, opener will pass with minimums, that is 16-17 HCP.
  - Jump support to 4-minor is forcing ( $1\clubsuit - 1\spadesuit$ ;  $2\diamond - 4\clubsuit$ ; opener can control-bid etc. if slam is possible).
  - Games are murky: some extra values but not encouraging slam.
  - The unbid (fourth) suit is the only force available for hands with no clear direction – that includes hands too strong for a direct 4-major.

# Bidding after a Reverse

► 'No System': let's consider 1♦ – 1♠; 2♥

- 2♠ = Non-forcing, five-plus spades 5-8 HCP, no fit for hearts (<4♥) and no fit for clubs (<3♣).
- 2NT = Non-forcing, 5-8 HCP, no heart fit (may have diamonds), club stop.
- 3♣\* = Fourth suit. No clear direction but strong enough to play in game
- 3♦ = 3+ diamonds, minimum values.
- 3♥ = 4+ hearts, minimum values. Because a major-fit has been discovered this will be quite limited, say only 5-7 HCP, otherwise responder should take a chance on game.
- 3♠ = Invitational and non-forcing, usually six good spades.
- 3NT = Natural, 9-14 HCP, no heart fit.
- 4♣ = Undefined.
- 4♦ = Strong diamond support.
- 4♥ = Natural, game only, stronger hands have to first force with 3♣\*.

# Bidding after a Reverse (2)

- ▶ Under 'No Conventions' responder's options are as 'No System' but:
  - A raise of opener's second suit is forcing.
  - Otherwise everything is the same.
- ▶ This makes a lot of sense:
  - The single raise to play at the 3-level had such a thin range that you might never make one.
  - Because opener's second suit is often a major responder strives to bid game even with support for the first-bid suit. Inhibiting the leap to 4-major creates more space to for opener to describe an off-centre shape.
- ▶ This is not new, it's been around since the 1950s

# Bidding after a Reverse (3)

- ▶ Under 'Blackout' responder's options are conventionally enhanced:
  - Responder has a 'weak signal', the cheaper of 2NT and the fourth suit. He uses that to deny values and sign-off in either of opener's suits.
  - A raise of opener's second suit is forcing and shows values (otherwise responder goes via the weak-signal).
  - Preference for opener's first suit is forcing and shows values (otherwise responder goes via the weak-signal).
  - Responder's rebid of his major at the 2-level is a one-round force
- ▶ Bundling all the weak hands into one option allows space to pass critical information about game and slam.

# Blackout

► Let's consider 1♦ – 1♠; 2♥

- 2♠ = Forcing, five-plus spades, possibly to sign-off in spades but with extras responder should support first if he can and bid spades later.
- 2NT\* = Artificial, aimed at signing off with a weak hand, opener is expected to bid 3♣ – responder with 6+clubs, might want to play there!
- 3♣\* = Artificial game-force, no club stop, typically 4♠-3♥-2♦-4♣.
- 3♦ = Natural game-force, may have 5♠.
- 3♥ = Natural game-force, 4+♥/5♠.
- 3♠ = Natural game-force, a one-loser suit at worst.
- 3NT = Natural, 11-13. Weaker NT hands go via 2NT.
- 4♣ = Splinter for hearts.
- 4♦ = 'Picture' raise, e.g. ♠AKxxx ♥xx ♦Qxxx ♣xx.
- 4♥ = 'Picture' raise, e.g. ♠AKxxx ♥KJxx ♦xx ♣xx.
- 4♠ = Solid 6+ spades, no club control
- 4NT = Key-card for hearts

# Key Points

1. Don't just count points: whether it's assessing if you will open 2♣ or force to game by another call, suit-quality, controls and playing-strength are more important.
2. Go slow with complex hands where two or more strains are possible.
3. Don't bid bad suits on good hands.
4. For your regular partnership ensure you have agreements about reverses. Go on, give Blackout a try.

# Credits

- ▶ For both this presentation and my own partnership agreements I have followed Eric Kokish on 'Blackout' (he doesn't actually call it that). A copy of his 2008 weak no-trump system with Beverly Kraft is available from several websites – search online.
- ▶ The later examples in the 'Single-suited Quiz', those with votes received from a bidding panel, came from the world's leading bridge magazine (in print, at least), *The Bridge World*.
- ▶ The picture of Leroy Jethro Gibbs used in genuine admiration of the character and the NCIS series.