

Responding to Partner's Weak-Two Opening Bid

What is the Purpose of Responding to Partner's Preempt?

- To extend the preempt.
 - You feel the opponents have a game or slam and you want to get in their way.
 - Basically, you apply the *Law of Total Tricks*.
- OR, you have a strong hand and are interested in game or even slam.
- Without one of these purposes, you will not enter the auction.

Use the Law of Total Tricks

- When you have a fit with partner and fewer than game-going points, you can safely bid to the level of your total number of trumps.
- The law is not perfect.
- If you are vulnerable and opponents are not vulnerable, be a bit cautious.

The Rule of 17

- The Rule of 17 is another guideline for Responding to partner's weak two opening bid.
- If your hcps and the number of cards in partner opening suit equal 17, you can try for game.
- You usually try for game by bidding 2nt, to see if partner has a minimum or maximum weak-two bid.

To Extend the Preempt, Use the Law

Example 1

north east south west

2♦ pass 4♦

South's hand

♠ Q 4 2

♥ 9 5 3 2

♦ Q 7 5 6 (8 points)

♣ A 3

- Despite east's pass, the opponents clearly have game points and probably a major suit fit.
- Use the law to make it difficult for them to find their best contract.

To Extend the Preempt, Use the Law

Example 2

north east south west

2♥ dble 3♥

South's hand

♠ 8 4 2

♥ A 5 3

♦ J 9 7 5 6 (5 points)

♣ 5 3

- You have 9 hearts between you and partner.
- You can bid to the 9 trick level.
- This is not an invitation.
- Partner will pass no matter what the opponents do.

To Extend the Preempt, Use the Law

Example 3

north east south west

2♥ dble 4♥

South's hand

♠ 8 4 2

♥ A 8 5 3

♦ J 9 7 5 6 (5 points)

♣ 5

- You have 10 hearts between you and partner.
- You can bid to the 10 trick level.
- Partner will pass no matter what the opponents do.

Making A Game Try

- When you have a good hand, you might make a game try.
- 13 to 15 points is not enough for a game try unless you have a strong fit and excellent distribution.
- When your side has game points, the law no longer applies.

First Consider this Hand Example 4

north east south west
2♥ pass pass

South's hand

♠ K J 10 2

♥ J 3

♦ A 6 5 (14 points)

♣ A J 7 4

- You have 14 points and a fit with partner.
- But very little chance for game.
- On a bad day 2♥ will be difficult.
- Does not make the rule of 17
- Best to pass.

First Consider this Hand Example 5

north east south west

2♥ pass 4♥

South's hand

♠ A K 10 2

♥ K 3

♦ A 6 5 (17 points)

♣ Q J 7 4

- You have 17 points and a fit with partner.
- With this hand a game is likely.
- When you have game points, the law is not a factor.
- From the bidding, opponents won't know this hand from a weak hand with long hearts.

With Invitational Values, Bid 2nt

- Invitational values, 14-16 points with a good fit (3 cards).
- Opener's rebid after two no trump.
 - With a minimum hand, 5 to 8 points, rebid your opening suit.
 - With 9 or 10 points
 - Bid an outside ace or king
 - With A, K, Q of your opening suit, bid 3nt.

With Invitational Values and a fit, Bid 2 nt Example 6

north east south west

2♥ pass 2nt

South's hand

♠ A K 2

♥ Q J 3

♦ 7 5 (14 points)

♣ A 10 9 7 4

- You will bid 4♥, unless partner shows a minimum hand.
- Makes the rule of 17
- Then you will pass 3♥.

We'll Look at the Opener's Hand After Responder Bids 2nt Example 7

north east south west
2♥ pass 2nt pass
3♣

- You will bid 3♣.
- This bid shows a max weak-two opener with a club feature.

North's hand

♠ 9 7 2

♥ K Q 9 8 4 3

♦ 7 5 (9 points)

♣ A 9

We'll Look at the Opener's Hand After Responder Bids 2nt Example 8

north east south west
2♥ pass 2nt pass
3♥

North's hand

♠ 9 7 2

♥ Q J 10 9 4 2

♦ 7 5 (7 points)

♣ A 9

- You will bid 3♥.
- You have a minimum weak-two opener.
- You do have an outside feature, but still a minimum hand.
- Don't encourage partner.

We'll Look at the Opener's Hand After Responder Bids 2nt Example 9

north east south west
2♥ pass 2nt pass
3♥

North's hand

♠ 9 7 2

♥ K Q J 10 8 4

♦ 7 5 (6 points)

♣ 9 3

- You will bid 3♥.
- You have a strong weak-two suit, but minimum points.
- Best to be cautious.

We'll Look at the Opener's Hand After Responder Bids 2nt Example 9

north east south west
2♥ pass 2nt pass
3nt

North's hand

♠ 9 7 2

♥ A K Q 10 8 4

♦ 7 5 (9 points)

♣ 9 3

- You will bid 3nt
- You have max points for your weak-two opening, but no outside feature.
- Show this to partner.

New Suit Bids by Responder are Forcing for One Round

- If you bid a new suit, in response to partner's weak-two opening, partner will.
 - Support your suit , with xxx or honor- doubleton.
 - Rebid the opening suit, without support for your suit.
- You hope to get to game, but....
- You must have a plan for the case when partner rebids the opening suit.

Imagine This Auction

north east south west

2♦ pass 2♥ pass

3♦ pass 3♥ dble

4♦ dble “Call 911”

- South had no plan for what he would do if his partner could not support his new suit.
- It looks like neither north or south has given much thought to what they are doing.

Deciding to Bid a New Suit Example 10

north east south west

2♦ pass pass

South's hand

♠ 7 5

♥ A K J 10 8 4

♦ 5 (12 points)

♣ A 10 9 3

- 12 points is not enough to try for game.
- You might think that hearts would be a better partscore.
- That would surely be true if partner can support hearts.
- If partner bids 3♦, you might be in trouble.

Deciding to Bid a New Suit Example 11

north east south west

2♦ pass pass

South's hand

♠ 7 5

♥ A K J 10 8 4

♦ Q 5 (14 points)

♣ A 10 9

- 14 points is not enough to try for game.
- You might think that hearts would be a better partscore.
- That would surely be true if partner can support hearts.
- If partner bids 3♦ you might still survive.

Deciding to Bid a New Suit Example 11

north east south west

2♠ pass 2nt

South's hand

♠ 10 5

♥ A K 4

♦ K 5 (16 points)

♣ A Q10 9 5 4

- Your hand is strong enough to give game a try.
- You could bid 3c, but that is not helpful...
- Bid 2nt.

Final Thoughts

- Remember 14 or 15 points alone is not enough for a game try.
- The rule of 17 applies, but use it with a bit of caution.
- Before bidding a new suit or two no trump after partner weak-two opening, be sure you have thought about all of partner's possible responses.
- A word about suit strength for a weak two opening.