

How to Deal With 5332 Hands after a 2/1 Auction

Once again we have a minimum set of auctions to consider:

1S-2C 1S-2D 1S-2H 1H-2C 1H-2D

Let's start out a couple of examples. Say the auction starts 1H-2C and you hold:

- A. ♠T62 ♥AKQ43 ♦543 ♣KJ
- B. ♠K52 ♥Q6543 ♦AQ3 ♣Q4
- C. ♠AK2 ♥65432 ♦543 ♣AQ

On each of these hands you are the same shape, 3532 and have 13 HCP. What would you like to rebid?

There are only 2 reasonable rebids, namely 2N and 2H. People who rebid 2N prioritize their shape, and people who rebid 2H like to prioritize right siding NT. The major proponent of rebidding 2 of your major was Mike Lawrence and the major proponent of rebidding 2N (at least locally) was Max Hardy.

Hardy would rebid 2N on all of these hands, whereas Lawrence would rebid 2N on B, but 2H on A and C.

The major benefit of the Hardy style is that 2H denies the 5332 shape, and so can be used to show 6+ cards in the major. The major benefit of the Lawrence style is that you get to play 3N from the right side more often.

The major detriment of the Hardy style is that you'll rebid 2N with hands like A where you really don't want to declare NT possibly 3N will go down when your partner's stopper gets led through on the opening lead.

The major detriment of the Lawrence style is that the 2M rebid gets lots of possible meanings and it's hard to work through them all.

Here's some examples:

♠AK432 ♥543 ♦53 ♣KQ2

Playing Hardy you would rebid 2N and then partner is likely to rebid 3N with

♠Q5 ♥K2 ♦AKQ642 ♣J54

3N will go down if the heart ace is offside and the opponents lead it, but would make most of the time if the hand with the heart K2 were declaring.

Playing Lawrence is all well and good if partner rebids 2N, but maybe the auction might proceed 1S-2D-2S-3D and then what do you rebid? Wrongside NT anyways? Bid hearts on 3 small? Rebid your spades a 3rd time?

Whatever you choose, partner is going to be confused about your hand pattern and is going to have to guess well to place the contract accurately.

An approach that seems to help with many of these issues is called the Schuler Shift. It says rebid 2N if you have 6 of your major and rebid 2M if you have only 5. That seems fair as you are much less likely to want to play 3N if you have a 6 card major and you have the room to rightside NT whenever you have 5.

There's of course more to this agreement and I encourage you to look it up online if you choose to play it. The biggest thing is as always to have an agreement.

So the 3 options are:

1. Lawrence style - Rebidding 2M with 5332 hands that have a problem in an unbid suit, rebid 2N if you have at least a partial stopper in both
2. Hardy style - rebidding 2N with all 5332 hands
3. Schuler Shift - rebid 2M with all 5332 hands and rebid 2N with 6+ in your major