

REVERSE BIDDING



with **Gary Brown**

Sunday October 14, 2018

12.45pm for a 1.00pm Start

*A **reverse**, in the card game contract **bridge**, is a **bidding** sequence designed to show additional strength without the need to make a jump **bid**; specifically, two suits are **bid** in the **reverse** order to that expected by the basic **bidding** system.*



"Oh, please, Harold ... all the ladies in my bridge club have pistols."

The Reverse Bid at the Two Level

Gary Brown's Bridge Archives: L 23A
 Degree of Difficulty: Intermediate
 Setting: 1 Hour Lecture

A '**Reverse Bid**' is the backbone of the standard bidding structure. Either opener or responder can make a reverse bid. A **reverse bid** is always the second bid made by either Opener or Responder. see Flash Card #26 at: www.ozbridgetravel.com.au

Opener's Reverse

To '**reverse**' the bidding, opener must have a hand valued at 17+ points, he must be longer in the first suit then he is in the second suit and his bid is forcing for one round.

Responder's Reverse

To '**reverse**' the bidding, responder needs a hand valued at 13+ points, he must be longer in the first suit then he is in the second suit and his bid is forcing to game.

The word '**reverse**' is by definition, relative to something else. Reverse to what? Consider the two following two auctions.

North	South	*North	South
1♥	1♠	1♦	1♠
2♦		2♥	

N has bid both red suits in the two sample auctions. Of the two suits, hearts is higher ranking than diamonds. Note how in the

second auction **N** reversed the way he introduced the two suits. In the first auction he bid hearts and then diamonds, where as in the second he bid diamonds and then hearts. In the second auction the 2♥ bid is called a '**Reverse Bid**'.

The thing to note is that in the first auction **S** has not denied holding diamonds. (**S** did not bypass diamonds in order to bid 1♠). However, in the second auction, **S** did bypass hearts in order to bid 1♠. If your second suit is a suit that your partner has by passed in the auction, you are making a '**Reverse Bid**'. Think about it: if you show 4 cards in a suit that your partner has denied, your side probably does not have a fit in that suit, so the auction is forced and if the auction is forced you had better have a stronger than normal hand.

Eg.

North	South
1♣	1♠



Note how **S** has bypassed both diamonds and hearts in order to bid 1♠. **S** has denied (temporarily) holding 4 diamonds or 4 hearts. Hence, if **N** now bids 2♦ or 2♥, a suit his partner denied, **N** has made a '**Reverse Bid**' and must have the requirements to do so.

Note: Another way to identify a '**Reverse Bid**' is; if your second bid suit (at the two level) is higher ranking than your first bid suit you have reversed. In the above *example, note that in the second auction, **N**'s second bid suit is higher ranking than his first bid suit.

Which of the following auctions is a **reverse** auction?

1) <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">North</td> <td style="width: 50%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♣</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	North	South	1♦	1♠	2♣		2) <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">North</td> <td style="width: 50%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♣</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	North	South	1♣	1♥	2♦		3) <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">North</td> <td style="width: 50%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">South</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♠</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	North	South	1♥	1NT	2♠	
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- 1) N's second bid suit in clubs is not a suit that S has bypassed in the auction. N shows diamonds and clubs and 13-16ish points.
- 2) N's second bid of 2♦ is a 'Reverse Bid'. S has bypassed diamonds in order to bid 1♥, so the 2♦ bid by N shows 17+ points and is longer in clubs than in diamonds.
- 3) The 2♠ bid is a "Reverse Bid". S responded 1NT to the 1♥ opening bid, denying a 4 card spade suit. Hence, when N bids a suit (spades) that his partner has denied, N has 'reversed' and shows 17+ points with longer hearts than spades.
- 4) This is an example of a 'Reverse Bid' by responder. Over 2♣, N has bypassed hearts and spades (in this case not necessarily denying the suits) and S has 'reversed', his second bid suit being higher ranking than his first bid suit. S promises 13+ points, longer clubs than spades and is forcing to game.
- 5) This is not a 'reverse' auction. N's second bid suit is not a suit his partner has bypassed in the auction. N has 13 -16 points with both minors.
- 6) Another example of a 'Reverse Bid' by responder. When N bid 1NT he denied holding 4 spades. Hence, when S bid 2♠, a suit his partner has denied holding, S has reversed the auction. S shows 13+ points with longer hearts than spades and is forcing to game.

Did You Know?

That you can 'reverse' at the three level too? The requirements are similar as a 'Reverse Bid' at the two level. If opener bids a new suit at the three level (per force) opener has to have 17+ points to do so, but does not have to be longer in the first suit nor will it be a higher ranking suit.

North	South
1♥	2♦
3♣	

To introduce clubs N has to go to the 3 level. Note clubs is a suit S has bypassed. N shows 17+ but not necessarily longer in the hearts.

Simple Math

How Come?

- Opener Needs 17+ Pts to reverse, and responder only needs 13+ to reverse.

Responder only needs 13 points to **reverse** because they have a partner that has opened and thus has 13 points as well. Opener needs 17+ points to 'reverse' because his partner might have as little as 6 points for their response. Hence, opener needs a bit more strength to force the auction.

Now you have an idea of what it takes for opener or responder to make a **Reverse Bid** at the two level.

Opener's Requirements:

1. 17+ points.
2. Must be longer in the first suit than in the second suit.
3. Second suit is higher ranking than the first suit.
4. Forcing for one round. (Responder cannot pass)

Responder's Requirements:

1. 13+ points.
2. Must be longer in the first suit than in the second suit.
3. Second suit is higher ranking than the first suit.
4. Forcing to game.

Responding to Opener's Reverse:

Responder must bid again when opener **reverses**. Below is a list of responses. Research reveals that there are many variations as to the meanings of responders second bid after opener reverses. Hence the ones I am suggesting seem to be fairly widely accepted and played, but not definitive. Using the following auction lets examine responder's forced response to a **reverse bid** by opener.

North	South
1♦	1♠
2♥	?

1. 3♦/3♥ A single raise one of opener's suit shows preference. 6-8 pts
2. 2♠ Rebid of your own suit suggests 6 cards, (may be only 5). 6-8 pts
3. 2NT Shows weakness with a stopper in the unbid suit, clubs. 6-8 pts
It should be noted that 2NT can be used as Lebensohl over a reverse bid. Lebensohl makes it easier to stop below game when there is no game.
4. 3♣ Bidding the fourth suit is natural and game going. 9+ pts
5. 4♦/4♥ Jump raise one of opener's suit shows enough strength to be in game. The jump raise in diamonds actually shows interest in slam.
6. 3♠ A jump rebid in your own suit, shows 6+ cards and game values. 9+ pts
7. 3NT A jump to 3NT shows games values opposite the reverse bid with stopper(s) in the unbid suit. 9-12 pts

In the Heat of Action:

♠43 ♥AKJ5 ♦AKJ1084 ♣2 You open this hand 1♦, partner responds 1♠ and you **reverse** into 2♥. You show 17+ pts, longer diamonds than hearts and force responder to come up with one more bid. If responder bids 2NT or 2♠ or 3♣ you will rebid your diamonds to show your 6-4 shape. If responder bids 3♥ you will bid 4♥.

♠A ♥85 ♦KJ74 ♣AKQ982 You open 1♣ and partner responds with 1♠. With 17+ points and longer clubs than diamonds, you **reverse** into 2♦.

♠43 ♥AQJ5 ♦AJ1094 ♣AQ You open the bidding with 1♦ and partner responds 1♠. You have all the requirements to **reverse** into 2♥. However, I think that a jump rebid of 2NT showing 18-19 with a balanced type hand is more appropriate. A lead of either unbid suit (hearts or clubs) comes right into the jaws of your tenace holdings. Interchange the A♣ and the 4♠ giving you this hand: ♠A3 ♥AQJ5 ♦AJ1094 ♣Q4 and I would go with the **reverse** into 2♥ now.

♠KJ8743 ♥A5 ♦42 ♣K32 This time you are responder and partner has opened 1♦, you responded 1♠ and opener **reversed** into 2♥. There is one thing you know for sure; you want to be in game opposite a hand that made a **reverse** bid. Jump to 3♠ to show your length and game going strength.

♠Q874 ♥95 ♦1094 ♣A1094 Again you are the responder and the auction is: 1♦ - 1♠ - 2♥. You are forced to bid again and should bid 2NT. 2NT shows a weak hand (6-8 pts) and a stopper in the unbid suit, clubs. **Reverse** auctions are difficult in that it is sometimes hard to put the brakes on and stop below game. However, you do have a number of weak responses to choose from, in response to a **reverse**. 2NT is one such bid.

♠AQ43 ♥J95 ♦AJ974 ♣2 Partner (not you) opened 1♦. You responded 1♠ and partner reversed into 2♥. Wow. You know partner has 5+ diamonds and 17+ points. You must be a wee bit excited. Jump raise opener's first suit with a bid of 4♦. This sets the trump suit, says you definitely want to be in game and shows slam interest. Your singleton club may gold dust.

Backbone of Standard American

I have always considered **Reverse Bids** to be the backbone of Standard Bidding methods. It empowers you with the ability to not only show strength, but to show distribution as well. What a lovely, all purpose, two edged weapon it is. So often a bidding sequence has ambiguities as to whether or not it is forcing. One player meant a bid as forcing but his partner interpreted it as invitational. No such problems with a **reverse** bid. A '**Reverse Bid**' is 100% forcing. Partner must bid at least one more time.

Reverse Bidding Quiz

On the first four hands you are the opener. You opened the bidding with 1♦ and your partner responded 1♠. What is your second bid?

♠72
♥AQ92
♦AJ652
♣K3

♠A3
♥KJ94
♦AQ74
♣KJ2

♠32
♥AKJ2
♦AQJ982
♣A

♠KJ93
♥AQJ3
♦KQ108
♣4

On the next four hands you are the responder. Your partner opened 1♦, you responded 2♣ and partner re-bid 2♦. What is your next bid?

♠AK97
♥94
♦74
♣KQJ107

♠K73
♥A63
♦93
♣A9542

♠832
♥Q72
♦2
♣AKJ1093

♠98
♥AQJ8
♦109
♣KQ962

On the next four hands you are the responder. Partner opens 1♣, you respond 1♠ and partner **reverses** into 2♦. What is your next bid?

♠AQ1096
♥943
♦982
♣76

♠QJ93
♥K96
♦832
♣832

♠K963
♥972
♦732
♣K98

♠10983
♥Q43
♦9876
♣A2

On the next four hands you are the responder. Partner opens 1♦, you respond 1♠ and partner **reverses** into 2♥. What is your next bid?

♠1098762
♥94
♦4
♣AQ87

♠K9873
♥Q1073
♦A9
♣72

♠AKJ32
♥K43
♦KJ72
♣2

♠J9863
♥K874
♦109
♣Q2
