



Some partnerships use the Count Signal when partner is leading. My advice is not to do so, preferring 'Attitude.' Sometimes it can be vital to tell partner how many cards you hold in a suit, enabling him to work out how many cards declarer holds. With an even number of cards, play high; with an odd number of cards, play low. This is called the Count Signal and should be used when declarer is leading (and you judge that the count is important to partner).

The clearest situation where a Count Signal will be vital to partner is when declarer is forcing out partner's high card in a long suit in dummy that doesn't have a side entry. Compare Deals A and B.

<p>Deal A</p> <p>♠ J10653 ♥ J5 ♦ 94 ♣ QJ43</p> <p><u>S</u> <u>N</u> 2NT 3NT</p> <p>Contract: 3NT Lead: ♠5</p>		<p>♠ 97 ♥ 872 ♦ KJ1052 ♣ 975</p> <p>♠ K82 ♥ Q1096 ♦ A73 ♣ 862</p> <p>♠ AQ4 ♥ AK43 ♦ Q86 ♣ AK10</p>	<p>Deal B</p> <p>♠ J10653 ♥ J5 ♦ 984 ♣ QJ4</p> <p><u>S</u> <u>N</u> 2NT 3NT</p> <p>Contract: 3NT Lead: ♠5</p>		<p>♠ 97 ♥ 872 ♦ KJ1052 ♣ 975</p> <p>♠ K82 ♥ Q1096 ♦ A73 ♣ 862</p> <p>♠ AQ4 ♥ AK43 ♦ Q6 ♣ AK103</p>
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West leads ♠5 vs 3NT to ♠K, declarer winning ♠A and leading ♦Q. Which card should West play?

It should be clear to West that declarer is forcing out ♦A and that East needs to know when to win. The principle is for East to win on declarer's last card, so that declarer will not have a way to reach dummy's other diamonds. The only way for East to know how many diamonds declarer has is for West to show him how many diamonds he holds.

On (A) West plays ♦9, high - even. East can now work out that declarer has one or three diamonds (clearly three - he opened 2NT). So East ducks ♦Q and the ♦6 to the ♦10 that follows. Dummy's diamonds now dead, declarer will switch tacks, playing ♥AK and a ♥3, hoping for a 3-3 split.

It is not to be, and declarer winds up one trick short, If East had won ♦A on either the first or second rounds, declarer would have romped home.

On (B) West signals with ♦4, low-odd. This tells East that declarer has two or four diamonds (two where it matters). He lets ♦Q win but when declarer leads the ♦6 to the ♦10, he wins ♦A. He returns the ♠8, ducked by declarer and won by the ♠10, West returning the ♠6 to the ♠Q. It's no good: all declarer can do is lead out ♣AK and ♣3 (preferring ♣'s over ♥'s because of ♣109), setting up ♣10. West cashes his two long ♠'s - down one. Note that if East had mistakenly ducked a second diamond, declarer would have played ♣AK3 and set up a ninth trick via ♣10. Game made!

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Note from Barbara: In England, the 2NT opening bid shows a higher range than ours.

Andrew owns a large bridge club in London and he was awarded an O.B.E. (Order of the British Empire) a couple of years ago by the Queen. This was for his excellent work for Charities.

COMMON ERRORS TO AVOID IN BIDDING & PLAY

by Barbara Seagram

Bridge is a game of mistakes. Even experts make mistakes. It is simply a question of how many mistakes you make. Those who make the fewest consistently win. But take heart...when you make a mistake and it is pointed out to you, you often remember not to repeat that mistake.

A good player does not necessarily have a higher I.Q. He/she just knows the common pitfalls and avoids them. It is okay to make mistakes in bridge. With each one, you grow and you always learn from these errors. Try not to make the same ones again. In some things in life, mistakes do matter.

An air traffic controller had better not make any; in bridge, they are a constant part of the game. It is impossible to be perfect. When you add a new convention to your repertoire, you will frequently get it wrong the first few times you try it. By the seventh attempt, you should have it down pat!

It is not the handling of difficult hands that makes the winning player. There aren't enough of them. It is the ability to avoid messing up the easy ones.
Alan Sontag

PLAYING TOO FAST

Slow down. Yes, duplicate bridge is a timed event but take the time to make a plan at the start of the hand and stop playing instinctively and by rote. Stop and think. As a declarer, count your winners in NT contracts and your losers in suit contracts. As a defender, calculate how many high card points that declarer and dummy have in the combined hands, then count your points and subtract that total from the number 40. I call it the **RULE OF 40!** There are 40 HCP in the deck. Your partner has the leftover points. If you know that partner can only have 5 points and she has already led a King, you know she has the King and Queen in that suit (by inference) and can have nothing more. ALL this thinking **MUST** be done at **TRICK ONE**.

CASHING TRICKS TOO EARLY ON IN THE GAME:

Aces were put on this earth to capture Kings and Queens. Kings were put on this earth to capture Queens and Jacks. Don't just lead out your Aces, unless you have also got the next-door neighbour King in that suit.

If dummy is on your left and has KJ72 and you have A63, plan that when declarer leads a small card from her hand towards that suit in the dummy that you will play low **smoothly** and not hesitate a long time. You are going to hope that declarer will play the Jack and that partner may be able to win the Queen.

Remember that if declarer has opened 1NT, she does have at least TWO cards in each suit so even if it is a trump suit contract, she cannot trump your Ace on round two of the suit.

TO PULL TRUMP OR NOT TO PULL TRUMP:

Sometimes you may fail to pull trump because your trumps are of poor quality. That should not make you nervous. If you have lots of good tricks (high cards) and lousy trumps, you simply have to draw those trumps, otherwise the opponents will ruff your good tricks in non-trump suits.

Sometimes you may pull too many trumps or draw trumps when you cannot afford to do so. If, for example, you as declarer have to ruff some losers in the dummy, then you will have to keep some trumps in dummy with which to trump the losers from your hand. You always gain tricks when you trump losers in the dummy. NOTE: Declarer always gains tricks when he trumps losers from his hand with dummy's trump. Trumping in declarer's hand gains you no tricks.

Also, sometimes you need to keep some trump in dummy as entries to the dummy.

BIDDING ERRORS:

Bidding is a language. Make sure you know what bids mean. 1S-2S. 2S says you have 6-9 points. If you make this same bid with 12 points, partner will be misled. This is false advertising. Know how to advertise accurately. MEMORIZE the bidding. There is simply no other way. NOTICE the opponents' bidding so you can use the clues to help you decide who has what.

CONVENTIONS: Too many people agree to play certain conventions and when the situation arises, they know the first part of the convention but that is only PAGE ONE of the convention. They do not know the follow-up.

e.g. 1S – 2NT. Most people play this as being Jacoby 2NT. A forcing raise in the major. There are 4 or 5 choices of subsequent rebids by the opener. You have to know these or don't play the convention.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OPENER'S REVERSE AND A JUMPSHIFT

By LARRY COHEN www.larryco.com

Even experienced players can get confused (or forget) when it comes to opener's jumpshifts and reverses. Opener's Jumpshift is Game Forcing (abbreviated GF from now on). That means a really big hand. Responder cannot pass and the partnership cannot stop below game. The range is roughly 18+ (maybe 19+) points (counting useful distribution).

Here are all of opener's possible jumpshifts into a new suit:

1♣-1♦-2♥

1♣-1♦-2♠

1♣-1♥-2♠

1♦-1♥-2♠

1♦-1♥-3♣

1♦-1♠-3♣

1♦-1NT-3♣

1♥-1♠-3♣ or 3♦

1♥-1NT-3♣ or 3♦

1♠-1NT-3♣ or 3♦ or 3♥

Any other jump by opener would not be a GF jumpshift. Here are the other possible (single) jumps opener can make (none of these are GF jumpshifts):

1♣-1♦-2NT (Natural + balanced, 18-19, not forcing)

1♣-1♦-3♣ (A jump rebid -- natural, invitational about 16-18 in playing strength)

1♣-1♦-3♦ (A jump raise -- Natural, 4-card support, invitational about 16-18 in playing strength)

1♦-1♥-2NT (Natural+balanced, 18-19, not forcing)

1♦-1♥-3♦ (Natural, 6+ diamonds, about 16-18 in playing strength)

1♦-1♥-3♥ (Natural, 4-card support, about 16-18 in playing strength)

1♦-1♠-2NT (Natural+balanced, 18-19, not forcing)

1♦-1♠-3♦ (Natural, 6+ diamonds, about 16-18 in playing strength)

1♦-1♠-3♥ (This is a "jump-reverse" which is a strange animal. There is no need to jump shift AND reverse)

1♦-1♠-3♠ (Natural, 4-card support, about 16-18 in playing strength)

1♥-1♠-2NT (Natural+balanced, 18-19, not forcing)

SUMMARY OF ABOVE

If opener jumps into a new suit, it is natural and GF. It is usually not a balanced hand (they would have jump rebid 2NT or opened 2NT). If opener jumps to 2NT it shows 18-19 balanced. If opener jumps in a previously bid suit (by either opener or responder) it shows a good hand (16-18), but is only invitational. Jump raises, jump rebids and jumps to 2NT are not GF. They are not even forcing at all. Though it is not a jump, I wish to point out here that if the response to any opening bid is 1NT and opener's rebid is 2NT, that shows 18-19 balanced (1 of any suit -1NT by responder-2NT by opener).

See next page for Reverses

REVERSES

Opener's reverse is *not* forcing to game. But, it is forcing for one round. Responder should not pass opener's reverse. The range is about 17-20 (counting playing strength). The gist of opener's reverse is:

Opener's second bid is (not a jump) in a higher ranking suit than his first-bid suit. We are concerned only with auctions where responder bid on the one-level. So, these are opener's possible reverses:

1♣-1♥-2♦

1♣-1♠-2♦ or 2♥

1♣-1NT-2♦ or 2♥ or 2♠

1♦-1♠-2♥

1♦-1NT-2♥ or 2♠

1♥-1NT-2♠

ED NOTE: In the auctions to the left, the opponents are not bidding at all. There is one response by responder and the next bid or bids are opener's rebids.

e.g. 1♣-1♥-2♦ Opener bid 1♣- Responder bid 1♥, opener now bid 2♦

IF YOU ARE PLAYING TWO OVER ONE: If responder responds on the two-level (without jumping) e.g. 1H-2C, you have to agree with partner as to whether reverses (e.g. 2S now by opener) still promise extra points. Alex and Barbara believe they should show extras but it is a partnership agreement. Discuss with your partner.

Rather than memorize the bidding sequences in this article, just know the definitions. Once you know that a reverse is 1X-1Y-2Z where Z is a higher-ranking suit than "X" you will recognize it.

Remember that a reverse is a strong bid, forcing, but not GF. **Occasionally, I hear (newer) students proudly state: "I don't play reverses." That's nice, but don't be proud. Like it or not, if you produce one of the auctions above, you have reversed! Try not to do it unless you have a strong hand!**

Barbara & Alex's note: A Reverse always shows 17 or more points including distribution and more of the first bid suit than the second.

Thus, if you have

54

AK76

AQ876

32

And you open 1D, if responder now bids 1S, you will now have to bid 2D next NOT 2H. BUT if you have a bit more such as adding the Diamond K instead of the Diamond 6, then you could now bid 2H instead of 2D on your rebid as opener.

THE KINGDOM OF BRIDGE

from Sylvia's Bridge Fairy Tales (the Sylvia that bridge columnists have written about for years!)

excerpted from an article in Sunshine Bridge News by unit 219 President: Jeri Edge

"Once upon a time in the Kingdom of Bridge, the Emperor noticed that there was an ever increasing din at his bridge games. Over time, the din grew so loud that the Emperor could not concentrate. So he called upon the Court Wizard for a solution. The Court Wizard said, 'Sire, if we had the payers use Bidding Boxes, it would cut down on the noise made by players bidding. It would also eliminate players being able to hear what was being bid at an adjoining table on boards they might be playing next.' The Emperor, much appreciating the Wizard's wisdom, rewarded him handsomely, and announced to his subjects that henceforth Bidding Boxes would be used at all bridge games held within the Kingdom.

Years passed, and once again the Emperor noticed a growing din at his bridge games. When it became unbearable, he called upon the Court Wizard for advice. After studying the situation, the Court Wizard reported to the Emperor. 'Sire, your subjects are aging. As they age, their hearing lessens, resulting in their talking louder and louder without realizing it. When partners try to converse at the same time their opponents are trying to converse, they end up

almost shouting at each other. Alas, in addition to the noise this causes, it also results in any discussions of a given hand after the play of the hand being heard at adjoining tables (if not further away). Other than issuing either hearing aids or muzzles to all the Kingdom's subjects – which lacks in practicality – I have only one suggestion. Ye must establish etiquette rules for thy subjects that deal with noise and post them throughout the Kingdom.' Thus, the following was posted throughout the Kingdom:

Hear Ye, Hear Ye: The Emperor of the Kingdom of Bridge Doth Proclaim That Henceforth

When ye partners and opponents wish to participate in separate conversations, one pair must removeth itself from the table. If thy partnership wisheth to hold a detailed bidding discussion, removeth thyselves to an area where thee will not intrude upon others.

Thou shalt not discuss hands at the table after play. If ye wisheth to discuss them, move away from the playing area. As Emperor, I understandeth my subjects' desires to aideth those with hearing afflictions. However thou shalt make every attempt to modulate thy voices. If ye are told ye are speaking too loudly, ye are. Because all others are speaking, does not mean that thee must."

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM MIKE LAWRENCE

Whatever you choose to bid, do so with an air of confidence. If you ooze uncertainty when you make a bid or an opening lead or during the play, your opponents will know when you are a happy bridge player and when you are in trouble. Be serene and keep your concerns from your opponents.

Saying things like: "I have never seen so many bad breaks in all my life" is just going to alert the opponents to your misery. Don't give it away. The opponents can find out after the hand that you were in trouble but it will be too late for them to profit from it.