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This series looks at suit opening bids, change of suit responses & minimum rebids. There is also an emphasis of giving preference. The play includes drawing trumps and ruffing on table. Some deals include play in a 4-4 fit. Part 2 of

2. Updated Spring 2015.	Contract: 2H
Y1 Blue #11 Opening bids & minimum rebids Part 2 SA	By: South
Date: 24/03/2016	Board #: 1
Dealer: North	Vulnerable: None
<a href="#">Play this hand online!</a>	

	North	
	♠ 3	
	♥ JT87	
	♦ KJ6	
	♣ QJ843	
West		East
♠ J984		♠ 762
♥ A32		♥ K4
♦ AT5		♦ 9732
♣ KT6		♣ A975
	South	
	♠ AKQT5	
	♥ Q965	
	♦ Q84	
	♣ 2	

**This set of six deals (part two of two) continues the theme of opening bids and rebids on minimum hands but focuses on the powerful and important idea of *giving preference*.**

**This is the essential means of attempting to kill the auction with a weak responding hand.**

Here, on Hand 1, you have to decide what to bid on the second round after a discouraging response.

West	North	East	South
-	P	P	1♠
P	1NT	P	2♥
P	P	P	

Lead: ♥ 2

### Bidding.

Here we have an obvious opening bid of 1♠ in third seat and partner responds 1NT. We have seen this response before in VuBridge and, no doubt, we will see it again. North is showing 6 to 9 points and something approaching a balanced hand.

We can easily deduce that the combined hands cannot be worth a game contract so we have to concentrate on finding the best part-score. Passing 1NT with a 5-4-3-1 pattern is a little unwise and it would be quite wrong to insist on Spades by rebidding 2♠.

In these cases we should show our second suit – always provided that we can allow partner to put us back to our first suit cheaply. Here it is right and proper to bid 2♥, offering North the choice between Hearts and Spades. If partner is indifferent to both suits he would at least have the decency to ***give preference*** by putting us back to 2♠.

Note that this preference bid would not raise the level of the auction to the three-level – an important consideration when we are thinking of bidding our second suit.

As it happens, Hearts is where partner wants to play the hand and he expresses that preference by Passing 2♥.

### Play.

Realizing that North is likely to be short in Spades (a subtle but important inference, this) West leads a trump. East-West now play three rounds of Hearts, denying us the opportunity of ruffing more than one Spade in the dummy. On many deals that would be a killing defense but – unluckily for the opposition – not today.

We win the third trump and knock out the ♦A. Winning the return we cash three top Spades and ruff one on the table. This sets up the ♠10 as an extra trick so we record an overtrick.



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2. Updated Spring 2015.  
 71 Blue #11 Opening bids & minimum rebids Part 2 SA  
 Contract: 2D  
 By: South  
 Date: 24/03/2016  
 Board #: 2  
 Dealer: East  
 Vulnerable: None  
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West	North	East	South
-	-	P	1♦
P	1♠	P	2♣
P	2♦	P	P
P			

Lead: ♠ J

### Bidding.

We open 1♦ after East Passes and rebid 2♣ after North has responded 1♠. By bidding our suits *downwards* we are giving partner the room to express a bad hand by giving **simple preference** should he so wish. Compare the actual hand with the following:

♠ A  
 ♥ K Q 10 3  
 ♦ Q J 10 9 2  
 ♣ J 7 2

Now after opening 1♦ and hearing a 1♠ response we should not contemplate rebidding 2♥. By bidding our suits upwards we would invite preference at the three-level and these modest values do not justify that. We'd just have to rebid 2♦ (or 1NT).

Whenever we invite preference at the three-level we are said to be **making a reverse**. Odd terminology, but there we are. Anyway, we would be showing a strong hand and here we don't have one.

Going back to the actual hand we rebid 2♣ and partner does give preference by bidding 2♦. This bid shows nothing but distaste for the whole business and, with a minimum opening bid, we Pass with great rapidity.

After auctions like this even two-level contracts fail sometimes.

### Play.

West leads the ♠J from his Spade sequence and dummy is displayed in all its glory. We can see that partner has nothing to spare for his bidding. However, 1♠ is an obvious initial response and 2♦ is an eminently correct second bid; North could hardly Pass 2♣ and leave us playing in a seven-card Club fit when there is an eight-card Diamond fit available.

Seeing eight tricks obtainable (well, eventually) via two Spades, three Diamonds and three Clubs we set about the routine task of drawing trumps. We win the ♠A and play the ♦Q,

North

♠ K762  
 ♥ Q85  
 ♦ 763  
 ♣ J94

West  
 ♠ JT98  
 ♥ KT6  
 ♦ K54  
 ♣ A76



East  
 ♠ Q543  
 ♥ A943  
 ♦ A8  
 ♣ 852

South

♠ A  
 ♥ J72  
 ♦ QJT92  
 ♣ KQT3

The bidding on this deal is straightforward – you have to show your two suits to partner without getting too high.

What is partner trying to say, though?

dislodging the ♦A. East plays back a Spade so we chuck a Heart. Another trump dislodges the ♦K. West "taps" us with a Spade, so we ruff, draw the remaining trump and set about the Clubs.

Although West removes our final trump with another Spade lead we are home and dry – we cash two Clubs and concede the last two tricks.



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2. Updated Spring 2015.

VB#1111 One-bids & minimum rebids Part 2 SA

Date: 24/03/2016

Dealer: South


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Contract: 2H

By: South

Board #: 3

Vulnerable: None

	North	
	♠ AJ765	
	♥ 853	
	♦ J7	
	♣ J54	
West		East
♠ Q83		♠ KT42
♥ KQ2		♥ A4
♦ A986		♦ T2
♣ T98		♣ Q7632
	South	
	♠ 9	
	♥ JT976	
	♦ KQ543	
	♣ AK	

Here you are faced with a choice of suits with which to open the bidding.

What should you choose and why?

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
P	1♠	P	2♦
P	2♥	P	P
P			

Lead: ♣ T

### Bidding.

With a 5-5 hand it is normally right to open the higher ranking suit, even when the quality of the suits has a disparity as in this hand. The idea is to try and bid the suits *downwards* so that partner can *give preference* without hoisting the auction to the three-level.

Contrast these two auctions:

We	Partner
1♥	1♠
2♦	?

We	Partner
1♦	1♠
2♥	?

In the former example partner can kill the auction with 2♥ if he hates the whole business – in the latter he would have to venture to 3♦ to try to stop the bidding.

So here we must open 1♥ and rebid 2♦, just in case partner has peanuts and wants out.

In fact, that is precisely the case. North responds 1♠ with his five-card suit and 7 points but then shows a poor hand by giving preference to 2♥ after we show our second suit. Knowing that partner may be very weak we should Pass.

### Play.

These two-suited hands are often awkward to declare. West leads the ♠10, won by our ♠K. It is often right to develop our side-suit in this type of hand rather than play on trumps and here we play a Diamond to the ♦J and, after the Jack wins, we play another to the ♦Q and ♦A. West continues Clubs so we win and ruff a Diamond with the ♥8, which forces the ♥A from East.

A further Club is ruffed in hand and now (with a Heart honor dislodged from the defenders) we go after trumps. West wins his ♥Q and plays a Spade but we *have the tempo* to play another trump to force the ♥K.

Now we can ruff the Spade return, draw the last trump and cash the winning Diamonds. That's an overtrick.



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2. Updated Spring 2015.  
 71 Blue #11 Opening bids & minimum rebids Part 2 SA  
 Contract: 2D  
 By: South  
 Date: 24/03/2016  
 Board #: 4  
 Dealer: West  
 Vulnerable: None  
[Play this hand online!](#)

West	North	East	South
P	P	P	1♦
P	1♥	P	1♠
P	2♦	P	P
P			

Lead: ♦ Q

### Bidding.

We open 1♦ after three Passes and North responds 1♥. We have to show our second suit with a rebid of 1♠ and now North has to find a second bid. He might Pass but that would be wrong on any number of counts. Best is to *give preference* to our first bid suit where there is likely to be an eight-card fit.

Although 2♦ raises the level of the auction the bidding does not go beyond the two-level so we have not "reversed" by bidding our suits "upwards". Anyway, 2♦ is not encouraging (quite the opposite) so we Pass and let the auction die quietly.

### Play.

West, with an unattractive set of leads, opts for a trump. To risk leading the suit West must have solid trumps – ♦Q J 10 is likely although ♦Q J bare is possible. Anyway, it looks as though trumps are 3-2. A count of winners shows that we have just seven (two Spades, one Heart and four Diamonds) and that's assuming trumps break nicely.

When we are short of a trick or two we should look at the possibility of a ruff in the dummy. Here it may be far from obvious that we can ruff a Spade on the table. The right play, though, is to take the ♦K and play three rounds of Spades.

Taking the trump return we ruff our losing baby Spade with dummy's ♦4 and we are home and dry.

Well, let's dot the is and cross the ts. We take the ♥A and can – in time – force out the boss trump to make two little trumps in hand.

In all we lose one Spade, one Heart, one Diamond and two Clubs.

North

♠ 653  
 ♥ A9763  
 ♦ K43  
 ♣ 64



East

♠ Q974  
 ♥ Q4  
 ♦ 87  
 ♣ AJT82

South

♠ AK82  
 ♥ J5  
 ♦ A9652  
 ♣ Q7

West

♠ JT  
 ♥ KT82  
 ♦ QJT  
 ♣ K953

Here, although you are bidding suits "upwards", you are not in any way showing a good hand.

Is partner showing any enthusiasm, though?



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2. Updated Spring 2015.	Contract: 2C
Y1 Blue #11 Opening bids & minimum rebids Part 2 SA	By: South
Date: 24/03/2016	Board #: 5
Dealer: North	Vulnerable: None
<a href="#">Play this hand online!</a>	

West	North	East	South
-	P	P	1♥
P	1♠	P	2♣
P	P	P	

Lead: ♣ 4

### Bidding.

We open 1♥ after two Passes and rebid 2♣ after partner's 1♠ response, offering North the choice of Hearts or Clubs. North loathes Hearts and prefers Clubs; he shows this by Passing 2♣, leaving us in it.

### Play.


We can see North's point when dummy is displayed – what else could partner do? Firstly, he was obliged to respond 1♠ (he lacked the values to venture to the two-level with 2♦) and secondly he had to express his preference for Clubs by Passing 2♣. Continuing with 2♦ over 2♣ on a 7-point horror would have been a bad mistake.

Anyway, North is clearly short of Hearts after this bidding and West suspects that we may try to ruff Hearts in dummy. To thwart this West attacks our part-score with a trump lead – good defense!

We can only see six *top tricks* (four Clubs and two Aces) so need two more. As usual, they can be found via ruffing in the **short trump hand** (that is: in the dummy).

We take the trump lead on table and immediately play the ♥A, ruff a Heart, cross to the ♠A and ruff another Heart. That gives us a total of six trump tricks and two Aces.

After that we can try for overtricks but nothing is forthcoming. Still, we have our contract and that's all that matters.

	North		
	♠ T863		
	♥ 4		
	♦ J8542		
	♣ AQ3		
West		East	
♠ K52		♠ QJ94	
♥ QJ872		♥ K9	
♦ A6		♦ KT97	
♣ 854		♣ 962	
	South		
	♠ A7		
	♥ AT653		
	♦ Q3		
	♣ KJT7		

Again, you have time and room to show two suits allowing partner to express his choice.


The end of the auction is a little unexpected but it does allow you to alight in a playable contract.



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2. Updated Spring 2015.  
 Contract: 2H  
 By: South  
 Date: 24/03/2016  
 Board #: 6  
 Dealer: East  
 Vulnerable: None  
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	North	
	♠ AJ76	
	♥ 82	
	♦ J7542	
	♣ J7	
West		East
♠ K542		♠ QT83
♥ AK53		♥ Q4
♦ 96		♦ QT83
♣ T82		♣ A96
	South	
	♠ 9	
	♥ JT976	
	♦ AK	
	♣ KQ543	

A deal where you might start out with some optimism but will struggle to make even a modest contract.

It all goes to show that without a *fit*, bridge hands do not play well...

West	North	East	South
-	-	P	1♥
P	1♠	P	2♣
P	2♥	P	P
P			

Lead: ♦ 9

### Bidding.

As usual with a 5-5 hand we should open the higher ranking suit. There is a potential problem though. Should partner respond 1♠ we could easily rebid 2♣ (bidding suits downwards, allowing partner to give preference at the two-level).

However, should partner respond 2♦ we'd be in a hole. A 3♣ rebid now would constitute a strength-showing **reverse** and would greatly overstate the worth of our hand. We'd just have to rebid 2♥ and hope that the sun shone. Maybe partner would bid again and allow us to show our Clubs on the next round.

As it happens, partner responds 1♠ and we rebid 2♣ happily. Partner makes a sign-off by giving us preference to 2♥ and – heeding the warning – we Pass.

### Play.

West leads the ♦9 (higher card from a doubleton) and we contemplate dummy with little enthusiasm. Bear in mind that preference bids are often made on hands like this, with inadequate trump support and weak values. It isn't North's fault that he has such a garbage dump – it's what he got dealt.

Playing this type of two-suited hand is always tricky and it's often a case of scrambling as many tricks as we can; often such contracts fail. *C'est la vie*. Here we should take the first Diamond lead and immediately set about playing on the side-suit (Clubs). East takes that and returns a Diamond so we win and – with little else to try – play a trump. East wins and shifts to a Spade. We win and play another Heart, letting West win to play another Spade.

We now make the contract by playing Clubs from the top, using our long suit to force out the opponents' trumps. Had Clubs broken 4-2 2♥ would have failed – but that's how life is sometimes.