

WEAK 2 BIDS, RESPONSES AND DEALING WITH INTERVENTION

Partnerships should agree various principles for pre-empting, whether at the two level or higher. Good partnerships decide on all sorts of parameters to factor in - here are a few to think over:

- a) The vulnerability (be more cautious when vulnerable etc.)
- b) Position at the table (1st seat = aggressive, 2nd seat = sound, 3rd seat = fairly random)
- c) Whether a side four-card major is acceptable or not.

Responding in a New Suit to a Weak Two

In response to any Weak Two, the bid of a new suit is constructive but not forcing. Generally opener can raise if suitable, or occasionally rebid a semi-solid suit if maximum. To create a force, either jump or start with 2NT.

Raising the Weak Two Suit

2D - 3D, 2H - 3H and 2S - 3S are all essentially 'barrage bids' i.e. pre-emptive. (Probably in the region of 7-14 points, but does not need to be defined too closely). It is so important to raise straight away to the three level to make life difficult for the opponents, rather than lamely passing, allowing them to find their fit and then bidding on the next round. The level of the fit tells us roughly that with: 8 trumps - bid to the two level, 9 trumps - bid to the three level, 10 trumps - bid to the four level (or higher!). This gives an indication of whether to raise or even how far to raise on the first round (you can of course factor in other considerations such as vulnerability and obviously the quality of your hand!)

Responding to a Weak 2D Opener

Since 3NT is often the desirable final destination the responses are geared accordingly:

New suit = constructive, non-forcing, as discussed (typically a six card suit with 10-14 HCP)

Jump in new suit = natural and game-forcing

2NT = relay. (Generally around 15 points but maybe less with a fit)

The relay here asks for features. A feature is defined as a possible stopper for 3NT, i.e. A, K-x, Q-x-x, J-x-x-x etc. as opposed to a control or singleton etc.

The responses are:

New suit = feature and 7-9 points

3D = minimum (5-6 points)

3NT = maximum with a good suit (two of the top three honours)

Responding to 2H and 2S Openers

Most of the details from the 2D opener hold, but the responses to the relay of 2NT change now, since usually the desired finishing spot is in the major opened. Shortages are now shown in response to the relay.

So, after a 2NT enquiry:

New suit = singleton/void, non-minimum

Return to major = minimum

3NT = maximum, no shortage but good suit (2 of top 3 honours)

Four of major = maximum, no shortage, not such good suit quality

Good holdings opposite shortage are: A-x-x, x-x-x, x-x-x-x, i.e. no wasted points and length (more ruffing potential)

Bad holdings: K-Q-x, K-J-x, x, i.e. wasted points are very poor - as is of course duplicated shortage (if partner and you both have a singleton in the same suit, that is bad news!).

. Clearly if you have the values for game, do not use the relay simply for practice as so many seem to do - just bid game! Only use the 2NT relay if there is uncertainty over whether to bid game (or sometimes slam!).

Dealing with Intervention after You Have Opened with a Weak Two Bid

All bids, wherever possible, retain their original meaning. Doubles after intervention are always penalties and not negative.

If the opponents overcall at the two level:

Double = penalties

2NT = relay

New suit = constructive and non-forcing as before

Supporting at the three level = still pre-emptive as before

If the opponents overcall at the three level:

Double = penalties

New suit (below partner's) = constructive and non-forcing

New suit (above partner's) = forcing

Supporting at the 3 level = competitive

If the opponents double:

Redouble = strong hand, usually seeking to penalise

New suit = constructive and non-forcing

2NT = still a relay

Supporting at the three level = pre-emptive