

Tidbit 16

Try not to rebid a Five Card Suit

Interpretation:

This applies principally to bidding systems which only open a major at the one level if they hold at least five in that suit. If opener then rebids that suit they are indicating that they hold six cards or more and partner, lacking the HCPs to go further, may pass with a singleton or even a void, which is the potential risk of rebidding the suit with only five cards.

There are some awkward distributions to manage, for example, 5M-3-3-2 (M=major) and 4S-5H-3-1 or 4S-5H-2-2. Sometimes, you will have to bid NT without a stopper over your partner's response even if you do not have stoppers in both the other suits. Sometimes you will have to raise partner with only 3 card support if your hand suggests that (eg a good 3 card suit and/or shortage in a third suit).

The 5-3-3-2 hand with a five-card major and 15-17HCPs has its own problems as far as finding a rebid. For example, if partner responds 1S to your 1H opening a rebid of 1NT is an underbid and a rebid of 2NT, an overbid. Similarly, if partner bids a minor at the 2 level over your 1M opening, do you bid 3NT or raise the minor with three cards in the suit and possibly a poor doubleton in one of the two unbid suits? It is quite common now for partners to include this type of hand in a 1NT opening. Partner can now choose from a number of modified Stayman conventions (eg Puppet Stayman) to discover whether you have a 5 card major in your balanced hand before naming the final contract.

Examples:

6	Dlr: E Vul: EW
♦ AT	♦ K8763
♥ K542	♦ Q2
♦ K54	♦ 75432
♣ Q986	♠ K8763
	♥ J9
	♦ A73
	♣ AJT
4	
12 13	♦ QJ542
	♥ AT
	♦ JT986
11	♦ K
	NT
	N - - - -
	S - - - -
	E 4 2 3 3 4
	W 4 2 3 3 4

East	South	West	North
1S	Pass	2C	Pass
??			

East has the choice of bidding 2NT with a weak doubleton in hearts or raising clubs with a good 3 card holding. I prefer the 3C raise and partner will convert to 3NT with stoppers in both hearts and diamonds.

11	Dlr: S Vul: None
♦ 753	♦ JT94
♥ 7	♥ JT32
♦ KT953	♦ Q87
♣ 9763	♦ A5
	♠ A86
	♥ K95
	♦ 642
	♣ KQJT
8	
3 13	♦ KQ2
	♥ AQ864
16	♦ AJ
	♣ 842
	NT
	N - - 4 4 3
	S - - 4 4 3
	E 1 1 - - -
	W 1 1 - - -

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2C=Puppet Stayman	Pass
2H=5 cards	Pass	4H	

Playing Puppet Stayman, the Stayman bidder may have only 3 cards in a major.

The response of 2H to the 2C enquiry shows 5x hearts and 15-16HCPs. Buoyed by her 4-card support and doubleton North jumps to game.

Exercise:

♠ AKQ52
♥ K86
♦ KJ52
♣ 9

North	East	South	West
1S	Pass	1NT	Pass
??			

What is your rebid as North? If you bid 2D, what do you bid if partner now bids 2H?

Answer to Tidbit 15 Exercise:

Bidding:

North	East	South	West
1S	2H	Pass	3D
Pass	3NT	Pass	4H

In the hand above, the bidding now results in a 4H contract. South leads the 9S, North wins and switches to the KC which East wins with the AC. How many losers does East count and what suit and cards should she play next?

BOARD 1			
BD: 1	♠ AQ7532 ♥ 86 ♦ Q2 ♣ KQ6	Dlr: N Vul: Nil	
♠ K ♥ 95 ♦ AK9853 ♣ 7543	♠ JT64 ♥ AKQJ7 ♦ 74 ♣ A8		
♠ 98 ♥ T432 ♦ JT6 ♣ JT92			
♠ ♦ ♥ ♣ NT			
N - - - -		13	
S - - - -		10	15
E 2 5 3 1 2		2	
W 2 5 3 1 2			

You count your losers as 2 x spades (while trumps remain in dummy) and 1 x club. You will not be able to trump 2 x spades and still draw 4 rounds of trumps because you have communication problems.

There are two options for play. Firstly, you could make 10 tricks by trumping your second small spade come back to hand using your last trump in dummy, draw trumps in four rounds and lead the JS in order to set up the 10S as a trick while you still have a trump left.

Secondly, you could lead a diamond and duck it. The defence can cash 1 x club but nothing further before you get in, draw trumps and lead a diamond to the AD and KD in the dummy in order to set up the whole diamond suit for (spade) discards and 11 tricks.