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This Week in Bridge

(370) 2/1 GF Auctions: 1♦ - 2♣

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Level: 4 of 10 (1 of 6)

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General

The most complicated 2/1 GF auctions are the ones that start 1♦ – 2♣. Actually, these can be some of the most difficult auctions in all of bridge. These auctions can lead to lots of complexity and confusion about the meaning of bids on the 2nd and 3rd round of the bidding. Many pairs have played in 3-3 Major suit fits after the auction began with 1♦ - 2♣, thinking they were headed to a much better fit. There are several partnership agreements that you can have for this auction, but our general approach will be based on the idea that that Responder will rarely bypass a 4-card Major to bid 2♣. If the Responder chooses to do so, it is likely because they have an extremely strong (and distributional) hand and plan to explore slam. Let's take a look at these 1♦ – 2♣ auctions and see how they generally proceed.

Opener's Rebids

Opener's rebid is largely used to communicate to partner the "nature" or type of hand Opener holds. But it is also used to potentially "right-side" the most common game contract, 3NT.

Here are some general principles we will adopt:

- In order to preserve space and to describe our hand, we rebid 2♦ with most hands that have a decent 5+card ♦ suit.
- Without a 5-card ♦ suit, we show our stoppers in the Majors. Bidding a Major shows a stopper in that suit and implies a problem in the other Major.
- Rebidding 2NT implies stoppers in both Majors – either a balanced 12-14 or 18-19 point hand.
- Jumping to 3NT shows extra values (usually 15-17 HCP) with singleton ♣ (usually 4-4-4-1).

Example 1

1♦ 2♣

2♦

♠ 93

♥ AQ4

♦ KJT84

♣ K43

Here we rebid 2♦ to show a decent 5+card ♦ suit. If partner shows ♠, we will head towards 3NT.



Here are the details of what Opener's rebids show:

1♦ 2♣

___?

- 2♦ Any hand with decent 5+card ♦
- 2♥ Usually not 5-card ♦, ♥ stopper, no ♠ stopper
- 2♠ Usually not 5-card ♦, ♠ stopper, no ♥ stopper
- 2NT Usually not 5-card ♦, stoppers in both Majors (12-14 pts OR 18-19 pts)
- 3♣ Usually 4-card ♣ support for partner
- 3♦ Great ♦, 6+c suit and a good hand
- 3♥ *Splinter*, 4+card ♣, Singleton or Void in ♥, at least a decent opening hand
- 3♠ *Splinter*, 4+card ♣, Singleton or Void in ♠, at least a decent opening hand
- 3NT Usually 4-4-4-1 (singleton ♣) with 15-17 pts (*mild slam try*)

Responder's NT Rebids

Once Opener has described their hand, Responder has one primary responsibility - to "right-side" notrump if we have a stopper in the unbid suits. This is particular true if these stoppers are positional and need to be led into and not put down on the dummy.

Example 2

1♦ 2♣
2♠ 2NT

Responder's rebid shows a ♥ stopper.

Example 3

1♦ 2♣
2♥ 2NT

Responder's rebid shows a ♠ stopper.

Unlike in the 2/1 GF auctions that begin 1-Major – 2-minor, where we might have a Major suit fit, in the auctions that start 1♦ - 2♣ we are primarily interested in whether we have stoppers in both Majors and from which side we should declare 3NT.

Since the general rule is that we don't have a Major suit fit when the auction starts 1♦ - 2♣ (which will be true most of the time), then subsequent bids of a Major tend to show a stopper, not necessarily a 4-card suit. This is an important to have a good agreement with partner that these Major suit bids show a stopper, not length, and can then be used to get us to play 3NT from the proper side (if we can play it at all).



Other Responder's Rebids

Later calls in these types of auctions are natural and shape-showing. They tend to be used for bidding out the pattern of Responder's hand and often show interest in playing in a contract other than 3NT. This can either be because we don't have a stopper in one of the Major suits or because we have interest in exploring a slam.

Example 4

1♦ 2♣

2♠ 3♦

4+card ♦, usually a longer ♣ suit, often slam interest in ♦, and frequently no ♥ stopper

Conclusion

The auctions that begin 1♦ – 2♣ can lead to some complicated and difficult bidding situations. It is important for you and partner to have good agreements about when your bids are looking for a Major suit fit and when they are used to show a stopper for notrump. Therefore, I recommend playing that 1♦ – 2♣ denies a 4-card Major suit most of time. Make sure that you discuss this auction with your regular partners and come to an agreement on the follow-up bidding and what to expect from these auctions. Do not have a bidding disaster in these “simple” auctions!