**(82) More Notrump: Advanced Lebensohl (Delayed Lebensohl)**

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*Level: Advanced/Expect* [*robert@advinbridge.com*](mailto:robert@advinbridge.com)

**General**

When the opponents bid over our 1N it is usually done immediately in order to cause us the most difficulty. But occasionally, when the opponents are feeling frisky (or they forgot to bid the first time) they will pass on their first call and then come into our auction after that. Here we will examine an advanced agreement about how to deal with such delayed interference.

**Delayed Lebensohl**

The general idea will be the same as Lebensohl vs. direct interference (or simple-sohl, if that is what you play):

* New suits at the 3-level will be natural and value showing, forcing.
* 2N is a relay to 3♣ to compete in the bidding.
* X shows values (usually a hand that was planning to rebid 2N next, but now it can not.)
* Other inference of “fast denies” and “slow shows” are also still available.

**Direct Delayed Auction**

We will start by looking at the auctions where the interference is behind the 1N Opener.

***Stayman Auctions***

Let’s look at auctions where we start by responding 2♣, partner answers, and the opponents then bid:

*Examples*

1N - 2♣ - 2♦ (2♥) -

* Double Usually 4+♥, 8 to 9+ points, Defensively oriented – penalty.
* 2♠ (Natural) 4+c♠, competitive.
* 2N Relay to 3♣, generally to compete in the bidding.
* 3-Level Natural and Forcing.
* With a balanced Game Force we can bid 3N (values with no stopper) or Relay and then bid 3N (to show values with a stopper.)

1N - 2♣ - 2♦ (2♠) -

* Double Cards, 8-9 points and defensive.
* 2N Relay to 3♣, generally to compete in the bidding.
* 3-Level Natural and Forcing.
* With a balanced Game Force Responder can bid 3N (values with no stopper) or Relay and then bid 3N (to show values with a stopper.)

1N - 2♣ - 2♥ (2♠) -

* Double Cards, usually 8+ points. 4+♠ (sometimes 3-card♠, not 4-card ♥), Defensive.
* 2N Relay to 3♣, generally to compete in the bidding.
* 3-Level Natural and Forcing.
* With a balanced Game Force Responder can bid 3N (values with no stopper) or Relay and then bid 3N (to show values with a stopper.)

***Transfer Auctions***

Similar to our delayed Lebensohl in Stayman auctions we can do the same after a Transfer to ♥ followed by competition.

*Examples*

1N - 2♦\* - 2♥ (2♠) -

* Double Cards, 8-9 points, was going to rebid 2N.
* 2N Relay to 3♣, generally used to compete in one of the minors.   
   Opener can bid 3♥ if they have a ♥ fit.
* 3-Level Natural and Forcing.
* With a balanced Game Force Responder can bid 3N (values with no stopper) or Relay and then bid 3N (to show values with a stopper.)

**3rd Seat Actions**

The opponent in the sandwich seat will sometimes take a destructive action. If Opener passes this around to the Responder, then Responder should use a delayed Lebensohl structure to describe their hand.

***Stayman Auctions***

When the opponents bid after Stayman we can double them for penalty – show 4-cards in their suit. We can bid our own suit if we can do so at the 2-level or pass to let partner further describe their hand. Let’s look at the auctions where we pass it around to partner and see how Delayed Lebensohl can be useful here as well.

*Examples*

1N - 2♣ (2♦) P --

Opener’s pass has generally denied a 4-card Major. Here are Responder’s options:

* 2♥ Bids are as though Opener has rebid 2♦ - Drop Dead Stayman.
* 2♠ Bids are as though Opener has rebid 2♦ - Invitational with 5+♠.
* X Cards – usually the values for a natural 2N rebid, 8-9 HCP.
* 2N Forces 3♣, a relay used to compete in the bidding – usually with long ♣.
* 3-Level Natural and Game Forcing.
* With a balanced Game Force Responder can bid 3N (values with no stopper) or Relay and then bid 3N (to show values with a stopper.)

1N - 2♣ (2♥) P –

Opener’s pass has generally denied a 4-card Major. Here are Responder’s options:

* 2♠ Invitational with 4+card ♠.
* X Cards – usually the values for a natural 2N rebid, 8-9 HCP.
* 2N Forces 3♣, a relay used to compete in the bidding.
* 3-Level Natural and Game Forcing.
* With a balanced Game Force Responder can bid 3N (values with no stopper) or Relay and then bid 3N (to show values with a stopper.)

1N - 2♣ (2♠) P –

Opener can still have 4-card ♥, so we will use some more sophisticated parts of delayed Lebensohl.

* X Cards – usually the values for a natural 2N rebid, 8-9 HCP.
* 2N Forces 3♣, a relay used to compete in the bidding.
* 3-Level Natural and Game Forcing.
* With a balanced Game Force Responder can bid 3N (values with no stopper) or Relay and then bid 3N (to show values with a stopper.)
* With a 4-card ♥ suit and a Game Force Responder can cuebid 3♠ (4c♥ without a stopper) or Relay and then cuebid 3♠ (4c♥ with a stopper). Cuebid is like “Stayman.”

**Other Delayed Lebensohl -- vs. Artificial Bids**

Other Delayed Lebensohl bids vs. interference are possible when the opponents use artificial systems against our 1N Opening bid - DONT, Cappelletti, Woolsey, etc…

An example would be if the opponent shows “some long suit” (say with a DONT Double) on the first round of the auction and then actually bids their suit on the second round of the auction. In this case, we can apply delayed Lebensohl as we did above.

**Conclusion**

This delayed interference from our opponents has become more and more common. It can make our life difficult, but sometimes it can actually help us to better show our hand if we have the proper methods. By playing Lebensohl (Delayed) we give up the natural 2NT in these auctions, but since we have a double available this does not cost us much. Instead we gain an effective tool for competing in the bidding. Generally, we like to recycle our methods in this way (that gives us less memory work than something entirely new) and we will continue to look for more ways to reuse some of our other agreements in complex situations.