

22. Failing to use Responder's Support Line when repeating

The concept of a limit bid is an important one. Whether supporting partner, repeating your own suit or bidding notrumps, you are limiting the strength of your hand.

Take the much misunderstood scenario of responder repeating their suit (thereby showing six cards). If they repeat their suit at the Two-level, they show 6-9 points. Repeating with a jump to Three shows 10-12 points. Repeating their suit at game level shows 13 or more points.

The bidding has begun 1♦ from partner, you respond 1♥ and partner rebids 1♠. What now with these?

♠ 962	♠ K62	♠ K2
♥ AQ7432	♥ AQJ932	♥ KQJ1092
♦ 3	♦ 8	♦ A
♣ J42	♣ J92	♣ J532

With the first, rebid 2♥, showing 6-9 pts and six hearts.

With the second, rebid 3♥, showing 10-12 pts and six hearts.

With the third, jump to 4♥; the danger of rebidding 3♥ is partner passing and game being missed. Note, if your hearts were less strong, eg ♥ KQ5432, you'd have to bid 2♣, the only way to force partner to bid again being to bid a new suit. [This 2♣ bid should be the Fourth Suit Forcing convention, more anon.]

What Happened

Languishing in 2♠, declarer won the ♥ K lead with dummy's ♥ A and led ♥ 2 to set up a heart ruff. However, West won and switched to ♠ 3, East playing ♠ A and ♠ 5. Declarer drew trumps and led and passed ♦ J but East won ♦ K and the defence cashed a heart. Nine tricks made.

Dealer: North, Vulnerability: Neither

♠ 43		♠ A85
♥ KQ109		♥ J853
♦ 98		♦ K1052
♣ J10653		♣ Q8

♠ KQJ976	
♥ 764	
♦ J7	
♣ A9	

What Happened

S	W	N	E
		1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠ (1)	Pass	Pass (2)	Pass

(1) Oops. This shows 6-9 pts.

(2) Correct to pass, facing at most nine pts.

Contract: 2♠, Opening Lead: ♥ K

What Should Have Happened

S	W	N	E
		1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♠ (1)	Pass	4♠ (2)	Pass

(1) Yes — 10-12 points and six spades.

(2) Correct to try game facing 10-12.

Contract: 4♠, Opening Lead: ♥ K

What Should Have Happened

In 4♠, you duck the ♥ K lead (key play). If the defence switch to the ace and another spade, you can draw trumps and run ♦ J to ♦ K, setting up ♦ AQ for a heart discard. On any other defence, you can ruff your third heart in dummy. Ten tricks and game made — because of the trick 1 duck. "If you have to lose a trick in a suit, lose the first."

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