

UNIT 503 FALL LECTURE SERIES – December 10, 2009

REVERSES – What is a reverse and what to do after partner makes a reverse ?

Examples of what I want to talk about today are at the top of the flyer which was distributed announcing this lecture ---

1C – 1S; **2H** would be a reverse.

1C – 1S; **2D** and 1D – 1S; **2H** are two more examples of reverses.

The Bridge Encyclopedia defines a reverse as follows:

“An unforced rebid at the level of 2 (or more) in a higher ranking suit than the suit bid originally.”

A reverse is a **STRENGTH SHOWING** bid – and, most importantly, the hand pattern is such, that the first bid suit is **always longer than the second suit bid**.

Let us look at the bidding of this hand.....AKJxx, AQJxx, K10, x. An 18 high card point (hcp) hand with a 5-5-2-1 distribution.

At the club here, I have seen this hand bid as follows --- 1H – 1NT; 2S – etc. After the hand is over, I asked why opener opened with 1H rather than 1S. He/she replied “I wanted to reverse to show my hcp strength.” This reverse violates the hand pattern rule that the first suit is always longer than the second.

So, how should this hand be bid ? By using a **jump shift** – ie, 1S -1NT; 3H.

Using a jump shift, the first suit bid is either longer or equal to the second suit.

However, jump shifts are not the subject for today !

A couple of other points that should not be confused with what I am going to discuss today. (1) 1D – 1H; 2D – 2S or 1C- 1D; 1S – 2H. These are reverses by responder. The second auction is often described as **FOURTH SUIT FORCING**.

And (2) playing 2 over 1, the auction 1H – 2C (game forcing); 2S = is not a reverse but a pattern showing bid – not necessarily showing additional strength.

Today, we treat a reverse as **FORCING** (for at least one round). This is what causes problems for a partnership that has not discussed the bidding subsequent to a reverse.

Here is another quote from the Bridge Encyclopedia – a great reference book to which I refer often with bridge questions and problems.

“There is a great tendency for partnerships to wander on to an unsound game when both players have a minimum.”

Thus – **caution** – I do not recommend making a reverse just to show high card points.

Example: -- Jx, A109x, AQ, AKxxx; after the bidding goes 1C – 1S; now what ? 2H would be a reverse but not the right bid. Bid 2NT = the “value” bid showing a hand worth more than a strong (15-17) NT opener.

Compare this hand: -- x, AKJx, Jx, AKQxxx. Now after 1C – 1S, bid 2H – a reverse showing hcp strength and a source of tricks.

In uncontested auctions, I like a REVERSE to show FULL WEIGHT. My partner can rely on me to have a good hand. Most of the time, we will want to be in game opposite my partner's 6 or 7 point hand.

Finally, a reminder – in contested auctions, a reverse may not carry full weight, but should be a good hand. Eg 1C -- P – 1S – 2D; 2H = something like this.....Qx, AQ10x, x, AK10xxx.

This brings me to the crux of this lecture – what to bid when partner makes a reverse.

Responses to a REVERSE: ----

1C – 1S

2H – 2S = weakest hand; sign-off somewhere (could only hold 4 spades).

--2NT = 6-8 hcps with no fit in clubs or hearts.

--3C = fit in clubs + game forcing.

--3D = 4th suit (forcing) and indicates a slam try somewhere.

--3H = fit (4 trump since it is opener's second suit) + game forcing.

--3S = 6 card suit + game forcing.

--3NT = 9-11 hcps

--4NT = Quantitative.

This method is fairly new for me. I like it because it is easy to remember in the heat of the battle. Most bids are natural, except the re-bid of responder's first bid suit – spades in the above example. Now, we can look at a couple of example hands before you get to bid and play “the responses to a reverse.” Good luck !

Hamish Bennett

North(D)

♠ A 10 9 8 3
♥ Q 9 7 2
♦ J 10
♣ 7 5

West

♠ 4
♥ A J 6 5
♦ A 8 2
♣ A K Q 9 3

East

♠ K Q 5 2
♥ 8 3
♦ 9 7 5 3
♣ 8 6 4

South

♠ J 7 6
♥ K 10 4
♦ K Q 6 4
♣ J 10 2

Hand 1: No one is vulnerable. The bidding:

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1C
Pass	1S	Pass	2H *
Pass	2S **	Pass	2NT
Pass	3C #	All Pass	

Notes:

* 2H = Reverse = 17+ distributional points with longer clubs than hearts.

** 2S = weakest possible bid (could have only 4 spades).

3C = sign-off knowing that the club fit is at least 5-3.

North

♠ K Q 10 6
♥ Q 8 3
♦ 10 3
♣ K 9 8 2

West

♠ 4
♥ A K 7 6
♦ K Q 8 4 2
♣ A Q 3

East(D)

♠ A 8 7 5 2
♥ 4 2
♦ A J 9 7 5
♣ 6

South

♠ J 9 3
♥ J 10 9 5
♦ 6
♣ J 10 7 5 4

Hand 2 : North-South is vulnerable. The bidding:

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
	Pass	Pass	1D
Pass	1S	Pass	2H *
Pass	3C #	Pass	3NT
Pass	4D **	Pass	4NT
Pass	5H	Pass	5NT
Pass	6C	Pass	7D (?)

Notes:

2H = Reverse

3C = 4th suit and suggests slam somewhere

** 4D = setting suit; thereafter use your slam convention to reach slam.

North
 ♠ K Q 8 7 2
 ♥ J 8 7 6
 ♦ 5 4 3
 ♣ 4

West
 ♠ J 10 9 3
 ♥ 10
 ♦ Q 10 7
 ♣ K J 8 6 2

East
 ♠ A 6
 ♥ 9 5 4 2
 ♦ J 2
 ♣ Q 10 9 5 3

South(D)
 ♠ 5 4
 ♥ A K Q 3
 ♦ A K 9 8 6
 ♣ A 7

Hand 3 : East-West is vulnerable. The bidding:

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1S	Pass	1D	Pass
4H	All Pass	2H *	Pass

Notes:

* 2H = Reverse with longer diamonds than hearts.

4H = 4 trump and minimum

North
 ♠ Q J 8 2
 ♥ 8 2
 ♦ Q 10
 ♣ J 10 8 3 2

West(D)
 ♠ 5 4
 ♥ A K 6 3
 ♦ A K 8 4 2
 ♣ A 7

East
 ♠ A K 9 7 3
 ♥ Q J 7 4
 ♦ 9 3
 ♣ 6 5

South
 ♠ 10 6
 ♥ 10 9 5
 ♦ J 7 6 5
 ♣ K Q 9 4

Hand 4 : Both sides are vulnerable. The bidding:

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
Pass	1S	Pass	1D
Pass	3H	Pass	2H
Pass	4S	Pass	4C
Pass	5C	Pass	4NT *
Pass	5S	Pass	5D **
All Pass		Pass	6H

Notes:

2H = Reverse. 3H = 4 trump + non-minimum

4C and 4S = Q-bids.

* 4NT = Roman Key Card Blackwood; 5C = 1 or 4 key cards (1 in this case).

** 5D = asks for the queen of trump; 5S says "yes + spade king."

North(D)

♠ 8
♥ A Q J 3
♦ K J 9 6 3
♣ A K 2

West

♠ A 7 6 5
♥ 10 9 7 5 2
♦ 10
♣ Q 5 4

East

♠ J 10 4 2
♥ 8
♦ Q 8 5 4
♣ J 10 8 3

South

♠ K Q 9 3
♥ K 6 4
♦ A 7 2
♣ 9 7 6

Hand 5 : North-South is vulnerable. The bidding:

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

Notes:

2H = Reverse with longer diamonds than hearts.

* 3D = supporting diamonds, could be only 3 + it is forcing.

4NT = quantitative. North can pass with a minimum and poor diamonds.