

OPENING LIGHT in THIRD-SEAT and “REVERSE DRURY”

Why should you open “light” in third seat? You direct the opening lead, and your bid makes life difficult for your left hand opponent if he has the wrong strength or shape to compete effectively.

Light hands should be opened in third seat if they:

- Have a strong suit, and
- Can pass Partner’s response
- Or, can be opened with a weak preemptive bid

Two passes to you. What would you do with these third seat hands?

1. QT9xx, x, AQx, Qxxx (10 HCP)
2. KQxxxxx, xx, x, Kxx (8 HCP)
3. Kxx, Qxx, AKx, xxxx (12 HCP)
4. Kx, Qxx, KQx, Jxxxx (11 HCP)
5. xx, x, AKTxxx, QJxx (10 HCP)
6. JTxx, AQTxx, xx, xx (7 HCP)
7. xxx, KQTxx, KQxx, x (10 HCP)
8. Jxxx, KQJT, x, Axxx (11 HCP)

Answers:

1. Open 1♠: This is one where Drury would come in handy.
2. Open 3♠: at equal vulnerability, (4♠ non-vul vs. vulnerable)
3. Open 1♣: If partner responds 1♦, 1♥ or 1♠, just pass.
4. Pass: No length in majors - do you really want a club lead?
5. Open 3♦: You have no interest in hearing from partner.
6. Open 2♥: make life difficult for your left hand opponent
7. Open 1♥: Another hand where Drury would be useful
8. Open 1♥: Open light in a very strong four-card major.

Partner will think that game is possible if he passed an eleven point hand. The Drury convention keeps Partner from going berserk.

REVERSE DRURY CONVENTION

What is it?

Drury is an artificial response of 2♣ by a passed hand showing 11+ points after partner opens 1♥ or 1♠. (Some pairs require trump support in addition to the 11+ points for Drury; these pairs must handle 11 point support-less hands in some other way.)

Why use it?

In third seat, how many of you open with less than an opening hand? As we saw above, many people will open sub-minima with as few as 10 points. Drury was designed to help Responder find out if Partner has full opening values or opened a sub-minimum.

An Example

You are in first seat with the following hand:

♠Q62 ♥AT4 ♦K10873 ♣J5

You pass and Partner opens the bidding in third seat with 1♠.

Without Drury, you have a choice of four possible bad bids:

- 3♠ (limit raise) - you go down if Partner opened light.
- 2♠ (conservative raise) - miss game if Partner has full opener
- 1NT (foolishly suppressing your ♠ support) - You get a bad score because the 8-card spade fit plays two tricks better.
- You temporize with 2♦ - Partner passes and you share a bottom with the above 1NT bidder.

With Drury, you bid an artificial 2♣ (Alert!). The Drury 2♣ response tells Opener that you have a good (11+ points) hand for him, but allows him get out at the two level if he has a sub-minimum.

Opener rebids his major (Alert!), or bid 2♥ if he opened 1♠ light with both majors, to show a sub-minimum. Opener bids an artificial 2♦ (Alert!) with a full opening bid to hear more from Responder. If Opener bids 3 original-major, he is invitational with a six-card suit.

After Opener's artificial 2♦ (promising a full opener), Responder further describes his hand. Here is an example:

♠Q62 ♥AT4 ♦K10873 ♣J5 ♠AKT54 ♥J3 ♦AQ2 ♣642

| | |
|------|-------------|
| P | 1♠ |
| 2♣ | 2♦* |
| 2♠** | 4♠ All Pass |

*2♦ is an artificial bid which shows a full opening values.

**2♠ shows ♠ support with limit raise values.

Opener is happy to carry on to game.

Summary

After a third/fourth seat 1-Major opening bid and Reverse Drury 2♣:

- 2♦: An artificial rebid promising full opening values. Responder bids 2NT without trump support or 3♣ with a long ♣ suit - any other Responder's rebid promises trump support.
- Original major at the two level: Shows a sub-minimum and does not promise any additional length in the original major.
- 2♥ after opening 1♠: Denies full opening values but promises at least a 4-card ♥ suit. Responder may pass or correct to 2♠.
- Original major at the three level: six-card suit; invitational.
- 2NT: balanced 15-17 HCP, five-card suit, choice of games
- 3NT: balanced 18-19 HCP, five-card suit, choice of games
- 3 new suit: a second suit. Forcing to game.

Now let's look at a hand with sub-minimum values:

♠KT2 ♥AK852 ♦43 ♣972

You open the bidding in third seat with 1♥, partner bids 2♣ (Alert!). You have nothing further to say and repeat your major at the two level. End of story. If the opponents decide to compete at the three level, it is up to partner to decide whether to compete at the three level. You have said your all.

Enemy interference

Reverse Drury does not apply in competition. If an Opponent doubles the Drury 2♣ bid, bid as without the double (but *pass* and *redouble* show a 4-card ♣ suit in a *sub-minimum* and *full* opener).

If the Drury 2♣ bid is overcalled, pass shows a sub-minimum, double is penalty, a bid through 2-Major shows a sub-minimum with extra length in the suit bid, a bid beyond 2-Major is as without overcall.

Drury Variants

Some play that *both* 2♣ and 2♦ are (Two-Way) Drury. In this case, 2♣ shows three-card support and 2♦ shows four-card support. The benefit is differentiation between three and four card support. The tradeoff is loss of the 2♦ bid to show a ♦ suit with 11+ points.

Drury requires a bit of memorization and a partner who agrees (remembers!) to play it; but is worth it.