

## §23. Strong Rebids. The Reverse.

### Notes on the basic principles to be taught in this section.

- This section is all about reverses to show intermediate to strong opening hands (16+ points).
- A reverse is defined to be any second-suit rebid that *invites preference at the three-level*. This is a chance to revise the principle of *giving preference*, especially as a way to kill the auction.
- $1\heartsuit - 2\clubsuit - 2\spadesuit$  is a reverse, as responder must go to the three-level if he wishes to go back to opener's first-bid suit.
- $1\spadesuit - 2\diamonds - 3\clubsuit$  is also a reverse, as the bidding is already at the three-level. When opener's second bid is at the three-level he is said to be making a **high-level reverse**.
- Although a difficult concept, it is important to point out that a reverse opposite a two-level response is **forcing to game**. This is simple arithmetic: 16+ opposite 10+ equals game values.
- Simple preference after a one-level response is a *sign-off*; minimum preference after a two-level response, however, is stronger than a jump to game. **The principle of fast arrival**.

Four hands need setting up (overleaf); none is a full deal. All of the West hands are irrelevant and have been greyed out.

“**Hand**” 1 contains three individual opening bids (North, East and South).

North (Ex. 1 in the student notes) would open  $1\heartsuit$  and rebid  $2\diamonds$  over a  $1\spadesuit$  or  $2\clubsuit$  response. East (Ex. 2 in the notes) would open  $1\heartsuit$  and rebid  $2\heartsuit$  over a  $2\clubsuit$  or  $2\diamonds$  response, only bidding Spades as a raise should partner reply  $1\spadesuit$ . South (Ex. 9 in the notes, in the Quiz) would open  $1\spadesuit$  but the rebid would depend on partner's response. The hand is not strong enough to bid  $1\spadesuit - 2\heartsuit - 3\diamonds$  and could only bid Diamonds over a  $2\clubsuit$  response. So, the hand would bid either  $1\spadesuit - 2\clubsuit - 2\diamonds$  or  $1\spadesuit - 2\heartsuit - 2\spadesuit$ .

“**Hand**” 2 contains just two opening bids (North and East) and subsequent intended *reverses*.

The North hand (Ex. 3 in the student notes) would be a reverse over a one-level response; the East hand (Ex. 4 in the student notes) would be a reverse over a two-level response.

Ask students to bid the North-South cards as a test. (South is Ex. 10 in the student notes in the Quiz)

The North-South cards should be bid  $1\clubsuit - 1\heartsuit - 2\diamonds - 3\clubsuit - \text{Pass}$ . Note the *reverse* and the *sign-off*.

Point out that if the East hand is bid  $1\heartsuit - 2\clubsuit/\diamonds - 2\spadesuit$  then this auction would be *game-forcing*.

“**Hand**” 3 shows the *principle of fast arrival* in a game-forcing auction.

Ask students to bid the North-South cards as a test. (The North hand is a repeat of Ex. 4 in the notes; the South hand is Ex. 7).

On the actual North-South cards the bidding should go  $1\heartsuit - 2\clubsuit - 2\spadesuit - 4\heartsuit$ .

Swap the East (Ex. 8, with the minors transposed) and South cards and ask pairs to bid them again.

Now the bidding should start  $1\heartsuit - 2\diamonds - 2\spadesuit - 3\heartsuit$  as  $3\heartsuit$  is stronger than  $4\heartsuit$ .

$2\spadesuit$ , as a reverse over a two-level response, commits the partnership to game. The idea is to explore for a slam, even though slams have not been discussed yet.

“**Hand**” 4 shows a *high-level reverse*.

Ask students to bid the North-South cards as a test. (The North hand is Ex. 6 in the notes).

On the actual North-South cards the bidding should go  $1\spadesuit - 2\heartsuit - 3\diamonds - 4\spadesuit$  (not  $3\spadesuit$ , as South has a minimum two-level  $2\heartsuit$  response).

Swap the East (Ex. 11, in the notes, in the Quiz) and South cards and ask pairs to bid them again.

Now the bidding should go  $1\spadesuit - 2\heartsuit - 3\diamonds - 3\text{NT}$ .  $3\diamonds$  commits the partnership to game as it is a reverse facing a two-level response.

## §23. Strong Rebids. The Reverse.

In the hands provided with this chapter (Hands 1-8) reference is made to Vubridge lesson 15 (VBlue, Year 1). This set of twelve deals ranges across three types of strong rebids – jumps in the same suit (covered in §18) jump raises (covered in §20) and reverses. So, the Vubridge session usefully revises all types of unbalanced strong rebids.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>“Hand” 1</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ 10 3 ♥ A K 9 8 2 ♦ K 9 6 4 ♣ K 2</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%; vertical-align: top;">           ♠ 4 2 ♥ 5 4 ♦ J 2 ♣ J 10 9 8 7 5 4         </td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W      E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </td> <td style="width: 30%; vertical-align: top;">           ♠ K J 9 6 ♥ Q J 10 6 3 ♦ 10 3 ♣ A Q         </td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ A Q 8 7 5 ♥ 7 ♦ A Q 8 7 5 ♣ 6 3</p>	♠ 4 2 ♥ 5 4 ♦ J 2 ♣ J 10 9 8 7 5 4	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W      E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W      E	S	♠ K J 9 6 ♥ Q J 10 6 3 ♦ 10 3 ♣ A Q	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>“Hand” 2</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ A Q 5 ♥ 2 ♦ A Q 10 8 ♣ K J 10 9 5</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%; vertical-align: top;">           ♠ 7 4 3 ♥ 8 7 5 ♦ J 7 5 4 ♣ 8 4 2         </td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;"> <table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W      E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> </td> <td style="width: 30%; vertical-align: top;">           ♠ K J 9 6 ♥ Q J 10 6 3 ♦ K 3 ♣ A Q         </td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ 10 8 2 ♥ A K 9 4 ♦ 9 6 2 ♣ 7 6 3</p>	♠ 7 4 3 ♥ 8 7 5 ♦ J 7 5 4 ♣ 8 4 2	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W      E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W      E	S	♠ K J 9 6 ♥ Q J 10 6 3 ♦ K 3 ♣ A Q
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## §23. Strong Rebids. The Reverse.

**By the end of this chapter you should understand the following terms:**

**A Reverse:** A rebid that *invites preference at the three-level*. If such a bid is actually made at the three-level (as in  $1\spadesuit - 2\diamond - 3\clubsuit$ , for example) then the last bid is called a **high-level reverse**. All reverses show good hands (16+ points, or so). Any reverse made after a two-level response (showing 10+ points, remember) is **forcing to game**.

**The Principle of Fast Arrival:** In a *game-forcing auction* a jump to game is terminal. Non-game bids tend to be stronger, and invite better things – such as slams. Thus, in the auctions  $1\heartsuit - 2\diamond - 3\clubsuit - 3\heartsuit$  and  $1\heartsuit - 2\diamond - 3\clubsuit - 4\heartsuit$  the jump to  $4\heartsuit$  in the second example is weaker than  $3\heartsuit$  in the first.

For some reason, players become mystified by the concept of a *reverse*. In point of fact, they just aren't that difficult. Everything centres around the basic idea of **giving preference**. Here is a workaday opening bid:

<b>Ex 1.</b>
♠ 10 3
♥ A K 9 8 2
♦ K 9 6 4
♣ K 2

You would open  $1\heartsuit$  on Example 1 with the aim of rebidding  $2\diamond$  over a  $1\spadesuit$  or  $2\clubsuit$  response. You have no idea what your partner's intentions are at this stage, but you have given him the opportunity of killing the auction by giving preference to  $2\heartsuit$  and keeping the bidding at a low level. What about this hand?

<b>Ex 2.</b>
♠ K J 9 6
♥ Q J 10 6 3
♦ 10 3
♣ A Q

Here you would open  $1\heartsuit$  but what is your intended rebid over, say, a  $2\diamond$  response?  $2\spadesuit$  would invite partner to give preference to  $3\heartsuit$ , and that may well be too high on an ill-fitting hand. The best rebid here is  $2\heartsuit$ , allowing partner to proceed with  $2\spadesuit$  if (a) he has a strong hand and (b) he has four Spades. A  $2\spadesuit$  rebid would constitute a **reverse** and show a strong opening hand, certainly stronger than this.

**Definition.** A **reverse** is any bid that asks for preference at the three-level. If the opener actually bids at the three-level he said to be making a **high-level reverse**. Thus, in the sequence...

Opener	Responder
$1\spadesuit$	$1\spadesuit$
$2\diamond$	

the last bid **is** a reverse. If responder (holding a poor hand) wants to duck out of the auction and put opener back to his first suit he has to bid  $3\clubsuit$  – he has to *give preference at the three-level*. This is a *low-level reverse*. In the sequence...

Opener	Responder
$1\spadesuit$	$2\diamond$
$3\clubsuit$	

the he last bid is also a reverse (as it, too, requests preference to opener's first-bid suit at the three-level). However, by actually bidding at the three-level opener has made a **high-level reverse**.

What does it take to make a reverse?

1. An intermediate or better hand. If you are going to force your partner to "prefer" at the three-level, you'd better have some extras. The guidelines suggest 16+ points.
2. The first-named suit is (almost) always longer than the second.
3. With reference to point 2... you shouldn't bid suits unnaturally just to show strength. With five Spades and five Hearts you should always open  $1\spadesuit$ , regardless of strength. Some players think it clever to open  $1\heartsuit$  and reverse into Spades with a strong hand. Simply put – it isn't.

Examples 1 to 3 would open the bidding with the longest suit and then bid the second suit on the next round, forcing preference at the three-level. Example 6 would open 1♠ and bid 3♦ over a 2♥ response.

<b>Ex 3.</b> ♠ A Q 5 ♥ 2 ♦ A Q 10 8 ♣ K J 10 9 5	<b>Ex 4.</b> ♠ K J 9 6 ♥ Q J 10 6 3 ♦ K 3 ♣ A Q	<b>Ex 5.</b> ♠ J 2 ♥ A Q 10 8 ♦ A K 8 6 3 ♣ A 5	<b>Ex 6.</b> ♠ A K 8 7 5 ♥ 7 ♦ A K Q 8 5 ♣ 6 3
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Responding to a reverse needs some care and attention. Firstly, having responded at the one-level, you may have very little (6 points or so). Although opener is showing a good hand you may not have enough for game. Simple preference, then, is *not forcing* (therefore, opener may well Pass it).

However, you need to be aware that opener has a good hand. If you have, say, 10 points, then you know you have enough for game. That may simplify your next bid.

If you have responded at the two-level everything changes. You have 10+ points, opener has 16+. Thus, the partnership has enough for game; we say the partnership is in a **game-forcing auction**. In this case (and there are other examples in bridge) simple preference is both *forcing* and *encouraging*. By contrast, a jump to game is a show of little interest. Compare and contrast these two hands:

<b>Ex 7.</b> ♠ 4 2 ♥ A 5 2 ♦ Q 5 2 ♣ K J 8 3 2	<b>Ex 8.</b> ♠ A Q ♥ K 9 8 ♦ 9 5 ♣ A J 10 8 7 4
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Here, partner opens 1♥ and rebids 2♠ over your 2♣ response. What do you know? What do you bid next? The answer is a reversal (no pun intended) of what you might expect. With a minimum two-level response on Example 7 the right call is 4♥, reaching game but showing no further interest. With a very good hand (14 points) on Example 8 you should bid 3♥, secure in the knowledge that opener cannot (or should not!) Pass. A reverse opposite a two-level response is *game-forcing*, remember. Here, 3♥ actually suggests a better hand than would 4♥; useful if opener is slam-minded. We call this the **Principle of Fast Arrival**. The quicker you reach game, the less interest you have of going higher.

### Further Examples.

What is your best bid as South after the following auctions?

<b>Ex 9.</b> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>S</td></tr> </table> ♠ A Q 8 7 5 ♥ 7 ♦ A Q 8 7 5 ♣ 6 3  <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Pass</td><td>1♠</td></tr> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>2♥</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td></tr> </table> <b>2♠.</b> You have to open 1♠ with these pesky minimum 5-5 hands but your rebid depends on partner's response. Had North had the good manners to respond 2♣ (or even 1NT) you would have been able to rebid 2♦ with no problem. You can't afford to make a <b>high-level reverse</b> with this hand, though.	N				W		E					S	West	North	East	South				Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass	?	<b>Ex 10.</b> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td>N</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>S</td></tr> </table> ♠ 10 8 2 ♥ A K 9 4 ♦ 9 6 2 ♣ 7 6 3  <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td>West</td><td>North</td><td>East</td><td>South</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>Pass</td><td>1♥</td></tr> <tr><td>Pass</td><td>2♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td></tr> </table> <b>3♣.</b> With a minimum responding hand (7 points) you have to do your duty and put partner back to his first-bid suit. He is the one who has hoist the bidding to the three-level, not you, so he needs to have the cards to justify that. 3♣ is <i>not forcing</i> – it's up to North whether he bids again or Passes.	N				W		E					S	West	North	East	South			1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass	?		
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## §23. Quiz A on Strong Rebids. The Reverse

In each case you are **South**In Quiz A you are the **Opener**.

What is your best bid on these hands?

1.

N			
W		E	
	S		

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♦
			?

♠ A Q 8 6  
♥ 5 3  
♦ A J 9 7 6  
♣ Q 8

2.

N			
W		E	
	S		

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	Pass	1♦
			?

♠ A Q 8 6  
♥ 5 3  
♦ A J 9 7 6  
♣ Q 8

3.

N			
W		E	
	S		

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦	Pass	1♠
			?

♠ A Q 9 7 6  
♥ 4 2  
♦ 7 3  
♣ A K 7 3

4.

N			
W		E	
	S		

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♦
			?

♠ A 9  
♥ A Q 8 6  
♦ A J 9 7 6  
♣ Q 8

5.

N			
W		E	
	S		

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦	Pass	1♠
			?

♠ A Q 9 7 6  
♥ A 2  
♦ 7 3  
♣ A K 7 3

6.

N			
W		E	
	S		

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	?

♠ A Q 8 6  
♥ 5 3  
♦ Q 8  
♣ A J 9 7 6

7.

N			
W		E	
	S		

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	?

♠ A 9  
♥ Q 8  
♦ A Q 8 6  
♣ A J 9 7 6

8.

N			
W		E	
	S		

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♥	Pass	?

♠ A Q 8 6  
♥ A J 9 7 6  
♦ A 9  
♣ Q 8

9.

N			
W		E	
	S		

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	2♠
			?

♠ A Q 8 6  
♥ A J 9 7 6  
♦ Q 8  
♣ A 9

10.\*

N			
W		E	
	S		

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	2♠
			?

♠ A J 10 9  
♥ A K J 7 6  
♦ 4  
♣ A Q 8

## §23. Quiz A on Strong Rebids. The Reverse Answers

1.

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West	North	East	South													
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♦													
			?													

♠ A Q 8 6  
 ♥ 5 3  
 ♦ A J 9 7 6  
 ♣ Q 8

1♠. A hand from an earlier series (§14) on opener's rebids. 1♠ is an easy call, allowing partner make his own arrangements. You don't know North's intentions at this point as his hand is undefined, but your job as opener is to try to describe yours as best you can.

2.

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♠ A Q 8 6  
 ♥ 5 3  
 ♦ A J 9 7 6  
 ♣ Q 8

2♦. Now you have to rebid your five-card suit as 2♣ would constitute a strength-showing **reverse**. With a moderate hand (just 13 points) you cannot afford to hoist the bidding to the three-level, and 2♠ would invite preference to 3♦ on what may be an ill-fitting hand.

3.

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			?													

♠ A Q 9 7 6  
 ♥ 4 2  
 ♦ 7 3  
 ♣ A K 7 3

2♠. In similar vein to Q2 you cannot afford to get too high too quickly on this 13 point minimum. 3♣ would be a game-forcing reverse and would exaggerate the values that you have here. You simply have to rebid your five-card Spade suit and see what happens next.

4.

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			?													

♠ A 9  
 ♥ A Q 8 6  
 ♦ A J 9 7 6  
 ♣ Q 8

2♥. Now, with 17 good points, you are quite in order to make a strong rebid. 2♥, a reverse inviting preference to the three-level, shows 16+ points, at least five Diamonds and four Hearts. Note, however, that if partner **signed off** in 3♦ next you would Pass.

5.

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			?													

♠ A Q 9 7 6  
 ♥ 7 2  
 ♦ A 3  
 ♣ A K 7 3

3♣. With 17 points opposite 10+ you have to play this hand in a game contract. 3♣, a **high-level reverse**, commits the partnership to game. It's not at all clear which game is on the menu – 4♠, 3NT, 5♣ or even 5♦ are all possible. North's next bid may clarify matters.

6.

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Pass	2♣	Pass	?													

♠ A Q 8 6  
 ♥ 5 3  
 ♦ Q 8  
 ♣ A J 9 7 6

**Pass.** Like a rat up a drainpipe. *Simple preference* is not forcing; in fact, it is as weak a bid as exists in this game. 1♠ was not a reverse, it merely suggested four Spades and five Clubs. Partner has now suggested that you shut up and Pass and we suggest the same.

7.

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♠ A 9  
 ♥ Q 8  
 ♦ A Q 8 6  
 ♣ A J 9 7 6

**Pass.** Yes, you have 17 points, but you showed that when you *reversed* with a 2♦ rebid. Partner's 3♣ is *simple preference* and is a cry of despair. This hand has little future opposite a minimum one-level response (6 points or so) and you should get out while you can.

8.

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♠ A Q 8 6  
 ♥ A J 9 7 6  
 ♦ A 9  
 ♣ Q 8

**Pass.** What else? You have arrived in game and have nowhere else to go. Some sequences in this game are *slam tries*, suggesting that you bid on with a suitable hand. Well, you have nothing extra and, anyway, 4♥ is *not encouraging* – quite the opposite, in fact.

9.

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Pass	3♥	Pass	2♠																	
			?																	

♠ A Q 8 6  
 ♥ A J 9 7 6  
 ♦ Q 8  
 ♣ A 9

4♥. You cannot Pass this, if you were thinking of that (cf Q6 and Q7). Yes, 3♥ is *simple preference*, but it follows a two-level response, so is **forcing to game**. You are actually invited to bid to the stars here, so 4♥ is the just about the weakest bid you can make here.

10.

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Pass	2♣	Pass	1♥																	
Pass	3♥	Pass	2♠																	
			?																	

♠ A J 10 9  
 ♥ A K J 7 6  
 ♦ 4  
 ♣ A Q 8

6♥. We've said nothing about slams in the course so far, so this is a tough question. However, let's look at the evidence. You have a maximum 19 points, a Club fit with partner and North says he is interested in better things than just game (cf Q8). Thus, a slam it is.

### §23. Quiz B on Strong Rebids. The Reverse

In each case you are **South**

In Quiz B you are the **Responder**.  
What is your best bid on these hands?

1.

N
W     E
S

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	?

♠ J 9  
♥ K J 8 6 3  
♦ 10 8 5  
♣ Q 8 2

2.

N
W     E
S

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	?

♠ J 8 6 5 2  
♥ A 8  
♦ J 9 4  
♣ J 10 5

3.

N
W     E
S

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	?

♠ J 9 8 4 2  
♥ K 10 8 6  
♦ Q 5  
♣ J 10

4.

N
W     E
S

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	?

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

5.

N
W     E
S

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	?

♠ Q J 9 8  
♥ K 10 8 6  
♦ Q J 5  
♣ Q 9

6.

N
W     E
S

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	?

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

7.

N
W     E
S

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	?

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

8.

N
W     E
S

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	?

♠ A Q 10  
♥ A 9 4  
♦ J 10  
♣ K 10 9 6 4

9.

N
W     E
S

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	?

♠ K Q 10  
♥ Q  
♦ A J 9 8 6 3  
♣ J 9 5

10.\*

N
W     E
S

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	?

♠ 10 9  
♥ Q  
♦ A J 9 8 6 3  
♣ K Q 10 8



## §23. Quiz B on Strong Rebids. The Reverse Answers

1.

N			
W	E		
S			

♠ J 9  
♥ K J 8 6 3  
♦ 10 8 5  
♣ Q 8 2

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♣	Pass	?

**2♣.** Simple preference, as a **sign-off**. North has only shown what may well be a minimum hand with five Clubs and four Spades. You can hardly allow him to play in a 4-2 Spade “fit”, so must put him back into Clubs, trying to kill the auction. 2♣ is not encouraging.

2.

N			
W	E		
S			

♠ J 8 6 5 2  
♥ A 8  
♦ J 9 4  
♣ J 10 5

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	?

**3♦.** North has *reversed* in this auction, showing 16+ points. Nonetheless, you have little (just 7 points) and should give simple preference back to Diamonds. This is non-forcing after a one-level response, and North may well Pass 3♦ with a minimum (16-17 points).

3.

N			
W	E		
S			

♠ J 9 8 4 2  
♥ K 10 8 6  
♦ Q 5  
♣ J 10

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	?

**3♥.** North has reversed into Hearts, showing 16+ points. If you were thinking of Passing (“only 7 points, partner!”) you’d be letting the side down. Game is still possible and you must allow partner the chance of bidding it. With a minimum 16-17 he should Pass 3♥

4.

N			
W	E		
S			

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

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	?

**4♥.** You should take the pressure off partner by raising to game immediately. You have 10 points and North has announced 16+ by his reverse, so you know of game values between you, not to mention the all-important 4-4 fit. It’s your duty to bid game, not his.

5.

N			
W	E		
S			

♠ Q J 9 8  
♥ K 10 8 6  
♦ Q J 5  
♣ Q 9

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	?

**3NT.** Had North bid Diamonds before Clubs you’d have bid 2NT at this point, as North may have a minimum opening bid. This way, though, North has shown 16+ points, so you know of a combined 27+ points and stoppers in all suits. No time to pick the daisies.

6.

N			
W	E		
S			

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

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	?

**4♥.** You know of an eight-card Heart fit (North is guaranteeing at least 5-4 in Hearts and Spades) and game values between the two hands. 3NT would be showboating here. 4♥ is not encouraging – it just says that you think that game is the limit of the two hands.

7.

N			
W	E		
S			

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

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	?

**3NT.** Partner has four Hearts and five Diamonds (probably) and a good hand (certainly). With the unbid suit (Spades) well sewn up, it looks right to play this one in No-trumps, hoping to wrap up an easy nine tricks. Difficult to see what else to bid in any case.

8.

N			
W	E		
S			

♠ A Q 10  
♥ A 9 4  
♦ J 10  
♣ K 10 9 6 4

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	?

**3♥.** Here you have a good hand – 14 points facing 16+. 4♥ would be terminal (cf Q6) suggesting that game is the limit of the hand. 3♥ is a stronger bid than 4♥ as a reverse facing a two-level is **forcing to game**. North won’t Pass 3♥ – indeed, he may bid a slam!

9.

N			
W	E		
S			

♠ K Q 10  
♥ Q  
♦ A J 9 8 6 3  
♣ J 9 5

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	?

**3NT.** You have the unbid suit (Spades) well held, so have no worries there. Nine tricks should be easy enough to make as your side has plenty of points (your 13 facing 16+). You might have bid 3♦ instead (which cannot be Passed, of course) but why bother?

10.

N			
W	E		
S			

♠ 10 9  
♥ Q  
♦ A J 9 8 6 3  
♣ K Q 10 8

West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	?

**4♣.** Yes, you might bid 5♣ but 4♣ cannot be Passed. Once you have made a two-level response a reverse commits the partnership to game, so a gentle raise here forces North to bid on. Who knows? Perhaps he will show support for your Diamonds next? Let’s see.



## §23. Example hands 1 to 4.

**Hand 1 Dealer North**

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

♠ 6 2  
♥ Q 8 7 3  
♦ A 10 6 3  
♣ K 7 3

N		
W		E
	S	

♠ Q J 10 9  
♥ K 10 2  
♦ K 8 5 4  
♣ 9 8

♠ K 8 7 5 4  
♥ 9 5  
♦ J 9 7  
♣ Q 5 2

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	
3♣ by North		Opening lead: ♠Q	

This deal illustrates both a **reverse** by opener and a **sign-off** by responder. After the obvious 1♣ – 1♠ start to the auction North has an eminently sound 2♥ reverse. Such a bid (*inviting preference at the three-level*) shows a strong hand (usually 16+ points) and is highly encouraging. What should South do, with a minimum responding hand? The answer is to make a minimum preference bid – 3♣ in this case. This is not encouraging, quite the opposite (see Hands 5 and 6 for an interesting contrast, though). What should North do after South's cry of weakness? Well, Pass. North should realise he is minimum for his action to date – he has already shown 16+ points.

**Hand 2 Dealer East**

♠ 10 8 6 5  
♥ Q 10 6 5  
♦ A 8 7  
♣ 8 6

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

N		
W		E
	S	

♠ Q 9 4 2  
♥ K 8 2  
♦ J 5  
♣ K J 10 4

♠ K J 7  
♥ 7 3  
♦ 9 3 2  
♣ A 9 7 5 3

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass
3NT by East		Opening lead: ♣5	

West opens 1♦ and has enough to rebid 2♥ over his partner's 1♠ response. Now the problem is East's; what should he bid next? Well, as West has shown 16+ points by his reverse and East has 10 points it's a case of adding up what you can see in front of your face with what your partner has told you. With all four suits stopped and 26+ points between the East-West hands, 3NT seems the obvious spot and East should bid it promptly. This should prove an easy spot with one Spade, two Hearts, four Diamonds and three Clubs, after East has knocked out the two minor-suit Aces. The East cards would only be worth 2NT had the red suits (and the bidding) been transposed.

**Hand 3 Dealer South**

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

♠ Q 10  
♥ 8 7 3 2  
♦ 8 7 5 3  
♣ A 6 5

N		
W		E
	S	

♠ J 8 6 2  
♥ 10  
♦ A 2  
♣ K J 10 8 7 4

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

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	
4♥ by South		Opening lead: ♥2	

The South cards here are the same as the West cards of Hand 2 and the bidding starts the same way: 1♦ – 1♠ – 2♥. What next, North? Well, 3♥ may appear obvious but that would be an underbid given that South is known to have 16+ points. In fact, 3♥ would show a much weaker hand than this and could easily be Passed by South. It is North's duty to raise to 4♥ as he knows of game values between the partnership (9 points opposite 16+). 4♥ has three top losers and the 4-1 trump break makes matters messy; declarer can two trumps and should drive out the ♦A now. In time, South makes two Spades, four Hearts and four Diamonds for his game contract.

**Hand 4 Dealer West**

♠ 9 2  
♥ 9 8 7 2  
♦ A K 8 6  
♣ K 8 5

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

N		
W		E
	S	

♠ K Q 7 6 4  
♥ K Q 10 5  
♦ 9 4 3  
♣ 9

♠ J 10 8 5  
♥ 3  
♦ J 10 7 5  
♣ Q 7 3 2

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		
4♥ by West		Opening lead: ♦A	

In essence, this is the same deal as Hand 3. The West hand is identical to the North collection of Hand 1 but here he faces a very different responding hand. After 1♣ – 1♠ West has (just) enough to reverse into 2♥, showing 16+ points. East, with 10 points, should not shirk his duty by making a feeble 3♥ raise (a bid that would be made on a far weaker hand) but should raise immediately to game. Note that East knows that his partnership has 26+ points and a 4-4 Heart fit. After three rounds of Diamonds the play is not as easy as on Hand 3. Declarer should **not** ruff in both hands – instead he should play off the ♠A, ♠K and ruff a Spade high. **Now** he draws all the trumps.

## §23. Example hands 5 to 8.

**Hand 5 Dealer North**

♠ 10 4 2 ♥ A 9 8 6 5 3 ♦ 10 2 ♣ 7 3	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	♠ A Q 9 7 6 ♥ 2 ♦ K 9 7 ♣ A K 6 5
N	E					
W	S					
♠ K 5 3 ♥ K 7 4 ♦ Q J 8 6 4 ♣ J 9		♠ J 8 ♥ Q J 10 ♦ A 5 3 ♣ Q 10 8 4 2				

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
4♠ by East		Opening lead: ♥Q	

These deals (Hands 5 to 8) all involve **game-forcing** reverses. That is, reverses made after a two-level response. Here, East opens 1♠ and West has (just) enough to reply 2♦. With 16 points East has enough to make a high-level reverse into 3♣, committing East-West into game. What next, West? Well, that player knows of game values for the partnership and of an eight-card Spade fit. That suggests an immediate leap to 4♠. All very good (and obvious?). What may be less obvious is that this bid carries a strong undertone of a lack of further interest. West has a minimum hand for a two-level response and 4♠ says exactly that. East has nothing more to say.

**Hand 6 Dealer East**

♠ K 5 3 ♥ A K 7 5 4 ♦ Q J 8 ♣ J 3	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	♠ 10 8 6 4 2 ♥ 6 3 ♦ A 5 3 ♣ 9 4 2
N	E					
W	S					
♠ None ♥ Q J 10 9 8 ♦ 10 6 4 2 ♣ K 10 8 7		♠ A Q J 9 7 ♥ 2 ♦ K 9 7 ♣ A Q 6 5				

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
4♠ by South		Opening lead: ♥Q	

Compare and contrast. South opens 1♠ and has (just) enough to make a game-forcing, high-level reverse into 3♣ over North's 2♥ response. Now, North has a robust opening bid himself and, given the right cards with his partner (say, something juicy in Hearts) a slam may be in the offing. To get across the good news North makes the highly encouraging 3♠ bid. "Do you fancy a slam, partner?" South is minimum for his reverse, though, and has no honours in his partner's suit – so the right answer is "No". Passing 3♣ would be a double-cross of the highest magnitude, so South makes the weakest bid he can – 4♣. North folds his tent and goes quietly.

**Hand 7 Dealer South**

♠ 4 ♥ K Q 9 8 6 ♦ 9 8 2 ♣ K Q 6 5	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	♠ 10 6 ♥ A 10 7 4 ♦ 5 3 ♣ 10 9 8 4 3
N	E					
W	S					
♠ K J 9 3 2 ♥ J 5 3 ♦ K Q 4 ♣ 7 2		♠ A Q 8 7 5 ♥ 2 ♦ A J 10 7 6 ♣ A J				

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
3NT by North		Opening lead: ♣10	

South opens 1♠ (in general, bid the major first with two five-card suits) and North has enough to scrape up a 2♥ response. Now South makes a game-forcing, high-level reverse of 3♦, putting North on the spot. Pass is out of the question; giving preference to Spades would be absurd. With a decent holding in the unbid suit, Clubs, North tries his luck with 3NT. East leads the top-of-a-sequence ♣10 and the hand is a brute both to play and defend. Best, from for declarer, is to set up Diamonds, starting by leading the ♦J from table. Whether the defenders can get at their tricks now is moot – it's one of those deals where declarer may just emerge with nine tricks.

**Hand 8 Dealer West**

♠ K J 9 3 ♥ J 5 3 ♦ 9 5 ♣ K 9 8 2	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td><td style="padding: 2px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W</td><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	E	W	S	♠ 4 ♥ K Q 9 7 6 ♦ K Q 8 3 2 ♣ 10 5
N	E					
W	S					
♠ A Q 8 7 5 ♥ 2 ♦ A J 10 7 6 ♣ A J		♠ 10 6 2 ♥ A 10 8 4 ♦ 4 ♣ Q 7 6 4 3				

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♦	Pass	5♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		
5♦ by West		Opening lead: ♣2	

An unusual hand, this one, as five-of-a-minor is a rare occurrence. "Rare" is not a synonym for non-existent, though, and such contracts are reached occasionally. West opens 1♠ (best with these 5-5 hands) and East responds with 2♥ (again, best with 5-5 in the red suits – bid the major). West makes a game-forcing, high-level reverse into 3♦, causing East to twitch an eyebrow. 4♦ is a possibility now (not a bad call at all) as West cannot Pass it; however, better is the terminal 5♦ (East is minimum and has no Aces. West Passes that, with no inclination to bid a slam. North leads a low Club and now West must lose two tricks, but making eleven is a simple affair.