

REVERSES: CHAT participants are showing confusion about what a reverse bid by opener is. I left a table last Monday where I am sure the confusion level was worse after my explanations. Maybe some examples will help.

Some reverse bidding sequences:

1♣ – 1♥

2♦ – ?

1♣ – 1NT

2♥ – ?

1♦ – 1♠

2♥ – ?

1♥ – 1NT

2♠ – ?

Audrey Grant’s REVERSE bid definition:

A non-jump bid by opener at the two level in a new suit that is higher-ranking than opener’s first bid suit.

It promises:

- 16 or more high-card points.
- 5+ cards in the first suit.
- 4 cards in the second suit.

A reverse bid is forcing for one round.

These bids are NOT reverses:

1♦ – 1♥

1♠ (1♠ is below the 2 level)

1♥ – 1NT

2♦ (♦ is a lower ranking suit than the opening bid suit)

A reverse bid often makes the bidding uncomfortable for partner. **But partner is forced to bid now.** Find the right bid: Choose one of partners 2 suits, **or** bid NT, **or** raise your own suit, **or** find another bid that is helpful to partner.

Why is a reverse useful? A reverse gives you a way to describe a distributional hand that has extra values (similar to the values of a 1NT opener – with balanced distribution), but not jump-shift values. Partner now has detailed information that can help to place the contract.

There is much more that can be said about this bid. Many situations arise in a competitive bidding situation that can make the bidding even more difficult. For more, read Audrey’s full account of the reverse bid.

<https://www.betterbridge.com/misc/StandardArticles/Standard200903.pdf>

My view is that the reverse is a bid that has to be in your partnership agreement. If you don’t have it, you should work on understanding it and adding it to your card.

Enough of that. Let’s lighten up a bit. Reverse bidding is merely Bridge. We are a lot more than just card geeks battling for masterpoints. We are social animals. The club game is a social gathering. Play some cards, taunt your opponents, eat some treats, then go out and drink beer and discuss how you screwed up hand #10. Admit to all your friends that you were an idiot on that hand. That really feels good! Self-deprecation is good for the soul. It must be, or we wouldn’t do it so much. Now, go home and give your spouse (who has zero interest in this peculiar obsession we have) a lengthy report on how the day went.

Reviewing the day’s hands at the local Pub is fun, but it doesn’t give you “lasting fun”. It can be helpful at improving your game when you see mistakes that you don’t want to make again. But you have to do something memorable at the table to get this “lasting fun”. Maybe just getting an extra trick (one that is not rightfully yours) is all that is needed.

There are a lot of ways to get an extra trick. You can trump in the short hand. You can squeeze people. You can execute an end play or a dummy reversal. You can set up a side suit and throw away losers. You can deceive people! (has a nice ring to it, doesn’t it?)

Find some clever little ruse that dupes the opponents. I was fooled one day when defending against 1NT. Declarer had a miserable hand with little chance of making 1NT. He (some guy named Bill) led his worst suit at the first opportunity. Fooled me. I took the trick and immediately switched suits (just what he wanted) and helped him make 1NT. I still remember it. I can still see the smirk on his face.

Find something like that. On a good day, the opponent is visibly upset at being deceived. Perfect! There is a chance, after this swindle, that the opponents might remember your first name the next time you meet. You can improve on this possibility by showing them the sensitivity and thoughtfulness that defines the real you. “I can feel your pain” is a phrase you might use here. Try to create a lasting experience for everyone!

Here’s to “Lasting Fun”!

Arne