

Third/Fourth Seat Openers

1) Bidding goes P-P-??? or P-P-P-??? and Partner opens in 3rd or 4th Seat

2) What does Partner show:

- a. Usually at least a good 10 or 11 HCP, may actually have a full opener or better (12-14 or 18-19)
- b. Probably some distribution
- c. Usually control of Spades (four or more)
- d. Uses the Rule of 15, 20, 21, 22 or some other rationale for opening

3) Advantages of 3rd/4th Seat Openers:¹

<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Dangers</u>
Partner gets off to a good lead	Partner may get off to a bad lead
May compete for a part-score	Partner might hang you!
If they play the hand, may lead them to misplace high cards and misguess distribution	If they play the hand, may help them locate high cards and deduce distribution
Preemptive value: Steal bidding room	Might push them into a good contract they weren't bidding
Might keep them out of the right contract	Partner might hang you!
Disrupting their normal flow of bidding	Might get doubled and go for a number

4) So how do you know the quality/HCP of your openers hand?

- a. What if partner has 13 or 14HCP? Or only 10 or 11HCP?
- b. What if you have 10 or 11HCP but couldn't open?

¹ Article by Barry C. Harper – Third Hand Actions or Action in 3rd Seat, 2012

5) Playing some form of Drury helps decide the correct contract – Here's one particular version (Two-way, reverse, fit Drury):

Over partner's 3rd or 4th seat opener, responder bids:

- a. bid 2C with LR and 3 piece support
- b. bid 2D with LR and 4 piece support
- c. with real club or diamond suit, first bid 1N

Over responder's bid, opener will rebid:

- a. their opening suit if they did indeed open light
- b. 2D (bidding 2H after opening 2S may be a tad weaker) if they had a full opener
- c. any other suit rebids are natural/usual (based on your card)

6) Advantages of Drury

- a. are mainly the times when you have a part-score your way and you avoid getting to the three-level unnecessarily on 18-24 HCP
- b. when you open light in third seat, the next hand might have the best hand at the table, and your action might make it difficult, inconvenient or even impossible for them to bid
- c. Also with hands where you have a good opening suit, it allows you to give partner a lead directing bid in, without (hopefully) having partner go crazy
 - 1. As opener, you hold: S-KQJT_x, H-KJ_x, D-xx, C-xxx

EXERCISES

Bidding goes P – P – and Partner opens 1 Spade and you hold:

- 1) S – Qxx
H – AJxx
D – xxx
C – xxx

- 2) S – xx
H – AQJxx
D – Kxxx
C – xx

- 3) S – QJx
H – AQxx
D – KQxxx
C – xx

- 4) S – Kxx
H – Axx
D – KQxxxx
C – QJ

- 5) S – xxx
H – xxx
D – Qxxxx
C – xx