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This Week in Bridge

(92) 2-Way Reverse Drury

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Level: 2

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General

When partner opens in 3rd or 4th seat and we have a good hand, we do not want to go jumping around to show it – partner may have no game interest for their opening bid. We want to have an effective way of describing our good hands cheaply when partner opens in 3rd or 4th seat.

Responding to 3rd or 4th Seat Openings - General

- When partner opens 1-minor we can bid 2-minor as “inverted minors” showing a fit and a maximum passed hand (9-11 pts.)
- When partner opens 1-Major, if we have a 10-11 count without a fit we bid 1NT (just as we always would with any 5-11 pts) and this will give partner a chance to get out cheaply if they have a simple opening hand (minimum or sub-minimum.)
- But when partner opens 1-Major and we have a maximum passed hand with a fit, then we want to be able to show this to partner without getting too high. This is what the Drury convention accomplishes.

2-Way Drury

When we are a passed hand we are more limited in what bids we can make. If partner opens 1-Major then we can no longer make Jacoby 2NT, Splinters, or 2/1 GF bids. Thus, we are generally down to bidding 1NT, 3/1 Invitational, or raising partner (possibly bidding 1♠ over a 1♥ opening.) It makes sense for us to make use of the free (cheap and newly available) 2/1 bids is a new way.

Note: 1♠ - 2♥ Natural, 9-11 pts., 5+c♥ (We don't want to give up being able to bid the Major.)

We do not want to use these 2♣ and 2♦ bids as natural, because when we have a long minor it will often be best for us to play in Notrump – so we respond 1NT and see if partner leaves us there.

The most valuable call we can make is to raise partner – thus, we will use these bids (2♣ & 2♦) as powerful raises of partner. Specifically,
2♣* 3-card Limit Raise (10-11pts)
2♦* 4-card Limit Raise (9-11 pts); we stretch a bit to make this call since we have more trump.

Note: With 5+card support, most players bid 2♦ to show 4-card support then raise again to show extra trump.

Do you have a partner that likes to be silly in the 3rd seat? These Drury bids also help keep us from getting too high when partner misbehaves in the 3rd seat.

Follow-Up Bids (Reverse Drury)

After the auction begins 1M-2♣* (1M-2♦*), Opener now needs to describe their hand. Since they have a known fit we use the “Principle of Fast Arrival” –

- Rebid 2-Major with all minimum and sub-minimum hands (hands not interested in game.)
- If we have enough points to accept the game invitation, then we bid game (4-Major or possibly offer 3NT if we think it is a good option...)
- Any other suit bid is a Help Suit Game Try.

Note: The idea of returning to our suit with a minimum is the opposite of the way Drury was originally played and thus it is called Reverse Drury.

Competition

Most players play that if the opponents interfere (either with a takeout double or an overcall) then Drury is off. If the opponents overcall, then Responder can just cuebid the opponents' suit (Q=LR+) as they would opposite a 1st or 2nd seat opening bid. If the opponents make a takeout double, then Responder starts with a redouble (10-11 pts) and raises partner on the next round of bidding.

Note: It is possible to play Drury on in competition (over double or some overcalls), but these would be very special agreements to have with partner – and they often become quite complex. If you choose to play Drury in competition, be sure that you and partner are on the same page.

Conclusion

When we are a passed hand some of our bidding system should change as it makes no sense to continue with our original system. We use some of these newly open bids in the most useful way we can – as conventional raises of partner's Major.



Drury is this useful convention, as it allows us to describe our entire hand in one bid – a maximum passed hand with a fit for partner’s suit. Give this gadget a try with your favorite partner. Just remember your agreements about Drury - many players have had Drury mix-ups and play in their 2-3♣ fit – so just be careful!