

## IS THAT FORCING? CAN I PASS?

By Maritha Potenger

Bridge players get major headaches from misunderstandings about which bids are forcing and which are not.

1. The first rule of forcing vs. not forcing is **ASBAF**: All Strange Bids Are Forcing. If you do not know what a bid is, assume that it is forcing.
2. What is the ONLY 100% forcing Opening Bid?
3. A \_\_\_\_\_ bid by Responder is forcing with only one exception.
4. What is the exception to #3?
5. What is the ONLY game-forcing bid you can make after partner makes a take-out double?
6. Are Jump Rebids (in same suit) by Opener: Forcing OR Non Forcing?
7. Are Jump Rebids (in same suit) by Responder: Forcing OR Non Forcing?
8. Which of the following bids are forcing one round, and which can be passed:

Reverse, Jump Shift, Cue Bid, Michaels Bid, Jump to 2NT by Opening Bidder, Unusual 2NT, New Suit by Responder when Partner Opens a Weak Two Bid, New Suit by Responder when Partner Opens a 3-Level Preempt; 2NT rebid after Opener starts with 2C; Jacoby Transfer; Stayman; 4NT as Roman Key Card Blackwood, 2C by Responder when Partner opens 1NT; New Suit by Opener that is Lower than First Suit Bid.

9. Certain auctions require discussion and partnership agreement. For example, 1C-P-1H-P-2NT-P-4C. Do you feel that the 4C bid shows clubs and an invitational hand for 5 clubs with distribution unsuited for NT? Do you feel that 4C is Minorwood, agreeing to clubs and asking for Key Cards with Clubs as trumps? Do you feel that 4C is Gerber and asks for number of Aces held by Opener? **Partnership Agreement!**
10. If you play New Minor Forcing, then 1C-P-1S-P-1NT-P-2H is NON FORCING because you would use the new minor (2D) to inquire about Opener's major suit holdings and HCP (minimum or maximum). However, what about 1C-P-1S-P-2C-P-2H? Is that forcing—some people say yes, absolutely because it is a new suit by Responder. Other people say, positively not because this is also a New Minor Forcing situation and Responder could bid 2D as a forcing bid to inquire about major holdings. **Partnership Agreement!**

## ANSWERS

2. 2C is the only 100% forcing Opening bid (unless you play Namyats or other conventions which use an artificial opening that requires a transfer bid by Responder or Big Club system).
3. A NEW SUIT bid by Responder is forcing with one exception.
4. The exception is 1C or 1D-P-1S-P-1NT-P-2H is NON FORCING (shows a weak 5-4 or 5-5 hand in majors) **if** you play New Minor Forcing convention. [Forcing if you don't play NMF.]
5. The only way to force game (other than bidding it directly) when partner makes a take-out double is to CUE BID THE OPPONENT'S SUIT as your first bid.
6. Jump rebids by Opening are NOT forcing (show 16-18 HCP and a good 6-card suit)
7. Jump rebids by Responder are NOT forcing (show 9-11 HCP and a good 6-card suit)
8. The following are FORCING ONE ROUND (or require a bid/answer from partner): Reverse, Jump Shift, Cue Bid, Michaels Bid, Unusual 2NT, New Suit when partner opens a Weak Two or a Weak Three Bid; Jacoby Transfer, Stayman, and Roman Key Card Blackwood. (**Rule: Any bid that asks a question or gives a command is forcing!**) The following bids are NOT forcing: 2NT rebid after 2C opening; Jump to 2NT by Opener; New Suit by Opener that is lower than first suit (pass or correct)..