

LEBENSOHL AFTER PARTNER DOUBLES A WEAK TWO BID ny Maritha Pottenger

When partner doubles a Weak Two bid, you are forced to bid (except in the very unlikely event that you have a huge trump stack). In general, partner can expect to find you with around 7 HCP. So, you must have more than 7 HCP to make a constructive bid. The problem is: since partner's double forces you to bid, how does partner know when you are making a constructive bid and when you are making a weak bid? Lebensohl comes to the rescue here.

After partner doubles a Weak Two bid, a 2NT bid by you is a relay—and demands that partner bid 3C (just like the relay when opponents bid at the 2 level over your partner's 1 NT opening). After partner bids 3C, you can pass with weakness (0-7 HCP) and longish clubs or correct to 3D, 3H, or 3S—whichever is your longest suit (and that might only be 4 cards). With 9-11 HCP, you can bid directly at the 3 level (no 2NT relay). With more than 11 HCP, you should probably jump or cue-bid to force to game. An immediate 3NT would be to play and guarantee a stopper (or two).

The **Bottom Line** (when partner doubles a Weak Two bid):

- 1) an immediate suit bid by you at the 2-level is to play.
- 2) an immediate suit bid by you at the 3 level shows 9-11 HCP (and only promises 4-card suit).
- 3) a cue-bid is game-forcing
- 4) a jump bid shows 12+ HCP and is game-forcing.
- 5) 2NT is a relay, forcing partner to bid 3C. Any suit bid after that is weak and asks partner to pass. (You can also pass partner's forced 3C bid.)

Therefore, **if the doubler has a monster hand, s/he must refuse to bid 3C** when partner bids the 2NT relay. Bidding 3C gives partner a chance to pass. If you have practically game in your own hand, make some other natural bid and partner will know that you have lots & lots of stuff!

If partner bids 2NT (15-18 HCP and a stopper) over an opponent's Weak Two bid:

- 1) Three clubs is Stayman.
- 2) Jacoby Transfers are used for the majors. (Some recommend using transfers for all 4 suits. If you do that, 3D transfers to 3H; 3H transfers to 3S; 3S transfers to 4C; and 4C—jump—transfers to 4D. Remember, 3C is Stayman.)
- 3) It is suggested that “transferring” to the opponent's suit shows shortness in that suit, game-forcing values, and no 4-card major.

LEBENSOHL WHEN PARTNER MAKES A REVERSE

- 1) With a very weak hand, bid 2NT which is the relay and demands that partner bid 3C. After the relay and 3C, a pass or any bid at the 3 level by you is weak and asks partner to pass.
- 2) Any response other than 2NT is natural, game-forcing and constructive (shows 8+ HCP).
- 3) When partner has a huge, huge hand, s/he must refuse the relay—making some other natural bid over 2NT—to show extra values and strongly suggest game.