

Advanced bidding -4 th suit forcing

Let us look at some common or garden bidding sequences where it becomes apparent that there is no fit to be found.

e.g 1D-----1H
1S----- ?
xx
AQxx
Jxx
AQxx

e.g 1S-----2C
2D----- ?
Qx
Kxxx
xx
AKJxx

The auctions have not yet been completed but responder should surely bid 3NT as their final call. Having bid three suits there is no real possibility of there being a fit in the final (unbid) 4th suit ; the last player to bid thus bids 3NT rather than bidding the last suit. All that seems straightforward.

Two more examples of this:

e.g 1S-----2H
3C----- ?
xx
QJxxx
Kxxx
Ax

e.g 1D-----2C
2H----- ?
KJxx
xx
Jx
AKJxx

Again responder knows that there is no chance of a fit in the 4th suit so bids No Trumps.

Why I am labouring all this is to point out that we never actually ever *need to bid the 4th suit when we hold it*; that if *we do hold the 4th suit we just bid No Trumps*.

Well if we don't bid the 4th suit when we hold it , when do we bid the 4th suit ? {The glib and correct answer to that is going to be that we bid the 4th suit when we don't hold it !! }. Let us change those above examples by a few cards:

e.g 1D-----1H
1S-----?
AJx
AQxx
Jxx
Jxx

e.g 1S-----2C
2D----- ?
Ax
Jxx
xxx
AKJxx

Responder knows that there are enough points for game and knows that there is no fit to be found. Normally one simply puts ones head down and charges into No Trumps in such circumstances but that would be wrong here.

Do you see why ? It is because responder should be rightfully nervous of playing in No Trumps when they have such a nebulous holding in the (unbid) 4th suit. In the first example here they hold only Jxx in clubs. Now bidding No Trumps when you only have Jxx in the suit that is almost certainly going to be led is not recommended. But what can you do ? -you have the points for game but are fearful of bidding the No Trump game. Over the page all will be revealed ---->

