

♣ Gary's ♦ ♥ Top Bridge Tips ♠

#6

2♥ (weak) - 2♠ (non-forcing) - **Now What?**

In Top Bridge Tip #5 I suggested that a new suit in response to an opening Weak Two bid should 'not' be forcing. Okay, so if it is not forcing, is it a shut out bid? Is opener allowed to bid again? Here is the way your more experienced beginner's can handle it.

The answer to the first question is: It is not a shut out bid. The answer to the second question is: Yes opener can bid again. However, if opener does bid again it **must only be** to show support for responder's suit. In other words, opener **must bid** again, if she has support for responder's suit. Having said that, what is support? Assume you open 2♥ with each of the following three hands and partner bids 2♠. What is your bid?

#1 ♠1083

♥AK8753

♦109

♣963

#2

♠3

♥KQJ874

♦Q862

♣82

#3 ♠83

♥AQJ1075

♦742

♣65

Hand #1: **Bid 3♠**. You have support. This does not promise any extra values, just support. Holding ♠AKJ974 ♥10 ♦A3 ♣1084 partner might make game in spades opposite this hand.

Hand #2: **Pass**. Remember...a 'new suit' is not forcing. Partner knows you have six hearts and yet has shown a preference to play in her own suit and in a part-score. Respect that.

Hand #3: **Pass**. In one sense you do have support because you expect partner to have 6+ spades. But, it is best to define 'support' as three cards* in the majors. The reason we show 3-card support is that with a reasonable hand, partner might be 'max' for her non-forcing bid and 4♠ may be on. *The 'Law of Total Tricks' will protect you at the 3-level with a 9 card fit.

If you have support, you must show your support!

An Aside

An added frill for your even more experienced players might be to include a 'Super Support' bid by the Weak Two bidder in response to a new suit by responder. I got this idea from a friend in Newfoundland Canada, Randy Bennett. A two-time Canadian Bridge Champ.

Say you hold ♠Q102 ♥AJ9875 ♦98 ♣32 You open 2♥ only to hear partner respond 2♠.

You should now bid 2NT. Remember, while 2♠ was not forcing, you must bid again if you have support. With this hand you have super support, considering you hold a Weak Two hand. (It is inconceivable to think that opener could bid no trump in a non-forcing auction). This is a great way to distinguish between just having a support and having super support! It costs you nothing, while potentially gaining a lot.