

Weak jump shifts *by Derrick Browne*

Partner opens 1S. What response should you make with the hand below?

S 5
H AK432
D 87
C AKQ98

Bid 2H, the higher-ranked of two 5-card suits. A new suit by responder is forcing, so there is no need to jump. Because there is no necessity for responder to jump shift to force partner, many pairs play responder's jump shift as weak, typically 3-6 HCP with at least a 6-card suit.

Assuming you have agreed to play weak jump shifts, consider your response to a 1H opening with each of these hands:

(a) S K T 9 8 4 2 (b) S 6 2 (c) S Q T 9 8 6 4
 H 4 3 H 7 6 4 H 2
 D 8 7 3 D 7 D 8 6
 C 5 2 C A T 9 8 7 3 2 C 7 5 4 3

Hand (a) is a normal weak jump shift to 2S. Hand (b) bids 2H to show the major suit fit. Hand (c) has only 2 HCP but the good spades and 6-4 shape justify a 2S bid.

On hands like (a) and (c), the weak jump shift allows responder to get into the action – hoping perhaps to make a contract, perhaps to cut out the other side – without deceiving partner into expecting 6+ points.

Do weak jump shifts apply when both sides are bidding? Some players change methods, but if you have no such agreement, the weak jumps still apply:

Dealer North, nil vul.

NORTH
S K
H 7654
D KQJ
C KQJ32

WEST
S J84
H KQ
D 8764
C 8764

EAST
S A32
H AJT82
D 932
C A9

SOUTH
S QT9765
H 93
D AT5
C T5

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
 1C 1H 2S

All pass

East's overcall does not prevent South from making a weak jump shift to 2♠, showing the 6-card suit and 3-6 HCP.

East encourages the HK lead, then overtakes the second round of the suit with the ace, in case partner has no more hearts. This turns out to be the case, so East wins and plays a third round of hearts.

When leading for partner to ruff, give a suit preference signal. Lead your lowest remaining heart to ask partner for the lower of the other two suits back, not counting trumps. Declarer ruffs with the S10, but West wins the SJ.

The club return is won by East's ace, and back comes a fourth heart, ruffed high by declarer. The subsequent trump lead is won by East's SA and now a fifth round of hearts promotes West's S8 as the setting trick. This is OK for North-South as they do not make 2C or 1NT either, while East-West can make 1NT or 2H.