

Responding to a minor *by Derrick Browne*

Partner opens 1D. Consider your response with each of these hands:

S AQJ2
H 32
D AQ54
C A87

Respond 1S. There is no rush to do anything else for now.

S AQJ2
H J542
D 32
C 987

Respond 1H - up the line not the better suit first..

S AQJ2
H 32
D 54
C AKJ87

Respond 2C. If you are going to show both suits (and you have enough points to do so), bid the longer one first.

S J982
H 32
D 54
C AQ987

Bid 1S. You don't have enough strength to start with 2C.

These hands come from the larryco.com website. Following are more ideas from American expert Larry Cohen as to best practice in modern Standard American bidding. Here are his suggested approximate ranges for the notrump responses:

1NT = 6-10 with no 4-card or longer major

2NT = 11-12 with no 4-card or longer major

3NT = 13-15 with no 4-card or longer major

Responding 2C to 1D shows at least 10 points.

What about raising diamonds? In "Standard", the simple raise e.g. 1D : 2D shows a minimum responding hand, while the jump raise e.g. 1D : 3D is invitational. However, most tournament players use inverted minors, so 1D : 2D is say 10+, while 1D : 3D is weak (useful for cutting out the opponents).

Another decision is how to play a jump shift by responder, e.g. 1D : 2H. The old-fashioned style was strong, but nowadays weak jump shifts are popular.

A double jump shift, e.g. 1D : 3H, is used by most top players as a splinter bid, showing diamond support and a singleton or void in hearts. Don't pull this one on an unwary partner!

Responding to 1C follows the same structure as responding to 1D, but raises the additional issue of the 1C : 1D response. Should you respond up the line? Or should you bypass diamonds? Consider your response to a 1C opening with each of the following hands:

S AQ82
H 32
D AQJ54
C 87

Respond 1D and later show your spades.

S AQ82	S AQ82
H 32	H 32
D J9854	D J542
C 87	C 872

With these two hands, bypass the diamonds and show the major – you might get only one chance to bid. This is the modern treatment, called Walsh. (With stronger hands, you can bid your diamonds first.) When using this style, after the partnership starts 1C : 1D, the opener should rebid 1NT with any balanced hand, even with a 4-card major. With the following hand, you opened 1C and partner responded 1D. What next?

S KJ93
H K7
D 873
C AJ53

Rebid 1NT over partner's 1D response, knowing there is no chance of losing a 4-4 spade fit. If there is one, partner has a big hand and will uncover the fit (Checkback, covered previously in this column, is useful here).

Notice that when using the Walsh style, opener's rebid in this auction 1C : 1D, 1MAJ, promises real clubs.
With a balanced minimum, opener would have rebid 1NT.