

Advancer's Turn

By Roger Lord

An old friend, a canny bridge player, 1962 Vanderbilt Cup champion, the late Garrett Nash, often proclaimed that it is predominately the responsibility of the partner of the direct takeout doubler to act, to compete, to try for game, to double for penalty (or to pass a reopening double for penalty), to bid a second time, or to pass as soon as practicable. The corollary is that the initial doubler should realize that he has acted and that he should not voluntarily act again unless he holds substantial extra values. In other words, don't tell the same story twice.

Garrett further maintained that the partner of a balancing (passout-seat) doubler should tread lightly, inasmuch as the balancer already may have bid some of his partner's cards, and therefore that the balancing doubler may opt to act again if he holds real assets.

We concur with these precepts, with a mild exception: A good known fit calls for aggressive bidding by either partner.

A similar view can apply to the advancer* to an overcall, provided that the partnership plays sound direct-seat overcalls, as we do.

*The term "advancer" applies to the partner of the player who overcalls or doubles. In the future, we will use this designation.

As the advancer, make the next bids on these hands, then see the answers.

1. S J762 H 75 D J865 C 974	West	North	East	South
	1 Club	Double	Pass	?
2. S Q1074 H 10863 D 75 C 824	West	North	East	South
	1 Club	Double	Pass	?
3. S J862 H KJ97 D 42 C Q93	West	North	East	South
	1 Diamond	Double	Pass	?
4. S J542 H 87 D 54 C Q10763	West	North	East	South
	1 Diamond	Double	Pass	?
5. S K105 H J5 D AJ10743 C 42	West	North	East	South
	1 Heart	Double	Pass	?
6. S K1053 H 5 D AJ10743 C 92	West	North	East	South
	1 Club	Double	Pass	?
7. S 752 H A762 D 1083 C Q102	West	North	East	South
	1 Diamond	Double	2 Clubs	?

8. S 10875 H 3 D QJ10982 C 84	West 1 Diamond	North Double	East Pass	South ?
9. S 865 H K10974 D AJ9 C K7	West 1 Spade	North Double	East 2 Spades	South ?
10. S Q2 H 8532 D K97 C 10764	West 1 Heart Pass	North Double 2 Spades	East Pass Pass	South 2 Clubs ?
11. S A754 H AQ4 D Q954 C 82	West 1 Club	North Double	East Pass	South ?
12. S KJ10 H J94 D K104 C Q976	West 1 Heart	North Double	East 2 Hearts	South ?

Answers to bidding quiz.

1. One diamond, the cheapest bid, trying to keep out of trouble with this weak hand. Why not bid one spade? Some players insist on having four of any unbid major when they double with a minimum, whereas we prefer to double, on a suitable hand, with three or more.
2. One heart. Again, the cheapest unbid suit.
3. There are two lessons.
 - A. Compete adequately. The double forces advancer to one of a major. Then, suppose the opponents bid again—for example,

West	North	East	South
1 Diamond	Double	Pass	1 of a major
2 Clubs	pass	2 Diamonds	?

You should not let them off too early. As Garrett would have said, your partner has spoken, but you have seven working* HCP when you might have had nothing. Get to two of a major, thinking of it as if you are raising partner's suit. *"Working" applies to useful honors in suits which partner's double asks you to bid, as opposed to wasted honors in an opponent's suit.

B. Get to the better major-suit fit. To ensure this, first bid one spade. On the next round, you are prepared to rebid two hearts, giving partner a choice at the two-level. Had you first bid one heart, you would have been constrained to try an awkward two spades, which could land you at the three-level if partner has three spades and four hearts.

4. One spade. No use going to the two-level unless you are forced.
5. Three diamonds. A jump-shift is non-forcing, invitational. You may have a three notrump hand.
6. Two spades. Your hand rates a forward move. If you jump in diamonds instead, you may miss a spade fit, with or without a game contract.
7. Two hearts. It's your turn to act. Don't be shut out—it may be now or never.
8. Pass, and hope partner has a diamond to lead. Your aim is to draw trumps before declarer can score too many small trumps by ruffing. If they make one diamond doubled, it's not game, and—particularly with IMP scoring—minus 140 is no big deal.
9. Four hearts, a stretch, but partner may pass a competitive-sounding three hearts when a makable game is missed.
10. Three spades. Traditional methods treat the double followed by a new suit rebid to announce a great hand. The value of your queen of spades in partner's long suit is enhanced.
11. Two clubs. Modern style is to play this cuebid as forcing on each partner to bid again (unless game is reached first). One sequence would be non-forcing: 1 Club-Double-Pass-2 Clubs-Pass-2 Spades-Pass-3 Spades.
12. If you prefer kitchen bridge, close your eyes for this one. The best call is double, responsive, not for penalty. If you have agreed to play responsive doubles, when the opponents bid a suit, our side doubles, and they immediately raise, double shows values and asks partner to respond. More about this convention may be discussed in the future.