



Karen Walker

Bidding Matters

“Coming alive” with 6-5 openers — part 2

In part 1 we looked at opening-bid strategies for those awkward 5-6 hands where you hold six cards in your lower-ranking suit but don't have enough points for a standard reverse. A handy solution is the *non-forcing jump-reverse*, which allows you to accurately describe your strength and pattern. With this agreement, you open your longer (lower-ranking) suit and use a jump-rebid in your second suit to show a minimum (10 to 14 high-card points) 6-5 hand. For example, with ♠4 ♥2 ♦KJ1043 ♣AK7654, you would open 1♣. Over partner's response of 1♥, 1♠ or 1NT, your jump to 3♦ would show a minimum with six clubs and five diamonds.

Adding the jump-reverse to your system is simple enough, but you'll need good hand-evaluation skills to take full advantage of it. The most difficult part of this type of auction is responder's decision after the jump reverse. These guidelines will help you choose your rebid:

- Opener's jump-reverse gives a fairly complete description of his hand, so in most cases, it's up to responder to place the contract. Remember that although opener has

shown great playing strength, the jump is not forcing. You may pass or take a preference to his first suit if you have no interest in game.

- To assess your chances for game or slam, forget about high-card points. Use your picture of opener's hand and concentrate on your holdings in his suits. You can start with these “ballpark” assumptions:

- On average, opener will have 11 or 12 points and two (possibly two and one-half) quick tricks.

Virtually all his high-card points will be in his long suits.

He will most often be 1-1 in the outside suits.

His hand will have four — possibly five — losers. (A loser is each missing ace, king or queen in a long suit; a missing ace or king in a doubleton; and a missing ace in a singleton.)

- In general, you should stretch to bid game if you have fitting cards in partner's suits. You can expect to make 4♥ or 4♠ if you have a fit and cards to cover one to two losers. For a minor-suit game, you need honors and/or ruffing values to cover at least two (possibly three) losers.

After the auction

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
3♥	?

the meanings of responder's rebids are:

Pass = a “trick-poor”, non-fitting hand that prefers opener's second suit, e.g.,

♠KQ102 ♥752 ♦KJ94 ♣43.

Since partner is likely to be 1-1 in the outside suits, you can't count on kings to cover any losers.

Preference to opener's first suit (4♣) = a weak hand that prefers the six-card suit. Opener will always pass.

Game bid in either of opener's suits (4♥ or 5♣) = to play.

Rebid of your suit (3♠ or 4♠) = to play. Your suit should be long and strong enough to play

opposite a singleton.

3NT = to play.

Below-game raise of opener's second suit (1♣-1S; 3♦-4♦) = invitational to game, showing a fit and cards that will cover one to two losers.

4NT = Key card Blackwood for opener's *second* suit. An alternative is “double” key card, which asks about six key cards (four aces and two kings in opener's suits).

Fourth suit (4♦) = a slam-try in opener's *first* suit. Opener accepts by cuebidding an ace or void or using key card Blackwood. Another approach is to use this as immediate key card for opener's first suit, which allows you to check on aces without going past five of the minor.

Opener	You
1♦	1♠
3♥	?

♠A9854 ♥1043 ♦K5 ♣943

4♥. Your ♦K covers one sure loser, and the ♠A will be another trick on most deals (when opener is 1-1 in the black suits). Your trumps may even cover a third loser if partner needs to ruff a diamond.

♠Q87432 ♥2 ♦10953 ♣KQ

5♦. This dummy could be a virtual yarborough if partner is 1-1 (or 2-0 with a club void). Then again, game could be almost laydown if he holds

♠— ♥A9863 ♦AK8762 ♣32.

Note that the auction gives you a clue that your K-Q are working cards. The opponents' silence suggests they don't hold 10 or 11 clubs, making it likely that partner is 0-5-6-2.

♠KQ7532 ♥Q7 ♦43 ♣KQ3

Pass. Plenty of high-card points, but with no fit and only one cover card for partner, chances for game are slim. At IMPs, I'd probably bid 3NT and pray. Opposite most of partner's hands, though, transportation problems and the shaky club stoppers will defeat 3NT.

♠AQJ854 ♥3 ♦J ♣AKQ103

3NT. You had high hopes when the auction began, but you've quickly discovered the misfit. When in doubt, be a pessimist about partner's potential fit for your suits. He'll rarely have the cards you need, and even if he did, there's no safe way to investigate. If you still have the nagging feeling that you should be making another move with this hand, keep in mind that partner's jump-reverse may have already given you an edge over the field. Pairs who don't play this convention will be having long, tortured auctions to show their "dueling 6-5's," and they may be propelled past 3NT. They'll also be giving their opponents more information than you've given yours, so they may not get the club lead you're expecting. Use what you know and rely on the odds to settle for a reasonable contract, not necessarily a perfect one, and let other pairs do the high-level guessing. □

SPECIAL EVENT at clubs for 49ers

Throughout the month of September clubs may run games for players with less than 50 masterpoints which award masterpoints 45% of Sectional Rating. District-wide winners will be determined and recognized as such on the ACBL web site and also in the monthly ACBL Bulletin if space is available.

No special fees are charged and there is no requirement for clubs to sign up in advance to hold a 49er game.



Test Your Play

Eddie Kantar

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1. Dlr: West ♠ K Q 9 8 3
 Vul: None ♥ A 7
 Matchpoints ♦ 7
 ♣ A K 9 6 3

♠ A 7 6 5 4
 ♥ 6 4
 ♦ A K 8 5 3
 ♣ 2

West	North	East	South
2♥	4♣ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♣	Pass	6♦
Pass	7♠	All Pass	

(1) Leaping Michaels (five or six clubs with five spades; strong).

West leads the ♥K. You win the ♥A and play the ♠K, East discarding a heart. Plan the play.

2. Dlr: South ♠ 7 5 4
 Vul: N-S ♥ A Q 3
 IMPs ♦ K 7 6
 ♣ A 9 4 2

♠ A 6 3
 ♥ K J 10 8 4
 ♦ A Q 9 4
 ♣ 6

West	North	East	South
			1♥
3♣ ⁽¹⁾	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

(1) Weak.
 West leads the ♣K. Plan the play.

(Solutions are on page 45.)

ACBL's Instant MP Game offers gold at your local club.

The 2003 ACBL Instant Matchpoint Game will be held at local clubs on Wednesday evening, Sept. 10.

The contest features a gold point for section top winners (each direction). The game also features a booklet with complete analyses of the deals by many-time national champion Richard Pavlicek.

The ACBL Instant Matchpoint Game is the only club event awarding gold points.

There will be two contests — an Open Championship and a Secondary Contest. The Open Championship is for games with at least five full tables run in a Mitchell movement. All pairs in the Open Championship games must play exactly 24 boards to be eligible for the prizes. Open events with 14 or more tables may split into games of at least seven tables each and award gold points to section winners in each direction.

Other awards are half red, half black. In stratified games, only those pairs placing first in the "open" field are eligible for gold points.

Invitational games will be considered secondary contests and will award .80 gold points for section-top winners in Mitchell movements of five or more tables.

The Secondary Contest must have at least six pairs. All games with half tables are considered secondary games. Howell movements will also be considered secondary contests.

Howell winners will be considered to be in the North-South field.

For more information, call the ACBL Special Events Department on the Customer Service Line's toll-free number (1-800-467-1623) or e-mail specialevents@acbl.org