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West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦	Pass	?
Pass	1♥	Pass	?

♠85 ♥AQT54 ♦K4 ♣QTJ74

I have seen many rebids by opener with hands like this one. 2♥, 2NT

and 3♣ are all popular. What's right? It's easy to dismiss 2NT for the reasons discussed previously. This leaves

2♥ and 3♣. I prefer 2♥. 3♣ looks like an okay bid because North promises

to bid 2♥. 3♣ takes away important bidding room. Think about it this way: If you

bid 2♥, North has room to show spades at the two level or clubs at the

three level. He might even bid 2NT. What should 3♣ show? An agreement that will stand you in good

stead is to play that 3♣ shows a five-card suit and extra values, possibly:

♥A7 ♥AQ742 ♦8 ♣KQ874

With: ♠42 ♥AK843 ♦A8 ♣AJ84, rebid 2♥. You have extra values, but

you have only four clubs. With: ♠KQ ♥QJ874 ♦3 ♣KJ873, rebid 2♥. You have five clubs but

your hand is minimum. □

of these rebids by responder. Note: Don't rebid 2♦ thinking that your diamonds are better than your clubs. A 2♦ bid promises three or more diamonds. You can fudge with clubs but never diamonds.

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦	Pass	?
Pass	1♥	Pass	?

♠J9874 ♥AQ9 ♦AQ ♣874

Rebid 2♥. Some will tell you that this promises a six-card suit. It is all very nice when you have the right

type of hand for it, but if you have that agreement you will have serious

problems with hands like this one. Those players who say that a 2♥

bid should show six spades will point to the balanced shape and bid 2NT.

This strikes me as silly bridge. Why the rush to bid notrump when you

don't have a stopper in clubs? In the 2/1 system, a 2♥ bid is forcing, and

it leaves lots of room for exploration. Here's a layout that shows why bid-

ding 2NT is a bad idea:

♠K3
♥KJ7
♦KJ10972
♣K6
♠J9874
♥AQ9
♦AQ
♣874

West leads the ♣J and the defenders take the first five club tricks. Down followed by two spade tricks. Down three. North, as it turns out, would have taken at least nine tricks. Unlucky or bad bidding? Another situation that is routinely messed up is this one:

Some 2/1 problems — part 1

Rebid problems for opener in 2/1

The two-over-one (2/1) bidding system is one of the most popular in use today, but like any system, it has its confusing moments.

The hands below illustrate areas of bidding that are often mishandled in 2/1 system bidding (as well as other systems).

West	North	East	South
Pass	1NT	Pass	?
Pass	1♥	Pass	?

North's 1NT bid is forcing for one round. Responder typically has 6 to 9 high-card points, but he may have a bit less or a bit more. Hands as good

as 12 HCP are possible. Opener must rebid something unless his partner

is a passed hand. If opener has a minimum, he sometimes has to bid a

three-card minor suit. Here, however, is a problem hand.

What do you rebid?

♥AQJ4 ♥K7643 ♦QJ ♣94

Try 2♣. This is the worst possible shape. If you had a three-card

minor you would bid that. You can't bid 2♥ because that shows a much

bigger hand, and you can't rebid 2♠ because that shows a six-card suit.

You can't pass because the 1NT bid is forcing. (North could have a limit

raise in hearts and passing could ruin the partnership harmony.)

2♣ is not beautiful, but it actually is relatively safe. You may think that

playing in clubs is horrible and in fact, it might be. But if you get left in 2♣, your partner will usually have

five or more of them. More often, however, your partner will keep bid-

ding. 2♦, 2♥, 2NT or 3♥ are all possibilities. You can and will pass all