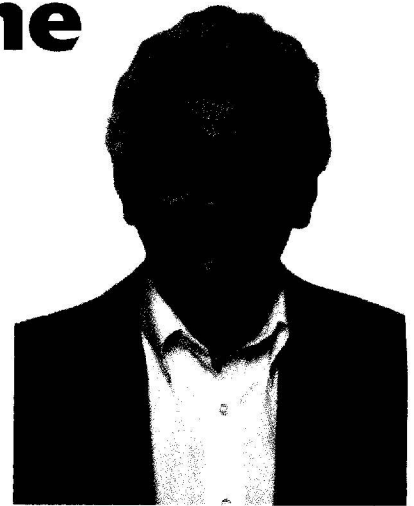


# Winsome & Loathsome

## Tales of the Trail

DRURY EXTENSION



Zeke Jabbour  
jabbour@adelphia.net

### Drury revisited – the Spaceman adjunct

What a world! We can now unlock our automobiles and start them from a block away. It is easy to imagine that some Mafia don “urged” the automobile manufacturers to develop remote ignition technology to protect “family” from exploding cars.

It’s apocryphal, but such a story might help show how new bridge conventions come about: a disaster occurs at the table (sometimes followed by an explosion), and we go to work to devise methods to prevent a recurrence.

People seem to like innovative treatments that are not a heavy memory load. Not long ago, my old friend, dentist and sometime bridge partner, Dr. William Winokur, as a result of such a “disaster,” wrote me asking about a variation of the popular Drury convention that I had suggested he and I play maybe a quarter century ago.

The Drury convention was invented by the late Canadian expert Doug Drury to determine whether third- and fourth-hand major-suit opening bids are full openers. Drury developed the convention in self-defense. One of his regular partners was Eric Murray, who was not averse to super-light openers in third seat.

Sami Kahela, Murray’s most famous partner, is reputed to have said that Drury saved them thousands of points. It used to go third seat 1♠–Pass–3♠, the opponents would double and they’d go down four! With Drury, they were able to stay a level lower and go down only three.

Originally, after a third- or fourth-seat major suit opening, if the passed hand bid 2♣ Drury, it meant that the passed hand was pretty good, but 2♣ did not necessarily promise trump support. Very few people still

play it that way. Later, Drury came to promise 10 or more high-card points, plus at least three-card trump support. Many variations grew out of this, including “two-way Drury,” i.e., 2♣ showing three-card support and 2♦ showing four or more.

Playing “standard” Drury, if opener had a sub-minimum, he would respond 2♦. Otherwise, he would bid out his hand. Nowadays, using “reverse Drury,” opener rebids his suit to show a sub-minimum hand.

That’s what I play: rebid the major with a sub-minimum; bid 2♦ with a minimum hand that would pass a limit raise; bid a new suit as a help-suit game try, and bid three of the trump suit to ask the quality of responder’s trumps. Support is promised, so opener simply bids game when appropriate.

The variation I proposed to “Willie Winner” revolved around methods of slam investigation. If opener rebids 2NT, it shows slam interest and ignites a slam investigation engine. Responder’s continuations are similar to those used after Jacoby 2NT (game-forcing major-suit raise): a new suit at the three level shows shortness; a four-level bid shows a five-card suit headed by at least two of the top three honors — a source of tricks. As originally conceived, the three-level bids showed the long suits. It was changed to be consistent with Jacoby 2NT.

If responder has no shortness and no five-card “source of tricks,” the principle of “fast arrival” is in effect: three of the major shows a maximum balanced-hand limit raise, four of the major shows a minimum. As for 3NT, I would suggest it shows a hand with no singleton and a broken side suit of at least five cards.

Now, back to Dr. Winokur’s hand.

He held (spots approximate)  
♠Q104 ♥A63 ♦75 ♣KQ872  
in first seat and passed. His partner opened in third seat with 1♠ holding  
♠AKJ865 ♥94 ♦A2 ♣A63.

Will responded 2♣, and his partner bid a confident game. Had they been playing the proposed version of Drury, opener might have tried 2NT, Willie would have responded 4♣, showing a good five-card club suit with at least two of the top three honors, whereupon opener would have cuebid 4♦, responder 4♥ and they would have revealed a road map to a reasonable grand slam!

One of the first persons upon whom I imposed this convention was Leon (“Pork Chop”) Lowe, from Michigan then and now from Arizona. One of his other nicknames was Space Cadet, thus the name of this version of Drury.

We got to use it almost immediately. Playing teams, I picked up third seat (spots approximate):  
♠AK7632 ♥A5 ♦KJ7 ♣A8  
and opened 1♠. Leon held  
♠Q1085 ♥76 ♦AQ543 ♣72

He bid Drury 2♣, and when I bid 2NT, he showed me his five-card diamond suit headed by two of the top three honors! We bid an easy grand while our opponents rested comfortably in four. □