

only eight tricks, and the defenders will prevail. After you use your energy for the thoughtful ♣10 falsecard, you still need enough energy to play a low heart from dummy at trick two. This caters to a singleton king onside. If the king doesn't appear singleton, you cross in spades to repeat the heart finesse.

The ♣10 falsecard is a clever ploy, but it turns out that the heart play at trick two is the key to your success. You take the first 10 tricks for plus 430. At the other table your counterpart opened

1♥ and your teammates entered the auction, playing 3♦ doubled down two for 300. For making your game you win 4 IMPs. Had you gone down, you'd have lost 8 IMPs.

More "over-my-shoulder" deals are demonstrated on-line at <http://larrycohen.com/>. You can try the deals at no cost, or order any of the CD-ROMs Play Bridge with Larry Cohen — 1999 Life Master Pairs or Kit Woolsey's Cavendish 2000 at the site or toll-free at 1(800) 386-7432. □



# Mike's Advice

Mike Lawrence

## Conventions — part 6

The semi-forcing INT bid after a third- or fourth-seat opening bid of 1♥ or 1♠.

### Responder's considerations

Last month, I introduced the idea of playing a INT response to a major in third or fourth seat as semi-forcing. The idea is that if opener has a minimum or sub-minimum hand, he is allowed to pass INT. If he has enough that game is possible facing a passed hand, he bids again. This article will show some hands responder may have and how he should handle them.

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	?	Pass

♠J 8 7 3 ♥6 2 ♦AK Q 5 ♣J 10 7  
Bid INT. You could bid 1♥, but that bid is not forcing. Better, I suspect, is to bid INT. If partner has a full opener, he

will bid again and so will you. If he passes INT, he will have a maximum of 13 points and often will have less. If your style is to open 9- or 10-point hands in third seat, staying in INT will be good.

♠A 8 3 2 ♥J 10 7 ♦4 2 ♣A J 8 3

Bid 2♣. Drury. When you are a passed hand, a INT response denies three-card support for the major. The familiar sequence of bidding of INT and then jumping in partner's major does not exist. Partner may pass if you bid INT.

♠9 8 ♥J 7 ♦A 9 8 7 ♣A Q 5 4 2

Bid INT. You can't bid 2♣, since that's Drury. You have to bid INT, semi-forcing. If West rebids 2♣, you can use the "impossible spade" trick by bidding 2♥. This trick shows a maximum raise to 3♣. If partner rebids 2♦, you can use the same trick, albeit with some guilt, because you have only four diamonds. If partner bids 2♥, this is very good news because it confirms a six-card suit and promises a full opening bid. Bid at least 3♥. Bid four

if you feel aggressive.

♠8 7 6 3 ♥Q 8 7 6 ♦AK J 3 ♣9

Bid 2NT. Because you've agreed not to bid 2NT with a maximum, balanced hand, you can use this excellent bidding trick. Play that a jump to 2NT promises a maximum passed hand, four-card or more support for partner's major and an unknown singleton somewhere.

If partner wants to know where the singleton is, he bids 3♣. Your responses to this are conventional. 3♦ says you have a club singleton, 3♥ says you have a diamond singleton, 3♠ says you have a singleton in the other major.

If partner has a terrible opener and can't envision a game opposite what you are promising, he bids three of the major, which is a sign-off. Responder accepts the sign-off unless he has an exceptional hand with a fifth trump.

Important: if your partnership opens four-card majors in third seat, you must take extra care in the bidding.

Here's a brief quiz that only you and your partner can answer: Do you open any of these hands in third seat? Does vulnerability affect your answers?

- ♠K 3 ♥A Q 9 8 4 ♦8 7 6 4 ♣6 3
  - ♠K Q 9 8 ♥6 5 3 ♦4 3 2 ♣A 6 3
  - ♠6 5 ♥A K J 10 ♦Q 6 5 3 ♣8 6 3
- If you or partner open any of these

hands, then when you are responding to a third-seat opening bid, you must give partner a little room in the bidding. If you make an invitational sequence and he says no, believe him. He knows what he says.

In the next few examples, partner opens 1♥ in fourth seat. This makes little difference in your methods, but it does make a little difference in your judgment.

The reason is that partner will not open a real dog in fourth seat. You may have heard of the Pearson rule. Pearson's guideline for opening in fourth seat is this: add up your high-card points and add one point for each spade. If the total is 15 or more, open the bidding. The idea behind this rule is to recognize that if you are short in spades, your opponents may be able to compete in spades.

Keeping in mind that partner will have at least 15 "Pearson points", how do you handle the following hands?

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	?	Pass

♠J 2 ♥K Q J 5 ♦K J 5 ♣J 5 4 3  
Assuming you passed this hand (I would), it is correct to bid INT. Even though partner promises a decent hand, he does not promise enough that you are safe in bidding 2NT. INT is semi-for-

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