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## More 2/1 Auctions

### The "impossible 2♠" club raise

I have previously written about this special sequence involving the forcing 1NT response, but I want to show it again because it is part of the 2/1 methods that I am discussing in this series.

Here is the problem (note that the sequences I am showing *all* begin with 1♥):

West	East
1♥	1NT
2♣	?

Sitting East, you have one of these three hands. What should you call in each case?

♠Q32 ♥9 ♦K432 ♣Q10873

Pass. You have a distinct preference for clubs and you have a weak hand. Passing describes this hand nicely.

♠K73 ♥3 ♦A1073 ♣Q8652

Raise to 3♣. This is a good hand in the normal range for a forcing 1NT response bid. With this decent collection, you should try to find a bid that describes it, and raising clubs is fine. Here you conveniently have five clubs. If you had one fewer club and one more diamond you would

# Mike's Advice

still have a good hand, but you would have a less easy bid to make. (I would still vote for 3♣, but I would be less happy about it.)

♠A84 ♥3 ♦A1084 ♣K10763

Now you have a hand in the invitational range, 11–12 points, and a simple raise to 3♣ feels like an underbid.

The solution (after partner bids 1♥ and then two of a minor) is to bid 2♠. This is called the "impossible 2♠." On this sequence, 2♠ says you have a sensational fit for the minor your partner bid and a hand that is worth around 11 or 12 points.

#### Note #1

Say the auction instead begins like this:

West	East
1♠	1NT
2♣	?

When the opening bid is 1♠, there is no convention to help you if you have one of the following hands that features a big fit:

♠3 ♥AJ3 ♦Q743 ♣KJ1084

You properly started with a forcing 1NT and now that partner has rebid 2♣, you want to tell him the good news. You could raise to 3♣, but it doesn't quite do the trick, does it? Is this situation totally lost? Although in fact there are hands that don't offer a good rebid, this particular hand has an answer: 2NT. This shows 11–12 balanced high-card points, and that is exactly what you have. 2NT is a suitable rebid on some of the hands in this category, but not all. Following is a hand that will elude your best intentions:

♠83 ♥AQ73 ♦83 ♣AJ874

There is no perfect rebid. 3♣ is an underbid and 2NT lacks a diamond stopper. 2♥ would show a long suit and a weaker hand. I admit I do not have a solution to offer. My guess would be 3♣, hoping partner has enough to bid again or that he is minimum, in which case 3♣ may be the best contract.

#### Note #2

There is a related sequence that won't come up unless you ignore it, in which case it will come up tomorrow.

West	East
1♥	1NT
2♥	?

♠3 ♥4 ♦KQ983 ♣AJ8743

When your partner opens 1♥ and rebids 2♥, you may find yourself with a maximum hand with two five-card or longer minors. You can use this version of the impossible 2♠ bid. 2♠ here says you have a good hand and two five-card minor suits.

Note that you need a maximum hand. If you had a minimum hand such as:

♠4 ♥2 ♦Q8743 ♣KJ9874,

you should pass 2♥. The idea behind the impossible 2♠ is that you are able to bid your constructive hands accurately, something that is impossible otherwise. Weak hands that smell of misfit are best handled by passing and hoping the auction is over. □