



Ask Jerry

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Dear Jerry,

My partner and I had difficulty bidding the following hands:

West	East
♠ A Q	♠ J 9 8 2
♥ A K Q 7 6 4	♥ J 9 5
♦ A 10 6	♦ J 3
♣ Q 8	♣ K 9 6 5

Our auction:

West	East
2♣	2♦
2♥	3♥
4NT	5♣ ⁽¹⁾
5♥	Pass

(1) Zero key cards.

We lost a spade, a diamond and a club for down one. I maintain that partner showed more values than he held when he raised 2♥ to 3♥. We play the Principle of Fast Arrival. How should we have bid this hand?

Rick

Hi, Rick,

Let's make sure everyone is on the same page before I get to the specifics of your question. Essentially, the Principle of Fast Arrival says that in any auction where both partners are sure that game must be reached, the faster we get to game, the less interest we show in going beyond game. Apply this to your auction.

2♣ = Strong, artificial, forcing.

2♦ = Most often played as either negative, i.e., 0–7 points, or if 8-plus points, no strong five-card or longer suit.

2♥ = Five or more hearts.

At this point, responder has several options available which could include heart support.

1. With a truly abysmal hand like:

♠ 9 5 4 ♥ 8 5 3 ♦ 9 8 5 4 ♣ 10 6 2,

he should bid a waiting 2♦ followed by 3♣ – an artificial second negative. Any thoughts responder had about passing opener's 2♥

should be dismissed, because the 2♣ opener could easily have the values for game in his own hand. After this second negative, the only bid responder can pass is specifically a rebid of opener's first suit or 3NT.

2. Holding:

♠ J 8 7 ♥ J 9 5 ♦ Q 5 ♣ J 9 7 6 4,

using the Principle of Fast Arrival, responder should jump to 4♥ over opener's 2♥ rebid. This shows at least three-card support with a few scattered values, but absolutely no outside aces, kings or singletons.

With your partner's actual hand,

♠ J 9 8 2 ♥ J 9 5 ♦ J 3 ♣ K 9 6 5,

I would recommend a raise to 3♥, showing trump support, at least enough values for game and an ace or a king somewhere. With your hand, I would bid 4♥. You have a bare minimum 2♣ opening bid.

With something like:

♠ K 9 8 ♥ J 9 5 ♦ Q 9 7 ♣ A 9 6 5,

responder will certainly drive to slam, which is by no means cold despite his impressive holding. Your decision to bid Blackwood reinforces a long-standing opinion I have held. When someone opens 2♣, they are often looking at the best hand they have held in quite a while. They are quite sure of reaching a makeable game, and all they need is the slightest twinkle in responder's eye to make them start considering slam. ■

Feedback needed on proposed revisions to convention charts

The Competition and Conventions Committee of the ACBL has been working for almost two years on possible revisions to the ACBL convention charts. A draft of the revisions is now available online for members to view. Comments are encouraged. Visit acbl.org/draftconventioncharts.

Members should keep in mind that the document on the website is a revised draft and is not yet final. An email address is available at the site for players to respond.

The deadline for comments is Oct. 15.