

## Basic Two-Over-One

2/1 is very similar to Standard American bidding but there are two major differences: -

- (a) A new-suit two-level response to a 1♥/♠ opening is forcing to game.
- (b) The response of 1NT to a 1♥/♠ opening is forcing and has less than game going values.

### 1. A new suit at the two level

- ♠ 2            Suppose you have this hand and partner opens 1♠. You would
- ♥ AKJ9542    respond 2♥ and partner bids 2♠. What now? Playing Standard bidding you
- ♦ K72           would probably jump to 4♥, but there may well be slam if partner has the ♥Q.
- ♣ A6           In 2/1 it is simple – take it slowly with a bid of 3♥. With good hands **take it**
- slowly!** The auction is absolutely game forcing.
  
- ♠ AK96543    And playing 2/1 makes life much easier for opener. You hold this hand and
- ♥ A4            open 1♠ and partner responds 2♥. What do you do now? 3♠? 4♠?
- ♦ 10            Playing 2/1 it is very easy, take it slowly with 2♠. This is just one of the great
- ♣ AJ8           advantages of 2/1 – there is no need to leap about to set up a game force.

### 2. The forcing NoTrump

So what do you do with a hand of 10-11 points where you would have responded at the two level? The answer is the forcing 1NT. Over a 1♥/♠ opening a 1NT bid is forcing; it may be virtually any shape and anything from 5 to a poor 12 points.

- ♠ 7            Partner opens 1♠. Playing Standard you would bid 2♦ and hopefully arrive
- ♥ 542           somewhere sensible. Playing 2/1 you do not have the values for a game force
- ♦ KQJ752      and so you bid a forcing 1NT. If partner then bids 2♣, 2♥ or 2♠ you can bid
- ♣ A72           3♦ to show this hand type exactly.
  
- ♠ J3            Partner opens 1♠ and you respond 1NT. If partner bids 2♣ you bid 2♦ - to play;
- ♥ 54            if partner bids 2♦ you pass; if partner bids 2♥ you bid 2♠ and play in the 5-2 fit;
- ♦ KJ9752      if partner bids 2♠ you pass and play in the 6-2 fit. (Tip - With 5 or less
- ♣ J52           diamonds tend to rebid 2 spades with minimal hands).

### 3. Responding to partner's forcing NoTrump

Opener must respond. With a six card suit he can rebid it. With 54xx he can bid 2♥. A 5-card major is not usually rebiddable and opener may sometimes have to bid a three card minor.

There is just one really awkward shape – 4522. After a forcing NoTrump opener cannot reverse into 2♠ without full reversing values so this one is a problem. If the 5 card suit is very good then rebid it, otherwise bid 2♣. The Flannery convention solves this problem and I recommend using it.

If opener has a big hand with game potential then he can jump/reverse whatever as normal.

#### 4. A reverse by opener after a 2/1 response

- ♠ AQ653      What do you open with this hand? Playing Standard a 1♠ opening has its
- ♥ 82            problems as you do not have the values for a 3♣ high reverse over 2♦/♥.
- ♦ 2             But playing 2/1 there is no problem. A 2♦/♥ response is game forcing and
- ♣ AK742      it's best to play that a subsequent reverse by opener does not show extras.
  
- ♠ AQ65        Important! Here you open 1♥ and get a 2♣ or 2♦ response. Without agreement
- ♥ AQ982      to the contrary a 2♠ bid would show 16+ points. Playing 2/1 it simply shows
- ♦ 2             the shape and does not promise extra values. (Tip - suppose you are responding
- ♣ 742         to this hand with four spades and game forcing values. It is fine to bypass your
- spades and bid a minor at the two level to show game forcing values.) Partner
- will now bid spades to show their shape and you will still find your fit.

#### 5. The 11-12 point 2NT invitational bid

- ♠ 53            Partner opens 1♠ and you have a classic 2NT response; but most players
- ♥ Q82         play Jacoby 2NT. In Standard you would bid 2♣ followed by 2NT but that
- ♦ AK86        is game forcing in 2/1.
- ♣ K942        The answer is to bid a forcing 1NT and then bid 2NT over partner's response.

#### 6. The 3-card limit raise

- ♠ KJ3         Partner opens 1♠. Playing Standard you would bid 2♣ and then 3♠ to show
- ♥ 82            just three card support.
- ♦ K863        Playing 2/1 you start with a forcing 1NT and then jump to 3♠.
- ♣ A942

#### 7. 1NT and two-level responses by a Passed Hand

Note that 2/1 only applies if responder is not a passed hand, so 1NT is natural if you have passed. If partner opens 1♥/♠ in 3<sup>rd</sup> seat or 1♠ in 4<sup>th</sup> seat then I like to play (two-way reverse) Drury. (2 clubs shows a three card limit raise - two diamonds shows a four card limit raise). Many play drury after third or fourth seat openings.