

# Fifth Chair



## Fourth Suit Forcing

The most difficult bid in the auction is Responder's rebid. Responder's job is to find the fit, decide the level and place the contract. After opener's rebid, responder usually has enough information to do his job. There are times when responder is not able to do so and needs more information from the opening bidder. Since responder's job is not to describe, he must name a new suit to get that information. This is not an alertable call unless you play fourth suit forcing as a convention. Playing the 4<sup>th</sup> suit as a convention allows the opener to describe his hand further in a structured manner.

The opener names two suits: (4sf the convention)

1c 1h

1s 2d\*\* The responder has an invitational hand or better when he bids a new minor and is unsure whether to rebid his 5 card suit or to bid 2nt. Responder bids the 4<sup>th</sup> suit to ask the opener to describe further:-

- 1) Opener patterns out with a 5-5 hand or better
- 2) Opener shows 3 card support for responders' first suit
- 3) Opener bids 2nt with a stopper in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit and a minimum hand
- 4) Opener bids 3nt with a stopper in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit and a maximum hand
- 5) Opener raises the fourth suit with 4 trump, careful not to bypass 3nt
- 6) Opener goes back to his first bid suit with none of the above

The fourth suit is treated much like new minor forcing when a minor is bid. Since opener must rebid 1 spade before bidding 1nt.

The Fourth Suit becomes game forcing when no major suit fit can be found or responder bids the 4<sup>th</sup> suit at the 3 level.

1c 1d

1h 2s---this is game forcing. Responder has game values without a stopper in the spade suit. Bidding 1 spade is forcing, since it is a new suit but also asks opener if he has 4 spades therefore natural. Opener bids nt OVER 2S with a stopper in spades. Shows 3 card support for diamonds if none, returns to his first suit with none of above.

1d 1s

2c 2h---this is game forcing. Responder needs to know if opener has a stopper in the heart suit. If opener has 4 hearts he can raise to 3h or bid 2n to show a stop or show 3 card spade support. Remember opener has 9 cards in the minors, with a heart stop he could not hold 3 spades and knowing if a stopper is held is important.

1s 2d

2h 3c= 4SF to game. New suit at the three level. Responder needs a 3<sup>rd</sup> bid from opener in order to place the contract. Responder tends not to have a club stopper, otherwise would be able to place the contract.

**NOTE; SHOWING 3 CARD SUPPORT OR BIDDING NT HAS BEEN REVERSED SINCE MY ORIGINAL NOTES. I STILL PREFER NT FIRST AT THE 3 LEVEL AND 3 CARD SUPPORT AT 2 LEVEL. DISCUSS WITH REGULAR PARTNER.**