



Adventures in Bridge

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This Week in Bridge

(171) Weak Jump Shifts by Responder

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Level: 1

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General

When partner opens the bidding at the 1-level and we make a jump shift to the 2-level, the modern approach is to use this as a *Weak Jump Shift (WJS)*. A WJS is a mix of a preemptive response and a constructive response. This approach to bidding follows the general rule that “good hands go slow” to preserve bidding space and effectively communicate with partner. Let’s see how these WJS by Responder work.

Non-Competitive Auctions

When Responder makes a 2-level WJS, it is a weak bid, usually showing 0-5 HCP and a 6+c suit. (Responder can have a bit more when vulnerable, about 2-6 HCP.)

The possible WJS auctions at the 2-level:

- 1♣ 2♦
- 1♣ 2♥
- 1♣ 2♠
- 1♦ 2♥
- 1♦ 2♠
- 1♥ 2♠

Destructive WJS

This WJS, showing a long suit, may preempt the opponents out of the auction (the destructive effect of a WJS) when partner has a minimum balanced opening bid.

Example

1♣ P 2♠ ___?

In this auction the opponents may have a hard time finding their fit or even entering the auction.



Constructive WJS

A WJS may also allow the partnership to reach a game that might have otherwise been missed if Responder passes with a weak hand and finds Opener has a good hand with a large fit for Responder suits (the constructive effect of a WJS).

Example

1♣ P 2♠ P

___?

♠ KT93

♥ AK82

♦ AQ

♣ K83

With this hand Opener may jump to 4♠ and find a reasonable game that might have otherwise been missed.

Jump Shifts at the 3-level

It is usually not best to use a jump to the 3-level as a weak bid, both because it is unlikely to be safe to get the auction so high with such a weak hand and because we would rather use these 3-level bids in a different way. Some of the more useful treatments for 3-level jump shifts are 3/1 Invitational, Bergen Raises over a Major, Fit Showing Jumps, etc.

Jump Shifts in Competition

Weak Jump Shifts at the 2-level are even more effective when the opponents interfere in our auction, either with an overcall or a takeout double.

Examples

1♣ X 2♠

1♣ 1♦ 2♠

These WJS fit with the general rule that “jumps in competition are weak.”

Conclusion

The idea of using a jump shift at the 2-level to show a strong hand with a strong suit is not commonly adopted anymore because with that hand, Responder can just start with a 1-level response and slowly describe the hand. Instead, a 2L-JS is used to show a long suit and few HCP. This is an effective tool for showing a long suit while not giving partner the impression of too many values. Though this hand type is not common, a WJS can help with constructive bidding by allowing Opener to know that Responder did not need to stretch to bid 1M with a long suit and not many points.