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This Week in Bridge

(512) Jump Shifts after 1-Level Openings: Weak & Invitational

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Level: 3 of 10 (1 of 6)

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General

When partner opens the bidding at the 1-level and we make a jump shift this is usually used to show a long suit. For 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. For a jump shift to the 3-level, we are unlikely to want to get that high with an extremely weak hand. The modern approach is to use this jump shift to the 3-level as an *Invitational Jump Shift (3/1 Invitational)*. Let’s see how these jump responses work.

Non-Competitive Auctions

When Responder makes a 2-level WJS, it is a weak bid, usually showing 0-5 HCP and a 6+card suit. (Responder can have a bit more when vulnerable, about 3-6 HCP.)

Examples of Jump Shift Auctions at the 2-level

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

Destructive Weak Jump Shifts

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

1♣ P 2♠ __?

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



Constructive Weak Jump Shifts

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 2

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. But the natural common approach is the 3/1 Invitational agreement.

3/1 Invitational Jump Shifts Examples

After a 1-level opening bids, a jump shift by responder (single jump shift, not a double jump shift) to the 3-level shows a 6+card suit and about 9-11 HCP.

Examples of Jump Shift Auctions at the 3-level

- 1♠ 3♥
- 1♠ 3♦
- 1♠ 3♣
- 1♥ 3♦
- 1♥ 3♣
- 1♦ 3♣



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.”

In competition, jump shifts to the 3-level are not needed as invitational. Instead, in competitive auctions these auctions return to being weak jump shifts.

Examples

- 1♣ 1♠ 2♦ Non-jump Freebid, 5+♦ and 10+ HCP.
- 1♣ 1♠ 3♦ Weak Jump Shift
- 1♠ 2♦ 3♥ Weak Jump Shift
- 1♥ X 3♦ Weak Jump Shift

Notice that we do not need invitational jump shifts in competitive auctions because we do not have 2/1 GF bids in competition.

Conclusion

The idea of using a jump shift at the 2-level to show a strong hand with a strong suit is not a common agreement anymore because with that hand, Responder can just start with a 1-level response and slowly describe the hand. Instead, a 2-level jump shift 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. We do not use a jump shift to the 3-level as weak, because a weak hand is less likely feel safe going to the 3-level. Instead, we use it to show length and almost enough strength to make a 2/1 GF bid. Make sure that you have thorough discussions with partner about the meaning of jump shift to different levels and both in and out of competition.