

Fifth Chair



The Flannery Convention

In standard bidding practice a hand with 11-15 points, 4 Spades and 5 Hearts is a difficult hand to bid. It would not be proper to open 1 Heart and bid the Spade suit on a rebid, because doing so would be a reverse bid which shows a strong hand. Using standard bidding practice there is no way for your partner to know that you also have a 4 card Spade suite. Responder is not likely to bid Spades after a 1 heart opening bid unless he has at least 5 Spades.

A bidding convention called Flannery was devised to handle this bidding problem.

THE OPENING BID

Flannery, applicable only on the opening bid, is an artificial bid of 2 Diamonds used to show a hand with exactly 5 Hearts and 4 Spades and 11-15 high card points. Using Flannery changes the meaning of the opening 2 Diamond bid which is normally used to show a weak hand with a 6 card diamond suite.

THE RESPONSE TO FLANNERY OPENING BID

Responder has a reasonably clear picture of opener's hand. With this picture in mind responder may make one of the following bids:

NATURAL RESPONSES

A single raise of either of opener's majors is a close out.

A jump raise of either of opener's majors is invitational.

A game level bid in either one of opener's majors or Notrump is a closeout.

A bid of 3 of a minor shows a strong hand (13+ high card points), a long strong minor suit, and no support for either of opener's majors.

A pass shows a very weak hand inappropriate for a single raise.

TWO NOTRUMP RESPONSE (Artificial)

With game going values, responder may make a conventional response of 2 Notrump asking opener to further describe his hand.

REBIDS BY OPENER

Opener should pass any single raise or game bid by the responder.

With maximum values accept responder's invitation to game in either major, or pass with a minimum hand.

If responders bid was 3 of a minor, invite or bid game in the most appropriate contract or explore slam.

If responder has bid 2 Notrump, opener describes his hand with one of the following conventional rebids:

3 Clubs or 3 Diamonds shows 3 cards in that suite (and thus a singleton in the other minor).

3 Hearts shows a minimum hand and 2-2 in the minors.

3 Spades shows a maximum hand and 2-2 in the minors.

3 Notrump shows a hand with 2-2 in the minors with a stopper in each.

4 Clubs or 4 Diamonds shows 4 cards in that suit (and thus a void in the other suit).

REBID BY THE RESPONDER

Based on the content of both hands the responder sets the contract, passes, or explores slam.

This next bid should be discussed with partner before bidding it. A further extension of a Flannery Bid is

4C = Keycard for Hearts

4D = Keycard for Spades