

Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 8 5 3 2
♥ 7 2
♦ J 9 6 5 4 2
♣ 9
♠ A J 10 7 6
♥ A J 9 8
♦ 10
♣ 6 5 4
♠ K 9 4
♥ K 5 4 3
♦ 8 3
♣ Q J 10 2

♠ Q
♥ Q 10 6
♦ A K Q 7
♣ A K 8 7 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♣	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	3 NT	All pass

Auction Commentary: The definition of a reverse is "bidding a higher suit, at a higher level." Think of it as bidding something that your partner has denied holding -- or has "skipped over." A reverse shows at least 17 points and promises a longer first suit. If the two suits are equal length, do not reverse, bid the higher ranking suit first. **A reverse is forcing**, partner may not pass. When East rebids 2 ♦, it's a higher ranking suit/higher level.

With a minimum hand of 6-7 HCP, West would rebid their suit or rebid 2 NT (promising a stopper in the other 2 suits). With West's reasonable 10 count, they need to make a forcing call. Bidding 2 ♥ here is similar to "4th suit forcing:" it doesn't promise hearts; it promises values.

Since 2 ♥ didn't promise a heart stopper, East needs to show one if they have one. Additionally, they need to show whether their reverse is a 17-point minimum or a 20-point maximum. They show the maximum by jumping to 3 NT. West should pass, but I would not blame them if they thought about trying for slam. If the ♥ J and the ♠ J were instead the ♣ Q, it would definitely be tempting to try for 6 ♣!

Opening Lead: ♥ 3. If declarer hadn't already shown 5 clubs by reversing, the ♣ Q would likely be the better choice. We don't want to lead their long suits when they are playing in notrump.

Play Commentary: When North produces a small ♥ on the opening lead, East should assume that South has the ♥ K and plan accordingly. Ted has come to today's game, and Ted wants to make use of dummy's ♠s. He's going to need some entries to the dummy. Ted wins the opening lead with the QUEEN. If you keep it, you'll have only one entry to the dummy, because when you lead the ♥ Q from hand later it will win and you will still be in your hand! (Not where Ted wants to be.) When Ted UNBLOCKS the ♥ Q, he can lead ♥s toward the dummy, finesse them, AND be in the dummy when they win! Win the ♥ Q, and lead the ♠ Q, letting it "ride." When this wins, take a ♥ finesse, and play the ♠ A and the ♠ J. South can win that one, but you now have the rest, making six.

Board 5North Deals
N-S Vul

	♠ A K J 4 3		
	♥ A K Q 10 6 3		
	♦ 7		
	♣ 3		
♠ 10 9 5	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ Q 2	
♥ 5 4		♥ 9 8 2	
♦ A K 4 3		♦ Q J 10 9 2	
♣ Q 10 8 4		♣ K 9 2	
	♠ 8 7 6		
	♥ J 7		
	♦ 8 6 5		
	♣ A J 7 6 5		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♥	Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♥
All pass			

Auction Commentary: One of the most important (and most often abused) rule about reverses is: The first suit is always LONGER than the first. With two equal length suits, you must ALWAYS open the higher ranking first. This is crucial to the partnership understanding.

North opens 1 ♥ here not because they have a good hand and want to reverse, though they do and they should, but because hearts is their longest suit. (If North were 5=5 or 6=6, they should always open 1 ♠.) So, when North bids 2 ♠ it is a reverse, and therefore is forcing for one round.

South is not really happy with these developments, but a reverse is forcing for one round, so South is forced to bid 3 ♣. This shows a minimum hand that North could pass. North, however, has plenty in reserve and bids three (but only three!) spades.

What does this tell South? When North bid 2 ♠, it promised only a four-card suit. North's rebid of 3 ♠ promised five spades. What else did it show? Opener's first suit is ALWAYS longer than the second when they reverse. If they have five spades, they must have SIX hearts! South knows this, even though they were only bid once. With two major suit fits, South must bid a game (the ♣ A is worth much more than ♣ KJ or even ♣ KQ when partner is known to be short). Since partner will likely have to ruff diamonds, we want their longest suit to be trumps, so 4 ♥ should be the final contract.

Opening Lead: ♦ Q (top of a sequence)

Play Commentary: Unless North is peeking, they'll lose one ♦, and the ♠ finesse will lose.

Takeaway: When you reverse, THE FIRST SUIT IS ALWAYS LONGER!! Got it? :-)

Board 12

West Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 9 5 3
♥ 10 7 5
♦ Q 10 9 7 4
♣ 5 3

♠ K J 10 8 4
♥ Q 9
♦ J 6 3
♣ 9 8 4



♠ Q 7 6
♥ A K J 8
♦ 5
♣ A K J 7 6

♠ A 2
♥ 6 4 3 2
♦ A K 8 2
♣ Q 10 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	Pass	1 ♣	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	All pass

Auction Commentary: East's 2 ♥ bid is a reverse. Bidding a new suit at the 2-level, higher ranking than the first suit, shows extra values, a hand worth at least 17 points. Reverses are forcing, but only on partner for one round. East knows that their side likely belongs in game, but doesn't know yet whether in some suit or in notrump. West shows a five-card spade suit by rebidding 2 ♠, with minimal values, 6-7 HCP. This 2 ♠ bid is not forcing, so with more than 8 HCP, it is imperative to bid more. Since East now has found an eight-card major-suit fit and has a ruffing value, they are happy to raise to game, even opposite partner's minimum.

Opening Lead: ♦T. (top of an interior sequence)

Play Commentary: If the defense wins and continues with the ♠ A and another spade, the goal will be to win the rest of the tricks. Play the ♠T from hand so that you can immediately ruff a diamond in the dummy (assuming North follows to the second round of spades). You can return to hand after the diamond ruff with the ♥ Q, draw the remaining trump, and discard one diamond and one club on the long hearts in the dummy.

At trick 3, if you play the ♠ 8 from hand, North can cover with the ♠ 9, and you have to win in the dummy. You can now play a ♥ to the queen and ruff a ♦, but you cannot get back to your hand a second time to finish drawing trump. North will eventually score the ♠ 9, holding you to 10 tricks. Still making, of course, and well bid!

Defensive Commentary: When we are shown from the bidding that the dummy will have a short suit and only 3 trumps, it is often right to attack declarer's ability to ruff by leading trumps. In this case, if a spade is led originally, the defense can play two rounds immediately. When East wins in the dummy and leads the singleton diamond, it will still take a brave South to let this ride to partner's Queen so that they can lead another trump. A truly inspired defense if found, and just to prevent an overtrick!