

OH NO!

Perhaps you remember this rule from my Rules of Bridge column. I called it the **Trump Suit Unbid Rule**. Basically this rule states the obvious.....it's very hard to bid and make a game or a slam in a suit that is never introduced into the auction. This rule came about after watching several hands like those that follow.

I tend to gather bridge hands as a hobby....usually from watching online bridge or playing at the local club. Often I discuss these hands with friends and/or use them in bridge lessons as reminders to work hard on keeping options open in the bidding. My goal is to leave no possibility unexamined when it comes to looking for the very best contract. Or more simply put it's called "letting your partner know what you have".

In this first example, for some reason the opener declined to open the bidding with the obvious 3D bid. He probably thought that his hand was too good.....even though vulnerable it certainly describes it pretty well. Once he passed, he could never get an accurate picture of his hand across to his partner; in fact he never did introduce his good long suit.

| | | |
|-----------|---------|----------|
| Dealer | Partner | Both vul |
| ♠9 | ♠K93 | |
| ♥8 | ♥AKJ2 | |
| ♦AKJ10765 | ♦Q432 | |
| ♣10962 | ♣AK | |

Auction:

| | | | |
|--------|------|---------|------|
| Dealer | Opp | Partner | Opp |
| Pass! | 2♠ | Double | Pass |
| 3♠ | X | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

As you can see this hand makes 6D (or 6NT) with no problems whatsoever. And it does remind me of a rule I have for myself. If I hold a hand that I feel is too good to preempt then I open it with one of the suit. And of course, if I hold a long suit and the hand isn't right to open one of the suit, then I preempt. At least it makes my life easier. (Once in a blue moon I think neither is right and I reluctantly pass.)

The next one I find really difficult to understand. This pair was playing IMPS, not MPs but believe it or not, diamonds (as a natural suit) were never mentioned in the auction. Perhaps the dealer didn't want his partner to play the hand?

| Dealer | Partner | Vulnerable |
|----------|-----------------------|------------|
| ♠AK1042 | ♠5 | |
| ♥- | ♥AQ109642 | |
| ♦AKQJ105 | ♦864 | |
| ♣A7 | ♣KQ | |
| Auction: | | |
| 2♣ | 2♦ (waiting, I guess) | |
| 2♠! | 3♥ | |
| 3NT | 4NT | |
| 6NT | | |

In some respects this pair got what they deserved. The dealer never bid that terrific diamond suit. As it turned out 7♦ makes easily while 6NT went off one when the opponents defended carefully.

This hand brings up an important point. When your partner opens 2♣ you are entitled to give a positive response with a five-card or longer suit if you have two of the top three honors. And if you have that and don't show it then partner has the right to assume your suit is not very good if you bid it later.

Another one:

| Dealer | Partner |
|------------|----------|
| ♠KJ7 | ♠A6 |
| ♥43 | ♥AK65 |
| ♦AKQJ10953 | ♦8 |
| ♣ - | ♣AKQJ107 |
| Auction: | |
| 1♦ | 2♣ |
| 2♦ | 2♥ |
| 3NT | 4♠ |
| Pass! | |

When I was watching this hand and the dealer passed the 4♠ cuebid, I yelled at the computer screen “Oh, No”. It’s so easy when looking at both hands! And I always thought new suits by responder were forcing? Especially when it’s the third suit your partner has bid. The declarer couldn’t help but make 4♠ but who really cared. Playing in NT there are 19 tricks in the two hands (the Queen of spades was onside)! And, of course, there’s that diamond contract available one more time... only 7♦ this time.

In all of the above examples there was no competitive bidding. There was nothing to make getting to slam difficult. Notice that in all three of the above cases diamonds were the predominant suit. It must have been guys doing the bidding because we all know that “diamonds are a girl’s best friend.”

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