

THE REVERSE DRURY

You are South and the dealer. You pass and your Right Hand Opponent also passes. Your partner opens 1♠ and rightly passes. What do you do? This is your hand:

South
♠ K53
♥ J742
♦ K75
♣ A93

You have a fairly good hand in support of spades. You don't have any shortness, but you do have 11 HCP and a major honor in spades. If partner has a full opener you have almost enough for a game. But he is opening in 3rd seat and holds the 3rd seat mentality. He may be opening light. Your jump to 4♠ may be much too high. If you respond 1NT or make a 2 over 1 bid, it might be passed. This 3rd seat mentality thing has got you flumoxed.

There is hope. If partner is apt to open light in 3rd seat, there is a convention that you must play for hands such as these. It is called Reverse Drury. A response of 2♣ by you says nothing about clubs. It does say that you have support for partner's major suit and hold an invitational strength hand – 11+ HCP. And it asks partner if he has a full opener or a sub par opening. If he has a light opening he will return to his suit at the 2-level. If he has a full opening, he will bid something else.

This is the bidding sequence:

West	North	East	South
			Pass
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

Your partner has admitted to less than an opening hand. Your hand and his can't possibly be strong enough for game. You've found the best contract at 2♠ using the Reverse Drury. In duplicate, the 2♣ bid is alertable.

East makes the opening lead of the ♦Q. Take the North hand and make a plan for taking 8 tricks:

	South	
	♠ K53	
	♥ J742	
	♦ K75	
	♣ A93	
East		West
♦ Q		
	North	
	♠ A8742	
	♥ A9	
	♦ 86	
	♣ K854	

The opening lead suggest that West holds the ♦A so you are certainly going to lose 2 diamonds. If spades break 3-2 as expected, you have 1 spade loser. You will have 1 heart loser so you can afford only 1 club loser.

There are several possibilities for eliminating a second club loser. If clubs break 3-3, your 4th club will be good. Or, you may be able to trump the 4th club in the dummy. The 3-3 club split has about a 35% probability, so it would be more profitable to plan on trumping this second club loser in the dummy.

Suppose you trump in on the 3rd diamond and play two rounds of trump, leaving the ♠J outstanding. The problem here is that after the first two rounds of clubs, the defenders will win the 3rd round and if the winner is also the player who holds the ♠J, he will lead it and remove the last trump from the dummy before you get to use it. You can look below and see that this would actually happen here.

Another idea is to lose a club before pulling trump. This presents another problem. If you play the ♣AK and another club and the clubs break 4-2, the player with the club shortness will ruff, forcing you to over ruff with your ♠A or ♠K. Now you will lose 2 trumps and go down. This will also happen in this layout.

You can counter both these problems by ruffing the third diamond and playing a low club from both hands. Now the defenders can't damage you. They will win this trick and probably lead a heart. You win the ♥A and play two rounds of trump. Now switch to the top two clubs, ending in your hand. You play your 4th club and ruff it in the dummy. It will either win or be over ruffed by the ♠J. Either way you will take 8 tricks.

This is the entire hand:

11 D	N North ♠ A8742 ♥ A9 ♦ 86 ♣ K854	<table border="1"><thead><tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>P</td><td>1♠</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>2♠</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table>	W	N	E	S	P	1♠	P	2♣	P	2♠	P	P	P			
	W	N	E	S														
P	1♠	P	2♣															
P	2♠	P	P															
P																		
W West ♠ J96 ♥ Q83 ♦ A94 ♣ Q1076		E East ♠ Q10 ♥ K1065 ♦ QJ1032 ♣ J2																
	S South ♠ K53 ♥ J742 ♦ K75 ♣ A93																	
		2♠ N NS: 0 EW: 0																

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/ltw933p>. or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.