

LESSON 15 – Two-over-One Game Forcing (2/1 GF)

In the "Standard American" system, if your partner opens 1♣ and you respond 2♦, it is natural indicating diamonds and 10+ HCP. If opener has 12+ HCP for his opening, that bid leaves you in "no-man's land." indicating the partnership has 22+. All it does is cause confusion as to whether or not game should be reached or whether you should pass below game level.

In the superior "2/1 GF" system, the response of 2♦ to partner's 1♣, promises an opening bid (13+). Now we have two opening bids facing each other, so game should be reached. Neither player can pass until game is reached. In its simplest terms, the "system" described as **2-over-1 game-forcing** refers to the following 6 bids;

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

These are the only 6 possible "2/1" auctions. Anything else would be either a raise (i.e., 1♥-2♥) or a jump-shift (i.e., 1♥-2♣). When responder uses a game-forcing "2-over-1" bid he is informing the opener that he, too, holds at least opening-bid values. Thus, the partnership should proceed to a "game" contract (i.e., neither player can pass until a game contract is reached). This does not mean that Game is guaranteed in a minor, however. Game in a minor (5♣ or 5♦) usually requires 29+ pts, but distribution is always a factor to be considered. Openers rebid should show his "shape," without implying HCP. Bidding is natural to best describe your hand.

This system is not on if partner has "passed". The first bid must be by the dealer or the player in 2nd position. If there are 2 or more passes before the first player bids, then 2/1 GF response does not apply. Why? Seat 3 or 4 could be a weak opening and not totally reliable. ***This system also is not on if the opponents interfere (either with an overcall or a double).*** An overcall by your partner over a bid by an opponent may not indicate a full opening bid. *For example:*

YOU	OPPONENT	PARTNER	OPPONENT
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass

As opener, what do you rebid with the following hands?

A)	B)	C)	D)	E)	F)
♠54	♠32	♠AKJ2	♠AQ3	♠QJ2	♠A2
♥KQ10874	♥QJ1087	♥AQ876	♥KJ876	♥Q9764	♥AKQJ98
♦AJ3	♦A4	♦A54	♦9876	♦Q92	♦K76
♣K4	♣AQ54	♣2	♣K	♣AQ	♣52

ANSWERS

- A) 2♥ (Repeat the 6-card suit)
- B) 3♣ (Forcing, of course—until at least game is reached. No extras promised)
- C) 2♣ (Natural again – and just coincidental that you have extras)
- D) 2♦ (Just bid naturally--even though the suit is of poor quality)
- E) 2NT (Natural—also, not promising extras)
- F) 3♥ (An unnecessary jump should show a solid suit)

Assuming the bidding proceeded as follows:

PARTNER	OPPONENT	YOU	OPPONENT
1♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	???	

As responder, what do you bid with these hands?

G)	H)	I)	J)	K)
♠ K J 3	♠ 4 2	♠ 4	♠ 4 3	♠ K Q J
♥ A 2	♥ A Q J	♥ A 5	♥ A Q 2	♥ 10 3
♦ K Q 10 8 7	♦ A Q 8 7 6 5	♦ A K Q 10 8 7 2	♦ K Q J 10 8 2	♦ A Q 10 8 4
♣ 4 3 2	♣ A 7	♣ Q 3 2	♣ 5 2	♣ A Q 5

ANSWERS

- G) 3NT
- H) 3♥ (Forcing, of course. Leave room for investigation)
- I) 3♦ (No need to rush into Blackwood)
- J) 4♥ (Most players use this jump to show a minimum with all the pictures in the suits bid.)
- K) 4NT (Quantitative)

Once you decide to use 2/1 Game Forcing bids, you must have an alternative to respond with fewer than 12 points (6 to 11 HCP)...Thus the complement bid in the 2 over 1 Game Force system is 1NT Forcing.