

# After a 2H Reverse, Use a 2S Rebid as Lebensohl Instead of 2NT

Presented by Mike Savage

After your partner opens a minor and with no opposition bidding you respond 1S, followed by a 2H reverse by partner, how does responder show a very weak hand? A standard approach is that 2NT is artificial (Lebenshol-ish) showing a very weak hand and three of either of opener's suits is forcing. After the artificial 2NT bid, opener is expected to (usually) rebid three of his minor and responder can pass the minor or bid 3H to show a very weak hand with heart support.

This approach works well with one big exception—it forces the weak hand to be declarer if no-trump is the final contract and *wrong-sides* the play, especially since he may have no stopper in the unbid suit. However, if you agree to use a 2S rebid as artificial—to (potentially) show a very weak hand and not *promise* extra length in spades, then if 2NT is bid by either hand, it will be by the “right” hand to do so.

Here is how it works: 1m-1S-2H:

**2S** = Conventional Lebensolish mark-time relay bid. Might be made with only four spades and usually shows a very weak hand. Shown below are some suggested continuations:

**2NT** = Natural and passable.

**3 of opener's minor** = Shows a weak hand with support and is passable.

**3H** = Shows four-card support with a weak hand and is passable.

**3S** = Shows a six-card suit and is invitational to 4S (not so much to 3NT).

**3NT** = To play with minimum values for game.

**4NT** = Invitational.

**3 of opener's minor** = Natural, the default rebid after 2S and is passable.

**3H** = Shows four-card support and is very weak (passable).

**3NT** = Shows a weak hand with black stoppers and minimum values for game.

**3S** = Shows good 3-card support and is passable (some might play it forcing).

**3NT** = To play.

**4S** = Shows very good three-card support and a great hand—pass or correct.

**2NT** = Shows at least one stopper in the unbid suit and is forcing (could be very strong).

**3 of opener's minor** = Shows a fit and is forcing (the meaning of the unbid minor is up to the partnership).

**3H** = Shows four-card support, forcing and may have some slam interest.

**3S** = Shows a six-card suit and is forcing.

**3NT** = To play, with black-suit stoppers and slight extra values but no clear-cut slam interest.

**4 of opener's minor** = Roman Key-card Blackwood in the minor.

**4H** = To play.

The first time I heard about the idea of using 2S as an artificial relay bid was from Jade Barrett. Using 2S as a mark-time bid allows right-siding play in no-trump while letting responder show support for either of opener's suits and differentiate between having a weak hand and one with enough values for game. The values assigned to a 3S rebid by responder (after having bid 2S over 2H) are based on the assumption that the partnership plays weak jump-shifts. Thus, if responder has a six-card spade suit and rebids 2S over 2H, if he rebids spades again at the three-level—it's game forcing.

As far as playing in a potential 4-3 spade fit, opener could bid 3S over responder's 2S when he has three-card support with a major honor, 3-4-1-5(5-1) distribution and a non-minimum. With three poor to mediocre spades and a minimum, rebidding three of his minor may be the better choice. With three spades and two of the top three honors, bidding 3S might be the best choice *regardless* of strength. Good bidding judgment is needed for both opener and responder when choosing to propose or accept a 4-3 fit.