

♠♥♦♣ PLAY REVERSES? OF COURSE, YOU DO ♠♥♦♣

You are the dealer with this hand:

S	South
♠	AKJ93
♥	K7
♦	AK9876
♣	

You have 18 HCP, a nice 5-card Spade suit and an equally nice 6-card Diamond suit. What are you going to open?

If you had fewer points, I'd say open 1♠. You don't need much from your partner to make a game in Spades. A major suit game is preferable to a Diamond suit game for the obvious reasons. It scores higher and it is 1 trick easier to make.

But, with 18 HCP, you can afford to open 1♦ and rebid 2♠. This is called a "reverse" bid and it is forcing for 1 round.

I can hear you now. "But I don't play reverses!"

Of course, you do. Everybody plays reverses. Reverses isn't a bidding convention like Jacoby 2NT, that you can agree to play or not play. It is bidding *pattern* that occurs naturally when you open your lower-ranking suit and rebid your higher-ranking suit at the 2-level. If your partner doesn't like your second suit and wants to return to your first suit, he must bid it at the 3-level. If he has a minimum hand – say 6 points, and you have only 12 to 16, you are already too high.

The other thing about reverses is that when you do bid in this pattern, your partner knows a lot about your hand:

- You have 17 or more HCP
- You have a 4-5 or better distribution
- Your 1st suit is longer than your 2nd suit

Furthermore, your partner can add his points to 17 and determine whether game or slam is possible.

The hand you hold here, fits the definition perfectly. You open 1♦ and rebid 2♠ over partner's 1NT response.

Of course, his 1NT initial response denies four Spades, so he takes preference to your first and longer suit – 3♦.

Now you can rebid your Spades, telling him you have 5 Spades and 6 Diamonds. Remember, when you reverse, your 1st suit is always longer than your 2nd suit.

He rebids 3NT. This rebid denies three Spades and implies he has some control over Hearts and Clubs.

You would like to find out how many Aces he has. But, if you use Blackwood and get the answer that shows 1 Ace, you won't know if he has the ♥A or the ♣A. The ♥A is golden, but the ♣A is useless. Better to just bid 6♦ – the contract you hope to make!

West leads the ♥10 and you see this dummy.

N	North
♠	86
♥	A84
♦	J1042
♣	KJ72

West Leads: ♥10

S	South
♠	AKJ93
♥	K7
♦	AK9876
♣	

You have a total of 10 Diamonds. Your plan is to win the opening lead and play the ♦A. If they both follow suit, you can clear the trump suit with no losers.

Next you will set up the Spade suit by ruffing out the losers. Fortunately, Spade split 3-3 and you can take all 13 tricks, for a score of +940.

This is the entire deal:

7 ♦	N North	W N E S
	♠ 86 ♥ A84 ♦ J1042 ♣ KJ72	P 1NT P 1♦ P 3♦ P 2♣ P 3NT P 3♣ P P P 6♦
W West		E East
♠ Q107 ♥ 1032 ♦ 5 ♣ Q109654		♠ 542 ♥ QJ965 ♦ Q3 ♣ A83
	S South	
	♠ AKJ93 ♥ K7 ♦ AK9876 ♣	6♦ S NS: 0 EW: 0

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/22rxh8p7> , or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. If you don't want to see the opponents hands, click on the white area in the South hand before you start.

Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own. <https://tinyurl.com/2p3hmb44>

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