

# Fifth Chair



## Are Reverses Forcing?

*By Frank Stewart*

Although there is a logical basis for reverses to be not forcing, almost all current expert partnerships treat them as forcing. Some experts treat a reverse as especially strong, roughly equivalent to a jump shift and virtually forcing to game; other partnerships treat a reverse as strong -- opener is willing to play at the three level if responder must go there to show a preference -- but not game-forcing, so decide this with your partner.

Are reverses forcing if the opponents have previously spoken, is ambiguous without specifically what the auction was.

In an auction such as

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

1C

Pass 1D 1S 2H

South's rebid is a reverse, and the strength he promises should not be altered by East's overcall. But here,

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

1C

1S 2D Pass 2H

South's 2H is not a reverse. North's 2D is forcing, and 2H was South's cheapest action.