

Revan – a discard signalling system

Alex/Jeff play a somewhat convoluted discard signalling system and I was asked if I could find out what it was. I extracted the following explanation from Alex.

2,3,4 of a black suit	→	the other black suit
2,3,4 of a red suit	→	the other red suit
5,6,7 of any suit	→	that suit
8,9,10 of a minor suit	→	the other minor suit
8,9,10 of a major suit	→	the other major suit

My comments: -

Suppose ♥'s are lead and you discard the ♦3, that asks for ♥'s??

Suppose ♠'s are lead and you discard the ♣4, that asks for ♠'s??

Suppose ♣'s are lead and you discard the ♦8, that asks for ♣'s??

Suppose ♦'s are lead and you discard the ♣9, that asks for ♦'s??

Or do these discards mean that you don't particularly want anything? Clarification please Alex!

Let's see how it works, suppose that a ♥ is lead and you have none. If you want a ♣, then it's the: ♠2,3,4 or ♣5,6,7. Tough if you don't have the ♠2,3 or 4 and don't want to waste a ♣?

Now, especially in a NT contract, it really is silly to discard in the suit that you like, agreed? So that means that there is just a choice of 3 specific cards available to indicate your chosen suit. In our example we need the ♠2,3 or 4 to ask for ♣'s. What is the probability of your hand actually containing one of these three specific cards?

It is $1 - \frac{39}{52} * \frac{38}{51} * \frac{37}{50} =$ about 59%

So 41% of the time you cannot sensibly signal - what a silly system! And talk about complex - no wonder Alex/Jeff usually finish each round last!

N.B. If you are happy with discarding from the suit that you like then there are six specific cards available. The odds of you having one of these then increases to about 84% - but it still doesn't work 16% of the time.

And one more point. If you play a sensible simple system like McKenny/Lavinthal then you can make note of dummy's cards. Suppose that you discard the ♠3 on a ♥, then this also asks for a ♣ in McKenny. But if, say, the ♠5432 are in the dummy then the ♠6 or ♠7 discard would then obviously be low and ask for a ♣. I do not believe that this is possible with Revan?

