



However, restricting the cuebid to weakish hands allows advancer to compete aggressively with a good fit on the assumption that if the contract goes down—perhaps doubled for penalty—the opponents can make a game or slam.

We can make an exception when we have a very strong two-suiter, where we are willing to bid again after partner's call.

With this hand, for example, we can use Michaels over a 1♣ or 1♦ opening.

We plan to raise partner's advance to game or bid again if the opponents compete. For example:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1♣	2♣
3♣	Pass	Pass	4♥

Partner will interpret our sequence as showing that we want to be in a game contract in one of the major suits. With a better fit for spades than hearts, partner can bid 4♠.

As with all competitive actions, vulnerability is a consideration. We can be very aggressive at favorable vulnerability—when the opponents are vulnerable and we are not—, but should be very conservative if the vulnerability is unfavorable.

### Advancing After Michaels

If partner cuebids 2♣ or 2♦, we know partner has both major suits. **With a poor fit, we bid the suit we prefer at the cheapest level, or pass if responder bids. With a good fit with one or both majors, we can compete aggressively.**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♦	2♦	Double	?

We don't have a good hand to compete since too much of our strength is in the opponents' suits, and we have a poor fit for spades. We don't have to bid after East's double, but with a distinct preference for hearts, we should bid 2♥.

The more it sounds as though we have found a good fit, the less likely the opponents are to double us for

penalty, even if we are in trouble. We shouldn't consider notrump with this type of hand. We're unlikely to have a source of tricks.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣	2♣	2♥	?

We should find out what East's 2♥ bid means in this type of auction. Since North has shown both major suits, most partnerships would treat this as a cuebid by responder showing a fit for opener's clubs. However, the auction can become confusing when both sides are making artificial cuebids! Whatever it means, we have a fit with both of partner's suits and should be willing to compete.

A bid of 2♠ would be conservative; a jump to 3♠ is likely to be more effective; and many players would make a preemptive 'raise' all the way to 4♠, especially if our side is not vulnerable. Putting pressure on the opponents is an excellent tactic, and we may come close to making ten tricks in the major suits anyway.

If partner cuebids 2♥ or 2♠, we know which major suit partner has—the other one—, but we don't know which minor suit. If we are interested, we bid 2NT to find out.

#### ASKING FOR PARTNER'S MINOR

When partner makes a Michaels cuebid of 2♥ or 2♠, advancer's bid of 2NT asks opener to bid the minor suit.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	2♥	Pass	?

Partner has shown spades and a minor. We don't have a fit for spades, so we'd like to play in our minor suit fit. We suspect partner has clubs, but can't be sure. So we bid 2NT. If partner bids 3♣, we will play there; if partner bids 3♦, we can consider bidding more.

If the opponents bid and we want to compete in partner's minor suit, we can bid notrump at a higher level—a sort of 'unusual' notrump.

Suppose we are South and the auction begins this way:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♠	2♠	4♠	?

With a good fit for whichever minor suit partner holds and little defense against 4♠, we want to compete to the five level, especially at favorable vulnerability. Any penalty is likely to be less than the value of the opponents' game. We can bid 4NT to discover partner's minor.

We should be a careful here. It might be obvious to us that 4NT is asking partner to bid a minor, but partner might think we are using the Blackwood convention. Similarly, a bid of 3NT might be considered a natural bid in some sequences. Some partnerships prefer to bid 5♣ in a situation like this, expecting partner to pass with clubs and correct to 5♦ with diamonds. A partnership should discuss such sequences.

### Other Uses of Michaels

Once the partnership is familiar with Michaels, its use can be extended to other situations.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♥	Pass	1NT	2♥!

Since South is unlikely to want to play in West's five-card suit, North should interpret South's 2♥ bid as a Michaels cuebid, showing spades and a minor.

### Playing in the Opponent's Suit

The opponents occasionally open a three-card minor suit, so it's possible that we might want to play in that suit. This is typically handled by passing and then bidding the suit later, although some partnerships treat a direct jump overcall in the opponent's suit as natural.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♣		?

With a hand like this we can pass, planning to bid clubs later, or we can jump to 3♣.

In either case, we'll hope partner is on the same wavelength!