

Survey of Two-suited Overcalls of Suit Bids

By Henry Jackson

January 2019

Why?

- Two-suited overcalls bring Partner into the decision about competing and/or sacrificing.
- If a fit can be found, you may be able to compete successfully with fewer points.
- Without two-suited overcall methods, you would have to guess which suit to bid first and whether or not to show your second suit.

Not A Detailed Manual!

- This presentation is intended to make you aware of several methods but not to teach you how to use them.
- Please refer to bridge books or the internet to learn how to apply these methods properly.

Unusual Notrump

- Overcall via a jump in Notrump shows 5-5 or better in both minors or two lowest suits by agreement.
- Advantages:
 - So commonly used that no alert is required.
 - Easy to remember.
- Disadvantages:
 - Some confusion possible when used over 1 club opening and playing two lowest suits.

Sandwich Notrump

- One Notrump overcall after both Opponents have bid at the one level (i.e., 1C – P – 1H – **1N**).
- Shows 5-5 or better in **other** two suits with fewer points than a takeout double would show. May use with 5-4 at favorable vulnerability.
- Advantages:
 - Less dangerous than jumping to 2NT.
 - Partner knows you don't have an opening hand.
 - If you double, Partner knows you have a full opening.

Raptor

- 1NT overcall showing a 4-card major and a 5-6 card minor.
- When used over a major it promises the other major and an unknown minor.
- When used over a minor it promises the other minor and an unknown major.
- Range is 10-15 hcp.

Raptor Continued

- Advantages:
 - Allows competition with hands unsuitable for a takeout double or a Michaels cue-bid.
 - Better than just overcalling in your minor and losing the major suit.
- Disadvantages:
 - Loses the natural 1NT overcall.

UnMichaels

- A 2NT overcall of Opponent's one of a suit bid promises:
 - Both minors if Opponents bid a major.
 - Other minor and unknown major if Opponents bid a minor.
- Used along with Michaels.
- Advantages:
 - More precise than Unusual NT

Michaels

- A cue-bid of Opponent's one of a suit bid shows:
 - 5+ in both majors if used over a minor.
 - 5+ in other major and 5+ in unknown minor if used over a major
- Should be used with weak (0-10 hcp) or strong (16+ hcp) hands.
- Overcall or off shape takeout double is better with 11-15 hcp

Michaels Continued

- Advantages:
 - Quick way to describe highly distributional hand.
 - Can be used with weak or strong hands.
- Disadvantages:
 - If Opponents declare your distribution and strength are known

Leaping Michaels

- Used over Opponent's weak two bid or three of a minor preempt.
- Only used with very powerful hands.
- A bid of 4 of Opponent's minor promises 5+ in BOTH majors
- A bid of 4 in a minor over a major promises 5+ in that minor and 5+ in the other major.

Leaping Michaels Continued

- Advantages:
 - May be only way to show distribution and strength when a takeout double is risky with shortness in a major.
 - Since only 3-card support is needed, partner can place the contract.
- Disadvantages:
 - Opportunities are exceedingly rare – maybe 3 per year and Partner may not remember.

Ghestem

- Ghestem is popular in other countries and provides the exact two suits to Partner.
- **NOTE. There are several versions of Ghestem.**
- Over 1D, 1H or 1S,
 - A cue-bid shows the extreme suits
 - 2NT shows the lower ranking suits
 - 3C shows the higher ranking suits
- Note that you lose the ability to make a weak jump overcall to 3C.
- Note also that the (Ext, Low, High) pattern changes for clubs.

Ghestem Continued

- Over a 1C opening,
 - 2C is natural (Other versions don't use this)
 - 2D shows hearts and spades (high)
 - 2H shows diamonds and hearts (low)
 - 2S shows diamonds and spades (extreme)
- Over a 1D opening,
 - 2D (cue-bid) shows Clubs and Spades (extreme)
 - 2N shows Clubs and Hearts (low)
 - 3C shows Hearts and spades (high)

Ghestem Continued

- Over a 1H opening,
 - 2H (cue-bid) shows Clubs and Spades (extreme)
 - 2N shows Clubs and Diamonds (low)
 - 3C shows Diamonds and spades (high)
- Over a 1S opening,
 - 2S (cue-bid) shows Clubs and Hearts (extreme)
 - 2N shows Clubs and Diamonds (low)
 - 3C shows Diamonds and hearts (high)

Ghestem Continued

- Advantages:
 - Precise suits are described in one bid.
 - No longer need Michaels, Unusual NT, etc.
- Disadvantages:
 - Some memory work required especially because pattern over a club is different.
 - Must give up 3 club and 2 diamond weak jump overcalls.