

Some Thoughts on Bidding After Partner Has Passed

When Partner Passes, the Situation at the Table Changes

- You can look at your hand and know the maximum value of your side's high-card points.
- Partner has a maximum of 11 points.
- Look at our high-card points and add 11. That will be the max high-card values for your side.

Consider this Hand – You are South

♠ K 4 2
♥ J 9 7 3 2
♦ A 5
♣ K 10 4

north east south west
pass pass ??

- 11 points.
- Hopefully, you would not think of opening this hand in first or second seat.
- But now that partner has passed, you should open 1♥.
- The reason it is a reasonable bid is that partner is a passed hand.
- Partner is unlikely to push too far.

The Same Idea Applies to Overcalls

♠ 4 2
♥ A Q 7 3 2
♦ 8 7 5
♣ 10 8 4

north	east	south	west
---	1♣	??	

- You would be foolish to overcall with this hand when partner has not bid.
- Partner might have a pretty good hand.
- If she does, you could easily get too high.

When Partner is a Passed Hand

♠ 4 2
♥ A Q 7 3 2
♦ 8 7 5
♣ 10 8 4

north	east	south	west
pass	1♣	1♥	

- Now that partner is a passed hand, you are hardly interested in game.
- You can think tactically.
- What is the best defense?
- Can you help partner find a good opening lead?
- Can your bid interfere with the opponents, even in a small way?

When You Can Overcall 1 Spade

♠ Q 10 9 6 7
♥ 7 3
♦ Q 8 7 5
♣ K 4

north	east	south	west
pass	1♣	1♠	

- Overcalling with this hand when partner is unpassed is poor bidding.
- But after partner has passed, you make a tactical bid of 1♠.
- Hopefully to get in the opponents' way.

When You Can Overcall 1 Spade

♠ K Q J 10 7

♥ 3

♦ 7 5 2

♣ K 9 7 4

north east south west

pass 1♣ 2♠

- After partner has passed and you have a fairly weak hand, it the opponents who are looking for game,
- Using reasonable common sense, you should do what you can to get in their way.
- You might even preempt with a 5 card suit.

Same Hand More Thoughts

♠ K Q J 10 7

♥ 3

♦ 7 5 2

♣ K 9 7 4

north east south west

pass 1♣ 2♠

- There is danger here:
 - Partner might continue the pre-empt too far.
 - You may walk into a stack.
- Note the quality of the suit.
- Note 4 cards in the opener's suit.
- This is a very disruptive bid.

Another Passed-Hand Situation You Might Think About

♠ 8 3
♥ K Q J 9
♦ K 8 4 3
♣ J 4 3

north	east	south	west
pass	1♦	1♥	

*expert trick.

- After partner's pass, you might overcall 1♥.
- Even with a 4-card suit.
- You do not have the strength or shape for a takeout double.
- Here it is pass or bid and never open your mouth again.
- *Note again, length in opponent's suit.

Opening the Bidding After 3 Passes

- You're sitting in the 4th seat and there have been three passes.
- You can pass out the hand or open the bidding. The choice is yours.
- What should you be thinking about?
 - First consideration is whether or not you think your side can get a positive score.
 - The number of spades you hold is an important factor.

The Rule of 15

- Taken with a grain of common sense, if the number of spades + your high-card points = 15, you should open the bidding.
 - With a void in spades you need 15 hcp to open.
 - With a singleton in spades you need 14 hcp to open.
 - With a doubleton in spades you need 13 hcp to open.
 - With 5 spades, you might open with 10 hcps.

Apply Common Sense

- It might be difficult to pass a 14 point hand with a void in spades.
- If you open that hand, your opponents will come in and you will have to compete to the 3 level or even perhaps the 4 level.
- I'm not saying you should not open that hand, but you should be prepared.

Open a 4-Card Suit

- Sometimes, opposite a passed partner, you can open a 4-card major suit.
- You do not do this always:
 - If you have a thought of getting to game with a passed partner, open the normal way.
 - If you have little or no thought of game, you might open a good 4 card major suit, even if you have a 4 or 5 card minor.

Here's an Example

♠ Q 8 3
♥ A Q J 9
♦ K 8 4 3
♣ 9 4

north east south west
pass pass pass ??

- Better to open this hand 1♥, rather than 1♦.
- The hand makes the rule of 15.
- Almost no chance of game, even if partner has a max pass.

Consider this One

♠ A 8 3

♥ A Q J 9

♦ K J 8 4 3

♣ 9

north east south west

pass pass pass ??

- On this hand you have 16 hcps.
- You have a chance of game even if partner is a passed hand.
- Open the bidding with 1♦, and let the bidding proceed naturally.

Consider this Auction

♠ A 8 5 3
♥ A J 9
♦ K 10 8 4
♣ 9 5

north	east	south	west
pass	pass	pass	1♦
pass	1♠	pass	pass

- When you're sure you have no chance of game, pass partner's response, when you have a reasonable fit.
- When partner is a passed hand, and you have a fit, there's no obligation to bid again, even if partner bids a new suit.

Opening 1 nt in 4th Seat

♠ A Q 5 3

♥ A J 9

♦ K J 8 4

♣ J 5

north east south west

pass pass pass 1nt

- A 1nt opening in 4th seat should be the same as in any seat.
- 15-17 balanced.
- Systems on:
 - Stayman
 - Transfers
- This is a normal 1nt and you would open it 1nt in any seat.

Some Pairs Open a Bit Light

♠ K 10 9
♥ A J 10
♦ K Q J 8 6
♣ 9 5

north	east	south	west
pass	pass	pass	1nt

- This hand has 14 points.
- It is a good 14.
- Worth a 1nt opening, in the 4th seat.
- This hand makes the rule of 15 so you could open 1♦, but that makes it easy for an opponent to over-call 1♥ or 1♠.
- If you open 1nt, you make it much more difficult.

Final Thought

- When your partner passes, the situation at the table changes.
 - You have less chance for game.
 - More reason to obstruct opponents.
 - More reason to bid aggressively.
- Keep the new situation in mind and bid accordingly.