

LEBENSÖHL - Revisited

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When the opponents interfere over the bid of 1NT=15-17 a common convention used by players is Lebensöhl. It may also be used to respond to Reverses when partner makes a takeout double of a Weak 2-level bid or makes a 2NT overcall bid.

In this tip I will provide an over review of the convention for quick reference.

After a 2-level suit Overcall

- (1) X* equal Penalty - however, many use it as a TAKEOUT bid (NO ALERT) to show cards asking the Opening 1NT bidder to bid and not pass the X. Why? If the opponents, make their 2-level suit contract it may double them into a game score.
- (2) Two Level bids are to play
- (3) Three Level bids are forcing to game
- (4) 2NT* is a relay forcing opener to bid 3♣ – (a) Responder may pass with clubs, (b) Bid a suit below the rank of the overcall bid to play, (3) Bid a suit above the rank of the Overcall suit as invitational, (4) Cue bid opponent's suit to **show** a stopper. Opener will next bid a 4-card major or 3NT, (5) Bid 3NT over 3♣ showing a stopper and ask opener to pass.
- (5) IMMEDIATE cue bid is Stayman and **denies a stopper** in the known overcall bid suit - Opener will (a) bid a 4-card major, (b) bid 3NT with a stopper, (c) or bid a new suit.
- (6) Jump to 3NT* **denies a stopper** – Opener will (a) pass with a stopper, (b) bid a 5-card major, (c) bid another suit.

After Artificial Overcalls of 1NT

- (1) Both suits are known - Cheapest cue bid is game invitational; higher bids are forcing to game and Lebensöhl rules apply: 2-level bids are to play, 3-level bids are forcing.
- (2) One or Both Suits are known – Cue bid is Stayman and Lebensöhl applies.
- (3) Doubles and re-doubles are natural, cue-bids are Stayman, delayed cue bids after 2NT show or deny stoppers.
- (4) Over artificial 2♣, X=Stayman and no Lebensöhl required.

In general Notrump conventional responses are ON over X and 2♣.

After a Major Suit REVERSE – Responder Bids

- (1) 2NT* is a relay forcing opener to bid 3♣ allowing responder to sign-off at the 3-level.
- (2) Any other bid is natural and game forcing
- (3) Any bid other than 3♣ by opener is forcing.

After a reverse bid of 2♦, responder **does not bid 2NT to show weakness** but uses fourth suit forcing as a relay to 3♣ since 2NT becomes a natural forcing bid as does a 2-level rebid.

After a Takeout X of a WEAK Two-Bid – Bids follow

- (1) 2NT* is a relay forcing opener to bid 3♣ with 0-7HCP
- (2) Any Three Level bid is constructive with 8+HCP and non-forcing
- (3) Cue bid game forcing

In general, a slow action shows a stopper and fast actions deny stopper (FADS)

After a 2NT Overcall by partner

- (1) 3♣ is Stayman
- (2) Jacoby Transfers apply
- (3) A transfer into the opponents' suit shows shortness and is game forcing