

Bidding After A Preempt

As people have begun to preempt more often, we are faced with this predicament more and more frequently. Depending upon the vulnerability, seat and knowledge of your opponent's tendencies you should adjust accordingly. Here's a basic approach that works well in this and other situations.

1. Give the preempter some # of points. (I usually choose 7)
2. Add your points to that number
3. Subtract that total from 40.
4. Divide that number by 2
5. Assume your partner has that many points.
6. Take an action if you think your combined strength can make at the level you are bidding at.

That sounds complicated but let's go through an example.

You hold:

♠KJ5

♥Q32

♦AJT86

♣KJ

That's 15 HCP and probably worth exactly that after you adjust up for the 5 card suit with good honors and down for the tight honors in clubs and the unsupported heart queen.

If an opponent opened 3H in front of you what should you do?

Step 1. Assume 7 points for the 3H bid.

Step 2. With your 15 that's 22.

Step 3. That leaves 40-22 for the other 2 hands.

Step 4. Give partner half of that, that's 9.

Step 5. Together that would give us 24 HCP

Step 6. If I am taking an action now, we are likely to play 3N or 4 of a suit. 24 HCP rarely makes at that level. Therefore I would pass.

Using this basic principle has led me to following guidelines:

To overcall as the 2 level or double 2D or 2H:

Opening hand or a hand that I would double 1D or 1H

To overcall at the 3 level or double 2S through 3H

15+ HCP if balanced, 12+ HCP with shortness

To overcall at the 4 level or double 3S through 4H

18+ HCP if balanced, 15+ HCP with shortness

Or to state it differently:

Try to play at the 2 level if you have an opening hand

Add 3 HCP for each level you are competing to.

To overcall 2N

15-18 HCP

To overcall 3N after a 2 level preempt

Any hand that might make

To overcall 3N after a 3 level preempt

17-20 HCP

With stronger balanced hands typically double and then bid NT.

Never be afraid to simply "bid what you think you can make" If you are uncertain just jump to the contract and try to make it.