

Competitive Bidding—Part IV
(October 4, 2021)

Last week we looked at the **Negative Double**. Your partner has opened the bidding and your right hand opponent (RHO) overcalls. Let's begin today by looking at a few examples of the types of hand which you might hold. Recall that you make a **Negative Double** when you cannot make the bid you would have made had RHO not overcalled.

Example 1. Your partner opens 1C. RHO overcalls 1H. What do you bid? Why?

Bidding: 1C (1H) ???

xxxxx x xx AQxxx

1S. You are not very proud of your suit; but, you should look for a major suit fit first. Here, you are promising a five-card suit when you make this bid. If there is no spade fit, you can support your partner's clubs later on in the auction.

Example 2. Your partner opens 1D. RHO overcalls 2C. What do you bid? Why?

Bidding: 1D (2C) ???

KQxx QJx Qxxx xx

Begin by making a **Negative Double**. Should your partner rebid 2H; then, rebid 3D. This sequence will warn your partner that you held 4S but not 4H.

Example 3. Your partner opens 1S. RHO overcalls 2C. What do you bid? Why?

Bidding: 1S (2C) ???

Qxx KJxx Kxxx xx

2S. You have three spades and less than ten HCP.

Example 4. Your partner bids 1C. RHO overcalls 1NT. What do you bid? Why?

Bidding: 1C (1NT) ???

Jxxx Kxxx Qxxx x

PASS. If you double here, it is a penalty double--not a negative double. (See **Hello** bids in July 12th lesson and August 2nd lesson.)

Example 5. Your partner opens 1H. RHO overcalls 1S. What do you bid? Why?

Bidding: 1H (1S) ???

K10xx Jx Kxxx Kxx

1NT. You have spades well stopped and 10 HCP. You don't have support for your partner's heart suit.

Opener's Rebids after a Negative Double

If you have opened the bidding and your LHO overcalls, a **Negative Double** by your partner is a kind of takeout double promising a variety of hand types.

Example 1. You open 1D. LHO overcalls 1S. Your partner makes a **Negative Double**. Holding the hand below, you should rebid 2H.

Bidding: 1D (1S) X (P)
???

10X AQxx KJxxx Kx

Example 2. You open 1D. LHO overcalls 1S. Your partner makes a **Negative Double**. Holding the hand below, you should still rebid 2H. Always choose to bid the major rather than rebidding a six-card minor suit. If you had NOT had four hearts, then the correct rebid would have been 2D.

Bidding: 1D (1S) X (P)
???

10 AJxx AJxxxx Jx

NOTE: If you hold a minimum opener, rebid at the lowest level possible, i.e., 2H.
If you hold 13 HCP and a singleton spade, you can rebid 3H.
If you hold 15+ HCP and a singleton spade, you can rebid 4H.

Once you have a known fit, you can reevaluate your hand upwards by counting your distribution and other features about your hand such as the six-card diamond suit.

Example 3. You open 1D. LHO overcalls 1S. Your partner makes a **Negative Double**. Holding the hand below, you should simply rebid 2D.

Bidding: 1D (1S) X (P)
 ???

10x AJx AJxxxx Jx

NOTE: If you were 5/4 in the minors, you could rebid 2C.

If you held a balanced hand such as Kxx/Qx/AKxxx/Jxx, you could rebid 1NT.

Even without a spade stopper, a 1NT rebid is often the best choice on balanced hands. Sometimes you have to make this bid without promising a spade stopper holding a hand such as: (109x/AJx/AQxx/Kxx).

The key here is that it is far better to distort having a stopper than to distort your shape by bidding 2H on a three-card suit.

PRACTICE HANDS

1. xx AJxx AKxxx Qx

Bidding: 1D (1S) DBL (P)
 2H

Your rebid is 2H only at this point. You have found your 4-4 major fit in hearts. Should your partner make another bid, you should go to game holding a maximum and four hearts. Having no wasted points in the spade suit is an added asset to your hand.

2. x AJxx AQxxx Kxx

Bidding: 1D (1S) DBL (P)
 3H

Your rebid is 3H. You have 14 HCP and a singleton spade. Your partner is now the captain and in charge of setting the final contract.

3. Qxx xx AQJxxx KJ

Bidding: 1D (1S) DBL (P)
 2D

Your rebid is 2D. You have a good six-card suit. It is better to rebid it than to rebid 1NT with a hand like the above.

4. Kxx xx AQ10xx KJx

Bidding: 1D (1S) DBL (P)
1NT

Your rebid is definitely 1NT. There is no better choice. Avoid rebidding a five-card minor suit.

5. Jxx xxx AKxx AQx

Bidding: 1D (1S) DBL (P)
1NT

Your rebid is 1NT even without a sure spade stopper. One notrump is your best bid with a flat hand and no second suit to bid.

6. KJx Ax AKxxx Axxx

Bidding: 1D (1S) DBL (P)
3NT

Your rebid is 3NT. Even if your partner has only a minimum for his negative double, your side has enough points for game.

When an Opponent Makes a Takeout Double

Thus far, we have focused on the responder's bids after an opponent has overcalled your partner's opening bid.

What happens when the opponent makes a takeout double of your partner's opening bid? Recall that a takeout double shows a minimum of 12 HCP and at least three-card support for all the unbid suits.

Caution: If your partner opens the bidding, he is usually promising at least 12 HCP. If the opponent makes a takeout double, he is showing a minimum of 12 HCP. You (the responder) need to exercise caution when making a bid, especially if your side is vulnerable vs. nonvulnerable opponents.

I. Partner opens with a major suit 1H/1S bid. The opponent makes a takeout double.

1H/1S (X) ???

Pass = Could be a waiting bid

Redouble = 10+ HCP and shows little support for your partner's suit. Note: your side needs to double for penalty any bid above the two-level.

1NT = 8-10 HCP

NOTE: If you play ***BROMAD**, the following bids are available to you:

2C = 3M, 7-9 HCP
2D = 3M, 10-11 HCP
2H/2S = 3M, 4-6 HCP
3C = 4M, 7-9 HCP
3D = 4M, 10-11 HCP
3H/3S = 4M, good preempt
4H/4S = To play

If you play **Jordan 2NT**, the following bid is available to you:

2NT = 4M, 10+ HCP

Note: The 2NT bid shows a limit raise in partner's suit with four trumps.

***Bergen Raises Over Major After Double**

If you play Bergen Raises, assuming no interference, your bids are as follows after your partner opens either a heart or spade:

3C = 4H/S, 7-9 HCP
3D = 4H/S, 10-11 HCP
2N = Jacoby 2NT = 4H/S, 12+ HCP

II. Partner opens with a minor suit 1C/1D bid. The opponent makes a takeout double.

1C/1D (X) ???

Pass = Could be a waiting bid

1D/1H/1S = Forcing for one round

1NT = 8-10 HCP

Redouble = 10+ HCP and shows little support for partner's suit. Should the opponents bid to the three-level, either you or your partner I needs to double the bid for penalty.

Raise your partner's suit to the 2, 3, 4, or 5-level depending on the nature of your hand.

If you play **Reverse Flannery** (see August 16th lesson), you could bid:

2H = 5S/4H, 6-10 HCP

2S = 5S/4H, 11-12 HCP

If you don't play Reverse Flannery, then a bid of 2H or 2S could be taken as a weak jump shift (see Convention Card under "Other Convention Calls—Weak Jump Shift in Competition", showing 6+ cards in the bid suit.

If you play Jordan 2NT, the following bid is available to you:

2NT = 4m, 10+ HCP

If sufficient interest warrants, I can do more in the area of bidding after an opponent has made a takeout double of your partner's opening bid.

Last Week's Assignment: What would you bid with the following hands?

1. Bidding: 1D (1S) ???

You Hold: xxx A98x Jxxx Kx

Make a **Negative Double**. You have 8 HCP and 4 hearts. Although you do hold 4 diamonds, you first want to explore for the 4/4 heart fit.

2. Bidding: 1D (1S) ???

You hold: Jxx Axx Qxx AQ10x

Bid 2C. The negative double should be reserved for hands that offer no other form of action. Without the overcall of 1S, you would have bid 2C (a 2/1 game force bid). Although it would not be a 2/1 bid in the above scenario, you have to make certain that your side reaches game.

Next Week: Reopening (balancing) Doubles, Maximal Doubles, and Penalty Doubles.

I want to take a few moments to revisit a hand which I included in last week's class. Unfortunately, the hand caused quite a bit of confusion for which I offer my apologies. Let's look at it again. Partner opened the hand with one heart. The next person overcalled either 1S/2C/2D.

You held the following hand: xx QJxx Kxx Jxxx

I indicated that perhaps the best bid on your part would be that of 3H. This bid shows 4-card heart support, approximately 7-9 HCP and promises one trick on defense. It is known as a **Mixed Raise**.

Mixed Raise: Shows four-card support for partner's suit, 7-9 HCP and promises one trick on defense.

If you bid 2H, your partner will not know you hold 4 hearts. This bid is a constructive raise, showing at least 3-card support and 7/8-10 total points. Plenty of bidding room is left available to the opponents. The beauty of the 3H mixed raise

is the amount of bidding space it consumes. The **Law of Total Tricks** indicates that you can bid to the level of the number of trumps held between the two hands. Your partner has 5 hearts to have opened 1H. You have four hearts. Thus, the **Law of Total Tricks** allows your side to compete to the three level (you hold a minimum of 9 trumps between the two hands).

Below is another example of a mixed raise type hand.

Partner holds the following hand: AK964 KQ86 A4 103

The bidding has proceeded as follows: 1S (X) 3S (P)
4S All Pass

You hold the following hand as the responder: J875 954 QJ KQ65

Your bid of 3S showed 4-card spade support, 7-9 HCP and promised one trick should your side defend the hand. The advancer passed. The opener bid 4S making for a whopping 92% score!

In a subsequent lesson, I will revisit the concept of Mixed Raises.

Again, I apologize for throwing you a curve ball.