

**Competitive Bidding—Part XII
(November 29, 2021)**

Preemptive Jump Overcalls

The opponents have opened and you (or partner) make a **Preemptive Jump Overcall**, you force the opponents to G-U-E-S-S what to bid. Your 3, 4, or 5 level overcall can be most effective in interfering with the opponents' bidding sequence. They may not get to their optimal contract should the hand belong to their side.

Recall from previous lessons (March 29 and April 5), the optimal level of making a preemptive jump overcall is dependent on the level of vulnerability. The chart below provides a ready guide:

<u>Opponents</u>		<u>Your Side</u>	<u># of Tricks to Overbid</u>
Vulnerable	vs.	Nonvul.	(Rule of 4)
Nonvul.	vs.	Nonvul.	(Rule of 3)
Vulnerable	vs.	Vulnerable	(Rule of 3)
Nonvul.	vs.	Vulnerable	(Rule of 2)

Your RHO (right hand opponent) has opened with one club (1C) in each of the next three examples:

If the opponents are vulnerable and your side is nonvulnerable, you can overbid by 4 (Rule of 4), i.e., if you bid 4H, you are promising that you can take 6 tricks.

Example 1. (1C) 4H

Your Hand: x QJ10xxxx Ax Jxx

of losers: Spades = 1
 Hearts = 2
 Diamonds = 1
 Clubs = 3

Total # of losers = 7

13-7 = 6 tricks or 10 – 6 = overbid by 4 tricks

If both sides are vulnerable or nonvulnerable, you can overbid by 3 tricks (Rule of 3), i.e., if you bid 4H, you are promising that you can take 7 tricks.

Example 2. (1C) 4H

Your Hand: xx KQJ10xxx Kx xx

of losers: Spades = 2
 Hearts = 1
 Diamonds = 1
 Clubs = 2

Total # of losers = 6

13 – 6 = 7 tricks or 10 – 7 = overbid by 3 tricks

If the opponents are nonvulnerable and you are vulnerable, you can overbid by 2 tricks (Rule of 2). If you bid 3H, you are promising that you can take 7 tricks (Rule of 2).

Example 3. (1C) 3H

Your Hand: xx KQJ10xxx Kx xx

of losers: Spades = 2
 Hearts = 1
 Diamonds = 1
 Clubs = 2

Total # of losers = 6

13 – 6 = 7 tricks or 9 – 7 = overbid by 2 tricks

CAUTION: When your side is vulnerable (red) against nonvulnerable opponents (white) you must be very careful not to overbid. A double can be devastating as illustrated by the chart below.

<u># of Tricks Set</u>	<u>Nonvulnerable</u>		<u>Vulnerable</u>	
	Not X	X	Not X	X
-1	50	100	100	200
-2	100	300	200	500
-3	150	500	300	800

NOTE: The person who made a preemptive overcall should leave ALL subsequent bidding up to his partner.

The Five Level Belongs to the Opponents!

Many factors combine to make it usually unwise to bid five over five.

- Even though your hand might be distributional, the opponents' hands are often more balanced. Therefore, you will frequently have more winners against their contract than you might suspect.
- Partner might have minor honor in opponents' suits. It is difficult to envisage the defensive power of stray queens, jacks, and tens. Many times, such cards can often help defeat the opponents' five level contract. At other times, your five level bid may not fare well because the other side holds minor suit honors in your suits.
- In defending the five level contract, there are only a very few combinations of cards that need to be considered. The defenders are much less likely to err against five level contracts than they are against lower contracts.
- Unless the deal is a distributional freak, the combined trick taking potential between both sides (i.e., the number of tricks you can take in your trump suit added to the number that the opponents can take in their suit) seldom exceeds 20. The combined trick taking potential is often 19. In these cases, five over five bids are disastrous!

	Qxx Axx xxx J10xx		Both sides vulnerable South: Dealer																
J9x x AKJ10xx KQx	Kxx xx Qxx Axxxx	Bidding:	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">S</td> <td style="width: 25%;">W</td> <td style="width: 25%;">N</td> <td style="width: 25%;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1H</td> <td>(2D)</td> <td>2H</td> <td>(3D)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4H</td> <td>(5D)</td> <td>P</td> <td>(P)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5H</td> <td>X</td> <td>All</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> </table>	S	W	N	E	1H	(2D)	2H	(3D)	4H	(5D)	P	(P)	5H	X	All	Pass
S	W	N	E																
1H	(2D)	2H	(3D)																
4H	(5D)	P	(P)																
5H	X	All	Pass																
	A10xx KQJ10xxx x x																		

South's five heart bid over West's five diamond bid cost him -500. Five diamonds would have gone down at least one for +100.

Always ask yourself the question: Does the 5-level belong to the opponents?

To bid to make at the five-level, you need:

- Offensive values—extra high-card points, extra trumps
- A source of outside tricks—a long side suit, or extra trumps and ruffing values
- Controls (aces, kings and singletons) in outside suits
- Very important: Control of their suit (singleton, ace or sometimes Kx)

To sacrifice at the five-level, you need:

- Extra trumps—usually a fit of at least 10 trumps
- Distributional values—a singleton in their suit (best) or other suits
- Very few defensive tricks (keep in mind that queens and jacks in your shorter suits may be tricks on defense)
- The expectation that you can take 10 tricks (red v. white), 9 tricks (at equal vulnerability) or eight tricks (white v. red). Refer to the Rule of two, three and four chart given above.
- **Strong expectation** that the opponents will make their game contract

Before you make a sacrifice bid, always:

- **Count your tricks on offense.** Add the number of high-card and playing tricks in your hand to your estimate of partner's playing tricks. Look at the vulnerability and decide if you can afford the penalty when the opponents double.
- **Count your tricks on defense.** Estimate the number of defensive tricks you might take against the opponents' contract. If partner opened or overcalled a Weak 2-bid, assume he'll take one defensive trick (perhaps two depending on your length in his suit). If partner made a 3-bid, assume he'll take zero or one defensive trick.
- **If you have doubts about the success of the opponent's five-level game contract or your sacrifice, PASS!**

References for the above material came from Bridgebum and Karen's Bridge Library (see Learning Page: Learning Links on swvabridgeclubs.org website).

Let's finish up by looking at a couple of examples which were taken from BBO Discussion Forums.

Hand 1. You sit North holding: 872 E/W is Vulnerable
 652
 QJ10
 Q432

The Bidding has proceeded as follows:

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	(1H)	P	(2H)	2S
	(X)*	P	(3C)	3D
	(3S)	P	(4H)	P
	(P)	4S	(P)	P
	(5H)	???		

*Game Try

What do you as North bid? Pass/Double/5S

PASS. You have told your partner what you have by bidding 4S. The final decision is now up to your partner. On the actual hand, the opponents made 5H for +650. If your side had sacrificed in 5SX, it would have gone down 1 for -100. Who knows!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Hand 2. 105 N/S is Vulnerable
K2
A95
AQ9842

74	AKJ92	Bidding:	N	E	S	W
Q10964	AJ8753		(1C)	2C	(3H)*	4H
1032	K8		(5C)	5H	(P)	P
1076	VOID		(X)	All Pass		

Q863
VOID
QJ764
KJ53

East makes a Michaels cuebid over the 1C opening by North. South's 3H bid is a splinter bid showing a singleton/void in hearts. West bids 4H because he knows his partner has at least 5 hearts. Also, the E/W pair is not vulnerable. When North bids 5C, East has no problem in bidding 5H. The question is whether North should have doubled 5H?

Bridge has a lot of “rules”. Examples are “third hand high”, “eight ever, nine never”, “pull trumps early”, etc. But, all of these “rules” should be taken with a grain of salt. Many times bridge rules are made to be broken. Some should seldom be broken and some much more often.

One **bridge rule** you may (or may not) be familiar with is “**The five level belongs to the opponents.**” Basically, what the rule means is if the opponents bid to the five level, you should let them play there, either doubled or not. That is, don't try to outbid them at the five level.

As a general rule, this is a particularly good one, especially for beginners and inexperienced players. But the five level rule does not have to be followed religiously. Judgment is always a factor in making the final decision.

ASSIGNMENT:	West	North	East	South
	(1D)	2D	(2H)*	4H
	(P)	P	(5C)	???

West is Dealer
Both sides vulnerable

***Showing support for the 4th suit (clubs)**

South's Hand: AQ Q109874 A943 9

What do you do? Pass/Double/Bid 5H

76532
A6532
KJ
5

4
KJ
Q10876
A10876

KJ1098
VOID
52
KQJ432

AQ
Q109874
A943
9

West opens with 1D. He is using the Rule of 20 to justify his opening bid.

North makes the Michaels cuebid of 2D showing at least 5/5 in the majors.

East bids 2H, the lower of North's known suits, to show the 4th suit, Clubs.

South has a tremendous hand after his partner shows 5/5 in the majors. A better bid by him might have been 3D, showing game or slam interest in one of his partner's two suits. The bid of 4H is a signoff bid.

East now bids 5C.

What is your call? Pass/Double/Bid 5H

Either 5H or double is wrong. Making the cuebid of 5D is a possible bid asking your partner to bid either 5H or 6H, depending on the strength of his Michaels cuebid. If E/W push on to 6C, DOUBLE!

I want to finish up today by looking at two hands which were played in last Tuesday's Roanoke game. The first one was an example of a FAST arrival Lebensohl bid. The second one is an example of how to show a "useful void" in slam bidding.

Hand One.	Bidding:	West	North	East	South
		1N	2H*	3NT**	P
		4S	ALL PASS		

***Mechwell Defense: Showing 6+ Hearts (natural)**

****Lebensohl: Showing game values, but no heart stopper**

Below are the four hands.

Hand One.	1063	N/S vulnerable
	AQJ1092	Contract: 4S
	J954	Opening Lead: A of hearts
	VOID	

K875	AJ4
73	K
A73	KQ62
AKQJ	97642

Q92
8654
108
10853

West knew their side had the values for game, that her partner did NOT have a heart stopper and that he did not have four spades. If he had held four spades, he would have bid 3H immediately. Refer to Convention Card where **FAST DENIES**. She placed the final contract in 4S.

The second hand shows another bid available to you when doing the check up for bidding a slam. I did not cover this type of bid in the August 9th lesson on Slam Bidding. It is a bid which allows you to show a “useful void” to your partner. In the case of hand two below, my partner knowing that I had a void was able to bid the grand slam.

Hand Two. K87 E/W vulnerable
 AQ
 A1098
 AKQ7

J6	93
105432	86
K5	QJ76432
8652	103

AQ10542
 KJ97
 VOID
 J94

Bidding:	East	South	West	North
	(P)	1S	(P)	2C*
	(P)	2H	(P)	2S
	(P)	4S	(P)	4N**
	(P)	5C***	(P)	5D****
	(P)	6H*****	(P)	7NT

*Could be short as two clubs

**Keycard Blackwood for spades

***5C shows one or four keys

****5D asks for queen of spades and outside king

*****6H shows specifically the queen of spades, the king of hearts and a useful void.

NOTE: If I had held the queen of spades and king of hearts and no void, I would simply bid 5H.

A jump bid in hearts shows a useful void. Simply bidding 5 hearts shows the queen of trumps and the king of hearts.

Assignment:

1. The bidding:

	South	West	North	East
	(1S)	2D	(2S)	X

What is the meaning of East's double? What type of hand is he showing?

2. The bidding:

	East	South	West	North
	(1H)	2NT	(P)	3C
	(P)	???		

What is the meaning of the 2NT bid?

Your partner has shown preference for clubs. Holding the following hand, what is your rebid?

A8
9
KQ872
AKJ76

Next Week: The Minor Suits (with special emphasis on inverted minors/interference bids)