

Using Michaels Over Michaels & Unusual No-Trump Over Unusual No-Trump When Responding to Partner's Opening Call, following a 2-Suited Competitive Overcall

After your Partner opens with a 1C, 1D, 1H, or 1S opening bid, and your right-hand Opponent (RHO) overcalls with either a "*Michaels Cue-bid*," or with an "*Unusual No-Trump*" call, either evidencing a very weak or very strong two-suited hand, you, as Opener's Responder, have several alternative bids; i.e., a "Pass," a "Double," a "bid of the 4th, as-yet unreferenced suit," a "No-Trump" call, or a "cue-bid of either of the two suits referenced by the Opponent's conventional, two-suited, competitive overcall." Partnerships must have a thorough understanding as to the meaning of all of these potential actions for use by the Responder under such circumstances, so as to eliminate what might otherwise be a competitive bidding miss-understanding.

1. A "Pass" shows, at most, a smattering of HCP's with no interest in competing.

With: JX QXXX KXX XXXX (1C, 1D, 1H, or 1S) -- "2-NT" -- Pass

2. A "Double" is a strength-showing action. It implies a hand that would be worth a Redouble had your right-hand Opponent made a Take-Out double, and should be avoided unless Responder is prepared to penalize the Opponents in at least one of the two choices implied by the Opponent's conventional two-suited overcall. Opener is invited to "*double*" any bid by the Partner of the 2-suited Overcaller, or to "*pass*" it on to you.

With: AQ95 KJ84 Q8 975 1C -- "2C" -- Double

Alternatively, if Responder has offensive features, he/she should begin to describe his/her hand, as in 3, 4, 5, or 6 below:

3. A bid in a new suit is natural, forcing, and shows 10 or more HCP's.

With: KX AQJXXX JXX XX 1S -- "2-NT" -- 3H

4. A bid of 2-NT is natural and is invitational to game, and a 3-NT bid is to play, both showing at least one stopper in the Opponent's implied, two suits.

With: AQX KXXX QXXX XX 1C --- "2C" --- 2-NT

With: AXX KQXX XX AJXX 1D -- "2-NT" -- 3-NT

5. A bid of Opener's suit is pre-emptive in support of Partner's opening suit, with 0-7 HCP's (a 10 or more loser hand), and conforms to the LAW OF TOTAL TRICKS.

With: XX KXXX QXX XXXX 1H "2-NT" 3H (shows 4-pieces)

6. A Cue-bid in either of the Opponent's implied two suits, represents either (a) constructive support for Opener's suit (7-9 HCP's) (9-losers), or (b) invitational or better support for Opener's suit (10-12 HCP's or more) (8- or fewer losers). (a) A cue-bid in the *lower-ranking* of the Opponent's implied suits represents a *limit raise or better* in support of Opener's suit, and (b) a cue-bid in the *higher-ranking* of the Opponent's implied suits represents a *constructive raise* in support of Opener's suit.

Examples: (a) 1C -- "2C" -- "2H" (Hearts and Spades are shown here by the Opponent's "*Michaels*" cue-bid. Therefore, this cue-bid of the *lower-ranking* of the two suits shown by the Opponent's overcall signifies an *invitational or better* raise in support of Opener's Clubs. (A bid of "2S," the *higher-ranking* referenced suit, would have shown a *constructive raise* in Clubs.)

(b) 1S -- "2-NT" -- "3D" (Clubs and Diamonds are shown here by the Opponent's "*Unusual No-Trump*" call. Therefore, this cue-bid of the *higher-ranking* of the two suits referenced signifies a *constructive raise* (10-12 HCP's) in support of Opener's Spades. (A "3C" call, the *lower-ranking* of the two referenced suits would have shown *invitational or better* support for Opener's Spade Suit.)

Using the Overcaller's two-referenced suits, as shown here, allows Opener's responding Partner to make a pre-emptive bid, a constructive bid, or an invitational or better bid in support of Opener's suit, all three, notwithstanding the 2-suited interference call by the Opponent.

Alternative Unusual 2-No-Trump over Unusual 2-No-Trump

Because we know the two suits when the Opponents use an “Unusual 2-NT” bid, we can use this information to our advantage. One uses the suits of the Opponents (the cheapest suit and their second suit, as cue bids) and the two natural available bids to describe the hand of the Responder:

1. The cheapest cue-bid is a limit raise or better in Partner’s suit.
2. The second cue-bid is a game-forcing hand in the fourth, as-yet, un-bid suit.
3. A raise in the fourth suit is natural and non-forcing.
4. A raise in the Partner’s suit is a competitive raise (non-forcing)

EXAMPLES:

West
1H

North
2-NT (Clubs & Diamonds)

East
?

3C (the cheapest cue-bid)
A limit raise or better in Hearts.

3D (the second cue-bid)
A game-forcing bid in Spades

3S (the fourth suit)
Natural and non-forcing

3H (A raise in Partner’s suit)
Competitive and non-forcing

3-NT
Natural with stoppers in the Opponent’s two suits

4C/4D
A “Splinter-raise” in Hearts

4S
Natural

Alternative Michaels over Michaels

When we know the two suits when the Opponents use a “Michaels” cue-bid, we can use this information to our advantage. One uses the suits of the Opponents (the cheapest suit and their second suit, as cue bids) and the two natural available bids to describe the hand of the Responder:

1. The cheapest cue-bid is a limit raise or better in Partner’s suit.
2. The second cue-bid is a game-forcing hand in the fourth, as-yet, un-bid suit.
3. A raise in the fourth suit is natural and non-forcing.
4. A raise in the Partner’s suit is a competitive raise (non-forcing)

EXAMPLES:

West
1C

North
2C (Hearts and Spades)

East
?

2D

Natural and non-forcing

2H (the cheapest cue-bid)

A limit raise or better in Clubs

2S (the Second cue-bid)

A game forcing bid in Diamonds

2-NT

Natural and invitational

3C

A competitive club-raise (non-forcing)

3D

Natural and non-forcing

3H/3S (or) **4H/4S**

A “Splinter-raise” in Clubs

3-NT

Natural with stoppers in the Opponent’s two suits

5C

Natural