



Cairns Bridge Club: Monday 14 Oct 2013

Workshop 1 Joan Butts COMPETITIVE BIDDING – WITHOUT A FIT

Joan has represented Queensland and Australia in bridge for over 20 years. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree and Diplomas in Education and Educational Psychology, and is an expert bridge teacher.

Joan has a passion for bridge education, both for students and for teachers, and has developed a new approach for beginners. Joan has been the official teacher for the Queensland Bridge Association for 8 years.

Joan was appointed as the ABF National Teaching Coordinator in January 2011 and trains teachers around Australia.

COMPETITIVE BIDDING -WITHOUT A FIT

Everyone at the table is affected by competitive bidding. The best way to look at it is that new bids are now available (cue bids and redoubles), as well as all the old possibilities - suits, no trumps, doubles - so make the most of it. You now have more information about the hand too.

When the opponents double or overcall your partner's opening bid, you either have a fit or you don't. Showing the fit is No 1 priority. Do it in competition as fast as you can, almost regardless of points. It's a matter of telling partner HOW HIGH you want to go in their suit.

But...at other times, you won't have a fit for partner's first suit. Now you need to decide whether your side should play the hand or whether it's better to defend and take the opponents down.

Responder's Actions after an Overcall (without a fit)

WE open the bidding

If partner opens 1♣/♦/♥/1♠ and the next opponent makes a natural overcall

- **DOUBLE** is for take-out, (a negative double) eg 1♠ (2♦) x
- A bid of responder's **OWN SUIT** is natural and forcing eg 1♠ (2♦) 2♥
- A bid of **NO TRUMPS** is natural, showing a stopper eg 1♠ (2♦) 2NT
- **PASS** shows too few points to bid, OR a hand that has values in the opponents' suit, and wants to defend the hand eg 1♠ (2♦) P P

Responder's Actions after a Take-Out Double (without a fit)

- A **REDOUBLE** shows 10+ points with interest in doubling the opponents for penalty. This denies a primary fit for partner eg 1♠ X XX
- A bid at the 1-level is **FORCING** (6+pts) eg 1♠ X 1♦/♥/♠
- A bid of a new suit at the 2-level is **NON FORCING** and shows a 5-card or longer suit with fewer than 10 points (as redouble was available) eg 1♠ X 2♣/♦/♥
- **PASS** shows a hand with too few points to bid

The Redouble

When an opponent opens, and your partner doubles, IF the next bid you hear is redouble (XX), your side could be in serious trouble. The redouble sends the message to opener that the hand belongs to their side, (10+ points and no primary fit), that they have the majority of points, and may be looking to make a penalty double if your side can't find a fit.

1♠ X XX sets up a nasty scenario if the XX'er is short in their partner's suit. A redouble usually promises another bid, either in a suit, or if a double, that will be penalty.

What should the next hand do in this situation?

Everyone knows that the 4th hand will have very few points, (opener = 13+, doubler = 13+, and XX'er = 10+), that leaves only 3 or 4 pts for the next hand (13 + 13 + 10 = 36)

The guideline is: If you have a definite preference to play in a suit, then BID it. But if not, pass, and it will come around to partner who will bid their best 4 card suit. This may be doubled for penalty by the opening side, but what can you do?

Eg

♠ J1094
♥ 76
♦ 82
♣ Q9872

♠ Q7
♥ A1042
♦ QJ1094
♣ K5

♠ AK852
♥ J53
♦ 53
♣ A64

♠ 63
♥ KQ98
♦ AK76
♣ J103

E	S	W	N
1♠	X	XX	2♣
P	P	2♦	P
2NT	P	3NT	

It's important for North to show South what they would like to play in, regardless of points. If it had been in EW's interests to X 2♣ this would have been for penalty. However on this hand, EW will score better in 3NT. When there has been a XX, the opener should ONLY bid at their next turn if they are weak with a 6 card +suit, or a two-suiter. The stronger they are, the more they should PASS!

♠ Q762
♥ 642
♦ Q54
♣ 752

♠ 104
♥ AJ108
♦ 1097
♣ KQ106

♠ AKJ95
♥ 93
♦ KJ62
♣ 84

♠ 83
♥ KQ75
♦ A83
♣ AJ93

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W	N	E	S
P	P	1♠	X
XX	P	P	2♣/2♥
X	P	P	P

South's takeout double is normal, showing support for the unbid suits, and an opening hand. When West redoubles, showing 10+ points and no fit, the message is sent that EW have the majority of strength. If West had passed, North would have to bid something. As North has no real preference for a suit to play in, it's best to pass. East should also pass, waiting to see developments. South does not want to defend 1♠XX, so bids a four-card suit, either 2♣ or 2♥. West, having redoubled, can now make a penalty double of whichever suit South chooses. The penalty should be more than any score EW would receive for making game.

Negative Doubles

Responder's double of an opponent's suit overcall, to whatever level, is for take-out, and known as a negative double. It usually shows:

- Four card or longer support for the unbid major suit: support for an unbid minor suit, unless responder has something else to bid if opener bids the minor suit eg 1♣ (1♠) X shows either hearts and diamonds, or maybe one of these, 6+ pts.
 - The higher you're forced to bid, the stronger the hand must be. A good rule is that you need to be a King (ie 3 pts) better for each level higher. Eg 1♣ (2♠) X requires at least 9pts to bid, as it forces to the 3 –level, and 1♣ (3♠)X requires 12+, as it forces to 3NT or the 4 level.
 - With a five-card or longer suit, responder bids the suit rather than doubling, showing 10+ points. This is forcing. (1♣ (1♠) 2♦/♥). If responder doesn't have enough strength to introduce the suit at the required level, responder starts with a negative double, planning to bid the suit at the next opportunity, eg 1♣ (1♠) X P 2♦ P 2♥ would show a weak hand (fewer than 10 pts), and 6 hearts.
 - Opener makes an appropriate bid after hearing a negative double by responder, based on what is in THEIR hand, and also how strong they are, ie minimum (13 – 15), medium (16 – 18), or maximum (19 – 20).
 - Sometimes the opponents pre-empt and responder is in a tough position to make a bid, eg 1♣ (3♠) ?, responder may not have the perfect shape for a negative double. Eric Rodwell has coined a term "Thrup Double" suggesting that in a situation like this, a X by responder asks opener for ONE thing only – bid 3NT IF they hold a stopper in the pre-empter's suit. Eg 1♣ (3♠) X 3NT promises a spade stopper, not necessarily four hearts, or the other suit.
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