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Bidding Basics

Opener's rebid after the opponents interfere

We've opened the bidding and received interference. Let's break this down into several categories.

We open and LHO enters the auction

Part 1) Our partner responds

Let's consider an auction such as 1♦-(Dbl)-1♥-(Pass)-?

In this case, we completely ignore the double and make our rebid as if there had been no interference at all.

Next, what about something like 1♣-(1♦)-1♥-(Pass)-?

Again, we rebid as if the opponents had passed, but we do have a new bid available; a cuebid of their suit. For the purpose of this basic series, I suggest not using such a bid (only to confuse your partner). If you were to make such a bid, it surely wouldn't be natural – it would have to show some big hand.

Part 2) Our partner passes

What if it goes 1♦-(Dbl)-Pass-(1♥/1♠)-?

Our partner doesn't have much, so for us to take a second call, we would need a good reason. Don't bid again with a minimum. Anything opener does here is natural but shows extra values. For example, after 1♣-(Dbl)-Pass-(1♠), don't rebid 1NT with a flat minimum; in fact, volunteering 1NT here would actually show 18–19 HCP! Don't repeat your suit or bid a new suit unless you have a good hand (more than a minimum).

Let's now consider this common auction: We open, LHO overcalls and it is passed back to us. For example, 1♦-(1♥)-Pass-(Pass)-? In this case, partner is usually broke but occasionally has what we call a "trap pass." He

wanted to double 1♥ for penalties but couldn't because we use negative doubles. Accordingly, it is our job to let partner convert his trap pass for penalties. We double for takeout, and he would leave it in. The rule of thumb is that when opener has a singleton in the opponent's suit, he "always" reopens with a double for takeout. So, on the auction above, opener would double with either of these hands:

♠A 7 6 2 ♥9 ♦A 8 6 4 2 ♣K J 9

♠K Q 9 ♥9 ♦K Q 7 6 5 2 ♣Q 10 4.

Note the quotes around "always." I wouldn't double (having no interest in defending) with something like:

♠4 ♥9 ♦A K Q J 10 6 3 ♣A 7 6 2.

I would cuebid 2♥ or jump to 3♦.

If opener is void in their suit, he can double, but likely will end up on defense with a void – so I would rather bid 2♦ on the auction above with:

♠K 7 4 ♥— ♦K Q 10 8 6 4 2 ♣K 6 3,

(no interest in defending). With a doubleton in their suit, opener can also reopen with a double, but might not do so with a dead minimum. Even if the opponents preempt, opener's reopening double is takeout.

If the opponents both bid, double is still takeout. So, in either of these auctions, opener is short in their suit(s): 1♦-(1♥)-Pass-(2♥); Dbl or 1♦-(1♥)-Pass-(1♠); Dbl.

RHO enters the auction

Part 1) Our partner has responded

We are considering something like 1♦-(Pass)-1♥-(2♣). Opener rebids pretty much as normal, but has a few other options such as:

Pass. Opener is no longer forced to bid and can pass with nothing special to say. Example:

♠A 7 6 2 ♥J 9 ♦A Q J 9 ♣J 7 4.

Double. This is something you don't want to try without partnership agreement. Most experts use it conventionally to show three-card support, a so-called "support double."

Cuebid. Another thing to avoid, unless you want to confuse your partner.

Part 2) Our partner has passed

We are considering 1♦-(Pass)-Pass-(1♠)-?

This brings us back to earlier in this installment, where opener shouldn't bid again unless he has extra values. Double would be for takeout of their suit. 1NT would show 18–19 (with 12–14 balanced, opener passes). Example of a double:

♠9 ♥A Q 7 4 ♦A K 7 6 2 ♣A 7 4.

Example of 1NT:

♠K Q 9 ♥K 2 ♦K Q 10 6 3 ♣A J 9.

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Bidding Basics Quiz

As opener, what is your call after 1♣–(1♠)–1NT–(Pass)–?

1) ♠9 ♥A Q 7 4 ♦K J 9 ♣K 10 7 6 2

2) ♠9 2 ♥A 3 ♦Q 7 4 ♣K Q 9 8 7 4

As opener, what is your call after 1♥–(2♦)–Pass–(Pass)–?

3) ♠7 6 2 ♥K J 10 9 7 6 2 ♦— ♣A Q J

4) ♠A 6 3 ♥A Q 7 6 2 ♦9 ♣Q 10 7 4

As opener, what is your call after 1♣–(Dbl)–1♠–(2♦)–?

5) ♠K 2 ♥K Q 7 4 ♦K 6 3 ♣Q 7 6 2

• 6) ♠Q 10 7 4 ♥6 3 ♦A 7 4 ♣A Q 7 4

As opener, what is your call after 1♦–(Pass)–Pass–(1♥)–?

7) ♠K Q 10 8 ♥6 3 ♦A K Q 10 7 4 ♣5

8) ♠A 10 6 3 ♥9 ♦A K 10 6 3 ♣A K 9

Bidding Basics Quiz Answers

1) Pass. Partner has spades stopped; no need to run from 1NT.

2) 2♣. Long clubs and a minimum.

3) 2♥. Yes, partner might be dying for a double, but this hand is all offense.

4) Double. Short diamonds mandate this action.

5) Pass. Nothing to say. Volunteering a bid here (other than a raise) would show extras.

6) 2♠. Support with support (if using support doubles, this guarantees four spades).

7) 1♠. Worth it. You wouldn't do this with a flat minimum.

8) Double. The perfect hand for this (takeout, extras). ☺