



# Adventures in Bridge

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## *This Week in Bridge*

### **(344) Opener's Rebid After RHO Overcalls**

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Level: 4 of 10 (1 of 6)

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#### **General**

When we open the bidding with a suit at the 1-level, partner responds, and RHO overcalls, we lose some of our possible rebid options (the number depending on how much bidding space the opponents robbed us of). But we do gain two new calls that are extremely useful in describing our hand to partner – pass and double. Let's take a look at these auctions in detail.

#### **Vs. 1-Level Overcalls by RHO**

Let's start by considering an auction when the opponents do not take away too much of our bidding space.

##### *Example 1*

1♦ P 1♥ 1♠

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Now our rebids are quite similar to if RHO had passed. 1NT, 2NT, 2♣, 2♦, 2♥ are all unchanged except that NT bids show a ♠ stopper. The new actions that are available to us are:

- X\* Support Double – showing 3-card ♥ support and any values (12+ pts).
- Pass Usually a balanced 12-14 pts without a ♠ stopper and fewer than 3c♥
- 2♠ Cuebid, Game Forcing, usually no ♠ stopper, trick-based hand or balanced 18-19 pts

*Note: Pass could be a trap pass of the opponent's suit, though this is rare when the opponents overcall at the 1-level.*



Let's look at another example where we do not usually play support doubles.

*Example 2*

1♣ P 1♦ 1♠

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Again, most calls are unchanged from the above auction. The primary difference is the different use of double. Many players do not use double as a support double in this auction; instead they use it to show a 2NT rebid without a ♠ stopper (balanced 18-19 pts). This was a hand type that we forced to game with in example 1 and this was an a potential overbid. Here we can show this hand by simply doubling (keeping the auction low).

Since we usually do not have a 4-card ♦ suit when we open 1♣ (unless we are highly distributional), we often raise to 2♦ with only 3-card support.

**Vs. 2-Level Overcalls by RHO**

When RHO makes an overcall at the 2-level we lose even more of our low-level rebids. This means that we will be forced to pass with a larger variety of hands where we can no longer make the rebid we had planned.

*Example 3*

1♦ Pass 1♠ 2♥

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- X\* Support Double, 3-card ♠ support, 12+ pts
- Pass Many hands possible, could be balanced 12-14 pts, or other balanced hands that cannot make rebid (planned to rebid 2♣ or 2♦) or "Trap Pass" hand with a 4-card ♥ suit.
- 2♠ 4-card ♠, 12-14 pts
- 2NT Balanced 18-19 points, ♥ stopper, 2-card ♠
- 3♣ Natural, 4+card ♣, 0-2 card ♠, 14-17 pts, NF
- 3♦ Natural, 6+card ♦, 0-2 card ♠, 14-17 pts, NF
- 3♥ Cuebid, Game Forcing, 18-19 balanced or trick showing hand without a ♥ stopper
- 3♠ 4-card ♠, 15-17 pts
- 3NT Trick-oriented hand, ♥ stopper, 0-2 card ♠



*Example 4*

♠ 5

♥ KQT6

♦ AK63

♣ KT95

1♦    Pass    1♠    2♥

Pass    Pass    X    All Pass

Here we trap pass RHO's overcall. We were happy to defend 2♥ and are even happier to defend doubled.

We bid similarly when the opponents bid and raise a suit.

*Example 5*

1♦    1♥    1♠    2♥

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Here we use a support double to show 3-card ♠ support and raise with 4-card support. This lets partner know whether we have an 8+card or 9+card fit. 2NT here, even though it is not a jump, shows a balanced 18-19 with 2-card ♠ and a ♥ stopper.

When partner responds with 1NT and RHO overcalls at the 2-level, we also use our new bids of pass and double.

*Example 6*

1♦    P    1NT    2♠

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Here we can double as takeout, implying shortness in ♠ (at most a 2-card suit) and usually at least 8-cards in the minors.

*Example 7 – 2/1 GF Auctions*

1♠    P    2♦    2♥

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When we are in a 2/1 Game-Forcing auction, if there is competition then most of our bids are unchanged. We can pass if we want to find out what partner thinks. Double in this auction is penalty.

**Vs. 3-Level Overcalls by RHO**

When RHO bids at the 3-level, things get even more difficult for the Opener. We have far less room to show our hand.



*Example 8*

1♦ P 1♠ 3♥

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- 3♠ Could be a stretch, 4-card ♠, 14-16 points
- 3NT To Play, "I hope I make this", ♥ stopper
- X General takeout, showing extra values and usually no ♥ stopper

**Conclusion**

As the opening bidder we strive to communicate our hand type and strength to partner. But even more important than that is our fit. With support we raise partner. If RHO interferes, we often gain a support double to show a partial fit. Another important gain is the pass, to be used with many minimum hands. One of the biggest mistakes players make is to rebid 2NT (as a non-jump) with 12-14 points. Remember, this 2NT rebid still shows 18-19 pts, even if it is not a jump, if partner could have as few as 6 points. Make sure that you and partner spend time discussing these Opener's rebids in competition.