



THE BIDDING TOOLKIT

Cappelletti over 1NT — part 2

Bridge players like to compete over an opponent's opening strong 1NT bid when they hold a shapely hand. Last month we explored a method to do this called Cappelletti (also called Hamilton). How do we act as responder after partner interferes?

Review of how Cappelletti works

Here is a review of what partner's bids mean when she intervenes. Double shows a good hand, either a very strong balanced hand or (better) a hand with a running suit that can be used to defeat 1NT; 2♣ shows any one suit; 2♦ shows both majors; 2♥ shows hearts and a minor suit; 2♠ shows spades and a minor suit, and 2NT shows both minors.

Responding after partner bids

If partner bids 2♣ showing a one-suited hand, you normally bid 2♦ so partner can name her suit or pass (if she has diamonds). An exception is that you may name your own decent six-card major. If your opponent doubles the 2♣ bid, a redouble by you shows 7 or more high-card points and support for any suit partner wants to name.

If partner bids 2♦ showing hearts and spades, you should bid your longer major suit. If you have a good fit and distribution you may jump in the major. If you bid 2NT, you show the minors and partner should name her longer minor, even

if it is a two-card suit. If you have a fit for one major and 11 or more HCP, bid a forcing 2NT, ostensibly for the minors, but follow up by supporting the major suit.

If partner bids 2♥ or 2♠ showing that major and either minor suit, you should raise the major with a good fit and 8 to 11 points. If you don't like the major but fit both minors, bid 2NT to ask partner which minor suit she holds. When partner names it, you may then pass.

If you have a strong raise for the major, bid 2NT first asking for partner's minor. Over her response, support the major. This shows a stronger hand than a direct raise. Even though the idea is to obstruct the opponents, sometimes you can make game and this allows you to find out. If partner has a minimum 5-5 type hand, she may pass your invitation.

Examples

Take a look at these hands. All start with your left-hand opponent opening a strong 1NT.

Partner bids 2♣. What would you call with

♠K 8 3 ♥Q 7 4 2 ♦Q 10 6 ♣K 5 4?

This one is easy. Bid 2♦, which allows partner to pass or name her suit.

Partner bids 2♣ and you have ♠8 6 2 ♥A Q 10 7 4 3 ♦4 ♣J 10 4.

Bid 2♥. You have a good suit and are willing to play opposite shortness. You've also helped partner if she is on opening lead.

Partner bids 2♣ and you have

♠8 6 2 ♥J 8 7 4 3 2 ♦4 ♣J 10 4.

Bid 2♦. Do not bid 2♥ with a bad suit and a bad hand.

Partner bids 2♣ and your right-hand opponent doubles. What do you call with

♠K 8 3 ♥Q 7 4 2 ♦Q 10 6 ♣K 5 4?

Redouble. This says you have at least 7 HCP and support for your partner's suit. She is invited to compete.

Partner bids 2♠. What would you call with

♠8 4 ♥6 3 ♦K J 8 4 2 ♣K J 4 2?

Bid 2NT, which asks partner to name her better minor. You don't like spades, but you are happy to play in clubs or diamonds.

Partner bids 2♠. What would you call with

♠9 4 ♥K Q J 7 4 ♦J 8 6 ♣K 9 2?

Pass. Partner has at least five spades. It's not advisable to bid 2NT to ask for her minor. Your fit might not be much better and you are raising the bidding to the three level. In any event, you have some help for partner, so pass and hope for the best.

Know what you're playing

If you and your partner agree to play Cappelletti, you may wish to discuss it in more detail.

We are trying to interfere with the opponents. What do we do if they turn the tables and they interfere with us?

Here's an example. Partner bids 2♣ over 1NT and your right-hand opponent bids 2♦. What is a double by you? Does that mean you can set them, or does it ask partner to name her suit? What is 2♥ by you? Is that pass or correct or does it show hearts?

If partner doubles 1NT and I have a weak hand, what should I do?

These are some examples of situations that merit further discussion. □

Next month: DONT — another popular way to interfere.