

# *Modified* Rebids by Opener

## After **Jacoby 2NT** Followed by an Overcall

Bare/Savage Version presented by Mike Savage

Have you discussed what your partnership agreements are when this happens? You opened a major, your partner responded (Jacoby) 2NT and the next hand unexpectedly overcalls at the 3-level, interfering with your normal Jacoby 2NT rebids by opener. This opportunistic overcall is happening more often as some players realize that they usually can get away with a lead-directing overcall over Jacoby 2NT when the opponents are known to have a nine-card trump fit. Do you have a partnership agreement in this situation? If not, here's what we play: **Double** is penalty and **Pass** *denies* a control in their suit. An immediate bid by opener at the **Cheapest Level of your Major** or **3NT** guarantees a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round control in the opponent's suit, while bidding a **New Suit** shows a singleton or void in the suit bid.

1M – P – 2NT (Jacoby 2NT) – Three-level Overcall:

**DOUBLE** = Penalties.

Usually 3-4 cards to an honor with no slam interest and most often balanced.

**PASS** = Typically 5-3-3-2, *denies* a control in their suit and probably will pass if partner doubles.

Also might have a very good hand and is marking time to see what partner does. If he is marking time, he normally will *not* have a control in the overcaller's suit.

Responses:

**3NT** = Requests cue-bidding and should have a control in the opponent's suit.

(Some partnerships might prefer to use this bid to show Kx in their suit.)

**New Suit** = Cue-bid with slam interest and also a control in the opponent's suit.

**NEW SUIT** = Shortness with a non-minimum (cue-bid of overcaller's suit should show a void).

**3 OF THE MAJOR** (if available) = Shows a control in their suit and could have slam interest.

**3NT** = Requests cue-bidding. Over a 3C or 3D overcall it shows *strong* slam interest, but over a 3S overcall it only guarantees *some* slam interest and always shows a control in their suit.

**4 OF THE MAJOR** (Jump) = No slam interest, good trumps and no control in their suit.

**4H** (after a 3S overcall) = Denies much slam interest but *does* have a control in their suit.

Since usually the suit overcalled is a good one, having a trump stack will be a rarity. However that doesn't mean a good profit can't be made from doubling the overcall, based more on power than on trumps—especially with two balanced hands with combined game strength or better. Some defensive methods don't cater to penalizing the opponents but concentrate in using all possible bids to better define opener's and responder's hands in case there is a slam. We, however, like to be able to punish the overcaller for his temerity in interrupting our auction, while still retaining slam probe capabilities. Above all, we want to keep our systemic responses simple (KISS) while still being effective.

Some partnerships have other methods to cope with the overcall. One we encountered had no penalty double provision at all as the double was used to show shortness in the suit bid, pass to show shortness in a lower ranking suit and bidding a higher-ranking new suit, showed shortness in that suit. This is very effective for locating any shortness you might have at the lowest possible level but allows opportunists, such as myself, to have free-reign to overcall at the three-level with KQJx (or some-such) and out!

There might be other, possibly better methods used in some partnerships. However the important thing is to have a partnership agreement—it's almost unimportant *what* that agreement is. You'll sure appreciate having a discussed agreement in place when this situation comes up (preferably a simple one that you and your partner will easily remember). Gerry and I like to be able to double for penalties if we can and then if we can't—or if the vulnerability is wrong—proceed to bid our game or explore for slam.