

A hand holding a fan of playing cards, with a background of geometric shapes and a semi-transparent orange banner. The cards are fanned out, showing various suits and colors. The hand is positioned in the lower right, with fingers holding the cards. The background features a pattern of overlapping squares and diamonds in shades of gray and white, with a semi-transparent orange banner across the middle.

Perfectly Powerful Preempts: The Sword and the Shield

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November 2024
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Overview – Perfectly Powerful Preempts

- Why Do We Preempt? (The Sword and the Shield)
- The Weak Two Bid Opening
- What Tools Do We Have After We Open a Weak 2?
- Raise Only Non-Force or not: A Discussion
- My Philosophy of Weak 2 Bids
- Defense Against Weak 2 Bids
- Recap

Why Do We Preempt?

Thinking Cap Time!



Why Do We Preempt?

(The Sword and the Shield)

- It may be our hand (partscore, game, even slam!)
- Take away their bidding space
 - They might get to the wrong level or wrong strain
- Help partner know what to lead



What Is a Weak Two Bid Opening – I

- Six Card Suit
- 4(?) - 11(?) High Card Points
- No outside 4-card major
- Positional:
 - 3rd seat often weak; preempting a strong(?) opponent
 - 1st seat may be weak; two Opps vs. one Partner
 - 2nd seat: sound, preempts partner and one opponent
 - 4th seat: What should a 4th seat weak 2 look like?

What Is a Weak Two Bid Opening – II

- Six Card Suit
- 4(?) - 11(?) High Card Points
- No outside 4-card major
- Positional:
 - 3rd seat weakest
 - 1st seat may be weak
 - 2nd seat: sound
 - 4th seat: There are no preempts in the pass-out seat!
 - “Intermediate” strength (6-ish LTC):
Ex: AKTxxx, QJx, T, QJx or AKQxxx, Tx, 9x, KJx

What Tools Do We Have After We Open A Weak Two? – I

- 2NT artificial and forcing (not an alert, but the responses should be alerted)
 - “Feature”: Opener shows an outside A or K
 - Ogust: Opener shows strength and suit quality

Question: What response by opener to 2NT is the same whether playing Feature or Ogust?



What Tools Do We Have After We Open A Weak Two? – II

- 2NT artificial and forcing (not an alert)
 - “Feature”: Opener shows an outside A or K
 - Ogust: Opener shows strength and suit quality
- What response to 2NT is the same whether playing Feature or Ogust?
- In both Feature and Ogust, opener’s rebid of 3NT shows a suit that is AKQxxx or better
 - 2H - 2NT
 - 3NT Shows a hand like xx, AKQxxx, xxx, xx
 - Allows an easy 3NT rebid with Ax, xx, Kxx, AKxxxx

What Tools Do We Have After We Open A Weak Two? **Feature**

- 2NT artificial and forcing (not an alert)
- “Feature”: Opener shows an outside A or K (**Alertable**)
 - Often a try for 3NT or a fitting suit game
 - Opener does not show shortage
 - Any strength or max? (recommend good hands only)
 - The negative response to a Feature Ask is rebidding the original suit (either no feature or bad hand)
 - Don’t forget, rebid 3NT with AKQxxx or better!
- Expert: 2X - 4NT is for Aces only! To use key card, set trump first with 2NT.

What Tools Do We Have After We Open A Weak Two? **Ogust**

- 2NT artificial and forcing (not an alert)
- Ogust: Asks Opener strength and suit quality.
- Opener's standard rebid scheme: (**Alertable**)
 - 3C: minimum hand, bad suit
 - 3D: minimum hand, good suit
 - 3H: maximum hand, bad suit
 - 3S: maximum hand, good suit
 - 3NT is... ?
- max vs. min depends on your agreed range
- "good suit" is 2 of the top 3 honors (KQ, AQ, or AK)
- Expert: 2X - 4NT is for Aces only! To use key card, set trump first with 2NT.

Raise Only Non-Force or Not?

- Often abbreviated “RONF”; if using RONF:
 - Auctions like 2H - P - 3D are forcing one round
 - May be looking for best game or even slam
 - Opener rebids as sensibly as possible:
 - Raise with xxx or Hx
 - Bid a new suit to show a fit and feature
 - Rebid opener’s suit if nothing else to show
 - What’s opener’s 3NT rebid?
- RONF is *standard*, you should assume it without prior agreement to the contrary. If not playing RONF, new suits must be **alerted** and explained as “non-forcing”

Why I Use RONF – I

- If a new suit is not forcing, how does responder intelligently investigate slam?
- If a new suit is not forcing, your system assumes you know when it's right to stop on a dime (for example that exactly 3C is better than 2H or 2S), and that finding the right partscore is more important than having tools to find the best game or slam
- I want my bidding system to be optimized to find the best games and slams.
- That said, some experts do play new suit non-forcing (but not a lot of them, in my experience)

Why I Use RONF – II

- I recommend you play RONF (new suit forcing) after preempts
- If NOT RONF, a new suit by responder must be **alerted!**

My Philosophy of Weak 2 Bids – I

- Use disciplined preempts until you're expert or on the high end of advanced
- Strive to make your actions and auctions repeatable, that is, allow you to gather useful experience to know what works and what doesn't
- This allows you to take advantage of both the sword (offensive uses) and the shield (defensive or obstructive uses) of preempts

My Philosophy of Weak 2 Bids – II

- Suit Quality: Vulnerable, have 2 of the top 3 honors in 1st or 2nd seat
- Stick to the 'rules' – *partnership* rules!
 - No 4-card major
 - Six card suits in 1st and 2nd seats. Seven in 3rd?
 - Don't preempt and bid again (unless forced)
 - Stick to partnership suit and hand quality agreements
 - Responder uses LOTT to advance the preempt, but keep in mind *Thomas' Rule*: We don't push the opps into game unless **EITHER** we can set them, **OR**, we want to get doubled when we bid again

My Philosophy of Weak 2 Bids - III

- If we stick to 2-of-3 top honors 1st or 2nd seat vulnerable, we don't need Ogust anymore!
- Thus I use:

Ogust only non-vulnerable
Feature Vulnerable
- Consider using this also in regular partnerships
- Responder “Continues” or “Advances” the preempt to the max at her first opportunity (don't bid 3S and then 4S, bid 4S if you're willing to bid 4S)
- Remember that Queens and Jacks outside of trump are often useless.
- Singletons or voids with four trump are *tricks*
- Aces are *tricks*, Kings outside trump to a lesser extent.

Defense against Weak 2 Bids – I

- Double is takeout – shape (i.e., shortage in opener's suit) is important!
 - lebensohl is a useful tool (but beyond the scope of this session). If you use it over 1NT, consider using it here.
 - After a 2D opening, KQ64, KT84, 63, A92 is a decent minimum takeout double
 - DO NOT double with a hand like Q754, AT7, KT6, K93
 - bad shape
 - subminimum hand
 - too many losers (LTC)
 - values in opener's suit

Defense against Weak 2 Bids – II

- Suit overcalls must take into account the vulnerability and level (is partner a passed hand?). Length and good suits are important!
 - Particularly in teams, consider the risk of a penalty X
- 2NT is 16-18, NOT “unusual”
 - When opps show weakness, our bids show strength
 - Side Note: Over a strong 2C, bids show length and good suits, not strength. Obstructive, not constructive.
- Overcaller/doubler may be bidding some of your values, advancer should use caution in their responses
- “Leaping Michaels” is rare, but can be useful (advanced)

Recap

- Why do we preempt?
 - Overview of what a Weak 2 Bid is
 - Tools we use after P opens a Weak 2 Bid
 - Should we use RONF?
 - Argument for disciplined Weak 2 Bids
 - Defense against Weak 2 Bids
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- If you have suggestions for future lectures, please send!

To better bridge!



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