

The opponents overcall in your best suit---low level penalty doubles/No Trumps

Your partner opens the bidding and you are about to reply with your suit when an opponents intervenes with an overcall in the very suit you were going to bid.

e.g

N	-----	E	-----	S	-----	W
1Sp		2C		?		
				A3		
				KJ32		
				653		
				Q1065		

Rather than be inconvenienced by overcalls you should try to turn the opponents overcall to your advantage.

Here are the two main options:-

a) Double -a penalty double suggesting to partner that the opponents will not make 2CI because (by inference) you hold the club suit *and* enough high cards to make some tricks. {{ In general a double of a two level overcall should promise at least 4 cards with an Honour in the bid suit and approx 10+ pts.}}

b)Bid NTs ----- ie bid 2NT with 10-12 or 3NT with 13+.

Of course neither of the bids are guaranteed to succeed but if we look at each in turn we can examine what *might* happen.

a) Double ----the opponent may have stuck their neck out a little with their bid - they may have a poor suit {{ how many times have we had to listen to players saying , "I had to bid partner , I had a 5 card suit.." }}. Well if your opponent is of that school then a double can net 500 -----800 pts with ease.

Suppose the overcaller is of a more cautious nature and you know will have a good long suit for their overcall. Well they will still have trouble playing the hand -even drawing trumps may prove a trial . They too are quite likely to lose 100-----300 pts.

Against all this sometimes the overcaller has an unexpected feature { a void say} or luckily for them *their* partners turn up with some unexpected high cards. The double may be "close" and if that is the case it has to be said the overcaller will sometimes make their contract.

b) Bid 2NT (or 3NT). -----rather than take the opponents on and try to defeat them you make a value bid of NTs. Probably if the opponent hadnt overcalled then you would have ended up in NTs anyway so the bid is not so outlandish. And your chances of making NTs are probably slightly improved by the overcall. {{You know for instance what the lead is likely to be and you know that it is the overcaller who will hold many of the outstanding high cards }}. A good player can "place the cards well" after the overcall and may do well in NTS. Sometimes BUT not always of course. Sometimes the NT bid will founder. NB if you do bid NTS don't worry that you don't own "stops" in every suit -it is only in the opponent's suit that you must have stops.

