

Continuing our investigation into reasons to make overcalls

2) to suggest to partner which suit to lead {should the opponents play the final contract}

Say the opponents have bid 1Ht

N	E	S	W
1H	?		

Look at these 3 hands :-

a) AQJ64	b) J10873	c) Q9542
76	QJ9	864
K976	985	AQ4
65	AQ	K4

we are considering which of these hands indicate best to partner which suit they should lead should the opponents play the final contract .

- {a} you do want a spade lead as that is where most of your high cards lie; you would expect to get 1 or 2 tricks if partner does lead spades.
- {b} here you definitely DON'T want a spade lead and would prefer a club
- {c} it might not be disasterous to get a spade lead BUT you would probably prefer a diamond or club.

Let me say straight away that I am NOT saying that there are no benefits from overcalling with such hands { and there are plenty of experts who do overcall with them } BUT as a lead directing bid , only {a } is useful.

We can say that in general if your overcall is to be lead directing that you need :

- **2 or 3 of the top three Honours.**

3) to suggest a possible sacrifice to partner

Say the opponents have bid 1Ht

	(you)		(partner)
N	E	S	W
1H	1Sp	4H	4Sp

Now it might be in your interests as E/W to play in 4Sp *even if you can't make the contract* ie as a sacrifice. No doubt N/S will double you so you don't want to go too light. At any rate your partner will consider bidding 4Sp as one of their options. Which of these hands that you have bid 1Sp with would you like to play a final contract in 4Sp as a sacrifice .Look at these 3 hands :-

a) KQJ643	b) AQ973	c) QJ542
7	QJ9	86
K976	985	AQ42
J5	KJ	K4

Surely it is only (a) that you would expect to get close to making 9 or 10 tricks. We can say that in general if your overcall is to play as a sacrifice that you need:

- **Very good distribution**

The bottom line is that if you are going to overcall you must be prepared:

- i) to make the contract you bid**
- ii) have partner lead the suit you bid**
- iii) play at a high level as a sacrifice in the suit you bid**

