



Mike Lawrence

Some questions regarding negative doubles — part 5

If you double a one-level overcall, you need four cards or more in each unbid major. What do you show if you double a two-level overcall?

I touched on this in the previous articles of this series. In general, if there is a two-level overcall you need 10 or more points to bid a new suit. This is true whether you play a 2/1 system or not. Since you can't bid a new suit with 8 or 9 points, and because you don't like to be shut out, your only solution may be a negative double.

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♥	2♣	?	

When there is one unbid major, a negative double should show four cards in it, and since you are at the two level, you need at least a good 7 high-card points, for example

♠Q764 ♥43 ♦AJ874 ♣54.

A minimum double for this auction.

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♦	2♣	?	

This is the one auction where a two-level overcall can cause some big confusion with a negative

Mike's Advice

double. If you have enough points to bid, but hold only one four-card major, you have to bid cautiously.

♠83 ♥QJ84 ♦A543 ♣984
 . Very annoying. If you double and partner bids spades, you have to go to the three level in diamonds. If you bid 2♦, you risk finding partner with four hearts. I can see votes for either choice, but the situation is ugly. It is possible that passing will be best. Although the majority of players would vote for a double or a bid, they would probably not be pleased to say exactly which call they would make.

♠83 ♥KJ84 ♦AJ84 ♣543
 This is a fine double because you can always return to diamonds if partner bids spades. The rule that applies is that if you double, partner will be aware that you may have only one major, not two. If you double and return to his suit, it means you do not have the major he bid and do have the other one.

♠QJ1087 ♥43 ♦53 ♣A874
 Double, intending to bid 2♠ when partner bids a red suit.

♠Q4 ♥Q8763 ♦862 ♣KJ5
 Pass. Doubling is not safe, because you have no safe bid if partner bids 2♠. Worse, if the bidding becomes competitive and partner bids up to 3♠ (4♠ maybe?), you are not ready for the postmortem.

When you have the right shape for a negative double, you may bid with a minimum hand. When you do not have the right shape, you must be very careful that you can cater to partner's doing the wrong thing. If you bid and it does not work out, the first words out of your mouth must be "Sorry."

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♥	1NT	?	

I am embarrassed to put this sequence into this section. I occasionally see players, however, who think that a double in this situation is a negative double. It is not. It is a penalty double showing at least 8 excellent points and usually more. The meaning of this double is that the notrump overcaller has done a bad thing and you want him to pay a price. □

Visit Lawrence's web site at www.michaelslawrence.com

Educational Foundation Election



ACBL members interested in running for the Board of Trustees of the ACBL Educational Foundation have until Oct. 31 to submit a written declaration of candidacy.

Three members of the Foundation's nine-member board will be elected by the ACBL Board of Directors for a three-year term. Directors do not receive expense reimbursement.

The election will take place during the Fall Board meetings in New Orleans. All materials will be distributed to the Board prior to that meeting.

If you wish to become a candidate for the Foundation's Board, please send a written declaration of candidacy containing your name, address, player number and biographical information to: Educational Foundation, 2990 Airways Blvd., Memphis, TN 38116-3847.

The Foundation Board thanks all ACBL members who have supported the Foundation through generous donations and the annual \$2 membership fee.