

# IMPROVE YOUR BIDDING

## 74. OVER A WEAK TWO-BID

BY BEVERLY KRAFT

Matchpoints, neither side vulnerable, the bidding has gone:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
—	—	—	2♥
?			

In direct seat over a weak two-bid, Bridge World Standard employs mostly mainstream traditional expert methods: double is takeout; two notrump shows a decent strong notrump; double followed by notrump or a new-suit bid is stronger or more flexible than direct action. A small amount of artificiality pokes its snout into the system: a four-of-a-minor overcall indicates a strong two-suiter with the bid minor and the unbid major; a three-level cuebid asks for a stopper for three notrump (suggesting a long, solid suit). Also, after a takeout double, Lebensohl (two

notrump as a marionette to three clubs, often preliminary to showing weakness at the three level) applies, enabling advancer to distinguish weak hands from moderate holdings.

As South, what call do you make with each of the following?

- (a) ♠ A 8 7 ♥ — ♦ K J 8 7 5 3 2 ♣ A K 3  
 (b) ♠ A 8 7 ♥ — ♦ A K 3 ♣ K Q J 10 7 5 3  
 (c) ♠ A Q J 5 2 ♥ — ♦ K 3 ♣ A Q 8 7 6 2  
 (d) ♠ A 8 7 ♥ 6 5 ♦ A K Q 10 8 6 5 ♣ J  
 (e) ♠ A K Q 5 2 ♥ — ♦ K 3 ♣ A K J 7 6 2  
 (f) ♠ K 8 7 ♥ A Q 5 ♦ A K Q 3 ♣ K Q 2

(Answers on page 74.)

# IMPROVE YOUR DEFENSE

Rubber bridge  
 South dealer  
 Neither side vulnerable

NORTH (dummy)  
 ♠ A 3 2  
 ♥ A K Q J 7  
 ♦ J 7 4 2  
 ♣ A

EAST (you)  
 ♠ J 9 8 5  
 ♥ 10 4  
 ♦ A 8 3  
 ♣ J 9 7 6

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♦	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♦	(All Pass)

Spade king, ace, nine, six.  
 Club ace, nine, ten, deuce.  
 Heart ace, four, three, nine.  
 Heart king, ten, five, eight.  
 Heart queen, ?

**Plan your defense.**

(Solution on page 73.)

## IMPROVE YOUR BIDDING SOLUTIONS

(Problems on page 70.)

Matchpoints, neither side vulnerable, the bidding has gone:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
—	—	—	2 ♡
?			

♠ A 8 7 ♥ — ♦ K J 8 7 5 3 2 ♣ A K 3

(a) *Three diamonds.* Then, over an anticipated heart raise by West, double for takeout. This two-step sequence describes a strong overcall with support for the unbid suits. With such great disparity between the main and secondary suits, and only moderate high-card strength, it would not be accurate to double and to follow with a diamond bid.

♠ A 8 7 ♥ — ♦ A K 3 ♣ K Q J 10 7 5 3

(b) *Double.* Although there is still much to be said for starting with an overcall, this hand, with a very good suit, excellent controls, and huge playing strength, is too strong for intervenor to risk the possibility that the auction will not continue. No normal raise will shut you out, so further competition is not a worry.

Over advancer's two spades, three clubs will show a strong hand, but perhaps one with more flexibility rather than so much extra strength; a jump to *four clubs* would be more appropriate.

Over North's constructive three diamonds, four clubs, which is forcing, is sufficient, even though advancer will not immediately expect such a skewed or strong hand.

If advancer bids two notrump, expecting you usually to bid three clubs, jump to four clubs, very strong but nonforcing.

♠ A Q J 5 2 ♥ — ♦ K 3 ♣ A Q 8 7 6 2

(c) *Four clubs.* This shows spades

and clubs, at least five-five, and a strong hand. BWS has not discussed this, but such a four-of-a-minor overcall should be treated as forcing.

Is this hand strong enough? Strictly speaking, it is close to the borderline—a case could be made either way. But no other action is particularly accurate or safe, so this border tends to be a porous one.

♠ A 8 7 ♥ 6 5 ♦ A K Q 10 8 6 5 ♣ J

(d) *Three hearts.* The stopper-ask solution, even though, when made in the direct position, advancer is entitled to expect a bit more, perhaps queen-low or singleton king, in the weak side suit. Still, it is essential to investigate three notrump with a wide range of strengths. The singleton club is a definite negative feature, but North won't mind being mildly deceived if three notrump is the only game contract with a chance.

♠ A K Q 5 2 ♥ — ♦ K 3 ♣ A K J 7 6 2

(e) *Four clubs.* Start by showing your two suits, but with slam prospects so bright, continue with five clubs if advancer signs off in four spades. This is a "real" Leaping Michaels hand; contrast with (c).

♠ K 8 7 ♥ A Q 5 ♦ A K Q 3 ♣ K Q 2

(f) *Double.* Then, continue with three notrump if advancer (as you anticipate) bids a lebensohl two notrump. Really, what choice do you have? If advancer bids two spades, you might consider bidding only two notrump. You have the high cards for three notrump—North may not raise with only two or three points—but where will the tricks come from? If North shows construc-