

## Bidding over opponents preempts – Ron Kral

Vul None East deals Lead: ♥9	♠ K10875 ♥ 65 ♦ KQ ♣ KJ62	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ 42 ♥ AJ10832 ♦ 1053 ♣ Q7	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">West</th> <th style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">North</th> <th style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">East</th> <th style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2♥<sup>1</sup></td> <td>2NT<sup>2</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥<sup>3</sup></td> <td>DBL<sup>4</sup></td> <td>3♠<sup>5</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT<sup>6</sup></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠<sup>7</sup></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	West	North	East	South			2♥ <sup>1</sup>	2NT <sup>2</sup>	Pass	3♥ <sup>3</sup>	DBL <sup>4</sup>	3♠ <sup>5</sup>	Pass	3NT <sup>6</sup>	Pass	4♠ <sup>7</sup>
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♠ J96 ♥ 94 ♦ 986 ♣ A10954	♠ AQ3 ♥ KQ7 ♦ AJ742 ♣ 83	<p><sup>1</sup> Undisciplined weak-2</p> <p><sup>2</sup> 15-18 HCP with a heart stopper</p> <p><sup>3</sup> Transfer to spades</p> <p><sup>4</sup> Lead hearts partner (PASS shows weak hearts)</p> <p><sup>5</sup> Usually promises 3 spades (PASS with only 2)</p> <p><sup>6</sup> I have a game forcing hand opposite a NT overcall</p> <p><sup>7</sup> I think 4 spades is safer. With one less diamond and one more club, PASS 3NT.</p>																											

There's no pat answer to bidding when the opponent's preempt. Preempts are designed to create problems for you and they do! Here are some ideas and tips to remember and use at the table. There are differences between bidding in direct seat and balancing seat. When your opponents open 2♦, 2♥, 2♠, 3♣, 3♦, 3♥, or 3♠:

### Basic guidelines

- 1) Assume partner has an ordinary (not perfect) 7 high card points (Rule of 7). If you can make your contract opposite that, bid. You'll be surprised at how often partner holds exactly 7 HCP.
- 2) The person with the *unbalanced* hand must strain to take action. Many times one hand has a balanced 15-16 HCP and has no bid.
- 3) Over an opponent's 3-bid, if 3NT is a reasonable call (eg, 18+HCP and a stopper in the preempted suit), bid 3NT. This is an expert bid that works most of the time.
- 4) ALL DOUBLES ARE PRIMARILY FOR TAKEOUT, NOT PENALTY. This includes the 2, 3 AND 4-level preempts. That said, partner may convert the takeout double to penalty by passing WHEN HOLDING A TRUMP STACK or a VERY GOOD hand. Analyze the vulnerability – it may be better to bid 3NT.
- 5) You can never preempt over a preempt. However, you *can* bid with a *good* weak-2 hand and suit of your own.

### Bidding in Direct Seat (2♥ - ???)

- 1) Overcall (rather than double) if you have 17 or fewer points and a decent 5-card suit.
- 2) Double (instead of overcalling a minor) if you have 3+card support for the unbid majors. As advancer, remember you've "promised" 7 HCP. Only bid on holding significantly more than that.
- 3) All jumps are strong. A jump overcall (2♥ by RHO - 3♠ by you) forces to game and asks partner for a cue bid of an Ace. Remember the rule: "You can't preempt over a preempt."
- 4) All notrump overcalls show notrump hands, NOT the minors. A 2NT overcall over a weak-2 is the SAME as a 1NT overcall – 15-18 HCP and a stopper in their suit. Transfers and Stayman are ON by advancer.
- 5) Over a Weak 2-bid, use a jump to 3NT to show a good hand, a stopper and a running suit. This jump denies takeout-double shape (you may be extremely short in an unbid suit).

### Bidding in the Balancing Seat (2♥ - Pass – Pass - ???):

- 1) Stretch to compete if you're short in their suit. For doubles and overcalls, mentally add an ace to your hand, then choose the same bid you would make in direct seat.
- 2) Stretch even more to make a takeout double if you're short in their suit because partner may have a trump stack behind the opener and could not double because she didn't have the correct shape.

### Advanced

- 1) Use Lebensohl when responding to a double of a weak 2. (2NT response demands 3♣)
- 2) Use Leaping Michaels over a major suit weak-2 bid. Four of a minor shows a good hand, 5/5 or better, with the bid minor and other major.
- 3) Over 2♦, a direct 4♦ bid, or as a response to a takeout double means "Pick a Major".
- 4) 3-level cue bids over weak 2's are Western Cue – game forcing – "Bid 3NT if you have a stopper. Bid your better minor if no stopper." Western Cue denies length in the other major.