

SNAPSHOTS

2-SUITED OVERCALLS MICHAELS CUEBID UNUSUAL 2NT

Bridge Lab

with the Monroes

COMPETITIVE OBJECTIVES

- Primarily obstructive to interfere with Opponents' auction and preemptive. Make them "guess."
- With a "fit," powerful trick-taking potential at low risk.

COMPETITIVE TOOLS – USED WHEN OPPONENT OPENS THE BIDDING IN A SUIT AT THE ONE LEVEL (OPENING HAND).

SIMPLE OVERCALL is the limited tool to compete with a one-suited hand.

TAKEOUT DOUBLE is the flexible tool to compete with a three-suited hand.

UNUSUAL 2NT & MICHAELS CUEBID are the tools used to compete with **two-suited** hands.

- Typically, preemptive strength - *minimum* of 5 cards in each of the two suits shown (5-5), singleton or void. Consider vulnerability. When vulnerable have better suits.
- If the opponents **PREEMPT**, e.g., open 2♥, no Michaels and no Unusual 2NT. Focus on constructive bids to show strength and fit. Only one side preempts per auction.

COMPETITIVE CONSIDERATIONS – FIND THE BEST FIT!

- Two-suited hands can take a lot of tricks with very few high cards.
- May suggest a sacrifice against the opponents' game or slam auction.

| COMPETITIVE BIDDING TOOLS | UNUSUAL 2NT | MICHAELS CUEBID |
|--|---|---|
| OPPONENT OPENS THE BIDDING 1-LEVEL SUIT ♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ | Jump Bid to 2NT | CUEBID of opponent's opening suit bid |
| SHAPE = 5-5 MINIMUM | Minimum of 5 cards in each of the LOWEST RANKING unbid suits | Minimum 5 cards in both unbid MAJOR SUITS OR the unbid MAJOR suit & a MINOR suit |
| COUNT | HCP + Length Points. Preemptive (typically) or Strong (rare) "Minimum" Range = 5-8 HCP Weak Hands do not bid again ♠ Strong Hands may bid again | |
| FORCING | YES | YES |
| OPPONENT'S OPENING BID | UNUSUAL 2NT | MICHAELS CUEBID |
| 1♣ | 2NT = 5+♦s & 5+♥s | 2♣ = 5+♥s & 5+♠s both Major Suits |
| 1♦ | 2NT = 5+♣s & 5+♥s | 2♦ = 5+♥s & 5+♠s both Major Suits |
| 1♥ | 2NT = 5+♣s & 5+♦s | 2♥ = 5+♠s & 5+♣s or 5+♦s unbid Major & either minor suit ADVANCER BIDS 2NT TO ASK FOR THE MINOR |
| 1♠ | 2NT = 5+♣s & 5+♦s | 2♠ = 5+♥s & 5+♣s or 5+♦s unbid Major & either minor suit. ADVANCER BIDS 2NT TO ASK FOR THE MINOR. |

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monroes@bridgewiththemonroes.com
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Responder's Options ~ Constructive

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1st | Identify the two suits shown by the opponent's overcall. Are both both suits known? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unusual 2NT identifies the two lower unbid suits.• Michaels Cuebid identifies the unbid majors (one or two). If there is only one unbid major, the second suit is either unbid minor. |
| DOUBLE | 10+ HCP and interest in penalizing one or both suits shown by the overcall. All subsequent doubles are for penalty (not takeout). |
| PASS | Likely not a good hand (about 8-10 points), no fit for partner's suit. Consider the level on the bidding ladder. |
| RAISE PARTNER'S SUIT | Natural with 3+ card support. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cheapest level (non-jump) = about 7-10 support points.• Game Level = 11+ and no slam interest. |

Advanced Options ~ Cuebids & More

Larry's Articles

Versus Michaels or Unusual Notrump

I don't like teaching this topic, because the natural reaction is to say: "This is too complicated." I don't like complicated. However, your opponents will use [Michaels](#) and Unusual 2NT bids. If you don't want to study/learn this defense, then you will be at a huge disadvantage on these auctions. Larry Cohen

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2-SUITED OVERCALLS

West Deals
None Vul

| | | | |
|--------------|----------------|--|--|
| | ♠ A 9 8 6 3 | | |
| | ♥ A 10 8 6 4 2 | | |
| | ♦ 8 | | |
| | ♣ 6 | | |
| ♠ J | ♠ K Q | | |
| ♥ Q J 3 | ♥ K 9 7 | | |
| ♦ A K J 10 7 | ♦ Q 9 5 3 | | |
| ♣ K 9 7 4 | ♣ A J 10 3 | | |
| | ♠ 10 7 5 4 2 | | |
| | ♥ 5 | | |
| | ♦ 6 4 2 | | |
| | ♣ Q 8 5 2 | | |

EW 4N; NS 4♠; EW 3♦; EW 3♣; Par -100: NS 5♠x-1

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1♦ | 2♦ ¹ | Db1 ² | 4♠ ³ |
| Pass | Pass | Db1 ⁴ | All pass |

1. Michaels Cuebid. 5♥ & 5♠. Distributional and preemptive.
2. 10+ HCP penalty oriented.
3. 10-card ♠ fit, preemptive sacrifice.
4. Penalty

Contract: 4♠* South **Opening Lead:** ♠ J, trump
Tricks Needed: Ten **Losers:** two ♠s, three ♦s, four ♣s.

Auction: With 5 cards in each of the unbid Major Suits, North uses the Michaels Cuebid, typically preemptive, to describe the hand and ask partner to choose their best "fit." South has no defense against opponents' 3NT game. With a 10-card fit in ♠s, South competes aggressively and takes the *sacrifice* by bidding 4♠.

Declarer Play: With a 10-card fit in ♠s, opponents have three ♠s. Win the trump lead, and leave the high ♠ outstanding. Focus on establishing ♥s to discard losing ♦s and ♣s. Play the ♥ A then ruff two rounds of ♥s to eliminate all ♥s from the opponents. Ruff a ♣ or ♦ in Dummy as an entry to the good ♥s to discard three losers.

Establishing Second Suit Winners. Consider combined length, suit splits, entries to the long suit. Ruffing eliminates losers *and* creates winners in the suit through length.

--Anyone can win tricks with aces and kings; it's far more satisfying to win tricks with twos and threes. A good player appreciates long suits and their ability to produce extra tricks.
Marty Bergen

Defense: The Michaels Cuebid marks Dummy with a singleton or void. Known Dummy shortness and a doubled contract indicate a trump lead. East draws another trump ASAP.

LAW OF TOTAL TRICKS. Bid aggressively in a competitive auction with a good fit, even without strong values. With a 10-card ♠ fit, bid to the 4-level (10 tricks). According to The "LAW," on most bridge deals the total number of combined trumps is approximately equal to the total number of tricks available.

Michaels Cue Bid & Unusual 2 NT

Board 1
West Deals

Hearts & Spades

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| ♠ A 9 8 6 3 ♥ A 10 8 6 4 2 ♦ 8 ♣ 6 | <table style="margin: auto;"> <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> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | ♠ K Q ♥ K 9 7 ♦ Q 9 5 3 ♣ A J 10 3 | |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | |

♠ 10 7 5 4 2
 ♥ 5
 ♦ 6 4 2
 ♣ Q 8 5 2

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|----|----|----|---|--|--|--|
| | <table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>8</td><td>15</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>2</td><td></td></tr> </table> | 8 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 2 | | | |
| 8 | 15 | 15 | | | | | | | |
| 15 | 2 | | | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| 1♦ | 2♦ ¹ | Dbl ² | 4♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Dbl | All pass |

1. Michaels, ♠s and ♥s, 5-5
2. 10+ Points

Contract: 4♠Dbl South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♦A, seq., East plays ♦3 (suit pref)
Losers: 2-♠, 3-♦, 4-♣ = 9.

Play: The defenders win the ♦A♣A and lead a trump. South wins the ♠A, the ♥A, and then ruffs two ♥. South loses only one ♠, one ♦, and one ♣.

Board 2
East Deals

Spades & Diamonds

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| ♠ J ♥ K 7 4 2 ♦ 8 6 3 2 ♣ A J 9 3 | <table style="margin: auto;"> <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> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | ♠ K 9 4 2 ♥ A 9 8 6 5 ♦ A Q ♣ K 7 | |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | |

♠ 8 6 3
 ♥ Q J 10
 ♦ 9 5
 ♣ Q 10 8 6 4

♠ A Q 10 7 5
 ♥ 3
 ♦ K J 10 7 4
 ♣ 5 2

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|----|----|----|---|----|--|--|--|
| | <table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>9</td><td>16</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>10</td><td></td></tr> </table> | 9 | 16 | 10 | 5 | 10 | | | |
| 9 | 16 | 10 | | | | | | | |
| 5 | 10 | | | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| Pass | 2N ² | 1♥ | 2♥ ¹ |
| All pass | | Pass | 3♦ |

1. Michaels Cuebid, ♠s & a Minor
2. Which Minor?

Contract: 3♦ South, 9 Tricks
Lead: ♥Q, seq. East plays ♥9
Losers: 2-♠, 1-♥, 2-♦, 1-♣ = 6.

Play: South ruffs the 2nd ♥, enters Dummy with the ♣A, and leads toward the ♦KJ. Draws trump, and wins four ♠s.

Board 3
West Deals

Diamonds & Clubs

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| ♠ 9 ♥ 7 4 ♦ Q J 9 8 3 ♣ K Q J 8 5 | <table style="margin: auto;"> <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> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | ♠ K J 7 4 ♥ K Q 8 6 ♦ K 4 ♣ 9 6 3 | |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | |

♠ A Q 10 6 5
 ♥ A J 9 3 2
 ♦ 5
 ♣ 10 4

♠ 8 3 2
 ♥ 10 5
 ♦ A 10 7 6 2
 ♣ A 7 2

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|----|----|----|---|--|--|--|
| | <table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>9</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>8</td><td></td></tr> </table> | 9 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 8 | | | |
| 9 | 11 | 12 | | | | | | | |
| 11 | 8 | | | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| 1♠ | 2N ¹ | 4♠ | 5♦ |
| Pass | Pass | Dbl | All pass |

1. Unusual 2NT, ♣s & ♦s

Contract: 5♦dbl South, 11 Tricks
Lead: ♠A, no good lead, East plays ♠J
Losers: 3-♠, 2-♥, 1-♦ = 5.

Play: East plays the ♠J (suit preference for ♥s) and E/W win two ♥s. South finesses ♦s, draws trump, and wins the ♣s.

Board 4
West Deals

Hearts & Diamonds

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| ♠ 6 ♥ A K 8 5 4 ♦ A K J 7 5 3 ♣ 7 | <table style="margin: auto;"> <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> | | N | | W | | E | | S | | ♠ 10 9 7 ♥ 10 9 7 2 ♦ Q 4 2 ♣ K 10 2 | |
| | N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W | | E | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | | | | | | | | | | | |

♠ K Q J 2
 ♥ Q J 3
 ♦ 8
 ♣ A J 8 4 3

♠ A 8 5 4 3
 ♥ 6
 ♦ 10 9 6
 ♣ Q 9 6 5

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|----|---|----|---|--|--|--|
| | <table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>15</td><td>14</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>6</td><td></td></tr> </table> | 15 | 14 | 5 | 14 | 6 | | | |
| 15 | 14 | 5 | | | | | | | |
| 14 | 6 | | | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
| 1♣ | 2N ¹ | Pass | 3♦ |
| Pass | 4♦ ² | Pass | 5♦ |

1. Unusual 2NT, ♦s & ♥s
2. Big Hand

Contract: 5♦ South, 11 Tricks
Lead: ♠K, Seq.
NorthLosers: 3-♥, 1-♦, 1-♣ = 5.

Play: South wins the ♠A, wins the ♥A, ruffs a ♥, ruffs a ♠, ruffs a ♥, wins the ♦AK and wins the ♥s. Loses a ♦, and a ♣.