



# LESSON 13 - STUDENT NOTES

## COMPETITIVE OR INTERFERENCE BIDDING

### BIDDING 1NT AS AN OVERCALL

If opponents open the bidding and you bid - you are an **Overcaller**. This term refers only to the first such bid.

As an **Overcaller**, your aims (and requirements) are different from that of an Opener. You are aiming to:

- Obstruct the opponents
- Win the contract (generally a part-score contract)

#### Bidding 1NT as an Overcall is dangerous!

- The Opponents have opened the bidding.
- You have no idea how strong Responder, Opener's Partner, is.

You could find yourself trapped between 2 strong hands and have a very tough time as Advancer, your partner, in these circumstances may have virtually nothing!

Because of this, you need a **much stronger hand to bid 1NT as an Overcall** (i.e. 16-18 points) than to Open 1NT (12-14 points).

So, if your plan was to open 1NT (12-14), but your RHO opens a bid ahead of you, then sadly, you **MUST** Pass!

### TO BID 1NT AS AN OVERCALL - THE RULES

You need **better points** than an Opening 1NT. That is, you **MUST** have:

- **16 -18 HCP** and a **balanced hand**  
PLUS
- You **MUST** have at least one **stopper** in the opponent's bid suit - a stopper shows a certain trick (e.g. Axx, KQx, QJ10)

## Overcall or Not?

♠ QJT

♥ K9

♦ AJ7

♣ AK963

South

East opens 1♦

What should South do?

South has 18 HCP balanced hand with diamond **stops** – ideal to bid a 1NT Overcall!

South must bid a 1NT **Overcall**

N.B. South is too strong to bid a suit overcall of 2C



## Overcall or Not?

♠ 873

♥ A98

♦ AKQ8

♣ KT4

South

East opens 1♠

What should South do?

South has 16 HCP balanced hand BUT no Spade **stop** ... so **cannot overcall 1NT!**

South must **Pass**



**NB** Do **not** overcall 1NT with 12 - 14 HCP

## ADVANCER'S OPTIONS AFTER PARTNER BIDS A 1NT OVERCALL

### 1. BALANCED HANDS:

Your responses as **Advancer** are the same as if partner had opened 1NT (but **adjust the point** count since bidding a **1NT Overcall** promises 16-18 points) so you may use Stayman and Transfers.

For example, to bid a 1NT Overcall partner **MUST** have 16-18 points. As Advancer, you need 9+ points for your partnership to bid game. **Bidding a 1NT overcall is a limit bid.** Overcaller has described his hand therefore it's up to **Advancer** to bid on or Pass. Advancer is the Boss!

- **0 – 6 HCP** - Bid 2♦ or 2♥ as a Transfer (with a 5+ card major) as an ‘escape’ from 1NT otherwise Pass. **No game possible.**

North bids a 1NT Overcall


West opens 1♦ East passes

N	E
W	S

♠A8  
♥7654  
♦9432  
♣T92  
4 HCP

What should South do?

South has a BALANCED HAND ... but not enough points for game, therefore..... **Pass**



- **7-8 HCP** - Bid 2♣ (Stayman) or 2♦ or 2♥ as Transfers followed by a game invitational bid of 2NT or 3 of major suit.

North bids a 1NT Overcall


West opens 1♣ East passes

N	E
W	S

♠AT73  
♥QJ8  
♦J974  
♣65  
8 HCP

What should South do?

South has a BALANCED HAND, with 8 points... so CLOSE TO GAME.  
With a 4 card major use Stayman **Bid 2♣**  
If partner responds 2♦ or 2♥ invite with 2NT



- **9+ HCP** - Bid to game (Remember Stayman not good on a 4333 shaped hand – no ruffing potential!)

North bids a 1NT Overcall

West opens 1♦ East passes


N	E
W	S

♠KQ72  
♥QJ9  
♦K72  
♣864  
11 HCP

What should South do with this hand?

South has a BALANCED HAND and enough points for game so bid 3NT

(Remember Stayman not used with 4 3 3 3 hands – too flat)



## UNBALANCED HANDS:

Your responses as **Advancer** are the same as if partner had opened 1NT (but adjust the points count, since bidding a 1NT Overcall promises 16-18 points) so you may use Stayman and Transfers.

- **0-6 HCP** - Bid 2♦ or 2♥ as a Transfer (with a 5+ card major) as an 'escape' from 1NT
- **7-8 HCP** - Bid 2♣ (Stayman) or 2♦ or 2♥ as Transfers followed by a game invitational bid of 2NT or 3 of major
- **9+ HCP** - Bid to game via Stayman (4 card major), or Transfer (5+ card major)  
**Advancer is the Boss!**

North bids a 1NT Overcall

West opens 1♣

N	E
W	S


East passes

♠JT765  
♥KJ2  
♦J962  
♣9  
6 HCP

What should South do?

South has an UNBALANCED HAND... not enough points for Game.

Better to play in a 5 card ♠ suit.  
Bid 2♥ transfer to 2♠ & then Pass.



North bids a 1NT Overcall

West opens 1♠

N	E
W	S

East passes


♠85  
♥AQ985  
♦KQT  
♣T82  
11 HCP

What should South do?

Firstly, bid 2♦ as Transfer to ♥ ...

South has enough for GAME ... so then jumps to 3NT

**Overcaller** is Boss now –  
he will pass 3NT (or convert to 4♥ with a fit)



If Advancer bids Stayman followed by 3♥/3♠ this shows that Advancer has 7-8 HCP and is invitational.

If Advancer raises his major after making a Transfer this also shows 7-8 hcp but a 6-card suit, again invitational.

If Advancer rebids 3NT this shows 9+ HCP and Overcaller can pass without a fit in Advancer's major, or convert to 4 of the major with 3+ cards in the suit.

If Advancer bids directly to 4♥/4♠ this shows 9+ HCP and a 6+ card suit. Advancer bids the major game knowing that the bidder of a 1NT Overcall must have a minimum of 2 cards in the major.

## RESPONDER'S OPTIONS WHEN OPPONENTS BID A 1NT OVERCALL

- With **no support** for opener's suit and insufficient points to bid at the 2 level – Pass

**Responder's Options when Opponents bid a 1NT Overcall**

What can North do?


1NT bid as an Overcall

♠ K82  
♥ AJ2  
♦ AJ75  
♣ KJ3  
17 HCP

♠ J74  
♥ 73  
♦ KT64  
♣ AT92  
8 HCP

South opens 1♥

North was planning to bid 1NT with no support for opener's suit and insufficient points to bid at the 2 level. This bid is no longer available so Responder must **Pass**



- **Support** partner with **4+ cards** in his suit at the appropriate level

**Responder's Options when Opponents bid a 1NT Overcall**

What can North do?

1NT bid as an Overcall


♠ AJ3  
♥ J8  
♦ AJ64  
♣ KQJ2  
17 HCP

♠ QT84  
♥ KT93  
♦ 87  
♣ A53  
9 HCP

South opens 1♠

Responder, North, with four card support in spades and 9 HCP was planning to support Opener's suit by bidding 2♠

**Responder still can!**



- **With 5+ cards** in your own suit and **10+ HCP** you can bid your own suit at the 2 level

**Responder's Options when Opponents bid a 1NT Overcall**

What can North do?

1NT bid as an Overcall

♠ QJ3  
♥ Q8  
♦ AJ64  
♣ KQJ2  
16 HCP

♠ AKT84  
♥ KT93  
♦ 987  
♣ 5  
10 HCP


N  
W E  
S

South opens 1♦

Responder, North, with a five card spade suit and 10 HCP was planning to bid 1♠

Responder, bids his own good suit but now at the two level

Bid 2♠



### Responder must re-assess the situation knowing that:

- Overcaller has 16-18 HCP, balanced hand, stop(s) in Opener's suit
- Opener, partner has 12+ HCP and at least 4 cards in his bid suit
- $16 + 12 = 28$  plus those in your hand =?
- So how many is Advancer likely to have?

Responder can now do the right thing!

### RESPONDER HOLDING A STRONG HAND WHEN OPPONENTS HAVE BID A 1NT OVERCALL

If you, as Responder, are very weak and RHO bid 1NT as an overcall Pass or with a 5- card suit, bid to take partnership into a part game in a suit.

If you, as Responder are stronger and partnership has the majority of the points, consider:

*'Is it more profitable to bid Game ourselves?' OR 'Will we score more points by putting the Opponents contract down?'*

## **SUMMARY: COMPETITIVE BIDDING: BIDDING 1NT AS AN OVERCALL**

- **Reasons:** Disruption of opponents or to play
- **To bid 1NT as an Overcall Requires** – 16-18 HCP + a stop in the Opener's bid suit.
- **Partner to 1NT Overcaller i.e. Advancer:** Bids as following a 1NT Opener with points adjustment including the use of Stayman and Transfer bids
- **Responder's Options after an Opponent bids 1NT as an Overcall:**
  - Pass (most often).
  - With 4+ cards & 6+ HCP support Opener's bid at the appropriate level.
  - Bid your own 5+ card suit with 10+ HCP.
  - No support for partner, & your side holding the majority of points, **X**.

**X of a NT bid is always for Penalties!**