LESSON 12 – TEACHER NOTES

SUIT OVERCALLS

AIMS: To introduce Competitive or Interference Bidding
- To explain the difference between an Opening hand and bidding an Overcall
- To introduce the SQOT, the 'level of the fit', the UCB and their use in competitive auctions
- To choose bidding options as opener, overcaller, responder and advancer.

At the end of Lesson 12 students will be able to:
- Describe the reasons and requirements for making a simple suit overcall bid in a game of bridge.
- Identify, who is **Overcaller** and **Advancer** (in addition to who is Opener and Responder).
- Contrast the requirements to open 1-of-a-suit and to make a Simple Suit Overcall bid and why it's important for all at the table to recognise this difference.
- Describe the Opening Partnership's options after the opponents make a simple suit overcall i.e. to Pass, to ignore and bid as planned bearing in mind a NT bid now promises a stop in the overcalled suit,
- Describe the options for Advancer after partner makes a simple suit overcall and when to select each i.e. to Pass, to support to the level of the fit, to explore for game by making an Unassuming Cue Bid UCB.

PART 1: MAKING A SIMPLE SUIT OVERCALL – MAIN POINTS TO EMPHASISE

Must be a 5+ suit with a minimum of 2 honours – Meet the SQOT!
An overcall need not have opening points (12+) – but must be close to opening if overcalling at the 2-level i.e. 10+ HCP

Suit quality is most important for an overcall i.e. SQOT
Overcalls suggest a lead and can be either constructive or obstructive.
Consider vulnerability. Generally, an overcaller's partner i.e. Advancer, should not bid on without a fit.
Who is the opener? Who is the responder? Who is the overcaller? Who is Advancer?
Overcaller is the name given to the player who bids after an opponent has opened.
Why overcall? – elicit this from the class
Obstruct the opponents , Win the contract (constructive), Suggest a lead

Advancer's Option: Pass, or with a Suit Fit, bid to the level of the fit
Revise what makes a suit fit – partner only needs 3+ cards to support, as Overcaller has 5+. Advancer should bid to the level of the fit! Take up the opening side's bidding space!
A change of suit by advancer after partner's overcall is essentially saying 'no matter how good your suit is, mine is better and so is to play' keeping only the UCB for game interest hands.

Responder's Options After the Opponents make a Simple Suit Overcall
Bid naturally ignoring the overcall i.e. if you can make the bid you were going to make, had there been no overcall, then bid it!

Play hands 1-4 which show how to:

1. Get into the bidding … make it hard for the opposition
2. Express a genuine desire to play in a suit
3. Suggest a lead for partner
4. Coping with an Opponent's Overcall – bidding what you intended!
5. Reacting to partner's suit overcall – bidding to the *'level of the fit'*

PART 2: ADVANCER'S OPTIONS WITH A 'SUIT FIT' AND A STRONGER HAND I.E. 10+ HCP

1. Normally, bid to the 'level of the fit' to maximize disruption
2. But with a stronger hand i.e. 10+ HCP Advancer bids an Unassuming Cue Bid (UCB) to query the strength of Overcaller's hand to see if a game may be possible for their side. The UCB is a bid of the opening side's suit. It is a Conventional Bid so must be Alerted by Overcaller.

Responder's Options with a suit fit and a weak hand after the Opponents make a Simple Suit Overcall

1. With a weak hand and a suit fit Responder can s-t-r-e-t-c-h his support bid by jumping a level! NB Opener must recognize this as a stretch bid!

Overcaller's Options after partner makes an UCB

1. If weak (no game interest) rebid the overcall suit
2. If strong, bid to game.

PLAY HANDS 5 – 8 WHICH SHOW HOW TO:

1. Get into the bidding … make it hard for the opposition
2. Express a genuine desire to play in a suit
3. Suggest a lead for partner
4. Coping with an Opponent's Overcall when you can't make the bid you intended!
5. Advancer's options after partner's Overcall – 'level of the fit', bidding your own suit to play or, making an Unassuming Cue Bid with interest in game.