



## Lesson 18 Teacher's Notes

### The Overcall

#### Aims

- To introduce Competitive Bidding
- To introduce the concept of Playing Tricks
- To emphasise the difference between the Opening Bid and the Overcall

#### Content

- 1 An overcall is a bid made over an opening bid made by an opponent  
It is a **competitive bid** –an attempt to compete for the contract.  
It is **natural** bid – you bid a suit where you have length (at least 5 cards for a suit overcall)
- 2 When should we overcall?  
An overcall is not the same as an opening bid.  
Opponents have the advantage that one player already knows something about his partner's hand.  
When we decide to **compete** we have to evaluate our hands differently.
- 3 **Playing Tricks:** Tricks that one player can make without help from his partner, *provided his long suit is trump*. Work through the example hands counting playing tricks.  
Emphasise that long, solid suits guarantee a number of playing tricks. **High cards do not**  
Reckoning playing tricks is not an exact science. You need a little imagination to work them out
- 4 **The overcall at the 1- and 2-level**  
***Overcalls are based on playing tricks, NOT points***  
You can overcall in a suit with a certain number of playing tricks - generally 2/3 fewer than the tricks you contract to make. EG if you overcall 1♠, you are trying to make 7 tricks in spades.  
You should have **4/5 playing tricks in spades** in your own hand, you hope partner can produce the rest  
If you have to overcall at the 2-level you need one more playing trick  
When considering an overcall we should take **the vulnerability** into account. Vulnerable we have to be a little more careful, since going down is more expensive, especially if we are doubled  
***An overcall at the 1-level needs 4/5 playing tricks and at least a 5 card suit***  
***An overcall at the 2-level (not a jump) needs 5/6 playing tricks and at least a 5 card suit***  
**Note:** Some overcalls do not have enough points to open the bidding  
And some hands worth an opening bid are unsuitable for overcalls because they lack playing tricks  
“To open count points: to overcall count playing tricks”
- 5 Other types of overcall: the **INT overcall** (15-18HCP with a **stopper**)  
and the **weak jump overcall 6+ cards and 6-10 hcp**