



# Adventures in Bridge

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## *This Week in Bridge*

### **(457) Partnership Bidding: Our Preemptive Opening Auctions**

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Level: 5 of 10 (2 of 6)

Robert S. Todd

[robert@advinbridge.com](mailto:robert@advinbridge.com)

#### **General**

When we open the bidding with a preempt (2-level or higher) our agreements are different from when we open the bidding at the 1-level. Once our side starts preempting the auction then we often continue doing so. We have many bids that allow us to extend partner's preempt, but when Responder has a good hand they often need to try for game, and this is where the auction gets complicated, especially when there is competition. Let's take a look at some of these auctions and make sure we have good agreements with partner.

#### **Constructive Bidding**

Even when the opponents are nice enough to stay out of the bidding, auctions that begin with a preempt can still be complicated.

##### *Example 1*

2♠      3♠

\_\_\_?

What does 3♠ mean from partner?

This 3♠ bid is not invitational. Partner is just extending the preempt. Partner could have 0 HCP for this bid. We should not bid 4♠, even if we love our preempt.

##### *Example 2*

♠ AQJ6542

♥ Q3

♦ 64

♣ T3

2♠      2NT

\_\_\_?

Assuming we open 2♠ with this hand, what do we rebid?



When partner bids 2NT they are interested in game – asking for a Feature (or Ogust if that is what we play.) But, given that partner is inviting game and showing interest in our suit (they did not bid a new suit of their own) then we should simply bid 4♠ and see if we can make it.

*Example 3*

♠ KQT954  
♥ A4  
♦ 43  
♣ T43  
2♠      3NT  
\_\_\_?

What do we bid now?

Partner is not asking our opinion. We simply pass – hopefully partner has a long running ♦ suit. If partner wanted our input, they would have bid 2NT or a new suit.

*Example 4*

♠ KQT954  
♥ A4  
♦ 43  
♣ T43  
2♠      2NT  
3♥      3NT  
\_\_\_?

What do we bid now?

This 3NT bid is a “choice of games”. With such a good ♠ suit, we should rebid 4♠. If partner does not have the ♠A, a ♥ lead will likely defeat 3NT. Partner usually has 2-card ♠ support on this auction.

### **Competitive Bidding**

Auctions that begin with a preempt get even more complicated when the opponents bid too!

*Example 5*

2♦      2♠      2NT

What does 2NT mean in this auction?

It is useful to play (either after an overcall or a double) that a 2NT bid by Responder is not a natural bid. Instead, it can be used as an asking bid (Feature or Ogust, whatever you normally play) to allow Responder to investigate game.



*Example 6*

2♦    2♠    3NT

What does 3NT mean in this auction?

If we play that 2NT can be used to investigate game, then 3NT is to play and shows a ♠ stopper and likely a source of tricks!

*Example 7*

2♥    X    4♥    4♠

X?

What does double mean here?

Preemptive bidders do not make penalty doubles. The modern expert standard is interesting here. Double is used to suggest a “sacrifice”. Since Responder could have a good hand or bad hand for bidding 4♥ – preemptor should not act unilaterally – we may be killing them in 4♠. So double is “I want to bid” and Responder can then decide to either bid 5♥ (with a shapely hand) or leave the double in with lots of HCP.

**Conclusion**

When we preempt the bidding, we make things more difficult for the opponents, but also more difficult for partner. We have very little room to communicate, and the auction can get complicated fast. We need to make sure that we have good agreements to make sure that the auction doesn’t get out of control. Make sure you discuss these auctions with your partner.