



Play & Learn

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Advancer's raises in action

In the past two months, we saw that an advancer (the partner of the overcaller) cuebids opener's suit to show a limit raise or better in the overcaller's suit. All other raises – even jump raises – are weak. Here are two deals illustrating advancer's raises.

1. Dlr: South ♠ K 8 4
 Vul: None ♥ J 9 6 4 2
 ♦ K 8 3
 ♣ K 7

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

West	North	East	South
1♦	1♥	3♦ ⁽¹⁾	?

(1) 3♦ is a preemptive jump raise showing about 0 to 7 high-card points and an expected nine-card fit (bidding for as many tricks as the pair has trumps).

West's overcall showed five diamonds, so East is expected to have four-card support to make a preemptive jump raise. As often happens after a preempt, it's not clear what North-South will do over East's 3♦. South might bid 4♣, which is likely to lead to a 5♣ contract. If East bids only 2♦ or

passes, South will bid 3♣, giving North a chance to bid 3NT.

In 5♣, South's losers are two hearts, one diamond and one spade, but one loser can be discarded on the ♦K for down one. 3NT is a better game. North has seven clubs and two spades off the top.

2. Dlr: East ♠ K 8 2
 Vul: E-W ♥ K J 3
 ♦ A 7 2
 ♣ Q 7 6 4

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	Pass	1♠
All Pass			2♠

South's suit is strong enough to overcall 1♠, an effective bid that steals almost the entire one level from the opponents. North has an opening hand, but because a one-level overcall can be fairly light, he is afraid to go directly to game. Agreeing to use a cuebid of opener's suit to show a limit raise or better can prevent you from getting too high after a one-level overcall. North cuebids 2♣. South's 2♠ rebid shows less than opening strength. It doesn't

matter that North has 13 points; the pair doesn't have enough for game and North passes.

The cuebid advance lets North-South stop safely when there is no game – a good thing, since making even 2♠ takes good declarer play. How would you play as South on the ♣J opening lead? Cover up the East-West cards, count South's losers and plan the play.

South counts only five losers (two clubs, two diamonds and one heart), but West's opening lead appears to be a doubleton and that can spell trouble if declarer isn't careful. Do you see the problem?

West's ♣J lead traps North's ♣Q. If North plays low, East encourages and West leads a second club, allowing East to win the trick and lead a third club. Even playing the ♣Q at trick one doesn't help. If declarer ruffs the third club, West will overruff unless South ruffs with the ♠A or ♠Q. But ruffing high turns West's ♠J into a winner on power. The solution for South? Don't ruff it; instead, discard a loser or, as I like to say, "Don't trump, dump!" South should discard a diamond that was already included in his loser count. If East leads a fourth club, South can discard the other diamond loser. If East leads a fifth club, dummy can overruff West.

The cuebid advance let North-South stop in a safe, low contract, and good declarer play let South make that contract. Well done! ■