

Multi Landy - A Defence to 1NT

When the opponents open 1NT it is best to overcall only on shapely hands (especially over a strong NT). Since you are already at the two level, you really need something more sophisticated than simple natural overcalls in order to show two suited hands. There are numerous different defences to 1NT around, but one of the most popular by more advanced players in America is Cappelletti (also known as Hamilton – depends on which coast of the USA you are on).

This defence is not common in Europe; but a popular defence is Multi-Landy, which is the same as Cappelletti except that the meanings of 2♣ and 2♦ are reversed. I believe that Multi-Landy is a definite improvement over Cappelletti and so it is what I shall describe here.

Playing Multi-Landy, over a 1NT opening by opponents the bids are :-

- 2♣ = both majors (9+ cards)
- 2♦ = a single suited hand (6+ cards, could be any of the 4 suits, but usually a major)
- 2♥ = 5 ♥'s + a minor suit
- 2♠ = 5 ♠'s + a minor suit
- 2NT = both minors (at least 5-5)
- dbl = penalties (15+ pts).

Let's start by looking at typical hands for using Multi Landy: -

Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3	Hand 4	Hand 5	Hand 6
♠ AQ98	♠ KQJ642	♠ 6	♠ KJ763	♠ 4	♠ AQ
♥ KJ763	♥ A8	♥ KJ763	♥ 6	♥ 84	♥ K98
♦ 6	♦ 652	♦ AJ985	♦ AQJ9	♦ AQ985	♦ QJ1095
♣ Q75	♣ 75	♣ K7	♣ Q76	♣ KQ763	♣ KJ8

Hand 1: A typical major suited hand. 5-4 is OK for a 2♣ bid.

Hand 2: A single suited hand, so overcall 2♦. Partner will 'automatically' relay with 2♥ and you will then bid 2♠ which partner will pass unless he has game interest.

Hand 3: Bid 2♥. This promises 5 ♥'s and an unspecified minor suit (usually 5 cards).

Hand 4: Bid 2♠. You must have 5 of the major for the 2♥/♠ bid, but the 'back-up' minor may be just 4 cards if they are good ones. Note that the major for these 2♥/♠ overcalls must always be 5 cards.

Hand5: Bid 2NT: Much the same as the UNT but you need a few points, especially over a strong NT. You do not normally expect to make a contract but this may make it difficult for the opponents to find a major suit fit at a safe level.

Hand 6: Double. You have good points sitting over the opener and a safe lead.

Responding after partner has made a Multi-Landy bid.

Now let's cover what the partner of the Multi-Landy bidder does. We'll call him responder.

a) Partner bids 2♣ - the major suits.

Over 2♣, responder bids his best major or 2♦ if he is equal length. This is the big advantage over Cappelletti - when responder is equal length he bids 2♦ and then the overcaller can bid his longer major. With Cappelletti it is a lottery as responder must choose a major and you can easily end up playing in a 4-3 fit when there is a 5-3 fit in the other major. Obviously when responder has one major longer than the other, he bids the longer.

Hand 7	Hand 8	Hand 9	Partner has overcalled 2♣: -
♠ 9854	♠ J74	♠ J7	With hand 7 we simply bid 2♠.
♥ Q43	♥ Q43	♥ Q4	With hand 8 we do not 'pick' a major as we may well end up in a 4-3 fit. The bid is 2♦ to get partner to choose.
♦ 64	♦ A764	♦ A7642	And with hand 9 it's even more important to get partner to choose - 4-2 fits do not play well.
♣ J62	♣ J64	♣ J642	

b) Partner bids 2♦ - a single suited hand.

2♦ is usually a major suit. If you have a decent minor suit, it will often pay to defend 1NT - especially if you are on lead with a suit that is good to lead from. Also, if your suit is a minor, then you have to play at the 3 level so it is usually best to defend. Thus this 2♦ is usually (but not always) a major suit. Responder bids using the same philosophy as with a multi 2♦ opening that includes a both majors option, ie :-

Responder normally bids 2♥, but bids 2♠ if he is prepared to go to 3♥ or more opposites a ♥ suit (the same principle as used in the Multi 2♦). Bear in mind that overcaller is limited to around 14 high card points (with more, he would usually double). Of course, nothing is lost on the odd occasion where overcaller has a long minor (you will always be at the 3 level).

c) Partner bids 2♥/♠ - the major bid + a minor suit.

Over a 2♥/♠ overcall, responder normally either passes or bids 2NT which over-caller will correct to his minor. If responder bids a suit (so 2♠/3♣/♦ over 2♥; or 3♣/♦/♥ over 2♠) then that is simply to play (presumably a 6+ card suit). A jump to 3 of partner's major is invitational to game.

d) Partner doubles - penalties.

Db1 should be passed unless responder has a very weak hand (4- points), in which case he should attempt to bail out by bidding a 5 card suit. With a very flat weak hand it is usually best to pass; partner may just have 1NT set in his own hand, and even if 1NT doubled makes it is usually not total a disaster (it is not a game contract).

Note that the double should have an upper limit of about 18-19 points. Now it would be nice to defend 1NT doubled when you have a huge hand but partner is very likely to have less than 5 points and will pull it!

Cappelletti or Multi Landy?

Multi Landy has the (very big) advantage that you always find the best major suit fit. Cappelletti has the advantage that you can play in 2♦ (as opposed to 3♦) with a single suited ♦ hand if you prefer not to defend 1NT. Up to you.