



# Defence to Three-Level Pre-empt 2

In the last issue we considered different actions available when an opponent opens with a three-level pre-empt. Now we turn our attention to the partner of the player who has made a call after an opposing pre-empt.

*Partner has doubled or bid a suit over an opponent's pre-empt*

## RESPONDING TO A TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

1. With 11-15 points think about game; with fewer points make a simple response (often you have no choice).
2. Tend to favour a response in an unbid major if you have two suits to show because game in a major is so much easier than in a minor.
3. Bear in mind that if your partner was last to bid he will have a king less (about 11 total points) so you will need 14 to go for game.

4. Any points in the opponent's suit (other than the ace) are worth less.
5. If you have a *stopper* in the bid suit and no long major, consider 3NT with 12+ points.
6. Only *pass* if you have *very good trumps* (taking three tricks).
7. With 16+ points you can bid the opponent's suit to try for slam.

## RESPONDING TO OTHER BIDS

1. When responding to an overall remember that partner expects you to hold between 8-9 points, so with support you can evaluate your hand including points for *shortage* and *length*, and if your total comes to 11 or above then you can bid on. With 12+ points and a stop in the opponents' suit, consider 3NT.
2. In response to 3NT, generally pass, unless you have a very long suit in a weak hand (seven cards) or you

have a strong long suit (six cards). Remember partner usually just wants to play in 3NT so *only take out if you are sure your contract will be better!*

3. When responding to a cue-bid, bid the lowest suit in which you are happy to play.

In the last issue you have already seen a number of hands on which there have been simple responses, but let us look at some more:

On these first three hands South opens 3♥ with nobody vulnerable:

**Layout 1**

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

### Auction 1

West	North	East	South
			3♥
Dbl	Pass	3♠	End

**Layout 2**

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

### Auction 2

West	North	East	South
			3♥
Dbl	Pass	4♠	End

**Layout 3**

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

### Auction 3

West	North	East	South
			3♥
Dbl	Pass	3NT	End

The West hand is the same in each case making a normal take-out double of 3♥. In Auction 1 East is weak but he must make a response (do not be tempted to pass): he bids the minimum

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possible 3♠ and West passes. As suggested in the last issue, you should not be too disappointed with your predicament, because although you are likely to be easily defeated in 3♠, your opponents could have comfortably made 3♥.

In Auction 2 the East hand is much stronger and although he has just 11 points he can rely on his partner to hold at least 14-15 total points and thus should jump to 4♠. 4♠ is an excellent game contract; just 23 high card points but with West's singleton heart opposite East's weakness the hands fit together neatly.

In Auction 3 East has a difficult problem: his trumps are too weak to pass the double (he would only make the king) and it is possible that 3♥ might go just one off for a mere 100 points. He clearly has a reasonable heart stop and a good source of tricks in his club suit and with 14 points surely 3NT is the best answer. East should make 3NT in comfort for 400 points.

This time South's opening bid is 3♠:

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

Auction 4			
West	North	East	South
3NT	End		3♠

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

Auction 5			
West	North	East	South
3NT	Pass	4♥	End

The two West hands are the same and both make an excellent bid over 3♠. 4♦ looks like the obvious bid, but those likely six diamond tricks are just as good in no-trumps as they are in diamonds and with a good spade stop – it makes

sense to take the risk. After all, if you bid 4♦ you don't get much for your efforts – perhaps +130, whilst if you can make 3NT you will get +400.

In Auction 4 East must not be tempted to bid 4♥: his heart suit is very poor, and he has to hope that his partner has a source of tricks and that his ♣K will come in handy. Remember: *only bid a suit over 3NT if you really think it is worth something*. As you can see, on this layout your partner has eight top tricks in no-trumps and the king of spades is likely to supply the ninth.

In Auction 5 East's heart suit is very different for it is likely to supply four or five tricks in a heart contract, but none in no-trumps since there is no entry. Hence this East does bid 4♥ and the partnership settle in an excellent contract. 3NT would be very lucky to succeed with the club suit very frail.

### Return what you've "borrowed"

It's very important that you don't forget to "give back" your king when your partner has doubled in last seat. On the next two layouts the auction starts with 3♣ from North:

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

Auction 6			
West	North	East	South
	3♣	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	3♠	End

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

Auction 7			
West	North	East	South
	3♣	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	4♠	End

Both Wests in Layouts 6 and 7 hold the same hand, and have done very well to make a call; perhaps they have read the first part of this article in the last issue of BRIDGE and so have "borrowed a king" from their partner to make a take-out double of 3♣.

In Auction 6 East needs to exercise self-control himself. In his place, you should remember that West might have borrowed some strength and you must also bear in mind not only how much you think the queen of clubs is worth, but how flat your hand is.

The queen of clubs is almost worthless and 4-3-3-3 hands should always be downgraded, so East should just bid 3♠.

However, in Layout 7 East has a much better collection of cards: still just 12 points, but with a good five-card spade suit, nothing wasted in clubs and honours likely to fit well with partner's suits. So in Auction 7 East should certainly jump to game.

### Two-suited hands

Last but not least, a quick look at a two-suited hand:

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

Auction 8			
West	North	East	South
			3♦
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠	Pass	5♣	End

Over South's 3♦ opening West shows his powerful two-suiter by bidding 4♦. Now East bids the lowest suit that he is happy to play in: 4♥. If hearts is one of West's suits he will pass, but since it is not he bids 4♠. Now East knows that West does not hold hearts and therefore that his two suits are clubs and spades; hence it follows that East corrects the contract to 5♣.

### Conclusion

The aim of pre-empt is to disrupt, and that they surely do. All you can do is try your best to deal with them.

A mixture of aggression and educated guessing is the best defence. ■