



# Adventures in Bridge

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## (173) Competitive Bidding and Interference: Jump Overcalls in the Passout Seat

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### General

One place that we do not need a jump bid to show a weak hand is in the passout (PO) seat, also known as the balancing seat. In this seat with a weak hand, say 5-8 HCP, and a long suit, we would not bid; we would simply pass the hand out. Bidding here with so few HCP may give the opponents a chance to reach a better partscore or game that they may not otherwise reach. Since we will not bid in the PO seat with a weak hand and we could make a simple overcall with 9-10 HCP and a long suit, then a Jump Overcall in the PO seat is free to be used to describe a different type of hand that can otherwise be difficult to show. Let's see how to best use this jump overcall in the PO seat.

### Balancing

When we are in a balancing position, we usually "borrow" 3 points from partner and bid our hand as though we have those points. Keep this in mind when it comes to bidding in this seat.

### Intermediate Jump Overcall in the Balancing Seat

With a strong 6+c suit and 13+ HCP, when we re-evaluate for length points and balancing, the playing strength of our hand is about 18+ total points (+3 for balancing and +2 for length).

We can show this type of hand that is just beyond the range for a simple overcall by making a Jump Overcall in the PO seat. This JO in PO is called an *Intermediate Jump Overcall*, and it shows about 13-16 HCP and a good 6+c suit.

### Example Auctions

1♣	P	P	2♦/2♥/2♠
1♦	P	P	2♥/2♠/3♣
1♥	P	P	2♠/3♣/3♦
1♠	P	P	3♣/3♦/3♥



Let's look at some specific examples of bidding situations to help see how to use this new tool.

*Example 1*

♠ AKJT87  
♥ 8  
♦ K65  
♣ A86  
1♥ P P 2♠

With 15 HCP and a good quality ♠ suit, this hand is a good candidate for an IJO in PO; bid 2♠.

*Example 2*

♠ K82  
♥ 8  
♦ AKJT87  
♣ A97  
1♥ P P 3♦

Again with a good ♦ suit and 15 HCP, this hand can make an IJO, but since it is ♦ over ♥, that will be at the 3-level.

*Example 3*

♠ T2  
♥ AJ7543  
♦ AK7  
♣ Q7  
1♠ P P 2♥

This hand has 14 HCP and a 6c ♥ suit, but the suit is not good enough quality to make an IJO. Instead, we start with a simple overcall.

*Example 4*

♠ AKJT87  
♥ 8  
♦ KJ5  
♣ AQ6  
1♥ P P X  
P 2♣ P 2♠

Although this hand has a nice 6c suit and is in the PO seat, it has 18 HCP of its own. When added to the 3 points for balancing and the length points for the 6c suit, this is too much to make an IJO. Instead, we start with a double and then bid the suit on the next round.



*Example 5*

♠ KJ2

♥ AKJT8

♦ 84

♣ A97

1♦	P	P	X
P	1♠	P	2♥

Although this hand has 16 HCP and is in the PO seat, it only has a 5c suit, so an IJO is not appropriate. Instead, we start with a double (because with the 3 balancing points, this is too good to make a simple overcall) and then bid ♥.

**Conclusion**

An IJO is a valuable tool for showing a specific type of hand in the PO seat. This bid also helps us clarify other auctions by providing valuable negative inferences for partner and is does so without giving up any useful call, as a WJO is not reasonable in the PO seat. Try adding this gadget to your bidding system.