

## *Unusual and Sandwich NT*

*The Unusual 2NT overcall is a method of showing a two-suited hand in competitive situations. This convention was devised by Alvin Roth in 1948 and promises five cards in each of the two lowest-ranking unbid suits. The most frequent occurrence is immediately after the opening bid but can also be employed in fourth seat when both opponents have bid.*

*Strength requirements can vary from about 9 HCP upwards but one should always pay attention to the vulnerability.*

*Advancer should be aggressive when a good fit is present but also be wary of the colours.*

a)	W	N	E	S	South holds:	♠32	♠5
	-	-	1♠	2NT		♥5	♥J6
						♦AQ1085	♦QJ985
						♣AQ974	♣KQ764
	W	N	E	S		♠	♠97
	--	-	1♦	2NT		♥KJ1094	♥J10863
						♦1082	♦2
						♣AQJ75	♣AKQ104
b)	W	N	E	S	West holds:	♠9	♠A4
	-	1♠	P	1NT		♥Q4	♥7
	2NT					♦AJ1098	♦AQJ74
						♣K7654	♣AKJ106
c)	W	N	E	S	North holds:	♠863	♠54
	P	1♠	P			♥9	♥K3
	1NT	P	2♥ or 2♠	P		♦AQJ2	♦K10987
	P	2NT				♣K10953	♣KJ62
d)	W	N	E	S	West holds:	♠3	♠
	-	-	-	1♠		♥98	♥Q5
	2♦	2♠	P	P		♦AQJ1064	♦AK97432
	2NT					♣AQ98	♣K1065
e)	W	N	E	S	South holds:	♠A	♠J98
	-	-	-	1♣		♥2	♥
	1♠	P	4♠	4NT		♦QJ986	♦AK53
						♣AK10974	♣AQ10872



## *Sandwich NT Overcalls*

*A term used to describe an overcall made in 4th position after both opponents have bid and partner has passed.*

<i>W</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>
1♦	P	1♠	1NT*

*To overcall with the equivalent to a strong 1NT opening in this position makes no sense. How many HCP could partner hold with both opponents bidding? Therefore both double and 1NT are available to show the unbid suits where the Sandwich overcall reveals 5-5 in the unbid suits. A common agreement is that the takeout double shows an opening bid but 1NT represents a weaker but more distributional hand (5-5).*

*An overcall of two diamonds or two spades in the above sequence is not a cuebid but natural. South would be disclosing a strong six card suit with opening bid values. If the 1NT bidder is an unpassed hand, this call would be alertable but if he has already passed no alert would be necessary.*

*You would double with: ♠K4 ♥AJ86 ♦1083 ♣AQ97 but bid 1NT with : ♠9 ♥KJ975 ♦32 ♣KQ864*

<i>W</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>
1♥	P	P	2NT?

*In the above sequence 2NT is **not** an Unusual NT overcall but promises a balanced 19-20 HCP with a heart stopper.*

*Systems are on so that Stayman, Jacoby Transfers & Texas Transfers are available to North*

## Quiz

1. W      N      E      S  
       --      -      1♠    ?

What call would you make with each of the following:

a)	b)	c)	d)	e)	f)
♠AJ874	♠8	♠K4	♠98	♠6	♠Q109
♥KQ	♥65	♥AJ873	♥AKJ1082	♥KJ3	♥6
♦A1032	♦QJ986	♦2	♦AKQ	♦A2	♦A987
♣J8	♣AK1042	♣KJ752	♣K7	♣AKQJ1095	♣KJ642

2. W      N      E      S  
       1♥    P      1♠    ?

What call would you make with each of the following?

g)	h)	i)	j)	k)	l)
♠KQJ974	♠2	♠Q7	♠9	♠	♠A10864
♥J108	♥53	♥92	♥	♥542	♥KQ97
♦2	♦AJ842	♦KQ107	♦AJ9654	♦AKJ108	♦K52
♣AQ5	♣QJ943	♣KQJ54	♣K98632	♣KQJ97	♣Q

3. W      N      E      S  
       1♥    P      2♥    P  
       P      ?

What call would you make?

m)	n)	o)	p)	q)	r)
♠7	♠A1062	♠72	♠AJ1092	♠K1082	♠QJ6
♥Q43	♥5	♥KJ84	♥J987	♥A97	♥876
♦KJ98	♦KQ98	♦A62	♦	♦K8654	♦KQ10982
♣KQ642	♣J1085	♣Q965	♣Q1097	♣2	♣9

4. W      N      E      S  
           P      1♦    P  
 1♠    INT    2♠    ?

*What action would you take with each of the following?*

s)	t)	u)	v)	w)	x)
♠KJ109	♠987	♠Q109	♠653	♠AKQ5	♠AQ9
♥643	♥AKJ95	♥54	♥Q7	♥86	♥86
♦10972	♦1064	♦K752	♦97	♦KJ1052	♦AQJ2
♣A5	♣J4	♣AJ86	♣J97642	♣73	♣10843

## *Answers*

- a) *Pass. Yes you hold 15 HCP but this semi-balanced collection does not merit a 1NT overcall. You would like to defend a spade contract. Partner might offer a takeout double after LHO has passed!*
- b) *2NT. The Unusual NT overcall promises 5-5 in the minor suits.*
- c) *2♠. The Michaels cuebid reveals hearts and a minor but Top & Bottom would show hearts & clubs.*
- d) *Double. You are too strong for an overcall. Begin with a takeout double and introduce hearts at your next turn showing a powerful hand.*
- e) *3♠. This action functions as a Western Cuebid commanding partner to bid 3NT with a spade stopper. You show a strong hand with a long & solid minor suit.*
- f) *Pass. You own insufficient values for any action. A two club overcall would promise a much better suit and an opening bid.*
- g) *2♠. This is not a cuebid but is natural promising a strong six-card suit in addition to an opening bid.*
- h) *This is an example of a Sandwich 1NT overcall disclosing 5-5 in the minors, the unbid suits.*
- i) *Double. The takeout double promises at least 4-4 in the minors plus an opening bid.*
- j) *4NT. This action is an Unusual NT overcall showing great length in the minors. Partner will take a preference.*
- k) *2NT. This overcall discloses 5-5 in the minors.*
- l) *Pass. The opponents have bid your suits. You should sit in the weeds and hope that they will be defeated in whatever contract they land in.*
- m) *2NT. Balancing is dangerous here since partner must own a truckload of spades. This call is takeout for the minors*
- n) *Double. A balancing double is perfect since you own excellent support for all unbid suits.*

- o) *Pass. You have the values to act but the wrong distribution for a double. Partner will bid spades giving you a headache. Pass and hope to defeat the heart partscore.*
- p) *2♠. Partner will not play you for the world since you declined an immediate overcall. Partner must own a lot of diamonds!*
- q) *Double. This is a risky action to be sure because partner may bid three clubs. In this scenario you should convert to three diamonds revealing spades & diamonds.*
- r) *3♦. Another risky call but you do own a six-card suit and it pays to be competitive.*
- s) *Pass. Partner is 5-5 in hearts and clubs but you wish to defend a spade contract. You should not double because you cannot be certain of defeating the contract.*
- t) *4♥. The opponents own a double fit but your side holds ten hearts. Leap to game as an advance sacrifice. The opponents could be icy for slam.*
- u) *3♣. There is a nine-card fit and you hope to make a partscore or push the opponents to the three-level.*
- v) *5♣. This action is a sacrifice that steals bidding space from the opponents. Your side owns an eleven-card club and the opposition is almost certain to make a slam.*
- w) *Double. This is a penalty double. You hold diamond strength behind RHO and partner has values in hearts & clubs. There will be no problems defeating two spades.*
- x) *3NT. Partner is 5-5 in hearts & clubs but 3NT will be easier than five clubs. The opening lead will be a spade and the king of diamonds is onside. You should easily be able to establish the club suit for four tricks.*

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