

## TO BID, OR NOT TO BID UNUSUAL 2N

That's the question!

You are probably familiar with Unusual 2N, a bid made by Overcaller designed to show two long suits and a weak(ish). There are a few variations, but most partnerships play that it shows:

- 5+/5+ cards in the two lowest unbid suits,
- Less than an opening hand and
- Good suits.

So, for example, if the bidding proceeded:

North	East	South	West
1♥	2N		

East would be showing 5+ clubs, 5+ diamonds, less than an opening hand, and something like 3 of the top 5 honors in each of the suits.

Some partnerships have less rigid restrictions. They might bid 2N with bad suits. They might bid 2N with opening points. That is their decision.

I like to know what to expect from partner's hand. My agreements are typically very structured and precise. However, even I make some strategic decisions when deciding whether or not to bid 2N, overcall one of my suits, or simply pass.

I'm going to talk about today about the other factors that can influence whether or not you decide to bid 2N. Some of these ideas can be carried over to the Michaels Cuebid as well, but I'm specifically addressing bids of Unusual 2N. On the following hands we are going to look at how each of these affect your decision To Bid, or Not to Bid.

The factors to take into consideration are:

- Vulnerability and Level
- Suit Quality and Length
- High Card Points
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Person to bid, or 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>
- What do you gain?

### **Vulnerability**

It's difficult sometimes to be able to bid both minor suits. You bid one of them and by the time the bidding gets back to you, it's at the three-level. If you want to bid your 2<sup>nd</sup> minor suit, you'd have to bid at the four-level - Vulnerable! It may be better to bid 2N at your first turn, telling partner about both your suits immediately rather than risk not being able to mention your second suit later in the auction.

When you are non-Vulnerable vs. vulnerable opponents, it is even more important to tell partner about a 2-suited hand in case they hold a well-fitting hand and can sacrifice, stealing the bid away from your Vulnerable opponents.

If you are Vulnerable and the Opponents are non-Vulnerable it is very unlikely that you will be able to take the bid away from them.

### **Suit Quality and Length**

The more cards you have in your two suits the more attractive bidding 2N becomes. Overcalling your long suit, may negate an opportunity to bid your second suit later, especially if your long suit is lower in rank. 2N has the bonus of letting partner know you hold two suits! Even though the two lowest unbid suits could be hearts and a minor, the opponents will hold spades and usually a fit in spades. The only time I would choose to overcall vs. bid 2N is if my hearts were longer than my minor AND I held an opening hand.

### **High Card Points**

Even with an opening hand it's often better to bid 2N (especially if your points are concentrated in your two suits).

### **Are you the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person to bid, or 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>?**

If you're partner has previously had an opportunity to bid and passed, think long and hard about bidding 2N. Is it likely that you and partner will be able to compete against the opponents?

### **What do you gain?**

Remember, every time you bid you give information to the opponents about your hand AND your partner's hand. If the opponents end up with the contract they will be looking at Dummy's hand and their own. They will know that you are 5+/5+ in two suits AND exactly which two suits. It's not hard for Declarer to figure out what your partner holds. If you don't think you and partner can compete for the contract, force the opponents to a higher level or take the contract away from the opponents...what did you gain?

Everyone likes to bid! Just make sure that you are choosing to bid for gain!

## Hand 1

**Board**

North Deals  
N-S Vul

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

  

♠ Q 9 8
♥ K 7 4 2
♦ 8 4
♣ Q 7 4 2



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	All pass		

North expects that East will raise spades. North expects that South (a passed hand) is unlikely to hold a fit strong enough to allow them to make 5 ♣ or 5 ♦ or to sacrifice against 4 ♠. North is on lead.

North has nothing to gain from bidding.

## Hand 2

### Board

East Deals  
E-W Vul

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

  

♠ 3	♠ 3	♠ 3
♥ A J 10 5 3	♥ A J 10 5 3	♥ A J 10 5 3
♦ 8 5	♦ 8 5	♦ 8 5
♣ K J 9 8 5	♣ K J 9 8 5	♣ K J 9 8 5



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	4 ♥	1 ♦	2 N
Pass		Pass	Pass

South's 2 NT bid is Unusual 2 NT showing 5/5 (at least) in hearts and clubs.

East/West are Vulnerable. North/South Non-Vulnerable.

South suspects that if he and partner have a fit, a sacrifice might be possible. North has fitting cards in clubs and hearts and a singleton diamond. North should expect to lose two tricks in spades and diamonds, no club tricks and (maybe) one heart trick. North expects to make 4 ♥.

### Hand 3

**Board**

East Deals

N-S Vul

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

  

♠ A K 8 7 6 5	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid black;">             N W     E S           </div>	♠ 4 2
♥ A K 9 8		♥ Q J 10 4 3
♦ 4		♦ 10 7 2
♣ 4 2		♣ 9 7 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	1 ♠
2 N	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
5 ♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

2 NT is Unusual 2 NT showing at least 5/5 in clubs and diamonds and typically less than an opening hand.

West expects that North will raise spades. West also knows that he would like to compete, even at a high level. Bidding 2N now, and clubs later allows West to tell East that he hold 6 clubs and 5 diamonds.

**Board**

West Deals

N-S Vul

Hand 4

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

♠ J 6 4  
♥ 8 7 2  
♦ 7 6 5  
♣ J 8 4 3



♠ 7  
♥ Q 5  
♦ K Q 10 9 4  
♣ K 10 9 5 2

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♥	2 N	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	All pass	

East suspects that North/South may have a spade fit as well as a heart fit (East holds a singleton spade and West did not open a Weak Two in spades).

Bidding 2N will interfere in the North/South auction and does have some gain.

- North/South could end up in the wrong suit
- North/South might not discover their second fit
- North/South might finesse West for the ♥ Q
- If West holds a good fit for clubs or diamonds, East/West might steal the bid or force North/South to a higher level

## Hand 5

**Board**

East Deals  
N-S Vul

♠ J 10 3 2	♠ 9 8 6 5	♠ A K Q 4
♥ A J 8 6	♥ 10 5	♥ 7 4
♦ 9 8 7 5	♦ A 4	♦ K Q J 6 3
♣ 9	♣ A J 10 6 2	♣ 4 3
	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #006400; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px;">             N W     E S           </div>	
	♠ 7	
	♥ K Q 9 3 2	
	♦ 10 2	
	♣ K Q 8 7 5	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	5 ♣	1 ♦	2 N
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

South's 2 NT bid is unusual showing 5+ hearts and 5+ clubs.

North's 5 ♣ bid effectively severs the communication between E/W. East may decide to double hoping to set them, but they will never find their spade game at this point and the best E/W can hope for is +200, setting 5 ♣ one trick doubled.

Even if West bids 3 ♦ after 2N, E/W will not find their major fit!



## Hand 6

South Deals  
E-W Vul

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
2 N	3 ♠	4 ♥	1 ♣
Pass	Pass	5 ♥	4 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	Dbl

West's 2 NT bid shows 5+ hearts and 5+ diamonds.

East bids 4 ♥ and then 5 ♥ over South's 4 ♠ bid. He should expect one spade loser, one club loser and maybe one diamond loser.

## Hand 7

**Board**

East Deals  
E-W Vul

	♠ K J 9 5 3											
	♥ 10 9 8											
	♦ 9 6 3 2											
	♣ 10											
♠ 7	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;"> <table style="border: none; text-align: center; width: 100%;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ 6 2	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♥ A 4		♥ 5 3 2										
♦ A J 8 7 5		♦ K Q 4										
♣ K Q 8 4 2		♣ A J 9 7 3										
	♠ A Q 10 8 4											
	♥ K Q J 7 6											
	♦ 10											
	♣ 6 5											
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>									
		Pass	1 ♠									
2 N	4 ♠	5 ♣	All pass									

West's 2 NT bid is Unusual 2 NT showing at least 5/5 in the minor suits.

North has a Weak Freak Bid. If West overcalls 2 ♦, he will never have an opportunity to bid his second suit and East/West will defend 4 ♠ vs. play 5 ♣

North Deals  
None Vul

Hand 8

♠ A J 10 7 5

♥ A 9 6 3

♦ K 8 3

♣ 9

♠ K Q 2

♥ K 10 8 4

♦ J 5

♣ Q 7 5 4



♠ 8 3

♥ 5

♦ A Q 9 7 4

♣ A J 10 6 3

♠ 9 6 4

♥ Q J 7 2

♦ 10 6 2

♣ K 8 2

*West*

*North*

*East*

*South*

1 ♠

2 N

3 ♠

All pass

East has a good 2N bid. On this hand it doesn't matter whether he overcalls or bids 2N or passes. The play will go approximately the same.