

## 19) 2 suited overcall on opponents opening of strong 1♣ or strong 1♦

There are quite a few bidding systems based on strong 1♣ opening . We go from Neapolitan ♣, Roman♣ , Blue Team ♣, Precision ♣, Polish♣ , Viking♣ , till the Two Suited ♣, the last born in the glorious family.

In all of these bidding systems , popular on both sides of the Atlantic, the only strong opening bid is 1♣ showing any shape and generally 16+ HCP.

We are talking about artificial systems where a 1 in a suit overcall over 1♣ opening, only represents a small nuisance and can often make life easier for the opener partner.

The 1 in a suit overcall is therefore not advisable because overcaller runs some risk without having in return any benefit.

The 2 in a suit overcall is instead quite effective for it takes away more bidding space and causes sizable difficulties to the opponents.

Bidding systems based on strong 1♦ opening, are normally played only in Italy and have a bidding technique similar to that of their more popular cousins.

Also in the case of a system based on strong 1♦ opening , the winning overcall is the one at 2 level for the same reasons seen over 1♣ opening.

Problems related to overcalling a strong 1♣ opening , are somehow similar to the ones seen when overcalling a strong 1NT opening.

In order to overcall we can not wait to have a strong hand because opener is known to have at least 16+ HCP and very seldom we could have a good portion of the maximum 24 HCP left.

Overcalls on 1♣ or 1♦ have to be based on shape, not on strength.

One treatment that works well is the DONT R&N :

### W N E S

1♣ 2♣ = minimum 5-4 in minors

2♦ = minimum 5-4 in majors

2♥ = 5+♥ with unknown 4+ minor on the side, or 6+♥ .

2♠ = 5+♠ with unknown 4+ minor on the side , or 6+♠

The X overcall showing any 6+ carder is not advisable because the X pre-emptive value is nil and has the only result of making life easier for opener partner.

As far as the HCP required for the overcall are concerned , we have to take into account that normally the defending side could , at most, have roughly 20 HCP, so it is useless to talk about an upper HCP limit . The overcall has therefore a destructive more than a constructive connotation .

The lower HCP limit would depend , as usual, on the shape and on vulnerability .

We have to think in terms of minimum 7-8 HCP obviously concentrated in the suits.

In case of violent shapes , like 6-5 , we could even overcall with a 5 HCP , and we can be sure that we will not be punished for our daring bid.

Overcaller partner should not take any risk but simply make a choice between the 2 suits , avoiding any inviting bid that, most of the times, would make no sense.