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This Week in Bridge

(139) Cuebidding the Opponent's Suit

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Level: 2

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General

When an opponent enters our auction by making an overcall, we have a new bid to use to describe our hand -- a cuebid of the opponent's suit. Here we will look at the reasons why we might cuebid the opponent's suit and what the different possible meanings are.

First Round Cuebids

A cuebid of the opponent's suit on the first round of the bidding usually has a specific meaning.

The options are a *Michaels Cuebid* or a *Limit Raise or better* in support of partner's suit.

- Michaels Cuebid
 - Direct seat cuebid:
Ex. (1♥) 2♥
 - Some play it as a sandwich seat cuebid as well:
Ex. (1♦) P (1♠) 2♦
- Cuebid to show a limit raise or better in support of partner's suit (Q=LR+)
 - This can be made by Responder to show support for Opener's suit:
Ex. 1♥ (1♠) 2♠
 - Or it can be made by the Advancer to show support for Interferer's suit:
Ex. (1♣) 1♥ (P) 2♣

Second Round Cuebids

Cuebids after the first round of the bidding are less specific in their meaning. These cuebids can be used for a variety of different options, but they are generally strength-showing without any other clear action at the 2-level and Western cuebids,

asking for a stopper, at the 3-level. The cuebid asks Opener to further describe the hand – show a stopper in the opponent’s suit or pattern out in a relevant Major suit.

Second Round Cuebid by Responder

Responder can cuebid the opponent’s suit on the second round of the bidding when they are not sure what to do. This generally is a game-forcing bid and asks Opener to further describe their hand. The most common and useful answer to that cuebid is for Opener to show a stopper in the opponent’s suit.

Example

♠ A543

♥ A5

♦ 63

♣ AQ943

1♣ P 1♠ 2♦

P P 3♦

Second Round Cuebid by Opener

A cuebid by the opening bidder simply shows a strong hand that is game-forcing. It is a general forcing bid and is often also a Western cuebid, asking Responder for a stopper in the opponent’s suit.

Example

♠ A5

♥ A3

♦ 832

♣ AKQ932

1♣ P 1♠ 2♦

3♦

Other Cuebids

Jump cuebids are often used as splinters in support of partner’s last bid suit. This can be used by any of the four players and can be used on either the first or second round of the auction.

Conclusion

A cuebid of the opponent’s suit is a valuable tool for describing your hand. In most cases it will be used to show a strong offensively-oriented hand – either a limit raise or better in partner’s suit or a strong hand without a stopper in the opponent’s suit.

This cuebid is frequently highly offensively-oriented because with a more balanced or defensively-oriented hand, we can make a reopening double instead of a cuebid.

This cuebid can be used as our general “catch-all” forcing bid for getting more information about partner’s hand. Partner’s first priority will be to tell us about a stopper in the opponent’s suit.

With a good hand, give a general cuebid a try and see if it helps you simplify the auction.