

Lansdowne Bridge Seminar Notes

Cue Bidding 1st Round Controls

There are four basic types of cue bids:

1. Bidding the opponent's suit as a simple overcall [1♠ - 2♠]
(**Michael's** Cue bids showing two 5+ card suits)
2. Bidding the opponent's suit when partner has opened [1♥ - 1♠ - 2♠]
(**Forcing to Game not necessarily in ♥** and asking for more info: ♠ stop?; 2nd suit?; weak or strong?)
3. Bidding the opponent's suit when partner has overcalled [1♥ - 1♠ - P -2♥]
(**Unassuming** Cue Bid, showing 3+ card support and 10+ HCP, and asking if partner's overcall is weak or strong)
4. **Splinter:** over a major opened by partner, double jump shift agrees partner's suit and shows shortage (void or singleton) [1♠ - 4♥ / ♦ / ♣; 1♥ - 3♠/4♣ / ♦]
5. Bidding a new suit at the **3♠ or 4** level after trumps have been agreed
(**Cue Bidding 1st round controls**)

Other cue bids are available.

When you think that a slam is possible, you sometimes need to know which specific Aces (or sometimes Kings) are held. Using Blackwood may not be the answer because you need to know *exactly* which Ace(s). For example, in these hands if you have agreed ♥s, you would want to know which Ace(s) were held by partner, perhaps because you don't care if partner has an Ace in your void suit.

Hand 1 (West)		Hand 2 (West)		Hand 3 (West)	
♠ A K		♠ A K 3		♠ K Q J 9 4 3	
♥ A K Q 7 6 4 2		♥ A K Q 6 4 2		♥ A K J 7 6 4	
♦ K Q 5 4		♦ 4 3		♦ -	
♣ -	(21 HCP)	♣ K 5	(19 HCP)	♣ 6	(14 HCP)
W	E	W	E	W	E
2♣	2♦	1♥	3♥	2♣	2♥
2♥	3♥	3♠	4♦	3♥	3♠
4♣	4♦	6♥		4♦	5♣
7♥				7♥	
After agreeing ♥s, 4♣ shows 1 st round control in ♣s and 4♦ shows the ace or void in ♦s. An answer of 5♥ to 4NT would leave you bidding 6♥, in case partner's control is in ♣s.		After agreeing ♥s (3♥), the other bids (3♠, 4♦) all showed Aces (or voids) and West, missing the A♣, bid 6♥.		After agreeing ♥s, East started the cue bidding with 3♠. West shows void in ♦s and East shows A♣, the contract is 7♥. Again, only 6♥, if West goes straight to Blackwood.	

To cue bid Aces / Voids (1st round controls):

- Agree trumps – explicitly

- Or implicitly: some players use a jump shift to agree partner's suit and show the first 1st round control, eg: 1♦ - 3♥. This is different to the double jump shift of the splinter: 1♠ - 4♣. It means you can't use the jump shift for a strong natural response, but arguably you don't need it, as you can always jump on the 2nd round.
- Remember some conventional bids agree partner's suit, eg: Splinters or Jacoby 2NT. **Take care:** after Jacoby 2NT, change of suit at 3 level (ie not a jump) is showing 1st round controls. After a splinter, cue bid Aces without jumping.
- Bid the lowest possible control – in Hand 1 above, 4♣ showed not only control in ♣s, but *no* 1st round control in ♠s.
- If there is room and you have shown all your 1st round controls, start bidding Kings and singletons (2nd round controls) – this is rare:
 - Cue bid 2nd round controls by either:
 - Cue-bidding a suit you already skipped, thus denying 1st round control; or
 - Cue-bidding a suit a second time shows Ace and King.
 - eg: 1♥ - 3♥ - 4♣ - 4♦ - 4♠ — . . . Opener denies A♠ but shows K♠.
 - If a cue-bid is made that by-passes both the trump suit and one or more of the outside suits then all the missing controls are being promised. The sequence 1♥-P-3♥-P, 3♠-P-4♣-P; 4♠... not only shows second-round control in ♠s, but also guarantees first-round control of ♦s.
- With no (more) controls to show, bid the agreed suit at the lowest possible level – should be at least game.
 - If responder is minimum, responder can exit at game in the agreed suit.
 - So, bidding the trump suit after a cue bidding sequence NEVER means “I have control of trumps” – it is an exit.
- You can still use Blackwood to find out about A (/K) of trumps, if you remain below the 4NT level. You will simply have a more clear idea about where the outside Aces/Voids are. Blackwood will not tell you about voids...
- Ensure you have Partnership Agreement – there is an **Italian Cue Bid** system, where cue bids are of 1st or 2nd round controls (ie Aces or Kings etc).

Thanks to Mike Eden, Andrew Robson and Bridgebums

Example Hands:

Hand 1: RHO bids 1♥, what do you bid?	Hand 2:	Hand 3	Hand 4																				
<p>♠ K 9 5 4 2 ♥ 6 ♦ Q J 10 9 6 5 ♣ 2</p>	<p>♠ 9 5 4 2 ♥ K Q 7 6 5 ♦ A 9 5 ♣ 2</p>	<p>♠ A K Q 5 ♥ Q 8 6 ♦ A Q 10 6 ♣ 9 5</p>	<p>♠ A 10 9 ♥ K Q 6 ♦ K J 10 ♣ A 5 3 2</p>																				
<p>2♥ - Michaels stating 5+ ♠s & 5+ minor suit</p>	<p>Partner's 2♦ is Michaels (5/5 in majors) – you bid 2♥ (she could be quite weak).</p>	<p>3♠ - jump in Partner's suit to show extra values: mild slam try and at least game forcing. Partner will raise to game or cue bid controls (or 4NT).</p>	<p>4♥. 3NT also an option to prevent ♦ lead against 4♥.</p>																				
Hand 5: Partner opened 1♥, RHO overcalled 1♠	Hand 6: Over 1♥, Partner overcalls 1♠. Pass. What to bid?	Hand 7																					
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<p>2♠ asks for more info on the way to 4♥ (at least). NB: bidding 4♥ is weak and preemptive, and shuts out slam investigation.</p>	<p>2♥ (UCB) asks if overcall was weak or strong. Weak: she bids 2♠ which you pass. Strong, she bids something else and you go at least to 4♠.</p>	<p>2♣ - 2♥ 2♥ shows 8+ pts and slam interest. (Partnership Agreement). Those who must bid 2♦ will have to agree West's 2♥ before cue bidding can commence. 3♥ - 4♦ 3♥ agrees the suit and 4♦ = Ace/Void in ♦s and no 1st round control in ♣s or ♠s. 6♥ - P If West had enquired with 4NT, she would not have known if East's single Ace was in ♠s, in which case she would be 1 off.</p>																					
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<p>2♣ - 2♠ Strong case for a positive 2♠, but you still gdt to same place with a mandatory 2♦ relay. 3♠ - 4♦ East shows A♦ and denies control in ♣s. 4NT - 5♥ Key card Blackwood; West wants to know if partner has K♣. She already knows partner does not have A♣. Answer: Yes. 7♠ Going straight to Blackwood without cue bidding, West would not know whether East's ace was A♦ or A♣</p>		<p>2♣ - 3♦ East shows 8+ pts and 5 ♦s. 4♦ - 4♠ East shows A♠ but lacking A♥. 4NT - 5♦ East's showing of two key cards means she has one of the A♦ or A♣, having already shown A♠. 6♦ Can't make 7: with cue bidding West would have to guess where the two Aces are and may guess to go to the grand slam.</p>																					

Hand 10		Hand 11	
West (Dealer)	East	West (Dealer)	East
♠ A K 9 7 3	♠ J 10 6 5	♠ -	♠ Q 10 9 6 2
♥ 2	♥ K Q 5 4	♥ K Q J 10 2	♥ A 9 7 6 4
♦ K 3	♦ Q J 7	♦ K 5 3	♦ -
♣ A K Q 6 4	♣ J 7	♣ A K Q 10 2	♣ J 5 3
<p>1♠ - 3♠</p> <p>4♣ - 4♠ West cue bids her A♣, but East has no 1st round control, so exits in 4♠. Blackwood would result in a 5♠ contract, which goes down if N can cash 2 aces and has the Q♠.</p>		<p>1♥ - 3♥</p> <p>3♠ - 4♦ West bids her ♠ void; East bids her ♦ void, denying control in ♣s.</p> <p>6♥ Blackwood will not give you this clarity of which Aces are missing. Actually, you make 7♥: would anyone bid it?</p>	

These are suggested sequences for discussion, not necessarily correct in all cases and systems.