



Negative Free Bids

by
Warren Watson
of the
Kootenay Jewel
Bridge Club

January 28, 2012





2





Negative Free Bids

From the Article by Karen Walker of the Bridge Bulletin
The Bridge News, Volume 3, Issue 10, October 2008, The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club

“A modern solution to a common bidding problem.”

“One’s success with this system depends on one’s hand evaluation skills”

Summary:

RHO overcalls partner (including 1NT, cuebid or 2NT) who is the opener. One may bid the following:

- A NFB (negative free bid) is a new non-jump suit between 2♣ and 3♦ showing:
 - a nonforcing constructive bid
 - no fit for partner (raising partner is most important)
 - a hand not good for notrump
 - 5-11 HCP
 - a good 6+ card suit or a strong 5-card suit.
- Non-jump bids of 3♥ and higher are forcing.
- A jump shift shows
 - a six-card suit with good playing values
 - 10-11 HCP
 - a cover card in an outside suit
- A double shows
 - a negative double
 - Responder will not bid a new suit
 - game forcing with or without a single suit.





- Responder will bid a new suit which is 5+ and forcing to game.
- A cuebid asks for clarification by opener.
- Jump in partner's suit is preemptive
- Cuebid:
 - usually suggests fit
 - direct cuebid is limit raise or better
 - cuebidder denies fit by rebidding notrump or his own suit
 - denies 4+ cards in any unbid major
 - asks for a stopper (Western Cuebid)
 - starts a slam sequence
 - tell partner you have extra strength and defensive values
 - important especially if opponent's sacrifice.
- Jump Cuebid
 - splinter
 - shows:
 - a singleton
 - good trump (4+) support
 - slam-try values





NFB depends on the following factors:

- one's hand evaluation skills
- NFB Suit:
 - high card values
 - suit quality
- outside holdings
- Vulnerability
- type of scoring
 - be more conservative at imps and vulnerable

Opener Replies to a NFB:

- Raise his own original suit
- Pass when very short in the NFB, no need to rescue partner unless original suit is very good
- Invite to Game
 - 2NT (16-18)
 - raise of the NFB suit (15-18)
 - raises are not invitation in competition
- Go to Game
 - with a great fit
 - with high card values for game, cuebid on the way to game





Quiz:

1♥ 1♠ ?

1	2	3	4	5	6
♠AQx	♠AQ	♠876	♠875	♠875	♠87
♥Jxx	♥Jx	♥8	♥8	♥8	♥83
♦KJ8754	♦KJ8754	♦K109872	♦KQJ876	♦AJ1098	♦AK10987
♣3	♣542	♣A54	♣QJ10	♣K54	♣1098

My answers:

1 and 2 are not suitable for a NFB because of heart support(1) and notrump suitability (2)

3 is suitable not vulnerable and not at teams

4, 5 and 6 are suitable at any vulnerability.

Being able to draw trump for one or two rounds without losing the lead or being able to draw trump without needing transportation is a bonus when vulnerable

Having 2 card support for partner should require a better NFB suit than with a void or a singleton because with two card support, partner's major may be the best place.

7.

We were vulnerable and partner opened 1♠ which was overcalled by 2♣. I held the following: Do I make a NFB of 2♥ to stop partner from rebidding 2♠? I passed and partner rebid spades, a bottom, down two vulnerable.

♠---

♥Jxxxxx

♦KJxx

♣Qxx



6





From Article:

Definition:

This is a treatment where opponents overcall partner and responder has a long suit that cannot be shown at the one level. Responder's NFB is always a non-jump, new-suit bid between 2♣ and 3♦. The bid of 1M is not a NFB.

It shows:

- a good 6+-card suit or a strong 5-card suit
- 5-11 points, not forcing constructive
- no support for partners major (3+)
- good suits and good playing values
- a hand not good for other contracts.

W	N	E	S
1♣	1♦	1M	6+ points (not limited) 4+ card suit

W	N	E	S
1♦	1♥	1♠	6+ points (not limited) 5+ card suit

Factors:

- one's hand evaluation skills
- NFB Suit:
 - high card values
 - suit quality
- outside holdings
- Vulnerability
- type of scoring
 - be more conservative at imps

3♥ and higher are forcing





Examples:

W N E S
1♦ 1♠ ?

♠8654 ♥Q107542 ♦A9 ♣3 2♥
♠J74 ♥K9632 ♦1054 ♣A7 Double
♠9 ♥AKJ97 ♦108732 ♣64 2♥ then compete to 4♦

With a good six-card suit, one can repeat it in competition.

Examples:

W N E S
1♥ 2♣ ?

♠97 ♥J42 ♦AQJ862 ♣83 2♥, support most important
♠J74 ♥42 ♦KJ1097 ♣AQ7 2NT, very descriptive bid

Negative Double Auctions

NFB are not forcing, but a double may either be a negative double or game forcing with or without a single suit.) After opener's response to a negative double, a new suit by responder is 5+ and forcing to game.

Opener must show some restraint. With a good hand, he can't blast off to four in the unbid major in case partner just has an opener. Instead, opener must cuebid to get clarification.

A cuebid can just be a request for clarification.

W N E S
1♦ 1♠ Dbl





♠AJ9 ♥K1074 ♦53 ♣AJ863 Dbl
1NT, 2♣, 2♦, 2♥ are minimum bids by opener

Bid 3NT 4 hearts are guaranteed??

♠4 ♥AQ ♦K102 ♣AKJ10974 Dbl

Double then bid clubs (forcing) then cuebid—slam try

♠AQ ♥Q10832 ♦A83 ♣Q93 Dbl

then 2♥ then 3NT

♠2 ♥AKJ1097 ♦K932 ♣87 Dbl

insist on 4♥.

Responder's Jump Shift

The jump in a new suit shows:

a strong 6+ card suit

10-11 playing points

a cover card outside suit

based on playing strength

Cuebid shows:

support if partner opened a major (direct cuebid is limit raise or better)

denies a 4+ card major if partner opened a minor.

Jump in partner's suit is preemptive.

Opener's rebids

Pass

Do not run to 2NT because of a minimum with poor support for the NFB suit.

Repeat own suit with a minimum and no fit for the NFB suit with invitational points

2NT (16-18)

raise of the NFB suit (15-18)

not invitational in competition



9





jump to game in the NFB with a big fit
with big high card strength, cuebid first.

- Cuebid
 - usually suggests fit
 - cuebidder denies fit by rebidding notrump or his own suit
- asks for a stopper
- starts a slam sequence
- tell partner you have extra strength and defensive values
 - important especially if opponent's sacrifice.

Jump Cuebid

splinter
shows:
a singleton
good trump (4+) support
slam-try values

Double

W N E S
1♦ 1♠ 2♥ 2♠

Dbl

either

penalty or
positive

Hand with values and no

clear-cut action

Over Responder's Jump Shift

raise based on:

quick tricks
trump fit
ruffing values



10





NFB Examples:

W N E S
1♦ 1♠ 2♥

♠KJ7 ♥8 ♦AJ9743 ♣A104 Pass (don't save partner)
♠7 ♥K8 ♦AK1054 ♣AQ974 3♥ (3♣ is forcing-pick a suit)
♠4 ♥Q982 ♦AQ1084 ♣A76 4♥ (2♠ or 3♠ for slam interest)

W N E S
1♥ 1♠ 2♣ 2♠
?

♠103 ♥KQJ74 ♦AQ5 ♣976 3♣ (not invitational)
♠J86 ♥AKJ52 ♦AQJ ♣73 Dbl (positive double)

The Lisa Convention and the Walsh Negative Double are alternatives to the NFB.





I find negative free bids very limiting because:

- What's wrong with making a point-limiting 1 NT response and then bidding your suit, given the chance?
- Partner can make a two-level bid with 5-11 HCP's and a good suit.
 - The range 5-11 is too wide.
 - I have found:
 - The definition of a good suit is vague.
 - Some play them at the one-level too.
- No mention of vulnerability is ever made.
- The point range of 10+ is too important to lump it with the weak range.
- The weak range should not always take the partnership to the two-level because:
 - Opponents have an opportunity to double.
 - The weak hand may have very limited entries.
 - You do not have a fit with partner, do you want to find he has a misfit with you at the two-level? With 10+, it is not so bad.

