

## 15) Two suited GAstem overcall in the second seat on opponents one in a suit opening.

Pierre Ghestem has been the first analyst to introduce 2 suited overcalls on 1 in a suit opponents opening. More 2 suited overcalls were later introduced like Michaels cue bids, CRASH and others. It is clear that the possibility to inform partner in one shot about the possession of 2 suits, doubles the chances of finding a fit.

As usual, when we have to make a choice among different treatments concerning the same topic, we need objective criteria.

**Frequency of use:** it is intuitive that if we overcall more frequently, our action will be more effective. .

**Defensibility** of the generated contract: if the over caller partner can always choose between the two suits with a bid at 2 level, the resulting contract would be more defensible than if the choosing response would have to be made at 3 level.

In practical terms the level of the choosing response is, in fact, the deciding factor not only as far as defensibility is concerned but also considering the frequency of use.

The above mentioned 3 conventions, that is Ghestem, Michaels and CRASH, are forcing the choosing response at 3 level in the majority of cases. A 3 level contract, in order to be defensible, requires the 2 suiter to be at least 5-5 and such requirement depresses dramatically the frequency of use.

The convention I baptised GAstem 2 suited overcalls, always allow partner to choose at 2 level and , as a consequence, the minimum requirement for the 2 suiter is to be 4- 4. The result of such different requirements is to obtain a much higher frequency of use as well as to maintain unchanged the defensibility of the generated contract.

Over 1 in a suit opponents opening, using GAstem 2 suited overcalls we bid as follows :

2♣ = minimum 4-4 in the 2 lower ranking suits (LRS) except opps. suit

2♦ = minimum 4-4 in the 2 higher ranking suits (HRS) except opps. suit

1NT = minimum 4-4 in the 2 extreme suits (ES) except opps. suit

The choosing response from partner can always be done at 2 level. Let us see in detail how it works:

Opponents opening.	GAstem 2 suited Overcall
1♣	2♣ = min. 4-4 in ♦-♥ (LRS) 2♦ = min. 4-4 in ♥-♠ (HRS) 1NT = min. 4-4 in ♦-♠ (ES)
1♦	2♣ = min. 4-4 in ♣-♥ (LRS) 2♦ = min. 4-4 in ♥-♠ (HRS) 1NT = min. 4-4 in ♣-♠ (ES)
1♥	2♣ = min. 4-4 in ♣-♦ (LRS) 2♦ = min. 4-4 in ♦-♠ (HRS) 1NT = min. 4-4 in ♣-♠ (ES)
1♠	2♣ = min. 4-4 in ♣-♦ (LRS) 2♦ = min. 4-4 in ♦-♥ (HRS) 1NT = min. 4-4 in ♣-♥ (ES)

Normally GAstem overcalls are made with a 6-11 point count but, if partner is a passed hand, then it can be done also with an opening hand.

The fact that we could overcall with a 4-4 two suiter and 6-11 HCP, it does not mean that we should always overcall with 6 HCP and 2 bare 4 carder with unfavourable vulnerability unless we have suicidal instincts. It is therefore recommended to overcall with HCP concentrated in the two suits and moreover, in case of unfavourable vulnerability, to have at least a 5-4 two suiter.

It is however useful to know that when we overcall with a 4-4 two suiter, we have more than 70% probability to locate a 4-4 fit with partner in one of our 2 suits.