

16) GAstem 2 suited overcall in 4th seat when opener partner has responded 1 over 1

We have seen the advantages of GAstem overcalls in 2nd seat, but what can we do when bidding goes for instance like this:

W	N	E	S
1♣	p	1♦	?

North, our partner has not overcalled and we can deduct that he does not have a major 5 carder, nor a 2 suiter composed by ♦-♥, ♦-♠ or ♥-♠.

This does not exclude that he might have 4♣-4♥ or 4♣-4♠. It could also be that partner is so weak that could not overcall at all.

In this situation, if, sitting South, we would have a two suiter composed by 4+♥ and 4+♠, we could have an excellent probability to locate an 8 cards fit in one of our majors. In order to inform partner about our holding, we can simply bid 1NT showing both the unmentioned suits. Let us see it in detail:

W	N	E	S
1♣	p	1♦	1NT = 4+♥ and 4+♠.
1♣	p	1♥	1NT = 4+♦ and 4+♠.
1♣	p	1♠	1NT = 4+♦ and 4+♥
1♦	p	1♥	1NT = 4+♣ and 4+♠
1♦	p	1♠	1NT = 4+♣ and 4+♥
1♥	p	1♠	1NT = 4+♣ and 4+♦

Once again North will be able to choose between our 2 suits, remaining at 2 level in an easy defensible contract..

Somebody might object that we are losing the possibility to overcall with a natural 1NT bid.

The remark is correct but is it a real loss? West, being the opener ought to have at least 12 HCP. East, responding 1 over 1 promises a minimum of 6 HCP. To make a natural 1NT overcall we should normally have 16-18 HCP.

In the whole deck we have only 40 HCP so that means that North is left with 4 or 5 HCP. Is it better to play in 1NT or rather in 2 of a suit with a 4-4 fit?

The answer is intuitive.

Considering the frequency of use, how many times we would have a 16-18 balanced hand in one of the above bidding sequences? How many times we would instead have a hand suitable for a GAstem overcalls? Probabilities are simply not comparable. Believe me, we are not losing anything.