

Overcalling A Preempt

Dealer: East
 Nobody Vul
 Lead: ♠K

	North	
	♠10 5 3 2	
	♥6 4	
	♦A Q 7 5	
	♣K 5 2	
West		East
♠K Q J 6		♠9 8
♥J 2		♥10 9 3
♦10 2		♦K J 9 6 4 3
♣A 10 9 7 4		♣Q 3
	South	
	♠A 7 4	
	♥A K Q 8 7 5	
	♦8	
	♣J 8 6	

The Bidding:

West	North	East	South
		2♦ ⁽¹⁾	2♥ ⁽²⁾
Pass	Pass ⁽³⁾	Pass	

Result: Made 4, +170 for North-South

(1) East held 6 points and so little hope for a constructive auction, but thought her 6 card diamond suit was good enough for a little obstructive bidding. A "weak 2" preempt is usually bid on a better suit: 2 of the top 3, or 3 of the top 5 honors. But she had other factors arguing for the 2♦ opening. She was in first position so her bid will obstruct 2 opponents versus only 1 partner; almost all of her HCP's are in the diamond suit; and she held good intermediates (lots of 10's and 9's).

(2) South thought about a double of 2♦ but didn't really have the hand shape for it. His spades and clubs were a little short and he really wanted to be in hearts, so he overcalled. He was too weak to double and rebid hearts because that shows about 18 or more points. So he chose a simple overcall of 2♥.

(3) North's evaluation of her hand was discouraging. She held only 2 hearts and her ♦Q would probably be redundant since between her and East they held 10 diamonds, and partner may hold a singleton. Also, the ♦K was probably sitting over her ♦Q. Her partner's overcall could have been made on as little as 7 points. So with only 7 useful points herself, she passed and contented herself to a safe part score.

South made 2 overtricks! Why weren't they in game? The fault lies with South. His overcall should have been 3♥, not 2♥.

A 2♥ overcall shows a hand between 11 and 17 points. South's hand does contain 16 HCP's but the minimum overcall doesn't show his extras: The 6 card suit and the singleton.

The correct bid for South is 3♥. Isn't 3♥ over 2♦ a preemptive jump overcall? No way! 3♥ over 1♦ is preemptive, but a jump bid over a preemptive bid is strong. You can't preempt a preemptive bid. There's only enough room at the table for one preemptive bid. **A jump overcall of a preemptive bid is intermediate. It shows between 14 and 17 points and a good 6 card suit.** Anything stronger starts with a double and then a rebid of your long suit.

Had South made the more descriptive bid of 3♥, his partner would have raised to 4♥. Her two hearts are now enough for an 8 card fit and knowing partner had an intermediate level hand, she risked the game level, trying for the 300 point game bonus.

West led the top of his spade suit. South took the second spade with his A♣, pulled trump and then led another spade to set up dummy's ♣10. So he lost 2 spades and the ♣A.

Remember the jump overcall of the preemptive bid. It shows a hand between 14 and 17 points and a good 6 card suit.