

## BIDDING 7 - LEBENSOHL

When opponents interfere over our 1NT opening, this can cause problems with our bidding:

1NT (2S) 3H

Is the 3H bid forcing or competing?

1NT (2S) 3NT

Does responder have a spade stop for their 3NT bid?

Lebensohl helps solve these problems. The essence of Lebensohl is that a 2NT bid by responder asks the 1NT opener to bid 3C (This is called "puppeting to 3C"). Responder's next bid is now weaker than if it were bid immediately or shows a stop in the overcalled suit:

1NT (2S) 3H is forcing to game with 5+ hearts

1NT (2S) 2NT (P) 3C (P) 3H is weak/competing in hearts

1NT (2S) 3NT says responder doesn't have a stop in spades

1NT (2S) 2NT (P) 3C (P) 3NT says responder has a stop in spades

### So how does Lebensohl work in detail?

1. X is penalty (though you can play take out if you and partner prefer)
2. All 2 level bids are 5+ and to play/non-forcing:

1NT (2H) X is penalty

1NT (2H) 2S is weak and to play

### Major suit bids:

1. Immediate 3 level major suit bids are forcing to game
2. 3 level major suit bids going through the 2NT puppet are INVITE if you could bid the suit at the 2 level and weak/competitive if you couldn't:

1NT (2H) 3S = 5+ spades forcing to game

1NT (2H) 2NT (P) 3C (P) 3S = 5+ spades invite

1NT (2H) 2S = 5+ spades weak/competitive

1NT (2S) 3H = 5+ hearts forcing to game

1NT (2S) 2NT (P) 3C (P) 3H = 5+ hearts weak/competitive

### Minor suit bids:

1. Immediate 3 level minor suit bids are INVITE
2. 3 level minor suit bids going through the puppet are weak/competitive:

1NT (2S) 3C = invite with clubs

1NT (2S) 2NT (P) 3C (P) P = weak/competitive with clubs

### **3NT bids:**

1. An immediate 3NT denies a stop in the overcalled suit
2. A 3NT bid going through the 2NT puppet shows a stop in the overcalled suit:

1NT (2S) 3NT = We have enough for game, but I don't have a spade stop

1NT (2S) 2NT (P) 3C (P) 3NT = We have enough for game and I have a spade stop

### **Cuing the opponent's suit:**

1. An immediate cue of the opposition suit shows 4 of the other major and no stop
2. The cue of the opposition suit after the 2NT puppet shows 4 of the other major and a stop:

1NT (2S) 3S = 4 hearts, enough for game and no spade stop

1NT (2S) 2NT (P) 3C (P) 3S = 4 hearts, enough for game and a spade stop

### Lebensohl over weak 2s:

You face similar problems when partner doubles a weak 2:

(2S) X (P) 3C

Are you weak, inviting or forcing in clubs?

(2S) X (P) 3NT

Do you have a spade stop for NTs?

Simply apply the same Lebensohl principles, taking into account partner has only shown an opening hand and not 15-17:

(2S) X (P) 3H = 5+ hearts, forcing to game

(2S) X (P) 2NT (P) 3C (P) 3H = 5+ hearts, weak/competing

(2S) X (P) 3D = diamond invite

(2S) X (P) 2NT (P) 3C (P) 3D = weak/competitive in diamonds

(2S) X (P) 3S = 4 hearts, game going and no spade stop

(2S) X (P) 2NT (P) 3C (P) 3S = 4 hearts, game going and a spade stop

(2S) X (P) 3NT = enough for game but no spade stop

(2S) X (P) 2NT (P) 3C (P) 3NT = enough for game with a spade stop