

47. Omitting to make an Unassuming Cue Bid

When partner has overcalled, you should support to the level of the fit — even with a very poor hand. So what do you do with a good supporting hand?

You need a special device, and that is the unassuming cue bid (UCB). With three or more cards in partner's overcall and ten or more points, you bid the opener's suit at the lowest level.

Exercise: Left-hand opponent has opened 1♦, partner has overcalled 1♥ and right-hand opponent has bid 1♠. What now with these?

♠32	♠K4	♠A432
♥KJ97	♥Q32	♥K97
♦52	♦Q852	♦52
♣98742	♣A974	♣QJ74

With the first, jump to 3♥, the presumed (nine-card) level of the heart fit, a purely pre-emptive ploy. With the second and third, bid 2♦, the UCB.

What Happened

Declarer had eight top tricks in his 2♥ — five heart tricks and the three side aces. And that's all he made, winning the ♦Q lead with ♦A, drawing trumps, cashing the black aces and conceding. Perhaps it was well bid after all, given declarer's uninspiring performance.

What Should Have Happened

Reaching 4♥ via North's 2♦ UCB, you win West's ♦Q lead with ♦A and do not touch trumps. The key is to score two club ruffs in dummy to generate a total of seven heart tricks.

The order can vary but try this: cash ♠A, lead ♣4 to ♣A, ruff ♠3 with ♥5 then give up the second

Dealer: East, Vulnerability: Neither

		♠J8532									
		♥KQ3									
		♦852									
		♣A2									
♠Q10764	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠K9
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥86	♥742										
♦Q	♦KJ10643										
♣Q10873		♣KJ									
		♠A									
		♥AJ1095									
		♦A97									
		♣9654									

What Happened

S	W	N	E
			1♦
1♥	1♠	2♥(1)	end

(1) Mistake — the failure to bid a 2♦ UCB theoretically limits the hand to nine points.

Contract: 2♥, Opening Lead: ♦Q

What Should Have Happened

S	W	N	E
			1♦
1♥	1♠	2♦(1)	Pass
4♥(2)	end		

(1) Yes — bidding opener's suit, the UCB, showing three or more hearts and ten or more points.

(2) Facing a UCB, South is worth a pot at 4♥, loving her 5431 shape and good controls.

Contract: 4♥, Opening Lead: ♦Q

club, East winning ♣K.

East cashes ♦KJ and leads ♥2 (best). You win ♥9 and ruff ♣6 (with ♥Q). You ruff ♠5 and ruff ♣9 (with ♥K). With ♥AJ to come, that's ten tricks and game made. Only an unlikely opening trump lead would have scuppered you.

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