

BALANCING – BIDDING AFTER TWO CONSECUTIVE PASSES (IN LOW-LEVEL AUCTION)

- Don't let opps play at one-level (unless you have massive trump stack.)
- Almost always balance if they stop in part score at 2-level.
- A 2-level balancing overcall can be lighter than in direct seat – as few as 7-8 points.
- If your LHO opened the bidding, a balancing 1NT should show 11-14 (typically) and a stopper.
- Play “systems off” after a balancing 1NT..no transfers or Stayman. (NT bidder is not showing a strong hand.)
- If your LHO opened the bidding at the one-level, if you make a balancing double and then bid 1NT over partner's response, you are showing a standard 15-17 notrump with a stopper.
- Jump overcalls in the balancing seat are *not weak*...they show sound opening hands and a six-card suit.
- If your LHO opened the bidding at the one-level, your balancing bid of 2NT is NOT the unusual notrump. It should show 20-21 points and stopper(s). Partner can raise to game with some values.
- If *you* opened the bidding and your LHO overcalled, followed by 2 passes, tend to make a balancing double if short in opp's suit, even with as few as 9-10 points.(Your pard could have a trump stack and convert your balancing double to a penalty double.) Tend to pass with length in opp's suit and minimum values.
- If *you* opened the bidding and your LHO overcalled, followed by 2 passes, a bid of 1NT by you shows 18-19 balanced and stopper.