

# Opening Call<sup>1</sup> Out of Turn – What Now?

You're the dealer, thinking hard about a possible opening bid. You make your decision, then notice that there's already a call on the table. What do you do? **Call the director, of course!** (Except where noted, "you" and "your" always refers to the dealer.)

## Opening Call Out of Turn: Accepted

Remember, when there's an irregularity, the next person to act *usually* has the option to accept. If the opening call out of turn is accepted, the auction proceeds as normal and there is no penalty. You were the dealer, but you may not be the next person to act. A diagram will make the director's many considerations more clear.

- ♣ Offender was your LHO. Your partner is next to act and may accept the call.
- ♣ Offender was your RHO. You are next to act and may accept the call.
- ♣ Offender was your partner. Your RHO is next to act and may accept the call.

## Opening Call Out of Turn: Not Accepted

If the call is not accepted, it is cancelled and the auction reverts to you, the dealer. There will be a penalty, *but that penalty depends on the amount of information conveyed and the potential damage caused by the call out of turn.* There may also be lead penalties, if the offending side becomes the defending side.

- ♣ The opening call was a pass.

Although a pass does convey some information, that information is considered minimal, therefore the penalty is not too bad. The offender must pass at his next turn to call. If the offender was your partner, keep this penalty in mind when you make your bid.

- ♣ The opening call was a bid.

An opening bid conveys significant information about the hand's strength and distribution. All of that information is *unauthorized information* for the offenders! The amount of damage done to the auction depends upon the offender's position at the table. Take another look at the diagram while the various penalties are explained.

- Offender was your LHO. In a normal auction, his bid would have preceded his partner's, so the auction has not been greatly damaged. The corresponding penalties may not be as great. LHO's bid is cancelled and you now make your call.

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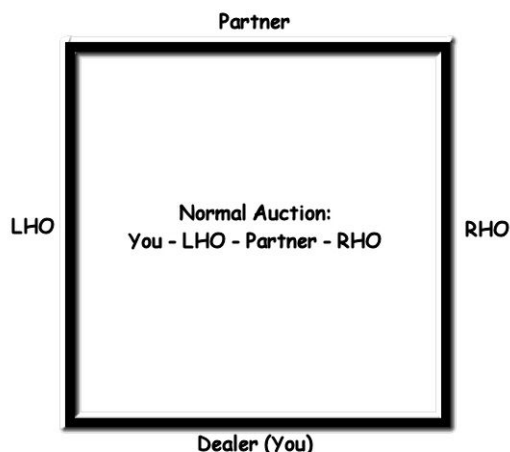
<sup>1</sup> All bids are calls. Pass, double and redouble are also calls, but are not bids.

- If you pass and LHO repeats his bid, there is no penalty.
- If you bid and LHO repeats the denomination of his bid out of turn, his partner *must pass one time - at his next turn to call.*
- If you bid and LHO *does not* repeat the denomination of his bid out of turn, **his partner must pass whenever it is his turn to call!** There may also be lead penalties.
- Offender was your RHO. In a normal auction, his bid would have come after his partner's. Now, his partner's action may be suspect. There is a major penalty. RHO's bid is cancelled. RHO may make any bid he chooses at his turn to call, **but his partner must pass throughout the auction!** There may also be lead penalties.
- Offender was your partner. In a normal auction, his bid would have come after yours. Now, your action may be suspect. There is a major penalty Your partner's bid is cancelled. He may make any bid he chooses at his turn to call, **but you must pass throughout the auction!** There may also be lead penalties.

### Should You Accept the Call Out of Turn?

The penalties for bids out of turn can be severe, and they put pressure on the offenders. It's seldom right to accept a bid out of turn, especially if your partner would have acted before you in the normal auction. My partner and I could think of only two instances in which we might accept the call out of turn. Perhaps you can think of more.

- ♣ Your RHO passed out of turn, and you have an opening hand. It may be right to accept the out of turn call and open the bidding. (Here, "you" refers to any of the players.)
- ♣ You are the dealer, but your RHO made an opening bid out of turn. You had just been thinking that you have the perfect overcall hand, but you don't have an opening bid. It may be right to accept the out of turn bid, then overcall your suit.



Keep in mind that unauthorized information or other problems may exist in these auctions, so the director may need to apply an adjusted score to restore equity.

Remember our theme. If there's an irregularity, ***call the director!***