

Cuebidding to Show Both Majors

When your opponent opens 1 of a minor (1 ♣ or 1 ♦), your cuebid of that suit is artificial, and promises at 5/5 or 6/5 or 6/6 in both majors. The bid is 100% forcing, because we're not planning to play in the opponent's minor suit.

Like the Unusual 2 NT, this cuebidder's hand can be one or the other of these:

- (1) It's **weaker** than an opening hand. Non-vulnerable this could be as few as 5 points! It's a hand that wants to get in the way, showing its special distribution, while making it more difficult for the opponents to find their fit. If vulnerable, though, the hand should be 7-11 points. When vulnerable, the suit quality is more important, too. OR,
- (2) it's **very strong** - 16+ - with a hand interested in game if partner has a little help. SO,
- (3) with values equal to "**just an opening hand**," 12-15 points, just overcall the higher-ranking suit and then rebid the lower-ranking one.

Examples of the cuebid overcall of a minor:

- (1) ♠ AJ876 ♥ QJ987 ♦ 75 ♣ 6 ← This is the weak hand example.
- (2) ♠ AKQT87 ♥ AQJT9 ♦ 8 ♣ 9 ← This is the strong hand example.
- (3) ♠ KQJ87 ♥ KQJT9 ♦ 73 ♣ 5 ← This is the "just an opening hand" example, where overcaller bids the ♠s first and then plans to rebid the ♥s.

And like the Unusual 2 NT, the advancer doesn't know which of these hands partner has. So, if there is not a terrific fit, advancer bids at the cheapest level, and waits to see if partner takes further action. If we have a great fit, (with combined pieces of at least 10), we're going to jump to game. Even if partner isn't the very strong hand, this will work nicely. We'll either have a shot at making our contract, or we will have preempted the opponents and they will not be able to find their best contract. Either way, we're happy.

NOTE: this cuebid lesson is half of the Michael's Cuebid convention. We will learn the rest of it at a later date.

Board 2
 East Deals
 None Vul

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

♠ K Q 9 8 7 6	♠ A
♥ 10 9 8 7 6	♥ Q 4 3 2
♦ 9	♦ A 10 4 3 2
♣ A	♣ K J 9

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
3 ♦	4 ♠	1 ♦	2 ♦
Pass		Pass	Pass

Auction Commentary: The cuebid of the minor shows 10 or 11 cards in the majors 5/5 or 6/5. The point count is either weak or strong. A medium hand with values of 12-15 HCP we bid naturally. The advancer of the partner who used Michaels must look at the DOUBLE FIT. Do not look at points. When you fit in both suits bid a game as the cards are now in the right place to be working for you.

Opening Lead: A ♦ (as partner showed support with usually 5 ♦ .)

Planning the Play: In a suit contract, we count losers: 1 ♠ loser, 1 ♥ loser, and 1 ♦ loser. E/W can make 5 ♦ , losing 1 ♥ and 1 ♣.

While points are used as a guideline, distribution is what counts. When you have a known double fit, upgrade your hand!

Board 5
 North Deals
 N-S Vul

	♠ K		
	♥ K J 2		
	♦ A Q J 10 9		
	♣ A 10 3 2		
♠ Q 10 7 5 3 2	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A J 8 6 4	
♥ 7		♥ A 10 9 8 6 3	
♦ K 8		♦ —	
♣ Q 9 6 5		♣ J 7	
	♠ 9		
	♥ Q 5 4		
	♦ 7 6 5 4 3 2		
	♣ K 8 4		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♦	2 ♦	3 ♦
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Auction Commentary: The cuebid of the minor shows 10 or 11 cards in the majors 5/5 or better. The point count is either weak or strong, and with a medium hand (12-15 HCP) we overcall naturally. Responder bids 3 ♦ preemptively, hoping to cut off West's reply. But with that massive ♠ fit, West bids game. (And N/S do not sacrifice at the 5-level when nobody is vulnerable. Going down 500 could be a disaster if all they can make is 420.)

Opening Lead: A♣ (as partner showed support, usually with 5 ♦s in their hand)

Planning the Play: We do NOT lead a ♦, as one opponent or the other is often void in an auction such as this. Leading the A♣ looks like the best choice. While we don't usually lead "Aces from spaces," West has promised at least 5/5 in the majors, and we know that we need to take our tricks in distributional hands before they find a way to disappear!

Of course, on defense, South will play an encouraging 8♣ on partner's A♣, so they are going to take 2 ♣ tricks right off the bat.

(Incidentally, on a ♦ lead they make 12 tricks, able to discard a ♣ loser on the K♦.)

The "master hand" is West, with long trumps. Play the Ace♠ and hope they drop 1/1. Do not trump ♥s unless that is the only way to your hand. You will need to trump 2 ♦s and a ♣, making 11 tricks.

Points are irrelevant when we have freak distribution. Shape, glorious shape!!

Board 8

West Deals
None Vul

		♠ Q J 7 5 4 3	
		♥ K Q 9 6 5	
		♦ 9	
		♣ A	
♠ A 2			♠ K 10 8 6
♥ A 10			♥ 4 3
♦ Q 7 6 5			♦ J 8 4 3 2
♣ Q J 8 7 5			♣ 3 2
		♠ 9	
		♥ J 8 7 2	
		♦ A K 10	
		♣ K 10 9 6 4	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♣	2 ♣	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	All pass	

Auction Commentary: After partner showed the majors, advancer has a fit and too many points to just bid 2 ♥. With a known 9-card fit, South must jump and invite to game. North's cuebid came from a hand that has only 4 losers (once finding a fit). So North tries game, accepting partner's invitation.

Opening Lead: Q♣ (promising at least the J♣ against a suit contract)

Planning the Play: Counting losers from the position of the master hand, (the North hand with more pieces in trump), there 1 ♥ loser, and 1 ♠ loser. How to actually play the hand? Win the A♣, and play trumps, K♥ first and finishing in your hand. Finesse the ♠ suit, playing toward the card you want to take the trick (the QJ♠). You will play for the ♠ honors to split, 1 in each defender's hand, and you have set up a ♠ honor for a minor suit pitch from your hand. You will lose 1 ♠ + 1 ♥ making eleven tricks. Not on points but on shape!