

MULTI-LANDY

*THE KILLER DEFENSE
VERSUS ONE NOTRUMP*

David Oakley

EXPANDED SECOND EDITION

An Honors eBook from Master Point Press

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Street-Legal Preface

This second edition incorporates new material, *Part 5: Comparison with Other Conventions*, which was developed since the original version published in 2016.

Prior to the first edition, a significant announcement appeared on page 62 of the July 2015 ACBL Bulletin. Two conventions were added to the ACBL General Convention Chart (GCC). The second was transfer response to an opening bid, when there has been an overcall. But the first was to allow a 2♦ overcall of the opponents' 1NT bid, to show one undefined major. Suddenly, this book gained more relevance and a wider audience for Multi-Landy. Instead of Multi-Landy being playable just on the West Coast, a few other ACBL Districts, and some local club games, it was now *Street Legal*.

Acknowledgements are due to several fellow bridge players: Roger Donato (UK), who proof-read the entire first edition; John Strauch and Bill Grant for their pertinent suggestions about the structure of this book and reviews of several chapters; Pauline Oakley who proof-read Part 5; David Hunt and Fred Parker for their useful comments and suggestions.

Introduction

How can you compete against a strong notrump? What is important? When the opponents bid one notrump, they usually show a balanced 15-17 HCP hand and have more than half the HCP. It is unlikely that you can compete without a shape hand. Furthermore, if the opponents have a major suit fit, they will simply out-bid you and your partner. So it is most important to be able to

overall with all major-suit combinations, particularly, if you hold five or six card suits.

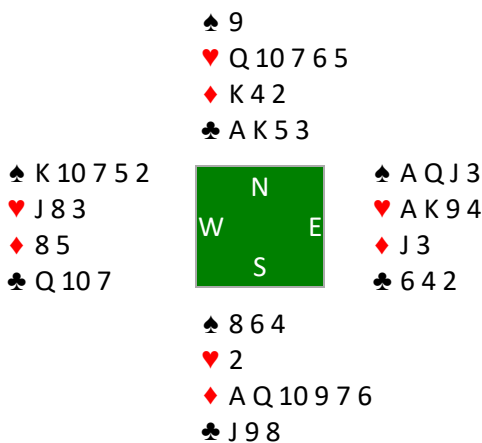
When the opponents open a weak notrump (11-14 HCP), it is important to compete with good hands, since game is more likely. Again, opponents with majors may dominate an auction. However, if you have one or both majors, it is important to compete, not allowing the opponents to steal a notrump or a minor suit contract.

If you have the right hand and the right partnership agreements, you can effectively compete against weak or strong one notrump bids *using the same convention*. Only the strategy must be changed. Versus strong notrumps you compete with shape. Versus weak notrumps (10-12 or 12-14 HCP) you compete with strength to avoid the opponents stealing the contract. Don't allow the opponents to shut you out! Disrupt their auction, steal their contract or find your best contract.

Anecdotal Evidence

In a club game, East opens one notrump. You are West. Right-hand opponent doubles, alerted by left hand opponent. You regret asking for the explanation, "Shows one of three types of hand. It is either a six card or longer minor or a five card minor and a four card major or a strong hand." Deciding to ignore this nonsense, you bid 2♥, a transfer to spades. Next, left-hand opponent doubles, alerted and explained as, "Support for anything" 'What on earth are these people doing?' you think. Partner bids 3♠. Right-hand-opponent bids 4♦. With minimum values you pass, as do North and East.

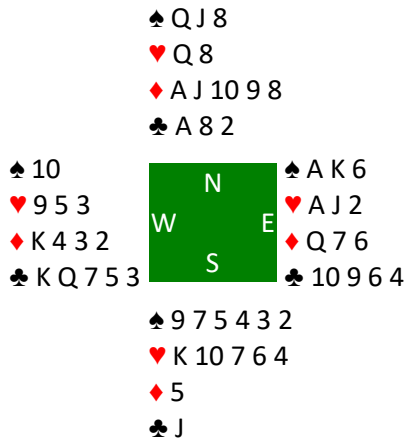
This is the deal. You cannot stop declarer from making 5♦.



West	North	East	South
		1 NT	Dbl
2 ♥	Dbl	3 ♠	4 ♦
All pass			

At the end of the session, the recap sheet indicates you missed first place by 6 matchpoints. But for the bottom on the above deal, you would have won East-West. Later over a beer at the local bar, you are discussing hands, trying to get some sympathy. “Oh yes, they were playing Multi-Landy”, comments the old man, known as Spider. “Let me email you some notes”, he says. Actually this works out rather well. You read the notes and play a couple of games with Spider at the local club.

A few months later, you have got the hang of Multi-Landy and so does your partner. With some well seasoned team-mates and an average of a few thousand points on your team, you are playing in a flight A/X team event. The professional on your right has 35,000 masterpoints. You cannot hope to match his card play, but maybe you can preempt him into making the wrong guess. Fortuitously he opens 1NT. It is your moment.



West	North	East	South
		1 NT	2 ♣
3 ♣	4 ♠	5 ♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All pass	

Your 2♣ showed the majors. Your crazy partner bids 4♠ (!) then doubles 5♣, indicating power. You end up +300 to gain 5 IMPs on the board, as your East-West pair make 2NT. You win the match by 7 IMPs, which is good enough to win flight X and tie for 3rd place overall with the pro and his clients.

After the event, you are back in the beer bar with Spider, who won flight A. Smiling you say, “Let me buy you a Heineken. I have a deal to tell you about”.

The Statistics

Versus strong (15-17 HCP) notrumps, simulations showed that overcaller could successfully compete about 30% of the time. Success means a game (6%), a partscore (17%) or a partscore sacrifice (4%). Incidence of overcaller’s successful hand types are roughly:

- A 6-card or longer suit, 10%
- Nine cards or more in the two suits, 7%
- Shortness, a singleton or void, 3%
- A magic fit, 3%
- Responder is weak. 4%
- Strong. 2%

The best hands to overcall (17%) have either a long suit or two-suits. A magic fit is an 8-card or better fit in a suit, non-biddable with most common conventions. Typically it is a 4-4 fit. Responder being weak refers to the partner of the notrump bidder, implying that in the balancing seat you should compete aggressively with shape.

Playing against weak (11-14 HCP) notrumps, the urge to compete should be stronger, with success likely on 49% of deals. Game is likely about 10% of the time and a partscore is likely a whopping 32%. Incidences of overcaller’s successful hand types are roughly:

- Strong, 18%

- Nine cards or more in the two suits, 15%
- A 6-card or longer suit, 10%
- Responder is weak, 3%
- A magic fit, 2%
- Shortness, a singleton or void, 1%

The statistics have totally changed. Now, strength is most important and 2-suited hands are more dominant.

Many players use different conventions versus strong and weak notrumps. DONT is frequently used versus strong notrumps, while Cappelletti (Hamilton) is used against weak notrumps. An advantage of Multi-Landy is that the same convention can be used against all notrumps. Just the strategy needs to be changed.

Historical Timeline

Evolution of the Multi-Landy convention is murky, but most likely attributable to Dutch bridge players and documented by the Dutch player, Maarten Schollaardt in the *Bridge Magazine IMP*. The Landy convention was developed by Alvin Landy in the United States, probably in the 1950's, after the adoption of Stayman by many bridge players.

In the early 1960's the Multi 2♦ was developed in Northern Ireland by John Grummit, who passed on the concept to Terence Reese in England. Reese publicized the idea in the 1970's. Muiderberg two-bids (5-card major plus 4-card or longer minor) were created by the Dutch players Onno Janssens and Willem Boegem, probably in the 1970's.

In 1972, the California player, Fred Hamilton independently came up with a Muiderberg-like structure for overcalling one notrump. Around 1986 on the East Coast, Mike Cappelletti publicized his eponymous structure.

The Landy 2♣ overcall occupied just one bid and a 2NT overcall showed minors, so three other 2-level bids were available. Most likely in the 1980's, the Dutch players combined Landy with Mutli and Muiderberg 2-bids to create Multi-Landy.

In the 1980's the Dutch version of Multi-Landy was augmented by the American player Kit Woolsey, who added the Woolsey double, a convention he had played for many years. Steve Robinson documented this version of the convention, devoting 14 pages to Multi-Landy in *Washington Standard*, published in 1996. Robinson's book popularized Multi-Landy, which became known as Woolsey in the United States.

Mark Horton and Jan Van Cleef allocate a 21 page chapter to Multi-Landy in *The Mysterious Multi*, published in 2010. Most of this guesstimated timeline is derived from their book and a smattering of information on the Internet.

Until 2015, the adoption of Multi-Landy in the United States was hindered by the ACBL. Since the ACBL frowned on the Multi 2♦ convention, both conventions were banned at many major Regional and National tournaments. On the West Coast of the United States, many Districts allowed Mulit-Landy, except notably Los Angeles, which barred the usage at Regionals.

Structure of the Book

This book is divided into four parts:

Part 1. Convention Overview. The four components of Multi-Landy: Cappelletti, Landy, Multi and the Woolsey double are described. This is an introduction to overcaller's strategy versus strong and weak notrumps and advancer's responses in non-competitive auctions.

Part 2. Actions versus Strong Notrumps. Here are statistics and more details of how Multi-Landy is used to disrupt the opponents' auctions. In the examples, all four hands are shown, illustrating the impact of the opponents' bidding.

Part 3. Actions versus Weak Notrumps. A change in strategy is necessary. Details of constructive bidding are described along with the more favorable statistics of each Mutli-Landy component.

Part 4. Defending against Multi-Landy. As responder to a one notrump opening bid, how should you defend against Multi-Landy? Lebensohl is basic to any defensive system and here are some additional ideas.

Part 5. Comparison with Other Conventions. An examination of the advantages and disadvantages of alternate conventions such as DONT, Cappelletti, Meckwell and others from the standpoint of overcaller holding a single suit, both majors, a strong hand, a major-minor two-suiter or the minors.

Glossary

Commonly accepted bridge language is used throughout this book. Defined below are the words used to describe the players, bridge calls and abbreviations.

Advancer. Overcaller's partner.

Anchor Suit. The known suit of two suits, when a 2-suited overcall is made. For example using DONT, the lower suit is bid, showing that (anchor) suit and a higher ranking suit.

Bid. A call showing spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs or notrumps in any denomination from 1–7 constitutes a bid; e.g. 1♠, 2♥, 4♦ or 7NT.

Call. A pass, double, redouble or a bid.

Cover card. An ace, king or queen that covers one of partner's losers, based on LTC.

DONT. Disturb Opponents NoTrump is a convention used over INT, where double shows a long suit and a suit bid shows the lower of two suits. See . Alternate Conventions DONT, page 278.

Halmic. An alternative name for the Helvic Wriggle.

Helvic Wriggle. A DONT-like escape sequence after 1NT is doubled.

Landy. A 2♣ overcall of one notrump, showing both majors.

Lebensohl. One version of this convention is used over interference by RHO, after partner opens one notrump. Two

notrump puppets to 3♣, allowing invitational, non-forcing, forcing, stop showing and stop denying sequences to be created for a number of situations. The 2NT invitational bid is lost.

Loser. In each suit there are zero to three losers, after accounting for the winners: ace, king, queen or void. Thus Axxx is two losers, KQx is one loser and AQxx is one loser. Queens are often counted as half losers. In the New Losing Trick Count (NLTC), a missing ace may be counted as 1 ½ losers. Thus KQx becomes 1 ½ losers.

Losing Trick Count (LTC). When there is a fit in a trump suit, counting the number losers in a hand by summing the losers in each suit. A typical opening hand has 7-losers. For the classic detailed write-up, see *The Modern Losing Trick Count* by Ron Klinger. For an excellent overview, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Losing-Trick_Count.

Muiderberg two-bid. A weak two-bid showing 5-card major and a 4-card or longer minor. Dutch twos were created by the Dutch players Onno Janssens and Willem Boegem, who lived in the village of Muiderberg, just east of Amsterdam. Developed in the mid 1970's the Muiderberg structure, is similar to Cappelletti.

Multi. An opening bid of 2♦ nominally showing a 6-card major and 5-11 HCP; along with some other types of hand. Versus 1NT, a Multi 2♦ overcall shows a 6-card or longer major with less than about 16 HCP.

Multi-Landy. After a one notrump opener, Multi, Landy and Cappelletti overcalls are combined with the Woolsey Double.

Opener. The player who opens the bidding.

Overcaller. The player who takes action against an opening bid or a bid by responder.

Responder. The player who is the opening bidder's partner.

RHO. Right hand opponent.

Woolsey. An alternative name for Multi-Landy based on a description of the convention by the American player, Kit Woolsey.

Part 1: Convention Overview

In a nutshell, here are what the four Multi-Landy overcalls show:

1. **Double.** One of three types of hand:
 - a. 6-card minor.
 - b. 5-card minor with a 4-card major.
 - c. Strong hand.
2. **2♣.** Both majors.
3. **2♦.** A 6-card or longer major.
4. **2♥ or 2♠.** A 5-card major and a 4-card or longer minor.

Most important is that compared with other conventions, suit lengths are well defined. Any 6-card suit can be shown. With a major minor two suiter, a 5-card major and a 4-card minor can be shown in a different way from a 5-card minor and a 4-card major. 2NT showing both minors is standard bridge and not covered here.

Criteria for an Overcall

Multi-Landy is used in the direct and balancing seats with the same meaning, but there are adjustments for notrump strength:

- **Strong notrumps.** Overcalls can be made with relatively weak hands, but suit length and shortness in one suit is important. A successful partscore is the main objective.
- **Weak notrumps.** Direct overcalls tend to be made with close to opening hand values, while balancing overcalls can be shaded in strength. Game is likely if your side has a fit.

In deciding whether to overcall, suit quality and vulnerability are key considerations:

- **Vulnerability.** A non-vulnerable overcall should have a reasonable chance of success, since the opponents' 1NT may be defeated or they may be heading for an unsuccessful contract. Vulnerable overcalls should be made with good suit quality and preferably include the surprise of a singleton or void. A good guideline is no more than eight losers, non-vulnerable; and seven losers, vulnerable.
- **Suit quality.** In the direct seat it is best to have top honors (aces and kings) sitting over the notrump strength. In the balancing seat, lesser hands with queens and jacks are acceptable, gambling that partner has passed with a balanced hand holding some top honors. In either seat, it is best to compete with hands where your honors are concentrated in your suit or suits; at least two controls in the direct seat.

Can you get into serious trouble by using Multi-Landy to bid aggressively? There are two outcomes to consider:

- The *chance of failure*, controlled by overcaller having sufficient shape and values.
- The *chance of success*, primarily controlled by responder's hand, either shape or HCPs; and supported by advancer's defined set of responses.

The structure of Multi-Landy protects overcaller from making bad decisions (*failure*). Chance of a disaster is less than 5% versus either strong or weak notrumps, although the risks are different:

- 15-17 HCP notrump: A 2 trick set or worse versus a partscore.
- 11-14 HCP notrump: One notrump can be defeated but overcaller cannot make a partscore.

Except for the double with a strong hand every Multi-Landy overcall includes at least 9-cards in two suits, simplifying the play of the hand and discouraging the opponents from doubling.

Note that 4441 distributions are omitted. Even with at least 11 HCP, the chance of failure rises significantly. Additionally, there are complications finding the best fit when overcaller has two four card minors. See *4441 Distribution*, page 101.

Advancer's defined set of responses supports getting to the right contract (*success*), in either uncontested or competitive auctions. Key components of advancer's responses are:

- 2NT to ask about overcaller's strength and suit length.
- 2♦ to ask for overcaller's longest major after a Landy 2♣ bid.
- Double and redouble in competition to show support.
- Pre-emptive suit jumps.

Versus Strong Notrumps

Versus 15-17 HCP notrumps, the chance of a disaster is often alleviated by the opponents striving to get to their own partscore or game, as illustrated by this deal.

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

An aggressive 2♠ overcall by South can be held to 5 tricks; -500 non-vulnerable or -800 vulnerable, if doubled by East- West. Far more likely the auction will proceed:

West	North	East	South
		1NT	2♠
3♥(1)	Pass)	3NT	

(1) West might bid 3♦, transfer Lebensohl.

Quiz

- 1) ♠ 8 6 4 ♥ 2 ♦ A Q 10 9 7 6 ♣ J 9 8
- 2) ♠ A Q 8 7 5 4 ♥ 8 ♦ Q 9 ♣ Q J 8 2
- 3) ♠ Q 9 5 3 2 ♥ K 8 7 4 3 2 ♦ Q ♣ 5
- 4) ♠ 10 ♥ A J 9 3 2 ♦ 10 7 5 ♣ A J 10 3
- 5) ♠ 10 9 7 4 2 ♥ 10 7 ♦ A K 7 3 ♣ Q 4
- 6) ♠ 9 4 ♥ A J 5 4 ♦ K 6 5 ♣ A K 10 3

Answers

- 1) 8 losers, 2 controls, 7 HCP: Woolsey double. *Anecdotal Evidence*, page 2
- 2) 5 ½ losers, 2 controls, 11 HCP: a Multi 2♦ overcall at any vulnerability. *Moderate with 4-card Sidesuit: Partscore by Advancer*, page 134.
- 3) 6 ½ losers, 1 control, 7 HCP: 2♣, Landy for the majors. *Preemptive Raise to Game*, page 124.
- 4) 8 losers, 4 controls, 10 HCP: Could be passed but non-vulnerable, the singleton spade swings the balance in favor of a Hamilton 2♥ bid. *Advancer's New Suit: Length and to Play*, page 145.
- 5) 7 ½ losers, 3 controls, 9 HCP: 2♠, showing five spades and a minor. *Advancer Passes with a minimum*, page 142.
- 6) 7 losers, 4 controls, 15 HCP: Pass because you have no good rebid if partner bids 2♣. See discussion under *Part 5: Comparison with Other Conventions, Guessing the right 4-card suit*, page 244]

When the opponents open one notrump, you are faced with a dilemma. Versus a strong notrump, the opponents have the power; versus a weak notrump, they force you or your partner to compete at the two-level. This second edition adds Part 5: Comparison with Other Conventions and a new section, Criteria for an Overcall.

Multi-Landy comprises four components:

- **Multi.** 2♦ shows a 6-card or longer major.
- **Landy.** 2♣ shows both majors.
- **Cappelletti.** 2♥ or 2♠ shows a 5-card major and a 4-card minor.
- **Woolsey Double.** Shows either a 6-card minor or a 5-card minor with a 4-card major or a strong hand.

Key advantages are:

- Can be used against all opening one notrump HCP ranges.
- All hand types can be shown: a long major, majors, major-minor 2-suiters with defined length, a long minor and strong hands.
- Advancer has a defined set of responses.

The tactics in this book evolved from analysis of thousands of computer-generated deals to determine the statistics of successful overcalls. Using these recommendations, you can effectively compete for part-scores, bid your games and occasionally slams.



DAVID OAKLEY is a retired electronics engineer, who learned to play bridge as a teenager in England. He and his wife, Pauline, immigrated to the USA in 1966, eventually settling in Southern California. He has played Multi-Landy with several partners since 1998.

