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Lebensohl after intervention over our 1NT

This Topic provides you with hands where the opponents intervene with a bid of two in a major over our 1NT opening. Responder may have several types of hands with which he wants to bid: weak hands with long suits or any stronger hands: limit or better.

Since you don't have your regular Stayman and Transfers available due to the restricted bidding space, people resort to other conventions to still be able to get to the right strain.

Of these conventions, Lebensohl and Rubensohl are the most popular ones. A popular mixture of these two, called Transfer Lebensohl, is a little more complex and is used by a lot of experts.

Below we will describe Lebensohl. Rubensohl and Transfer Lebensohl will be published in the Topic sheet in the expert section of www.bid72.com/topics.

General Lebensohl rules

- a bid on the two-level is natural and to play
- a bid on the three-level is natural and forcing to game
- a direct cuebid, a bid in the overcalled suit, is Stayman with a stopper in the overcalled suit
- 2NT forces to 3♣ after which
 - Pass = to play 3♣
 - A bid below the suit overcalled is natural and to play
 - A bid above the suit overcalled is natural and invitational
 - A cuebid is Stayman without a stopper in the overcalled suit

Here an example of how this set of agreements works out for a 2♥ overcall.

You	They	Partner	
1NT	2♥	dbl	take-out (usually fourcard ♠)
		2♠	natural, to play
		2NT	Lebensohl, a puppet to 3♣
		3♣	natural and forcing to game
		3♦	natural and forcing to game
		3♥	asking for 4♠ and showing a ♥ stopper
		3♠	natural and forcing to game
		3NT	to play

You	They	Partner	You	Partner	
1NT	2♥	2NT	3♣	pass	to play
			3♦		to play
			3♥		asking for 4♠ and denying a ♥ stopper
			3♠		natural and invitational
			3NT		natural, to play, denying a ♥ stopper

Alternatively, you can switch the way you deal with stoppers in opponents' suit. If you do that, the meaning of 3NT and the cuebid, directly or via 2NT, switches.

The reason for the initial choice is that it feels most natural to have a direct 3NT bid just mean: "I want to play 3NT", but each person can tweak the agreement to fit his/her own logic.

The same principles apply if the opponents overcall 2♣ or 2♦, but when their bid is conventional you have to take that into account when defining the meaning of your own bids.

It is not possible to list every possible conventional approach opponents might use, but here is an example how you can deal with the popular overcall of 2♣ Landy, showing both majors.

You	They	Partner	
1NT	2♣	dbl	values, invitational or better
		2♦	natural, to play
		2♥	natural, to play
		2♠	natural, to play
		2NT	Lebensohl, a puppet to 3♣
		3♣	natural and forcing to game
		3♦	natural and forcing to game
		3♥	natural and forcing to game
		3♠	natural and forcing to game
		3NT	to play

You	They	Partner	You	Partner	
1NT	2♣	2NT	3♣	pass	to play
				3♦	natural and invitational
				3♥	natural and invitational
				3♠	natural and invitational
				3NT	natural, to play, denying stoppers in both majors

Notice that, since the opponents only show a four-card suit in each major, this system still enables you to play in one of the major suits. If you want to play 3NT but you are lacking one of the stoppers, you start by doubling 2♣, showing values. After that you can use a cuebid in one of their suits to ask for a stopper.