



Jack Spear - 2007

EXTENDED MICHAELS OVER MINOR OPENINGS

by Jack Spear. Overland Park, Kansas City, Missouri, United States

Michaels Cuebids over a minor opening show both majors. But the important need to show spades and the other minor at low levels is not addressed. This is covered by Extended Michaels Cuebids over minors, showing spades and another suit (excluding the minor suit opened by the opponents).

Japan defeated the USA in the 2008 World Championship Senior Teams by two IMPs, including a 9-IMP USA loss when USA held this hand: Jxxxx - Qxx -NONE - AKJTx. Japan opened 1♦ in front of this hand, and an Extended Michaels Cuebid would have brought the club suit into play, without guessing to disregard the weak spade suit.

Japan would then have been unable to declare a successful notrump partial, with partner holding: A - 109xxx - 10xxx - Qxx. One spade ruff against a 3-diamond partial would have sent the match into overtime. [See January 2009 ACBL Bulletin.]

Pass-or-Correct continuations over Extended Michaels Cuebids are simple and effective for locating the second suit at a low level:

(1♣)-2♣-(P)-2♦ = Pass or correct to 2 Hearts.
(1♣)-2♣-(P)-2♥ = Pass or correct to 2 Spades.

Similar Pass-or-Correct auctions also apply at the 3 and 4-level, or after (1♦)-2♦-(P).

Preemptive action can be taken when there is a known fit. These bids show tricks but not many high-card-points:

(1♣)-2♣-(P)-3♦ = Pass or correct to 3 Hearts.
(1♣)-2♣-(P)-3♥ = Pass or correct to 3 Spades.
(1♣)-2♣-(P)-3♠ = Preemptive [Bid 2N with spade game try.]

(1♣)-2♣-(P)-2N asks for the second suit, and is at least mildly constructive.
[This includes (1♣)-2♣-(P)-2N-(P)-3♦-(P)-3♠ defined as a game try in spades.]

3N is for play, even if the bidding is at the 3-level [e.g. (2♦)-3♦-(P)-3N.]

The responses above are simple and playable, but bidding strategies should be discussed in the use of these cuebids. One strategy in the use of basic Michaels Cuebids is to use them for either weak or strong hands, but not use them for intermediate hands. If this is the strategy favored by a partnership in the present use of Michaels, then that strategy might well be employed for Extended Michaels Cuebids.

However, passing on intermediate hands does reduce opportunities to compete for partscores or preempt the opponents. An alternative strategy is to bid more often, passing only the weaker hands to conceal the distribution from the opponents. Extended Michaels Cuebids are twice as frequent as basic Michaels Cuebids, and more bidding is more fun!