



## Ask Jerry

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Dear Jerry,

**My partner and I play that a cuebid by advancer shows support and at least enough values to invite game, while a jump raise is preemptive. One of our problems came in the following auction:**

<i>LHO</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>RHO</i>	<i>Me</i>
1♥	1♠	Pass	2♥
Dbl	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

**I thought partner was showing extra values by bidding when he didn't have to. With my four trumps and 11 high-card points, I raised to game and we were quickly down two. Partner had only 7 HCP. Who bid too much?**

**Bitter Bidder**

Hi, Bitter,

Obviously somebody! Perhaps both of you. By the way, I am impressed that you knew that advancer is the partner of the person who has made an overcall or takeout double, as opposed to responder, who is the partner of the opening bidder.

This is another area of bidding that requires partnership agreement. As a general concept, I believe in something called the principle of fast arrival. Loosely defined, this means that the faster the partnership reaches the minimum level it must reach, the less interest they show in going higher. After your cuebid, could your side ever play less than 2♠?

Based on fast arrival, the overcaller's options should be:

1. 2♠. A return to the trump suit is the weakest possible action.
2. Pass. This shows some game interest opposite more than a minimum limit raise, giving advancer room to further describe his hand.
3. 3♠. A general strength try for game, essentially giving advancer the option to make the last mistake.
4. 3♣/3♦. A help suit game try. It asks advancer to bid aggressively with honor strength in the new suit.
5. 4♠. Game try! The overcaller plans to try and make game opposite any form of an invitation.

One of the many benefits of your partnership agreement regarding cuebids is the ability to express values while keeping the auction at the lowest level possible. For years, using standard practice, with your 11 points and four trumps, you would have jumped to 3♠ invitationally, and in this case, gone down one. Having expressed your invitational values, you should have respected partner's rejection of the invitation by passing. For a raise to game, your hand should have been so strong that no matter how bad partner's overcall actually was, you thought you had it covered. Even a raise to 3♠ in this sequence should show an opening bid with excellent trump support, giving the overcaller the option to reevaluate just how minimum his minimum values actually were. ■