

MULTI-LANDY

*THE KILLER DEFENSE
VERSUS ONE NOTRUMP*

David Oakley



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Street-Legal Preface

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*.

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 overcall 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.

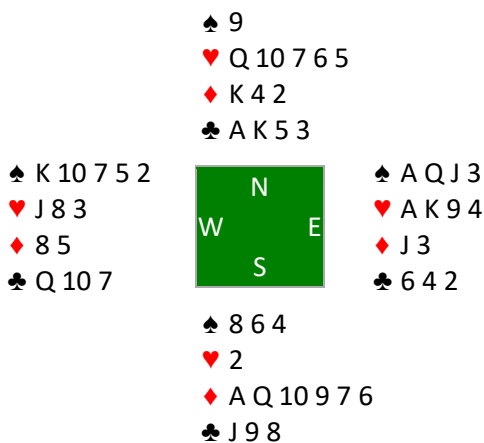
If you have the right hand and the right partnership agreements, you can effectively compete against weak or strong one notrump

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.

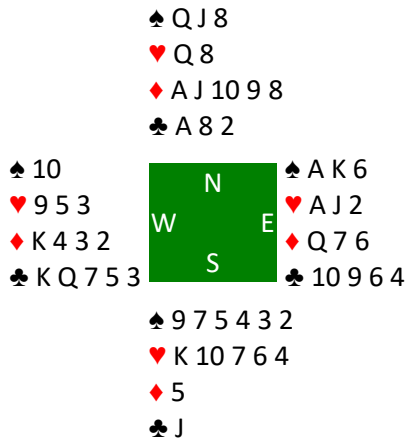
This is the deal. You cannot stop declarer from making 5♦.



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.

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 Multi 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 Multi-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.

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.

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.

Halmic. An alternative name for the Helvic Wriggle.

Helvic Wriggle. A DONT-like escape sequence after 1NT is doubled. Redouble shows a long suit and opener is expected to redouble after a pass by responder. See the Overcaller Doubles chapter in Part 4: Defending against Multi-Landy.

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.

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 Cappalletti overcalls are combined with the Woolsey Double. Aka Woolsey.

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.

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 major.
4. **2♥ or 2♠.** A 5-card major and a 4-card 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.

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. In addition to partscores, 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.
- **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.

Learning Multi-Landy

How should you go about learning Multi-Landy? Multi-Landy suit overcalls are actually a combination of three conventions:

- **Cappelletti (aka Hamilton).** A 5-card major and a 4-card minor.
- **Landy.** Shows the majors.
- **Multi 2♦.** Shows a 6-card major.

This structure leaves the **Woolsey Double** to take care of everything else.

Most likely you are familiar with Cappelletti, also known as Hamilton, on the West Coast of the United States. So starting with the 2♥ or 2♠ overcalls is recommended. If you are unfamiliar with Cappelletti, you should consider starting with Landy, as it is more likely that you will play in a major suit contract over a 1NT opening

bid. A Landy a 2♣ bid shows both majors, leaving all other calls as natural, showing a known suit.

Since each of the three sub-conventions can be learned separately, the strategy for overcalling first strong notrumps and then second weak notrumps is included under the Landy, Cappelletti and Multi subheadings.

Cappelletti 2♥ and 2♠ Overcalls

A 2♥ or 2♠ overcall shows a 5-card major and a 4-card or longer minor, like the Cappelletti convention. Advancer's response structure is:

1. **Pass** showing minimum values and tolerance for the major.
2. **Preemptive raise** of partner's major.
3. **New suit** showing length but non-forcing.
4. **2NT** to show either:
 - a. An escape to overcaller's four-card minor, or
 - b. A Limit raise.
5. **Raise to game** with either:
 - a. Shape, or
 - b. Strong with trump support.

When using Cappelletti, it is important to keep the major-suit length at five. If you have a 6-card major, a Multi 2♦ call is better because partner can evaluate your hand by using a 2NT asking bid. With a 7-card or longer suit a 3-level bid is often more descriptive and disruptive.

In competition, the above structure is retained with some extra bids now available:

1. **Double**. Shows values and is penalty oriented.
2. **Redouble**. Shows values and implies no fit.

Cappelletti Examples versus Strong Notrumps

1. Advancer Passes with a minimum

♠ 9 7 5 3

♥ J 8 7

♦ A 5 3

♣ A 3 2



♠ 10 4

♥ A Q 6 4 2

♦ Q 9 8 7 6

♣ 4

West

North

East

South

1 NT

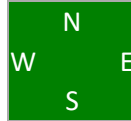
2 ♥

All pass

Game is unlikely without shape, so with a 9-loser hand North simply passes the 2♥ overcall. With 6-losers, South can overcall at any vulnerability, despite only having 8 HCP.

2. Advancer Invites game.

♠ A 3
 ♥ 9 8 6 4 3
 ♦ Q J 10 5 3
 ♣ K



♠ Q 8 7
 ♥ K Q 7 5 2
 ♦ 2
 ♣ Q 7 4 2

West	North	East	South
		1 NT	2 ♥
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	3 ♥	All pass	

With invitational values, advancer bids 2NT followed by 3♥. On a good day, overcaller will have the spade king and 4♥ can be made. With scattered values, South should be non-vulnerable.

The simple approach used by many players, is to use 3♥ by advancer as invitational.

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. Multi-Landy (aka Woolsey) 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.

Multi-Landy is a unified convention that has three key advantages.

- The same set of bids and the Woolsey double are used against all opening one notrump HCP ranges.
- The four components of Multi-Landy allow all hand types to be shown: a long major, majors, major-minor 2-suiters with defined length, a long minor and strong hands.
- Advancer has a set of structured responses defined for all types of auction.

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.