



## Other Tempo Problems (Part I)

In the 2 previous articles, we discussed the situation where a player takes a long time and passes. His partner is "ethically bound" to not take advantage.

There are other ethical tempo issues:

1) Fast passes with minimums.

You decide to open 1♦ (both sides vulnerable) with:

♠ A764  
♥ 6  
♦ KJ942  
♣ QJ3

Partner responds 1♥ and RHO overcalls 2♣.

Do not "fast pass." If you pass in the same instant that RHO takes his fingers off his 2♣ bid, you are telling your partner you have a dead minimum. You must (ethically) take at least 2-3 seconds to pass. The difference between "instant" and "2-3 seconds" is very discernible. Don't give the show away with a very fast pass. Don't let the tempo of your pass convey your hand strength. With, say,

♠ A76  
♥ 42  
♦ KQ10762  
♣ A2

you might actually have something to think about (should I freely bid 2♦?) and your pass might take 3-5 seconds. Don't distinguish the 2 hands shown by fast-passing with the first one, but thinking a little with the second one. What if RHO overcalled preemptively with 3♣? Again, you must wait an appropriate amount of time (about 5-10 seconds after a preempt) with either hand. Don't "fast-pass" to show a minimum. Here is a video showing the proper and improper tempo/disposition.



*Note/warning:* Please don't be offended by the term "unethical." Newer players might innocently bid out of tempo without bad intentions. It is *intentional* poor tempo (intended to convey information) that is unethical.

**First, a "FAST PASS" by the 1♦ opening bidder:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3gdxRZG0C8>

**And now the same auction with proper tempo by the 1♦ opening bidder:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kiQnSKsdrC4>

2) Fast penalty doubles

Not vulnerable against vulnerable opponents, you open 1♠ holding:

♠ A6542  
♥ A2  
♦ 32  
♣ KQJ10.

LHO doubles and partner raises to 2♠. RHO competes with 3♣. Of course you want to double, but do it ethically. Don't snap out a double card as soon as 3♣ hits the table. Don't let saliva come out of your mouth. You can't convey to your partner that you have a clearcut double.

Here is a Video showing the situation above. The opener uses the wrong (unethical) way in which to make a penalty double:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r3wQHozU1zs>

The opener (who doubled) should not give it away that she has a trump stack. She should take a little time and calmly double (without drooling) like this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AdN6u3a8tcw>



### 3) Fast signoffs.

Nobody is vulnerable and RHO opens 3♥. You hold:

♠ KQJ1076  
 ♥ 32  
 ♦ 632  
 ♣ K2.

Probably you aren't worth it, but you stretch and decide to overcall 3♠. Partner cuebids 4♥ to show a big (slam-invitational) spade raise. You must not bid a fast (less than one second) 4♠. That would convey to your partner that you have the worst overcall in history (you do!). You must sign off in normal tempo. This video shows the wrong and right way.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	3♥	3♠	Pass
4♥	Pass	4♠*	

\*Here we have an unethical fast signoff by East (the 3♠ overcaller):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9aNNgkluhM>

The person signing off should pause at least 3-5 seconds so as to not tell her partner she is dead minimum:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jRPU5IBp4BA>

It is not just fast actions which cause trouble. Next month, we will look at some slow actions in both the bidding and defense which cause problems.

**New Year's Resolution: I will try to bid/play in tempo.**

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