

Interesting hand 6 : Board 14 Wednesday 15th March

Last week's hand on transfers attracted an amount of interest. In my commentary, I wrote that 5:5 distributions after partner opens 1NT were uncommon. Well, there was another this week so what do I know? However, the similarity between the two hands stops there.

This week I will look at Board 14. The problems posed by this hand are very different for here you hold both minor suits after partner (East) opens 1NT. For the moment, I will leave to one side a possible intervention by S. What does W do? He has 11HCPs and 6 losers. Partner must have 3 cards in at least one of his minors to open 1NT. Is this enough to look for game and, if so, in what?

Board 14 interface details:

- Top Left:** Dlr: East, Vul: None
- Top Right:** Optimum NS -130
- Center:** A large '14' with 'NORTH' above and 'SOUTH' below. To the left of the '14' are the hands: ♠ J 10 4, ♥ - -, ♦ K Q J 9 8, ♣ A 9 8 6 4. To the right are: ♠ Q 8 6, ♥ A 9 4 3, ♦ A 10 6 5, ♣ Q 7.
- Bottom Left:** A box with numbers: 6, 11, 12, 11.
- Bottom Right:** A box with card symbols and numbers: ♠ A 9 2, ♥ K J 7 6 5, ♦ 3 2, ♣ K 10 5. Below this is a table:

	♠	♥	♦	♣	N
N	-	-	1	-	-
S	-	-	1	-	-
E	3	4	-	1	1
W	3	4	-	1	1

Normally with 11HCPs you would invite by bidding 2NT or 2S for those who use this to show 11. This latter bid can also be used as having the alternative meaning of a transfer to a minor (McKendrick). A gambling alternative is to go straight to 3NT hoping for a lot of tricks in the minors.

The options do not end there! 3Cs or 3Ds are not good. These are strong bids, game forcing and looking for a possible slam. It is difficult, and probably impossible, to place partner with cards where a slam is possible and a game in a minor is unattractive and unlikely. 2Cs and 2Ds of course have conventional meanings.

The last alternative is to pass. Passing 1NT with 11HCPs can often bear dividends especially as some pairs may be in 3NT going off (if it does!). Not a bad option here as it happens and it has the advantage of avoiding ending up in the wrong minor suit !

Often the correct answer only becomes clear when all the hands are revealed and that is true in this case. As you will see from the Board Composer analysis, 4Ds is the best that can be made.

I think we need to jog back to the 2S (or 2NT) option. This is dual purpose if you use it also as a transfer to a minor or McKendrick. Let us assume that you do. Partner bids 2NT over 2S showing the weaker end of the NT range. You can now either pass or bid a minor at the 3 level. 3D is probably best as it is the better suit. On balance, I prefer this to a pass.

If partner had replied positively to your 2S (bidding 3C would show this using McKendrick), I would go to 3NT. If you had bid 2NT to show 11/12 HCPs, partner will pass weak or bid 3NT strong. No further thought required by you!

Finally, what if S intervenes and bids 2Hs. Bottom end but just about OK? The way in which partnerships handle intervention over 1NT is for another day.....!