Bridge Workshop

Lesson #3 - Responding to 1 NT Opening

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Instructors: Tony Schlegel
Mentors: Bob Doughty - Laurel Ludden - Wendy Schlegel

Agenda

- Review partner’s roles
- Scoring
- Opening 1 Notrump bid
- Responding to 1 Notrump bids
- Play hands

Auction or Bidding concepts

- If partnership wants to “buy” the contract, one of the partners needs to start the auction - he/she is called the **Opener** or opening bidder
  - Opener’s task is to **Describe** the hand

- The partner of the Opener is called the **Responder**
  - Responder uses information from Opener to “steer” the partnership into appropriate contract - sometimes called the **Captain.** Decides the level and strain of the contract.
  - **Level** - how many tricks over 6 can the partnership take
    - Start by adding the total number of points in the partnership
      - 25 + points - play in “Golden Game” contract
      - Less than 25 - play in part score contract
  - **Strain**
    - Look for “Golden Fit” - 8 or more in a suit - preferably a major (♠, ♥)
    - If no Golden fit - play in NT

How does a player decide to open the bidding?
How does the responder decide which contract and how high?

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF BIDDING?

PART SCORE
GAME
SLAM

TO ARRIVE AT A PROFITABLE CONTRACT, BASED UPON THE *COMBINED ASSETS* OF PARTNER'S HAND AND YOURS.

YOU HAVE TO DETERMINE THE *TRICK-TAKING ABILITY* OF THE COMBINED HANDS!

From Lampert's - "The Fun Way to Serious Bridge"

Bidding ladder

1NT
1 ♠
1 ♥
1 ♦
1♣

2NT
2 ♠
2 ♥
2 ♦
2♣

3NT- Game 25+
3 ♠
3 ♥
3 ♦
3 ♣

4 NT
4 ♠ - Game 25+
4 ♥ - Game 25+
4 ♦
4 ♣

5 NT
5 ♠
5 ♥
5 ♦ - Game 29+
5 ♣ - Game 29+

6 NT
6 ♠
6 ♥
6 ♦
6 ♣

Small slam 33+ pts

7 NT
7 ♠
7 ♥
7 ♦
7♣

Grand slam 37+ pt

HOW DO YOU WIN TRICKS

1. HIGH CARDS:

2. LONG SUITS:

3. TRUMPING:

EXAMPLE: HEARTS ARE TRUMP

From Lampert's - "The Fun Way to Serious Bridge"

Part Score and Game Score

- **Part score** - points for tricks made plus a **bonus of 50 points**
  - Ex. 3 Spades bid and made = 90 points + a bonus of 50 = 140 points

- **Game score** - points for tricks made (must be 100+ points) plus a **bonus of 300**
  - Ex. 4 Hearts bid and made = 120 points + a bonus of 300 = 420 points

- Other bonus points depend on vulnerability and bidding and making 6 or 7 tricks (called a slam)

Points earned by Opponents

- If the declarer fails to make their contract or bid (assume non-vulnerable)
  - Opponents earn 50 points (non-vulnerable) or 100 points (vulnerable) for every trick less than the bid
  - Ex. - Declarer bids 5 Diamonds and only makes 3 (total of 9 tricks instead of 11)
    - This is 2 less than the contract - therefore the opponents get 2 x 50 = 100 points (non-vulnerable)

- Other factors that increase the points the opponents can earn
  - Doubling the contract by the opponents
  - Redoubling by the Declarer

Opening the bidding - General guidelines

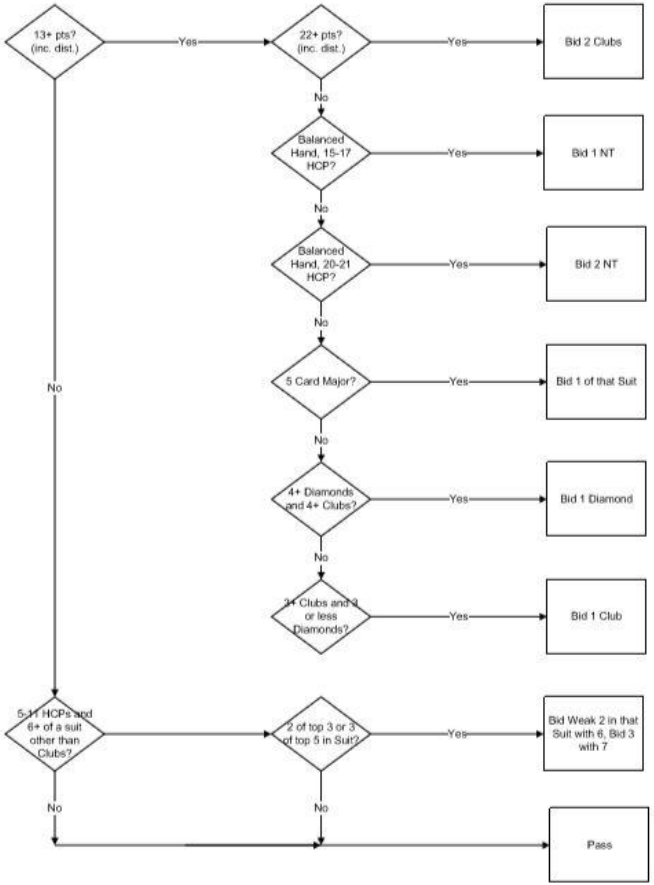
- With 13 to 21 points, open the bidding at the ONE level (**Remember to include your distribution points**)
  - 1 Club, Diamond, Heart, Spade or **NoTrump**
  - **1 Heart or Spade (Major) requires at least 5 in the suit**
  - 1 Club should have a minimum of 3 in the suit
  - 1 Diamond should have a minimum of 4 in the suit

- 1 NT requires a few extra points - point range is more narrow
  - Hand should be balanced
  - Hand should have 15 - 17 **High Card Points**

- 2 NT - balanced hand with 20-21 HCPs

- More than 21 points in one hand are rare. Will discuss later.

Helpful Questions for Opening a Hand



Tony Schlegel
4/10/18

Opener bids 1 NT. What should Responder be thinking?

- What do we know about the Opener's hand????
  - It is "Balanced"
  - It has 15 to 17 High Card Points (HCP)

- Responder looks at the strength of their hand
  - Three categories
    - 0 - 7 (minimal hand - stop - think **red** light)
    - 8 - 9 (invitational - **yellow** light)
    - 10 or more points - (should be thinking game - **green** light)

What level and strain should Responder bid?

Partner opens 1 NT

♠ 8 2
♥ 10 9
♦ A K 8 7 6
♣ Q J 9 8

Game is likely 3 NT. Responder bids 3 NT and the bidding message is “signoff”

♠ 9 8 3
♥ K Q 10 7 6 2
♦ 6 3
♣ K 4

Game is 4 Hearts since we know that opener has at least 2 hearts. Responder bids 4Hs & the message is “signoff”

Responder to 1 NT Opener's bid has choices based on value & shape of the hand

Responder's HCP	Responder's Shape	Recommendation
0 - 7	Balanced	Pass
0 to 7	5 + in a major	Bid 2 of the major as a signoff
8 - 9	Balanced	2 NT
8+	1 or both 4 card majors	???????
10 or more	Balanced	3 NT (but what if responder has 4 of a major?)

Examples: Responding with 0 - 7 points

♠ 10 8 6 5 4 2
♥ J 7 5
♦ 8
♣ J 6 2

Points - 4
Level - Partscore
Strain - Spades
Response - 2 ♠ as a signoff. Partner will pass.

♠ J 9 8
♥ A 9 6 2
♦ J 7 6
♣ 10 9 4

Points - 6
Level - Partscore
Strain - NT
Response - Pass

Responding with 0 - 7 points

♠ Q J ♥ 9 8 ♦ Q 9 8 ♣ 10 9 7 6 3 2
Points - 7 Level - Partscore Strain - NT Response - Pass

Responding with 8 - 9 total points

- Responder bids 2 NT

- Let Opener decide on final contract
  - If opener has 17 points, game is likely
  - If opener has 16 points, judgement is needed
  - If opener has 15 points, Pass

Additional examples of Responder bids

Partner opens 1 NT

♠ 8 2 ♥ 10 9 ♦ A K 8 7 6 ♣ Q J 9 8
Game is likely 3 NT. Responder bids 3 NT and bidding message is “signoff”

♠ 9 8 3 ♥ K Q 10 7 6 2 ♦ 6 3 ♣ K 4
Game is in 4 ♥. Bid 4 ♥ showing partner 6 of the major. .

♠ A K 9 7 4 ♥ Q 7 ♦ J 7 6 ♣ Q 9 8
Game is either ♠ or NT. Responder would likely bid 3♠. Partner will bid 4 ♠ or 3 NT.

How should we bid this hand as Responder???

- Responder example hand :
  ♠ A Q 7 2
  ♥ K Q 5 4
  ♦ 9 8 7 6
  ♣ 8

- Responder has 11 HCP & two 4 card majors

- What doesn't the Responder know about partner's hand? Does he have a 4 card major????
  - If the 1 NT opener has either 4 ♠ or 4 ♥, there is a golden game.
  - If not, game is 3 NT

BUT….how do we get there?

Introducing the Stayman Convention

What is a “convention”?

- An artificial bid to help partners communicate additional information about the hand that normal bidding methods do not provide

- Example: Opener bids 1 NT. Responder bids 2 Clubs. The 2 club bid is artificial and **does not imply anything about the responder’s clubs.**

Guidelines for the Responder who initiates Stayman by bidding 2 Clubs

- Responder must have at least 8+ HCP points
- Responder must have a 4 card major
- Responder bids 2 ♣, which is artificial, over opener's 1 NT
- Do not use Stayman if Responder's hand is 4,3,3,3 distribution. There is very little opportunity for ruffing with this distribution.

Opener's rebid guidelines to Stayman

Remember, Responder bids 2 ♣

- If Opener (original bid 1NT) has 4 card or longer major, bid the major at the 2 level
- If opener has both majors, bid hearts first
- Without a 4 card major, Opener bids 2 ♦ (artificial bid and does not say anything about diamonds

Summary: Opener has 3 choices after Responder bids 2 ♣

- 2 ♦ shows no 4 card major
- 2 ♥ shows a 4 card ♥ suit and maybe a 4 card ♠ suit
- 2 ♠ shows a 4 card ♠ suit and **NO 4 card ♥ suit**

Remember - the 1 NT opener cannot pass the 2 ♣ bid!

Example: Responder's hand

♠ A Q 7 2
♥ K Q 5 4
♦ 9 8 7 6
♣ 8

Previous method of bidding without playing Stayman: 1 NT, P, 3NT, P, P, P (Clubs could be a challenge for the declarer)

Bidding using Stayman convention:

- Opener - 1 NT
- Opponent - P
- Responder - 2 ♣ (artificial, 8+ points and 4 card major)
- Opponent - P
- Opener's rebid - 2 ♥ (Opener guarantees 4 ♥'s)
- Opponent - P
- Responder - 4 ♥ (11 points and 4 ♥)

Conclusions when Responder has 0 - 7 points

- Play in a **partscore**
  - Why?
    - even if you have 7 points, partner's max is 17 - **24 pts is not game**
  - Responder has 2 choices
    - Pass - Play in 1 NT
    - Bid 2 of a major if you think the contract is better in a suit. This is a signoff bid. Responder **must have at least 5 in the suit** in which you want the contract to be played
    - Why not 2 ♣? Two clubs initiates the Stayman convention
- **Bottom line - there is no room in the bidding scale to explore other contracts with 7 or less points in responder's hand**

Responding with 10 - 15 total points

- As “Captain”, you want to place the contract into a Golden game
  - Opener 15-17 HCP, with Responders 10 points, total partnership is 25 pts.

- Responder has choices:
  - 3 NT if balanced and no 4 or 5 card major
  - Bid 2♣ - if you have a one or both 4 card majors, bid the Stayman convention asking partner for a 4 card major
  - Bid 3 of the major to show 5 of the major
  - Bid 4 of the major to show 6 of the major

Examples of Responder hands:

♠ A 8 2
♥ A Q 9 8 3
♦ 9 4 2
♣ 10 9

Points - 11
Level - Game
Strain - ?? Maybe Hearts
Response - 3 ♥ - If partner has 3 ♥'s, partner will bid 4 ♥. If partner only has 2 ♥'s, partner will bid 3 NT.

♠ Q J
♥ K Q
♦ Q 9 8
♣ J 9 7 6 3 2

Points - 13
Level - Game
Strain - NT
Response - 3 NT

The Opening Lead

- Against Notrump contract
  - If you have a sequence of 3 or more touching high cards - ex. **A**, K, Q or **K**, Q, J or **Q**, J, 10, lead the highest in the sequence
  - If you don't have touching high cards, lead a low card from your longest suit - ex. K, 10, 7, **5**

- Against a suit contract
  - Lead the suit your partner bid
  - Lead a singleton - allows you to possibly use one of your trumps to win a trick
  - Lead the high card in a suit where you have touching high cards - ex. **K**, Q, X, X or **Q**, J, 10
  - Otherwise, lead a low card in a suit with 3 or more if you have an honor