

No Trump

There is no correct no-trump range. There are many variables

Mini – 10-12

12-14

14-16

15-17

16-18

A lot depends on the teaching you received, the club/district where you play and your contemporaries.

The two most common ranges in Scotland are weak (12-14) and strong (15-17). People ask me what is best? I was brought up playing 12-14 and did so for over 25 years. I was in the majority at that time, and it was only after I played in the US Nationals where everyone played 15-17, that I was converted.

It is suggested that 12-14 has a pre-emptive value, but the modern player has a convention that enables bidding to compete, generally for the part-score.

Certainly, in the competitive branch of Scottish Bridge, 15-17 is far more prevalent.

Are there any advantages to playing 15-17?

Well, you are less likely to be doubled for penalty.

It is more difficult for the opposition to envisage a game their way.

It allows you to open flattish 11 counts that fall outwith the 12-14 range. Remember when you open the bidding, you must have a rebid available to you or you will get into all sort of trouble.

Board 12 last night showed the differing ranges in action. This is the board that was voided at our table as three of us sat the wrong way, Cathy is absolved from all blame.

Sylvia, playing 12-14, opened the bidding 1♥, Doug with a 3/void/5/5 shape and nine points bid 1NT.

Sylvia held ♠ A1095

♥ KQ109

♦ 43

♣ AQ2

Would you have raised with that hand? Not many would.

Jack & Catherine and Howard and Joe, both playing 15-17, bid 3N and made ten tricks. It is much easier for East with his 5/5 in the minors to bid game when they know partner's point count.

Of course, you will be able to identify hands where the opposite is true, but overall, I much prefer the 15-17 range.