

It's a bidder's game

One of the justifications for playing Weak NT was the pre-emptive effect it had. Players would be reluctant to bid at the two level etc. That tenet has long gone and it equally applies to Strong NT.

Twice Cathy opened 1NT (15-17) and even though I had some points balancing them out, it didn't stop our opponents bidding and making game on both occasions.

On Board 9, North passes and E opens 1NT, vul v non-vul

South holds S KQ3

H A843

D K8652

C 6

Opposite a passed partner do you bid?

Pros – you have two suits, your points are behind opener, you are non-vul against vul opponents.

Cons – Partner may have few points, your suits are poor, can you get to dummy?

Assuming opps can make 3N for 600+, you can go three off for -500, that means 5 tricks.

On the other hand if this is a part score hand, two off for -100 will beat a lot of part scores.

DONT allows you to bid two suited hands like this, but Astro etc usually require a 5-card major, so it is not that easy to compete. Playing natural overcalls 2D is fine. Partner tries to better the contract by bidding 2H, gold dust, 3H then 4H. Unstoppable game with 19 points and a well-earned top.

Board 21 this is much easier to enter the bidding. Again a passed partner and 1NT opened on your right.

South holds S AKQ98

H KQ97652

D J

C ----

A powerhouse, with game 99% certain and slam a possibility if P has a red Ace. How do you treat this hand? Multi Landy gives a choice, 2C=both majors, 2D=single suited major. Fiona chose the latter and despite me trying to muddy the waters bid 4H making 11 tricks. Interestingly two pairs were doubled in 4H and another doubled in 5H all making. It goes to show that shape beats points any day of the week. 6H should only make eleven tricks but finding the 5-4 spade fit results in an easy slam. I suspect that most were seduced by the seven card suit. Even if you find your spade fit and enquire Partner's ace could be in clubs.