

How to Bid a Hand with Long Minors Opposite 1NT

Board 2

East Deals

N-S Vul

♠ Q 10

♥ —

♦ A J 8 7 6 5

♣ A 6 5 3 2

♠ 9 8 6 4

♥ 9 8 7 4 3

♦ Q

♣ J 9 4



♠ A 7 5

♥ K J 2

♦ K 10 3

♣ K Q 10 8

♠ K J 3 2

♥ A Q 10 6 5

♦ 9 4 2

♣ 7

Last Sunday, we talked about how to bid a hand that was problematic played on December 27 in the afternoon game. While talking about the hand, I mentioned 3D forcing over 1NT and 4-way transfers with pre-acceptance. Getting to slam is not easy with this hand, but you should be able to find slam if you have some tools to handle a hand with minors when your partner opens 1NT.

East will open 1NT. If there is a pass, what do you do?

Jump to 3 Level in Minor Suit

Bid 3D meaning you have a hand with both minors that is strong and interested in exploring for slam. This is not a convention; it is a

treatment of that bid. You should alert it, anyway, because the opponents should know what the bid means. Many people use that bid, but you and your partner have to discuss it before you do that. Some people play that a bid of 3D over 1NT is weak and to play. Bidding is a language, so it's important that you and your partner are speaking the same one.

This is an excerpt from

http://www.northerncoloradobridge.com/playerscorner/RespondingToPartners1NT_minors.htm. I thought it was expressed well, so here it is:

"A hand with both minors increases the probability that NT may not be the best strain. Again, you need to be able to sign off, invite game, and force to game or slam. At matchpoints (pairs) it is important to remember that 3NT is still often the right game contract.

"[With a long minor and interest in slam,] jump to three level. A jump to three of a minor may be used to show a two-suited hand. The most common method is for 3C to show a weak hand with 5-5 (or longer) minors and 3D for hands with game going values with long minors. After a weak 3C response, opener is expected to take a preference at the three-level."

4-Way Transfers

Another concept that came up last week to maybe use with that hand would be to transfer to diamonds using 2NT. Who does that? Lots of people. Do you want to use it? You and your partner have to decide. The hand above is probably best suited for the 3D bid to show both minors, but if you're not playing that but you are playing 4-way transfers, you can start by bidding 2NT. The good thing about 4-way transfers is that the NT opener can tell you with his bid if he likes your suit (clubs or diamonds) by either bidding the transferred suit or not bidding it. If you asked him to transfer to diamonds, and he/she had 3 or more to the queen or better, the bid would be 3C meaning I like diamonds. (If you bid 2S to transfer to clubs, he would be 2NT if he liked clubs.) This may be confusing, but it's very helpful. It is actually more helpful in a 1 suited long minor hand, not 2-suited. The hand above is better suited to an immediate showing of both suits.

Also from the same site mentioned above:

"Here is a typical convention card layout used by many intermediate and advanced players today:

Under NOTRUMP OPENING BIDS

3C 5-5 minors Weak

3D 5-5 minors Forcing

2S transfer to 3C (opener rebids 2NT with super accept)

2NT transfer to 3D (opener rebids 3C with super accept)"

I actually play the systems listed above except for the 3C bid, which I use as Puppet Stayman. I won't go into that right now, but we can cover it on another lesson if you would like to learn it. Also not mentioned: 3H and 3S over 1NT!

Either system would probably work to find either 6D or 6C, which is superior to 3NT. Bidding 3NT directly would get you to game, but you should have slam in mind when you have 11 cards in the minors. Bidding 3D also let's your partner know you have clubs. The hand always makes 7 clubs! However, I don't think it's probably biddable (but 6 is).

A Small Problem with 4-Way Transfers

As much as I love 4-way transfers, it does mess up the 2NT as invitational to 3NT bid. When you add something, you often have to change something else. So if 2NT no longer means invitational to 3NT (now means long diamond suit), how can you invite to 2NT? You have to use something that I like to call "Maybe Stayman." I made that up, so don't put that on your card. All it means is that if you have a hand that would have bid 2NT (good 8-9 points), you have to bid Stayman even if you DON'T have a 4-card major. Hard to remember at first. So what do you do, if your partner opens 1NT and you have this hand?

♠AJ3 ♥QJ7 ♦JT32 ♣T73

You bid 2C, no matter what your partner says, you bid 2NT. Your partner must alert the 2NT because you MIGHT not have a 4-card major (and you don't).

What about this hand?

♠AJ3 ♥QJ76 ♦JT32 ♣T7

If the NT opener says 2S over your 2C, you bid 2NT. Your partner must alert the 2NT because you MIGHT not have a 4-card major (even though you do).

What about this hand?

♠AJ32 ♥QJ7 ♦JT32 ♣T7

If the NT opener says 2H over your 2C, you bid 2S. This is the hard-to-remember one. Your partner's bid of 2H does NOT deny 4 spades, so if you bid 2NT, it means you don't have 4S. This wrong-sides the hand, of course, if your partner is also holding 4 spades, but no bid is perfect.

What if you get an Overcall after the 1NT?

Oh, my, would the opponents actually ever do that? Of course. What if you got a 2H overcall after partner's 1NT? Well, I think I might just bid 3D, which in standard bidding is always natural and forcing to game. (All 3-level bids are forcing, 2 level bids are to play.) I don't even want to mention Stolen Bids, one of my least favorite bids. In standard bidding, all transfers are off if the bid is above 2C, so suit bids are natural. (2S would be natural and non-forcing.) There are a lot of questions that you need to ask your partner about these kinds of sequences. It is far more important that you play the same as your partner than it is to play what I like.

Anyway, if you play that 3D is forcing over the 2H overcall, there's still a good chance that you will get to a slam, hopefully in clubs, even if the wrong hand is on lead.

Linda MacCleave

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