

145. The right height

By Ron Klinger

Teams: Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1♦	1♥	1♣ Pass	Pass ?

The bidding is natural. What would you do as South with:

♠ A109
♥ J6
♦ A753
♣ J764

After a natural opening and a natural response of suits at the 1-level by the opponents, there is a strong chance that the opponents have about 20 points together. That means your side also has about 20 points. If you give the opponents only 18 points, your side has 22 points. What that means is that you do not need to become too excited when partner overcalls and you have 10-11-12 points. The combined strength has not changed.

That strongly suggests that a 1NT bid by South here is quite adequate.

Today's deals arose in the semi-finals of the 2015 Bermuda Bowl (World Open Teams).

Board 17: Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

	North	
	♠ KQJ	
	♥ K9854	
	♦ KJ104	
	♣ 9	
West		East
♠ 632		♠ 8754
♥ 32		♥ AQ107
♦ Q982		♦ 6
♣ K853		♣ AQ102
	South	
	♠ A109	
	♥ J6	
	♦ A753	
	♣ J764	

USA2 North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>Nystrom</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Upmark</i>	<i>Demuy</i>
Pass	1♥	1♦	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT

Demuy (S) took the ♠6 lead with the jack, cashed the ♦K and ran the ♦J to the queen, East discarding the ♠4. West switched to the ♣5. East won with the queen, cashed ♣A and returned the ♣2, jack, king. West played the ♥3, eight, queen. East's ♣10 and the ♥A gave the defence seven tricks, East-West +50.

Board 17: Dealer East : Nil vulnerable

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	♥ K9854	
	♦ KJ104	
	♣ 9	
West		East
♠ 632		♠ 8754
♥ 32		♥ AQ107
♦ Q982		♦ 6
♣ K853		♣ AQ102
	South	
	♠ A109	
	♥ J6	
	♦ A753	
	♣ J764	

Sweden North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Wrang</i>	<i>Hurd</i>	<i>Sylvan</i>
1♦	1♥	1♣	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT

Wooldridge led ♣5 against 1NT. East won with the ♣Q and returned ♣2, jack, king. West switched to ♠2, jack. Declarer picked the diamonds via ♦A, ♦3 to ♦10, ♠K, ♠A, ♦5 to ♦J, seven tricks, N-S +90, 4 Imps to Sweden.

England North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Kalita</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
1♦	1♥	1♣	Pass
Pass	3♦	Pass	2♦
Pass	Pass	Dble	3NT
			All Pass

You have to wonder why North-South bid to 3NT with a combined 23 count. Bakhshi might have chosen 1NT rather than 2♦. The ♠6 lead was taken by the jack. As West's 1♦ was natural, Bakhshi played ♦A, diamond finesse, followed ♠A, diamond finesse, ♦K and ♠K. That was seven tricks, but also the end of the line for declarer, East-West +300.

Poland North-South:

West	North	East	South
<i>Forrester</i>	<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Robson</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>
Pass	1♥	1♣	Pass
4♣	Dble	2♣	Dble
		All Pass	

East's 1♣ showed 2+ clubs. East's 2♣ bid was unusual and risky. Why not pass with a minimum opening and strong hearts? Maybe it is a problem for those who open 1♣ with 2+ clubs. They might feel the need to let partner know that their club holding is useful for an opening lead. In any event, West took 2♣ seriously, perhaps too seriously. Pre-emptive jumps are not usually a good idea with a balanced hand.

Against East's 4♣ doubled South led the ♥J: two – eight – queen. The ♠7 went to the jack and North switched to the ♣9: ten – jack – king. The ♥3 went to the ten and declarer played another spade. North won with the queen and played the ♠K to South's ace. After ♣6 to the ♣Q, East exited with the ♦6. South took the ace and returned a club, won by the ace. The ♠4 was ruffed by the ♣7 and over-ruffed by the ♣8. Declarer ruffed a diamond, cashed ♥A and lost his last heart to North's ♥K. That was two down, North-South +300, 12 Imps to Poland.

Women's semis: England 1NT +90, France +120, +1 Imp. Netherlands 1NT -50, USA2 2NT +120, +5 Imps.
 Seniors: USA1 4♦ -50, USA2 1NT +90, +4 Imps. Norway 1NT +90, Sweden 2♦ +90, no swing.

With both sides vulnerable there are three passes to partner, who opens 1NT, 15-17. Pass on your right. What is your plan of bidding with:

♠ QJ5
 ♥ QJ854
 ♦ J6
 ♣ J106

Board 29: Dealer West : Both vulnerable

	North	
	♠ QJ5	
	♥ QJ854	
	♦ J6	
	♣ J106	
West		East
♠ 72		♠ 10984
♥ 762		♥ A109
♦ A752		♦ K8
♣ K742		♣ Q853
	South	
	♠ AK63	
	♥ K3	
	♦ Q10943	
	♣ A9	

Every table began:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦ ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2♥
Pass....			

(1) Transfer to hearts

At three tables it ended there and Sweden scored an overtrick Imp vs USA2. Poland scored 140, but at the other table, David Bakhshi, North, invited game with 2NT and David Gold bid 3NT, all pass. West led the club 2: jack – three – nine. The ♥4 went to the king and the ♥3 to the queen and ace. East returned a club. South took the ace and with hearts 3-3 he had ten tricks, +630, 10 Imps to England. The positive side for taking a bid on the North had is that (a) it has 8 HCP, (b) it has a ten and (c) it has a 5-card suit. No one can promise you success every time, but vulnerable games have to be bid if it is at all close.

Women: Netherlands 2♥ +140, USA2 3NT +630, +10 Imps. England, 2NT +150, France 3NT +630, +10 Imps.
 Seniors: Poland 1♠ +110, Sweden 2♥ +170, +2 Imps. USA2 2♥ +140; USA1 3NT +630, +10 Imps.

Problems for Tomorrow:

1. Dealer South : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
			?

What would you do as South with:

♠ Q98
♥ AQJ2
♦ Q93
♣ 1086

2. Dealer South : East-West vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♦	?	Pass

What would you do as East with:

♠ K5
♥ K64
♦ KJ106
♣ AK97

3. Dealer West : Both vulnerable

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	2♠	?

What would you do as South with:

♠ A
♥ Q10
♦ 109862
♣ AK1087

Why not phone or email your bridge partners and compare your answers and your reasoning?

You know that little thing in your head that stops you from bidding when you feel like bidding, but you know you shouldn't? Yeah? Well, I don't have one of those.