




Rebidding No-trumps when outside the range for opening 1NT. ACOL version. Part 2 of 2. Updated winter 2015/6.

Y1 VBlue #13 Limit rebids in No-trumps Part 2 ACOL	Contract: 3N By: South
Date: 24/03/2016	Board #: 1
Dealer: North	Vulnerable: None
Play this hand online!	

	North		
	♠ K6		
	♥ JT3		
	♦ QT9653		
	♣ 84		
West		East	
♠ JT943		♠ Q82	
♥ AQ9		♥ 7652	
♦ 8		♦ A742	
♣ QT97		♣ 63	
	South		
	♠ A75		
	♥ K84		
	♦ KJ		
	♣ AKJ52		

This series (following on from another elsewhere in this edition) is all about rebidding balanced hands unsuitable to be opened with 1NT.

There is a perfect No-trump bid for every balanced hand, even when you can't open 1NT to show 12 to 14 points and a balanced hand.

This series gives you further practice in bidding those balanced hands that are the wrong strength to be opened with 1NT.

As a reminder, here's how it goes:

- With 12 to 14 points open 1NT
- With 15 to 16 points open one of a suit and rebid No-trumps at the lowest legal level.
- With 17 to 18 points open one of a suit and rebid No-trumps at the lowest level plus one (i.e. jump a level).
- With 19 points open one of a suit and rebid 3NT.

Hand 1: You have a powerful hand that you need to describe accurately. How?

West	North	East	South
-	P	P	1♣
P	1♦	P	3NT
P	P	P	

Lead: ♠ J

Bidding.

Our hand is way too strong for a 1NT opening bid (12 to 14) so we open 1♣ in third seat and await partner's response.

When North replies 1♦ with his 6 points we make the perfect bid... a jump to 3NT showing precisely 19 points.

Partner has nothing to say over that (no surprise there!), but holds out hope that his long Diamonds may prove useful as a source of tricks.

Play.

What is especially interesting about this hand is that, even though we have all the points, partner has all the needed tricks. Our **Count of top tricks** shows us that we have two Spade tricks and two Club tricks. We need to establish five more [sigh...] but, thanks to dummy's suit, they are available in the guise of the long Diamonds.

We need to take great care in order to make this. Firstly, at trick one, we can blow the whole thing if we take the trick in dummy with the ♠K. We need to take it in hand with the ♠A, preserving the ♠K as a later entry.

At trick two, we immediately attack the Diamonds by leading the ♦K to unblock the suit, remembering our standard strategy of attacking the suit that will provide the extra tricks. Note that leading the ♦J on the first round of Diamonds would be a losing play. We'll leave it as an exercise to the reader to see if you can spot the two ways the defence could thwart us.

Trick three provides another opportunity to go down. If we don't overtake the ♦J with dummy's ♦Q, we'd have to spend our last entry, the ♠K, and the wretched opponents would keep us from our Diamond winners. So we overtake, and keep playing high Diamonds till we see the ♦A appear. We are in a position to win any return they make (even a Heart the second time they play them), and we are home and dry. As it happens East returns the ♠Q (good, if ultimately futile, defence) and we take the ♠K on table.

After the auction closes you'll have an interesting play challenge. Which suit should you develop and why?


We cash the long Diamonds and the ♣A K and that's nine tricks. After that we don't much care.

There are several ways we might go wrong and we manage to avoid them all.



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Y1 VBlue #13 Limit rebids in No-trumps Part 2 ACOL	Contract: 3N By: South
Date: 24/03/2016	Board #: 2
Dealer: East	Vulnerable: None
Play this hand online!	

	North	
	♠ Q4	
	♥ A92	
	♦ 853	
	♣ KJ853	
West		East
♠ 83		♠ KJT9
♥ QJT83		♥ 65
♦ T972		♦ J64
♣ A9		♣ 7642
	South	
	♠ A7652	
	♥ K74	
	♦ AKQ	
	♣ QT	

Who said, "It's better to be lucky than good."?

There are similarities between this deal and Hand 1.

That might be a useful hint...

West	North	East	South
-	-	P	1♠
P	2♣	P	3NT
P	P	P	

Lead: ♥ Q

Bidding.

We open 1♠ after East Passes as dealer and hear partner respond 2♣.

As we know of at least 28 points between the North-South hands (18 in our hand, North showing 10+) we can fully justify a leap to 3NT. Unsurprisingly, that ends the auction.

Play.

We have a lovely hand, with almost half the points in the deck. Interestingly, as in Hand 1, it's the weaker hand that has the needed tricks.

Against 3NT West leads the ♥Q from his sequence and we pause to **Count** and **Plan**.

We've got one Spade, two Hearts and three Diamonds for six *top tricks*. Our remaining three tricks need to come from Clubs (although we should keep our eye on the ♠Q in case of emergency).

We need to take trick one in our hand to preserve the Heart entry in dummy. At trick two, we start to establish the Clubs, and are surprised to see the ♣A appear so quickly from West. We see his plan at trick three though, when he knocks out our entry to the dummy by playing a Heart.

At trick four, we heave a sigh of frustration and continue the Clubs. To do this, though, means that we have to lead the ♣K, dropping our own ♣10 on it. There is no choice here – we can't afford to isolate the Clubs on table. This way we need Clubs to break 3-3 or for something good to happen. And, *mirabile dictu*, something good does happen.

Our anxiety turns to joy when we see West play the ♣9. That means the rest of our Clubs are all winners. We won't need the Spade ♠Q as a trick, a play which was doomed to failure anyway.

We end up with our original six tricks plus four more Clubs for an overtrick.


Was it Napoleon who said, "I don't care if he's good, is he lucky?" Mind you, the way we played that hand we've proved ourselves to be both.



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Y1 VBlue #13 Limit rebids in No-trumps Part 2 ACOL	Contract: 3N
Date: 24/03/2016	By: South
Dealer: South	Board #: 3
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: None

	North	
	♠ A7	
	♥ 632	
	♦ 973	
	♣ AK953	
West		East
♠ J9652		♠ KT4
♥ Q8		♥ J975
♦ AJ		♦ Q865
♣ 8642		♣ T7
	South	
	♠ Q83	
	♥ AKT4	
	♦ KT42	
	♣ QJ	

Once more, you will see how fair reward is often given to those who play the game well.

On this hand, there are two chances for success.

If the first chance turns sour there's often a second string to your bow...

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♥
P	2♣	P	2NT
P	3NT	P	P
P			

Lead: ♠ 5

Bidding.

We open 1♥ as dealer (it is normal to open the higher of two four-card suits on this type of hand. The exception comes when we are 4-4 in Spades and Hearts) and partner responds 2♣.

With a balanced hand of 15 points we have an easy rebid of 2NT. All minimum No-trump rebids (1NT over a one-level response, 2NT over a two-level response) show the same hand type – a balanced hand of 15 to 16 points.

After this start to the auction partner, holding 11 points, has an easy time of raising us to game.

Play.

West leads his fourth-highest Spade (the ♠5) and we take stock of dummy.

Our initial count of *top tricks* shows one Spade, two Hearts one Diamond and five Clubs (unless there's a bad break, which any decent Plan should always take account of). However, a second glance shows that we have two certain Spade tricks after this opening lead.

We play low at trick one and see what's what. East has the ♠K and wins the first trick with it. That's no problem, but the inevitable Spade return at trick two is certainly awkward as it removes the entry to the long Clubs.

Without this infuriating Spade lead and return we'd have it easy. We could cash the ♣Q J, cross to dummy with the ♠A and cash the ♣A K 9. Only a desperately unlucky 5-1 break could damage our cause. Now, though, we have no entry to the North hand. The ♠A has been forced prematurely and we have no way of accessing the long Clubs.

Plan B involves playing the Clubs in a different way. The only viable line is to cash the ♣J and overtake the ♣Q. Now we need one of two possible holdings. Envisage the Clubs breaking 3-3. If they were to split equally we'd have five Club tricks. Statistically, we are more likely, though, to get the 4-2 split. In that event, we need to have the ♠10 drop in two.

So at trick three, we attack our Clubs by leading up to our ♣J. At trick four, we continue Clubs, knowing we have to overtake the perfectly good ♣Q, since we have no outside entries to dummy.


Since good things happen to people who do good things, we get our break. While we don't have the 3-3 split, the ♣10 drops out of East's hand, a vision if there ever were one. Now all the Clubs on table are winners. Combine that with the two top Hearts and the ♠Q, we win our contract.

Nine tricks come from two Spades, two Hearts and five Clubs. Easy-peasy.



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Y1 VBlue #13 Limit rebids in No-trumps Part 2 ACOL	Contract: 3N By: South
Date: 24/03/2016	Board #: 4
Dealer: West	Vulnerable: None
Play this hand online!	

	North		
	♠ A96		
	♥ QT964		
	♦ J6		
	♣ J85		
West		East	
♠ J8543		♠ T2	
♥ 832		♥ K75	
♦ K82		♦ QT74	
♣ K2		♣ QT97	
	South		
	♠ KQ7		
	♥ AJ		
	♦ A953		
	♣ A643		

The bidding should be routine by now.

The play? Well, much is about entries and needing to be flexible.

West	North	East	South
P	P	P	1♣
P	1♥	P	2NT
P	3NT	P	P
P			

Lead: ♠ 4

Bidding.

After three Passes we open 1♣ and see partner respond 1♥. We now have to find a way of showing a balanced 17 to 18 points and we can do that easily by jumping to 2NT, describing our hand perfectly.

With 8 points North has an untroubled raise to game.

Play.

West leads his fourth-highest Spade – the ♠4 – and we pause to **Count** our tricks and make a **Plan**.

We begin with only six *top tricks* (three Spades and three Aces) but our wonderful partner has provided a useful source of tricks in the form of his Heart suit. However, we have opportunities for failure, beginning with trick one.

If we take the Spade lead on table in dummy we've blown our entry to dummy's long suit, so we carefully take the first Spade in hand. At trick two, we start to develop our main source of extras by cashing the ♥A, and at trick three continue with the ♥J. This gives us yet another opportunity to throw it all away.

If we don't overtake our ♥J with dummy's ♥Q, we go down. We'd have the lead in the South hand, unable to carry on with Hearts. Sometimes inexperienced players miss that the Hearts are all equals (minus, of course, the ♥K) so there's no fear of missing a trick by overtaking the Jack with the Queen at trick three.

And now we're in business. We win any return (they choose to continue Spades, which is the natural defence), so we use the ♠A as our entry to the winning Hearts.


And that's it. We have sufficient winners providing we cash the otherwise stranded Hearts first.

Nine tricks materialise from three Spades, four
Hearts and two Aces.



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Y1 VBlue #13 Limit rebids in No-trumps Part 2 ACOL	Contract: 3N
Date: 24/03/2016	By: South
Dealer: North	Board #: 5
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: None

	North		
	♠ KT864		
	♥ J4		
	♦ A64		
	♣ 973		
West		East	
♠ J9		♠ Q752	
♥ KT85		♥ Q2	
♦ QJT83		♦ 75	
♣ J6		♣ QT852	
	South		
	♠ A3		
	♥ A9763		
	♦ K92		
	♣ AK4		

The more you play this game, the more you realise how important intermediate cards are... the Tens, the Nines, The Eights.

This is yet another hand where the spot cards play an important role.

West	North	East	South
-	P	P	1♥
P	1♠	P	2NT
P	3NT	P	P
P			

Lead: ♦ Q

Bidding.

We open 1♥ after two Passes and have to find an accurate rebid after partner's 1♠ response. Again we can express this balanced 18-point hand with 2NT, making a clear *limit bid*.

North has enough (8 points) to raise to the No-trump game and there we rest.

Play.

West has a pleasing Diamond sequence to lead from and we settle down to cogitate awhile. **Count and Plan...**

We assess our position and see that (surprise, surprise!) we don't have all the tricks we need. There are just seven *on top* (two Spades, one Heart, two Diamonds and two Clubs) so we need two extras from somewhere. We have two suits that could be developed (Hearts and Spades) but it's pretty clear that the Spades are the way to go. The Hearts are feeble, the Spades have greater strength and offer more promise.

We're going to need entries to dummy. Unlike some past hands, we won't be able to use our overtaking strategy, so it's all about what we choose to do at trick one.

We take the opening lead in hand, preserving the ♦A as a later entry to the Spades. At trick two, we immediately tackle our main source of tricks (Spades) by unblocking the ♠A. We are a little worried about the quality of our Spade suit, so we pay special attention to the opponents' cards, watching the spots.

At tricks two and three, West drops both the ♠J and ♠9. This is great news, as it tells us that the remaining ♠10 8 are equals against the ♠Q. Once the ♠Q is driven from its hiding place (it has to happen sooner or later, no?) the remaining Spades are all masters.

The ♠10 duly forces the ♠Q and from there it's plain sailing. We win the ♦A, cash the remaining


♠8 6 and take the winning high cards in the closed hand.

Nine tricks arrive courtesy of four Spades, one Heart, two Diamonds and two Clubs.



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Y1 VBlue #13 Limit rebids in No-trumps Part 2 ACOL	Contract: 3N
Date: 24/03/2016	By: South
Dealer: East	Board #: 6
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: None

	North	
	♠ K7653	
	♥ 873	
	♦ 762	
	♣ AJ	
West		East
♠ J94		♠ T82
♥ A		♥ KT9652
♦ KQJT		♦ 984
♣ 98653		♣ 7
	South	
	♠ AQ	
	♥ QJ4	
	♦ A53	
	♣ KQT42	

This last hand may prove be a bit of a challenge – in the play, anyway.

You have a chance for an overtrick... always a good thing if it doesn't jeopardise your contract.

West	North	East	South
-	-	P	1♣
P	1♠	P	2NT
P	3NT	P	P
P			

Lead: ♦ K

An interesting declarer-play problem to end this series.

Bidding.

We open 1♣ after East has Passed as dealer and watch as partner responds 1♠. Now we can jump to 2NT to indicate 17-18 points and a balanced hand; that's a good description of the South cards.

North, holding 8 points, has enough to raise us to game in No-trumps.

Play.

West has an easy lead of the ♦K and we realise it's time to **Count** and **Plan**.

[By the way. *Why not lead a Club from West? Well, we have bid them as South and, anyway, the Diamonds are really powerful. By leading the ♦K West knows he will have four tricks set up in good time (three Diamonds and a Heart) whereas leading Clubs looks to be – to say the least – a slow process*].

Back to the show. We have nine apparent tricks to start with: three Spades, one Diamond and five Clubs. However, the Spades are blocked and – surprisingly – we are going to be short of entries to the South hand. Let's go through the play, mentally.

Plan A: Win the ♦A, cash the ♠A Q to unblock that suit, cross to the ♣A to cash the ♠K and now the only way home to the closed hand is to overtake the ♣J.

Is there anything better?

Try Plan B: Cash the ♣A J first, return to the ♠A and cash the Clubs? Nope. No good. Sure, we'd make five Club tricks this way for sure but we'd only ever make two Spade tricks. Try it and see.

Plan A is our only play. Cash the Spade honours, cross to the ♣A, take the ♠K and overtake the ♣J to return to the South hand.

So we need Clubs to split 4-2 or 3-3 to make this hand. Or do we have a second string to our bow? What if Spades break 3-3? That would give us enough tricks, on any Club break.

So, we take trick the $\diamond A$ and immediately unblock the Spades. At trick four, we cross to dummy with that $\clubsuit A$ (**not** the $\clubsuit J$, please!), and cash the $\spadesuit K$. How's our luck today? It's good! We see the Spades are indeed 3-3. We pick up our extra two tricks in that suit whilst the lead is on table for the last time.

And then we return to hand by overtaking the $\clubsuit J$, fully expecting that all the Clubs will be good. Nope, not this time. West astutely keeps all of his Clubs and the evil 5-1 break means that we have only four Club tricks and not five.

A shame – but we do have five Spades, one Diamond and four Clubs and that's an overtrick.