

Defense Against a Weak 1NT Structure (Part 2)

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1 The nature of a weak 1NT structure (as most commonly played):

1.1 1NT bid is 12-14 (or fewer) high-card points with no singletons, at most one doubleton, and no five-card majors. Strong 1NT players would open 1♣ or 1♦ with these hands. The weak 1NT bid prevents you from overcalling at the one level if you have a five-card major.

1.2 With a strong 1NT hand they start with 1 of a suit and rebid 1NT if possible.

2 How to interfere with a weak 1NT opening:

2.1 A penalty double is a must. Doubler should have at least 14 hcp.

2.2 Since a major suit game or 3NT is very possible for the defenders, constructive elements (especially for the major suits) are emphasized.

3 When to interfere:

3.1 Whereas strong 1NT teams are annoyed by interference, weak 1NT teams will often be relieved to be out of the auction.

3.2 When you are in the direct seat:

3.2.1 Pay close attention to the vulnerability.

3.2.2 Don't overcall a suit that you would ordinarily be reluctant to play at the two-level. You should have perhaps 10 hcp non-vulnerable and more vulnerable.

3.3 When you are in the balancing seat (1NT)-P-(P)-?:

3.3.1 Should you just borrow a king?

3.3.2 Overcalling is similar to the usual 2♣ over 1♦ situation, but doubling is different.

3.4 If responder has bid a suit, check out transfers and “Forcing Stayman” on the convention card to see if the bid shows a weak hand.

4 What if they open a minor?

4.1 It never shows a balanced minimum. Opener with a balanced hand and more than a minimum wants to rebid 1NT or 2NT.

4.2 1♦ by responder to 1♣ may show a weak balanced hand. Check out “1NT/2♣” on minor suit section of the convention card.

4.3 Overcalling a major or bidding a minor at the two-level can be very disruptive.

4.4 Don't stretch to double.

4.5 If they bid 1m-1x-1NT (15-17):

4.5.1 No-trump defense in the direct seat?

4.5.2 How weak in the balancing set?