

26. Opening 1NT with 18 points is not done

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<p>♠ AJ9 ♥ Q432 ♦ K4 ♣ AKJ2</p>		<p>♠ 743 ♥ 976 ♦ AJ765 ♣ 73</p>	
<p>♠ Q108 ♥ A85 ♦ Q2 ♣ Q10985</p>	<p>♠ K652 ♥ KJ10 ♦ 10983 ♣ 64</p>		
<p>W N E S P 1♣ P 1♠ P 2NT P 3NT All Pass</p>			
<p>--North-South Vulnerable--</p>			

Notrump Ranges:

Do you know what to do with a balanced hand with any point range? The following are Notrump ranges for the following balanced hands:

- 12-14HCP --- Open a suit and rebid 1 NT
- 15-17HCP --- Open 1 NT
- 18-19HCP --- Open a suit and jump rebid NT
- 20-21HCP --- Open 2 NT
- 22-24HCP --- Open 2 clubs and rebid 2 NT
- 25-27HCP --- Open 2 clubs and rebid 3 NT

The purpose of bidding within these ranges is to give one's partner the best picture of your hand that you can. So should you open 1NT with 18 points? Of course not. Even if the hand is 4-3-3-3, 1NT tells partner you have 15-17.

There are two exceptions, but they are both 14 points that act like more. The first one is when one holds a good fourteen points with a very usable five-card suit. The second one is when one's RHO (right hand opponent) bids a suit in which one has several stoppers. The ten in his suit may now take a trick, and the

14 points are over top of his points. In spite of saying all that, most experienced partners want 15 to 17 high card points when you bid 1 NT.

The bidding:

North opens one club and South replies one spade. North does not have four spades, so he jumps to 2NT. South has nothing more to say about his suit holdings and places the contract in 3NT.

The opening lead: Six of diamonds

The play:

North wins the opening lead and attacks hearts. Declarer must lose sure losers before taking chances on finesses. West wins the ace of hearts and returns his last diamond. East knows West has no more diamonds so he cashes the ace and jack diamonds.

Declarer counts his tricks. He has two spades, three hearts, two diamonds and two clubs for a total of nine tricks and his contract. The spade and club finesses work, but declarer cannot take the risk of taking any finesse into the hand with the last diamond.

The result: Three notrump makes for +600.

Note:

-If North opens 1 NT, that is where he plays. In 1 NT, North can risk the spade finesse and will make ten tricks.

The result: One notrump making plus three for +180.