

BALANCING BIDS THAT INVOLVE NO TRUMP by Maritha Pottenger

Bidding NT in the Balancing Seat

- 1) Mike Lawrence suggests 11-14 HCP to balance with 1NT over 1C-P-P or over 1D-P-P. You may have a stopper OR you may just have length in that suit (e.g., 9xxx).
- 2) Mike Lawrence suggests that 11-15 or 11-16 HCP is advisable to balance with 1NT over 1H-P-P or over 1S-P-P. You absolutely guarantee a stopper in the major suit.
- 3) Jumping to 2NT shows 19-20 HCP and a stopper. If you are a passed hand, you can use the jump to 2NT as an unusual 2NT (showing the two lower unbid suits).
- 4) Jump to 3 in a lower-ranking suit (usually a minor) shows a good 6 or 7-card suit and invites partner to bid 3NT.

Responder's NT Calls when Partner Makes a Balancing Double

- 1) If Opener passes, 1NT should be 7-11 HCP. If Opener bids again, 1NT should be 9-11 HCP (and guarantees stoppers in both suits).
- 2) 2NT should be around 12-14 HCP if Opener passes (and guarantees a stopper). If Opener bids again, bidding NT at the two level usually shows 12-15 HCP.
- 3) If Opener passes, jump to 3 of a minor shows good 5-card or 6-card suit and 11-13 HCP. Invites 3NT.
- 4) If Opener passes, jump to 3NT should be 15 HCP or a super 14. (Did not want to directly overcall 1NT.)

Responder's NT Calls When Partner Makes a Bid in Balancing Seat

- 1) 1NT shows 9-12 HCP. (Same range whether Opener passes or not.)
- 2) Non-jump to 2NT shows 11-12 HCP. (Same range whether Opener passes or not.)
- 3) Jump to 2NT shows 12-14 HCP. (Same range whether Opener passes or not.)

If Opener bids a 2nd suit, you guarantee stoppers in both suits.

Responder's Bids When Partner Bids a Balancing NT (and Opener Passes)

- 1) Pass with most balanced hands up to 10 or 11 HCP.
- 2) 2NT (inviting game) shows 11-13 HCP.
- 3) Bidding game (3NT or 4 of major) shows 14+ HCP.
- 4) Discuss with partner whether you are playing "systems off" or "systems on" (Stayman, transfers, etc., still apply.) Mark on top middle of ACBL convention card.

Balancer's Rebids

- 1) After you double and partner bids a suit (at cheapest level), cue bid shows good hand, but usually only 3-card support. Should be 18+ HCP. Looking for a NT stopper generally.
- 2) Rebid of 1NT after your double shows 17+ HCP.
- 3) If partner jumped in a minor, bid 3NT with any decent 12 HCP or more and a stopper.
- 4) If partner cue-bids, explore possibility of NT (show a stopper if you have one) as well as possibility that partner is showing a strong raise for your suit (if you reopened with a suit bid).