

## Twos and Transfers

### Chapter 4: No Trump Rebids

Now that we have reached some conclusions about bidding when partner opens 1NT, we should also address the 1NT rebids. It is more sensible to have a 1NT rebid showing 15-17 HCP rather than 15-16. It may not sound like much of a difference but to rebid 2NT with a 17 count can be unpalatable at times, and even with an 18 count I have downgraded a poor hand and rebid 1NT. So, why not specify the 1NT rebids as 15-17? If you do, it helps if you can then add a small tweak to your bidding by having a way to ask the 1NT bidder more about the 1NT rebid, and that is popularly known as ‘checkback’.

I won’t describe exactly how ‘checkback’ works, and I suspect that there are many different versions, so to make it simple, just do it this way: bid 2C and that is ‘checkback’. Partner bids 2D with a minimum and not three card support for responder’s suit, or 2H or 2S with three card support. With a maximum, a bid of 2NT or jump to 3D, 3H, or 3S tells the story. All that means is that 2C can no longer be used as a sign off with club support if opener has opened 1C, but if your hand is that weak it is just as sensible to pass the 1NT rebid.

Now that we have ‘checkback’ available, it is important to reinforce the importance of having a trump suit with a fit, and not just lazily bid, or pass, No Trumps. I have stated many times that No Trumps should be a fall back option when there is no sensible trump contract to play in. At low levels that should be the case whether it is a minor or major suit, but at game level it is very important that you can choose to play in a 5-3 major suit fit rather than in No Trumps, and in 3NT rather than 5C or 5D when you have a minor suit fit when 3NT is more feasible.

Apart from the times that you will want to play checkback after a 1NT rebid, there will be times when you have responded in a major and opener has rebid their minor. Too many people then manage to miss their 5-3 major suit fit, but it is very easy *not* to miss it, if you want to find it. Either fourth suit forcing or a bid in a new suit at the three level will ask partner to show you three card support as long as you know what you’re doing, e.g. 1D-1S-2D-3C or 1C-1S-2C-3D are sequences that are generally used to ask for three card support. In neither case should opener raise the new suit to the four level, what responder is specifically looking for is three card support for the major suit.

*Both ignorance and laziness breed bad bidding habits.*

[villyn@xtra.co.nz](mailto:villyn@xtra.co.nz)