

BRIDGE – INTERMEDIATE LESSON II – 15a

The Meaning of Various No-Trump Bids by an Opening Bidder

“**Bidding**,” is the fundamental language used during the first phase of the game of Bridge! It is just as important as “**Signaling**,” which is the basic and essential language used by the defense during the play of the hand during the second phase of the game.

Bidding is the method by which each Partner is responsible, as succinctly and accurately as possible, to describe his/her holdings with respect to its strength (*HCP's*) and to its shape (*Distribution of cards in the suits held*). In order for the communication of the bidding process to be successful, however, with success being defined as a true understanding by each of the two Partners as to the exact description of the information which is being telegraphed, it requires both a precise description delivered by the “*telling Partner*,” and, just as importantly, an accurate interpretation by the “*listening Partner*,” as to that which is being described.

One of the areas for potential misinterpretation during the bidding process often occurs when any No-Trump bid is made by either Partner, a misunderstanding as to exactly what the bidding shows with respect to **strength, distribution, meaning**, and whether or not a “*stopper*” in any particular suit does, or does not, exist in the Bidder's hand, if it is needed and/or required.

The Following Represent Examples of Many of These Important No-Trump Bids

(A) Opening No Trump Bids

1a. A 1-NT Opening Bid, today, in the “Standard American” bidding system, shows 15-17 HCP's with an evenly-balanced distribution. It does not promise that all suits contain stoppers, but by consensus, usually does promise stoppers in at least three of the four suits.

(a) AKxx Kxx xxx AQx (Open 1-NT) (b) AKxx xxx xxx AKQ (Open 1C, not 1-NT)

1b. A 1-NT Opening Bid in the “ACOL” or in the “Precision” bidding systems, shows 12-14 HCP's, an evenly-balanced distribution, and here, once more, stoppers in at least three of the four suits.

(a) AJx KQx xxx Kxxx (Open 1-NT) (b) Axx Kxx AQxx Kxx (Open 1D, not 1-NT)

2. A 2-NT Opening Bid, by Partnership agreement, shows 20-21 HCP's, (alternatively, 20-22 or 21-22), and, again, does not necessarily promise stoppers in all of the four suit, and is also balanced.

Axx AKx Kx AQJxx (Open 2-NT)

3. A “3-NT Opening Bid,” by Partnership agreement, is most frequently used as a “*Gambling 3-NT*” call. It contains a 7-card, self-sufficient, **Club** or **Diamond** suit, headed by an **AKQ**. It contains 9-11 HCP's, and, other than a possible outside **J** or **Q**, shows an absence of honors in any of the other three suits.

(a) xx Qx xx AKQxxxx (Open “3-NT”) (b) xxx xx AKQxxxx x (Open “3-NT”)

(B) No-Trump Re-Bids by an Opening Bidder

1a. A 1-NT Re-Bid by an Opening Bidder, in the “Standard American” system of bidding, shows 12-14 HCP's. It does not promise that all suits contain stoppers, but does promise both an absence of support for Responder's bid suit and an absence of 4-cards in any, as-yet, un-bid suit at the 1-level.

1D - P - 1H - P
1-NT

xx Kxx AQxx Axxx (Re-Bid 1-NT)

1b. A 1-NT Re-Bid by an Opening Bidder, in the “ACOL” bidding system, shows **15-17 HCP**’s. It, likewise, does not promise that all suits contain stoppers, but does promise an absence of support for Responder’s bid suit.

1D - P - 1S - P
1-NT
xx Axx AKxx AJxx (Re-Bid 1-NT)

2. A 1-NT Re-Bid by an Opening Bidder, following *both* an intervening overcall by one of the Opponent’s as well as a response of a new suit from Opener’s responding Partner, shows a balanced hand, **11-14 HCP**’s (in “Standard American,”), and **15-17 HCP**’s (in “ACOL”), a lack of support for Responder’s bid suit, and at least one stopper in the suit bid by the Opponent.

1A - 1B - 1C - P
1-NT
xx Axx Axxxx AJx (Re-Bid 1-NT in S.A.) Kx Axx Axxxx AJx (Re-Bid 1-NT in ACOL)

3. A 1-NT Re-Bid by an Opening Bidder Following Either Opponent’s 1-Level Overcall, Absent Any Response From Opener’s Partner, shows **18-19 HCP**’s with a balanced distribution, at least one “**stopper**” in the Opponent’s bid suit, and is analogous to a hand that would normally have initially produced a jump-re-bid of **2-NT**, had Opener’s Partner responded other than a “*pass.*”

1C - 1H - P - P	1D - P - P - 1S
1-NT	1-NT
KJx AQx KQx Kxxx (Re-Bid 2-NT)	AQx KJx Kxxx KQx (Re-Bid 2-NT)

4a. A 2-NT Re-Bid by an Opening Bidder, in the “Standard American,” “ACOL,” or “2/1 Game-Forcing” bidding systems, *following a 1-level new suit response from Opener’s Partner*, evidences **18-19 HCP**’s. is Game-forcing with a balanced hand, and, here again, does not promise stoppers in all of the as-yet, un-bid suits, but does show an absence of support for Responder’s bid suit as well as an absence of 4-cards in any other, as-yet, un-bid suit at the 1-level.

1C - P - 1D - P
2-NT
AQ Axx xxx AKJxx (Re-Bid 2-NT)

4b. A 2-NT Re-bid by an Opening Bidder, in the “Standard American,” bidding system *following a 2-level, new suit, response from Opener’s Partner*, shows minimum opening HCP values (**12-14 HCP**’s), and a balanced hand with an absence of support for Responder’s bid suit. It also does not necessarily show stoppers in both of the two, as-yet, un-bid suits, as in 3a, above

1S - P - 2D - P
2-NT
Axxxx Axx Kx Qxx (Re-Bid 2-NT)

4c. A 2-NT Re-Bid by an Opening Bidder, in the “2/1- Game-Forcing” bidding system, *following a 2-level new suit response from Opener’s Partner (1)*, shows **16-18 HCP**’s, and a lack of support for Responder’s bid suit. Since the Partnership is already in a Game-forcing auction, “a slow arrival is stronger than a quick arrival.” It does not necessarily promise stoppers in both of the two, as-yet, un-bid suits. With minimum values, Opener’s re-bid with a balanced hand, if holding **12-14 HCP**’s (2), would be 3-NT; since the Partnership is already in a game-forcing scenario and “a quick arrival is weaker than a slow arrival.”

(1) 1S - P - 2D - P
 2-NT
 AJxxx AKx Kxx Qx (Re-Bid 2-NT)

(2) 1S - P - 2D - P
 3-NT
 Axxxx Axx Kxx Qx (Re-Bid 3-NT)

5. A 2-NT Re-Bid by an Opening Bidder After First Bidding a Strong, Artificial and Forcing “2C” Opening shows an evenly-balanced hand with **22-23** HCP’s; i.e., an ultra-strong, opening No-Trump hand.

“2C” - P - 2B - P
 2-NT
 AKxx Ax KQxx AQx (Open “2C” and then Re-Bid 2-NT)

6. A 3-NT Re-Bid by an Opening Bidder Following Partner’s Simple Response of a New Suit at the 1-level, shows **19-21** HCP’s, *with a likelihood, but not a guarantee, of one or more stoppers in all of the as-yet, un-bid suits*. It denies support for Responder’s bid suit, and the presence of any, 4-card, as-yet, un-bid Major.

1C - P - 1H - P
 3-NT
 AQx AQ Kx AJxxxx

7. A 3-NT Re-Bid by an Opening Bidder Following Three Suits Having Been Bid by the Partnership, shows game values, *with a guarantee of one or more stoppers in any, as-yet, un-bid suit*. It also denies support for Responder’s bid suit(s).

1C - P - 1H - P
 2C - P - 2S - P
 3-NT
 Qxx Jx KQx AJxxxx