***This Week in Bridge***

**(5) Responding to 1NT with the Majors**

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*The topics discussed below are several independent conventions, but they work well together to produce a set of tools for dealing with Major suit hands when your partner opens a strong NT.*

**Review of Basic Transfer Sequences**

*Level: 2*

*Invitational Hands (8-9 HCP or equivalent playing strength)*

1NT - 2♦\* - 2♥ - 2NT 8-9 HCP, 5c♥

1NT - 2♦\* - 2♥ - 3♥ 7-8 HCP, 6+c♥

1NT - 2♥\* - 2♠ - 2NT 8-9 HCP, 5c♠

1NT - 2♥\* - 2♠ - 3♠ 7-8 HCP, 6+c♠

*Game Forcing Hands*

1NT - 2♦\* - 2♥ - 3NT 10+ HCP, 5c♥

1NT - 4♦\* - 4♥ 9+ HCP, 6+c♥

1NT - 2♦\* - 2♥ - 3m 10+ HCP, 5+c♥, 4+c minor, Game Forcing (Often slammish.)

1NT - 2♥\* - 2♠ - 3NT 10+ HCP, 5c♠

1NT - 4♥\* - 4♠ 9+ HCP, 6+c♠

1NT - 2♥\* - 2♠ - 3m 10+ HCP, 5+c♠, 4+c minor, Game Forcing (Often slammish.)

*Slam Invitational Hands*

1NT - 4NT 16 HCP, Quantitative

1NT - 2♦\* - 2♥ - 4NT 15-16 HCP, 5c♥, Quantitative

1NT - 2♦\* - 2♥ - 4♥ 13-14 HCP, 6+c♥, Quantitative

1NT - 2♥\* - 2♠ - 4NT 15-16 HCP, 5c♠, Quantitative

1NT - 2♥\* - 2♠ - 4♠ 13-14 HCP, 6+c♠, Quantitative

*Also see Splinters and 5-4+ hands (above.)*

*Keycard*

1NT - 4♦\* - 4♥ - 4NT Keycard in ♥

1NT - 4♥\* - 4♠ - 4NT Keycard in ♠

**Other Standard Transfer Sequences**

*Levels: 2*

*Texas Transfers*

1NT - 4♦\* Transfer to ♥ (6+c♥)

1NT - 4♥\* Transfer to ♠ (6+c♠)

These bids are either used to signoff or to start a Keycard auction.

*Jacoby Transfers for Slam Tries*

1NT - 2♦\* - 2♥ - 4♥ Slam try with 6+c♥ (usually no shortness)

1NT - 2♦\* - 2♥ - 3♠\* *Splinter*, 6+c♥, Slam try

1NT - 2♦\* - 2♥ - 4♣\* *Splinter*, 6+c♥, Slam try

1NT - 2♦\* - 2♥ - 4♦\* *Splinter*, 6+c♥, Slam try

1NT - 2♦\* - 2♥ - 4NT Quantitative with 5c♥

1NT - 2♥\* - 2♠ - 4♠ Slam try with 6+c♠ (usually no shortness)

1NT - 2♥\* - 2♠ - 4♣\* *Splinter*, 6+c♠, Slam try

1NT - 2♥\* - 2♠ - 4♦\* *Splinter*, 6+c♠, Slam try

1NT - 2♥\* - 2♠ - 4♥\* *Splinter*, 6+c♠, Slam try

1NT - 2♥\* - 2♠ - 4NT Quantitative with 5c♠

**Drop Dead Stayman, Smolen, Delayed Texas: 5-4, 5-5, and 6-4 Major Suit Hands**

*Level: 2, 3*

*Weak Hands with Both Majors*

With weak hands with 5-4+M we use a convention called *Drop Dead Stayman*.

1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥\* This shows a weak hand with at least 4-4M (usually 5-4M) and asks opener to pass or correct to 2♠. It could have longer ♠ than ♥.

*4-4M is relatively rare and usually done when vulnerable with almost no values.*

*Invitational Hands with Both Majors*

1NT – 2♦\* - 2♥ - 2♠ 5c♥-4c♠, Invitational Values, NF

1NT – 2♣\* - 2♦ - 2♠ 5c♠, Invitational Values, unbalanced hands (usually 4c♥)

After this bidding sequence 2NT is not corrective, but it asks for responder’s other suit. This is most often used to find out about a possible double fit and bid game.

*With 5-5M+ and invitational values, we have conventional bids available: we might bid 3♥ over 1NT (or treat it like we are 5-4 in the Majors.)*

*Game Forcing Hands with Both Majors*

* With 4-4M, GF values, we simply bid Stayman.
* With 5-4M, GF values, we start with Stayman and follow with *Smolen.*
* With 5-5M+, GF values, we have a conventional bid of 3♠ (or Transfer to ♠ then bid 3♥.)
* With 6/4M GF values, we start with Stayman. If opener doesn’t have a 4cM we continue with either Delayed Texas or Smolen.

With a 6/4 hand that has no slam interest we make a delayed Texas bid.

1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 4♦\* 6c♥-4c♠

1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 4♥\* 6c♠-4c♥

With a 6/4 hand that has slam interest we use Smolen to find out if we have a 9-card fit. If partner rebids 3NT, denying 3 cards in our long Major, then we retransfer to show our 6-2 fit.

1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♠\* - 3NT - 4♦\* Re-Transfer with 6c♥-4c♠

1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♥\* - 3NT - 4♥\* Re-Transfer with 6c♠-4c♥

**Stayman+ Auctions**

*Level: 2*

*Re-Stayman* (1NT – 2♣ - 2♥ - 3♣\*)

3♣\* is a waiting bid – game forcing, often natural with ♣s. First, 3♣ asks Opener if he has 4c♠. If he doesn’t, then Opener can bid 3♥ to show a 5-card ♥ suit or bid 3♦ to show cooperation for a ♣ slam. 3NT is regressive.

*Note: Standard bidding would be to bid 3NT after 2♥ and have that promise 4c♠. Re-Stayman allows for hand re-evaluation and thus doesn’t require that a jump to 3NT shows 4c♠.*

*Forcing Major Suit Raises*

1NT – 2♣ - 2♥ - 3♠\* Forcing ♥ Raise. Slammish. Asks Opener to Cuebid. (Advanced)

1NT – 2♣ - 2♥ - 4♣\* Splinter, 4+c♥, 0-1♣

1NT – 2♣ - 2♥ - 4♦\* Splinter, 4+c♥, 0-1♦

1NT – 2♣ - 2♠ - 3♥\* Forcing ♠ Raise. Slammish. Asks Opener to Cuebid. (Advanced)

1NT – 2♣ - 2♠ - 4♣\* Splinter, 4c+♠, 0-1♣

1NT – 2♣ - 2♠ - 4♦\* Splinter, 4c+♠, 0-1♦

1NT – 2♣ - 2♠ - 4♥\* Splinter, 4c+♠, 0-1♥

**Conclusion**

Finding Major suit fits in an important part of any bidding system. Being able to describe a variety of different Major suit shapes and hand strengths effectively after partner opens the bidding with 1NT is essential to modern bidding. Our side frequently opens the bidding with 1NT and after that our first priority will be to look for a Major suit fit. It may seem that there is a lot of complicated bidding sequences and agreements to remember (because there are), but this is an area that is worth putting some work into for your bidding system and making sure you have a complete set of options for how to describe your hand.