

Responding to Partner's Opening Weak 1 NT

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

♠ 7 6		♠ Q J 10 9 8 2
♥ 9 8 6 4 2		♥ 5 3
♦ K Q J 10		♦ 8 4
♣ A J		♣ K Q 2

	♠ 5 4		
	♥ A K 10 7		
	♦ 9 6 2		
	♣ 10 6 5 4		

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	Pass

Pass

Lead: ♠ Q

We have 7 top tricks (2 ♠ , 4 ♥ , 1 ♦ , 0 ♣).

In the heart suit we must remember to 'play the high cards from the short side first' i.e. must start with the Queen and the Jack.

As we have no entries in dummy, we must overtake ♥ J with ♥ A (or ♥ K). Luckily we also have ♥ 10 which will give us a 4th heart trick even though we had to play ♥ J and ♥ A on the same trick.

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Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 7 6		♠ K 4 3
♥ 10 9 6 4 2		♥ A K
♦ K Q J 10		♦ A 7 5 3
♣ A 6		♣ 10 9 8 7

♠ A 5		♠ Q J 10 9 8 2
♥ Q J 8 7		♥ 5 3
♦ 9 6 2		♦ 8 4
♣ J 5 4 3		♣ K Q 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	Pass	1 NT	Pass

Lead: ♠ Q

There are 7 top tricks (2 ♠ , 4 ♥ , 1 ♦ , 0 ♣).

In the heart suit we must remember to 'play the high cards from the short side first' i.e. must play the Ace and King first.

It is important to win the opening lead with ♠ K and then cash ♥ AK. We can then cross to dummy with ♠ A and cash ♥ QJ. Finally win ♦ A for our seventh trick.

The ♠ A is our only entry to dummy, so we mustn't play it on trick one. We also shouldn't duck the first spade trick, otherwise we will be forced to win with the ♠ A at trick 2.

Opening 1 NT and Responses Level 1

Board 3

	♠ 6 5 2											
South Deals	♥ A K J 7											
E-W Vul	♦ 9 7 3											
	♣ 9 8 6											
		<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ K Q J 9 8	♠ 10 7										
	♥ 10 6 5 4	♥ 9 8 3										
	♦ J 2	♦ K Q 10 4										
	♣ K 7	♣ Q J 10 3										
		♠ A 4 3										
		♥ Q 2										
		♦ A 8 6 5										
		♣ A 5 4 2										
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>									
Pass	Pass	Pass	1 NT									

Lead: ♠ K

A very straightforward hand. We have 7 top tricks, 4 ♥ in and 3 Aces in the other suits. The only danger is blocking the Heart suit. Play the 'high card from the short side first' i.e. play the ♥ Q first and then the ♥ 2 over to dummy's winners.

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Board 4

	♠ A J 10 9 8 4											
West Deals	♥ 10 6 5											
Both Vul	♦ —											
	♣ Q 10 6 5											
		<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ Q 6 2	♠ K 3										
	♥ A J 3	♥ 8 7 4										
	♦ 10 6 5	♦ A K Q J 2										
	♣ A K 3 2	♣ 9 7 4										
		♠ 7 5										
		♥ K Q 9 2										
		♦ 9 8 7 4 3										
		♣ J 8										
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>									
1 NT	Pass	3 NT	Pass									
Pass	Pass											

Lead: ♠ J

After winning trick one with ♠ K we have a total of 9 winners. 1 in ♠, 1 in ♥, 5 in ♦ and 2 in ♣. What could go wrong?

We must make sure to play the diamonds in the right order, playing the high card from the short side first to unblock.

In this case the ♦ 10 is the 'high' card. If we play the diamonds starting with the AKQ the ten will fall under the queen and be wasted.

The 5-0 break in diamonds was unlucky but if we play correctly the 5-0 break won't hurt us. In practice, on this hand it's OK to start with ♦ A, provided that we notice the 5-0 break and play ♦ 2 to ♦ 10 on the second round.

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Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ A Q
♥ K 8 6 4
♦ 6 5 3
♣ A 7 3 2

♠ 10 9 8 7
♥ J 9 5 3
♦ K 9 8
♣ Q 9



♠ 6 5
♥ Q 10 2
♦ Q J 10 7 2
♣ K 10 4

♠ K J 4 3 2
♥ A 7
♦ A 4
♣ J 8 6 5

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Lead: ♦ Q

Assuming the spades break no worse than 4-2, there are 5 winners in ♠, 2 in ♥, 1 in ♦ and 1 in ♣. A total of nine top tricks. We just must make sure to play them in the right order to avoid blocking the spades.

After winning trick 1 with ♦ A, continue with the ♠ A and ♠ Q. Then cross to the ♥ A and cash the remaining spades.

Finally we cash our two remaining winners for 9 tricks.

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Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

♠ 8 7
♥ 10 8 6 2
♦ K Q 7
♣ K 6 3 2

♠ Q 4 3
♥ A Q 3
♦ A J 6 5
♣ 7 5 4



♠ A K 5
♥ K J 4
♦ 4 3 2
♣ Q J 10 9

♠ J 10 9 6 2
♥ 9 7 5
♦ 10 9 8
♣ A 8

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 NT	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass
Lead: ♠ J			


We have 7 top winners. 3 in ♠, 3 in ♥ and 1 in ♦. The best chance for two extra tricks is to promote two club tricks by forcing out the opponents ♣ A and ♣ K.

It is important that we do this as early as possible. We will have to lose the lead twice so we need our other high cards for winning back the lead.

Responding to Partner's Opening Weak 1 NT

Board 7

♠ A 3
 South Deals ♥ K Q J 9 8
 Both Vul ♦ 9 5 2
 ♣ J 6 3

♠ Q J 10 7 5 4		♠ 9
♥ A 4		♥ 7 6 5 2
♦ Q J 10		♦ 8 4 3
♣ Q 9		♣ K 10 8 4 2
		♠ K 8 6 2
	♥ 10 3	
	♦ A K 7 6	
	♣ A 7 5	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 NT
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	3 NT

All pass

Lead: ♠ Q

We have 5 top tricks. 2 in ♠, 1 in ♣ and 2 in ♦. Four more tricks will come from hearts once the Ace is forced out.


We only have one entry in dummy outside of hearts (♠ A) so we need to play carefully. We must win trick 1 with ♠ K and then play top hearts from dummy until the defenders play their Ace.

Note: If we win trick 1 with ♠ A (or if we duck trick 1) we will have played our only entry to dummy too soon. Defenders will then duck the first round of hearts, cutting us off from dummy.

Responding to Partner's Opening Weak 1 NT

Board 8

♠ Q J 10 8 5 3
 West Deals ♥ A 7
 None Vul ♦ 10 9 5
 ♣ J 2

♠ A 6		♠ K 4 2
♥ K Q J 10		♥ 9 6 2
♦ K 6 3 2		♦ A 7 4
♣ 6 4 3		♣ A K 8 7
		♠ 9 7
	♥ 8 5 4 3	
	♦ Q J 8	
	♣ Q 10 9 5	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 NT	Pass	3 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Lead: ♠ Q

We have 6 top winners. 2 in ♠, 2 in ♦ and 2 in ♣. There are three potential winners in hearts once we have forced the opponents to play their Ace.

We must play the hearts as soon as possible while we have winners in all the other suits to win back the lead.

Opening 1 NT and Responses

Board 9

North Deals
None Vul

♠ Q 10 6 5		♠ J 9 8
♥ Q 5		♥ J 10 9 7 3
♦ 8 7 6		♦ A 5
♣ Q 10 6 4		♣ J 9 3

	♠ A K 2		
	♥ 8 6 4		
	♦ Q 4 3 2		
	♣ K 8 2		

	♠ 7 4 3		
	♥ A K 2		
	♦ K J 10 9		
	♣ A 7 5		

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	3 NT
All pass			

North opens 1 NT, showing 12-14 points. With 15 points and no 5 card major South easily has enough for 3 NT.

Lead ♥ J

Declarer counts top tricks: 2 ♠, 2 ♥, and 2 ♣. Three extra tricks will come from diamonds once the ♦ A is forced out. Declarer must not cash his top tricks: he must keep them as stoppers. Declarer wins trick 1 with ♥ A and attacks diamonds, making ♠ A K, ♥ A K, ♣ A K and 3 diamond tricks.

Opening 1 NT and Responses

Board 10

East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 7 4 3		♠ A K 2
♥ A K 2		♥ 8 6 4
♦ J 10 9 8		♦ Q 4 3 2
♣ A 7 5		♣ K 8 2

	♠ Q 10 6 5		
	♥ Q 5		
	♦ K 7 6		
	♣ Q 10 6 4		

	♠ J 9 8		
	♥ J 10 9 7 3		
	♦ A 5		
	♣ J 9 3		

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
2 NT	All pass	1 NT	Pass

East opens 1 NT, showing 12-14 points. With 12 points West invites game with 2 NT. East wisely passes this with a minimum 12 points.

Lead ♥ J

Declarer has 6 top tricks, ♠ A K, ♥ A K, ♣ A K

Declarer must not cash his top tricks: he must keep them as stoppers. Declarer wins trick 1 with ♥ A and attacks diamonds, making 2 diamond tricks.

Opening 1 NT and Responses

Board 11

♠ 7 4 3			
♥ A K 2			
♦ J 10 9 8			
♣ A 7 5			
♠ J 9		♠ Q 10 6 5	
♥ J 10 9 7 3		♥ 5 4	
♦ A 5		♦ K 7 6 2	
♣ J 9 3 2		♣ Q 10 4	
	♠ A K 8 2		
	♥ Q 8 6		
	♦ Q 4 3		
	♣ K 8 6		

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 NT
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 NT
All pass			

South opens 1 NT, showing 12-14 points. With 12 points North invites game with 2 NT. South has 14 points, a maximum 1 NT opening bid, so he bids on to 3 NT.

Lead ♥ J.

Declarer can count 7 top tricks ♠ A K, ♥ A K Q, ♣ A K

Declarer must not cash his top tricks: he must keep them as stoppers. Declarer wins trick 1 with ♥ A and attacks diamonds, making 2 diamond tricks.

Opening 1 NT and Responses

Board 12

♠ J 9			
♥ J 10 9 7 3			
♦ A 5			
♣ J 9 3 2			
♠ K 8 7		♠ A 4 3	
♥ K 6 4		♥ A 8 2	
♦ 6 4 3 2		♦ J 10 9 8	
♣ A K 8		♣ 10 7 5	
	♠ Q 10 6 5 2		
	♥ Q 5		
	♦ K Q 7		
	♣ Q 6 4		

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 NT	All pass		

West opens 1 NT, showing 12-14 points. With only 9 points East passes because the most the partnership can have is 23 points which is not enough for game.

Lead ♥ J


Declarer can count 6 top tricks; ♠ A K, ♥ A K, ♣ A K. Declarer must not cash his top tricks: he must keep them as stoppers.

Declarer wins trick 1 with ♥ A and attacks diamonds, making ♠ A K, ♥ A K, ♣ A K and one diamond trick.

Opening 1 NT and Responses

Board 15

South Deals ♠ 5 2
 Both Vul ♥ A Q J 10 4 3
 ♦ Q 7
 ♣ A 8 5

♠ A J 10 4 ♥ 8 7 ♦ 10 9 6 5 2 ♣ 7 4		♠ Q 9 8 7 ♥ 9 6 5 ♦ J 4 ♣ K Q J 10	♠ K 6 3 ♥ K 2 ♦ A K 8 3 ♣ 9 6 3 2
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<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	4 ♥	All pass	1 NT

South opens 1 NT, showing 12-14 points. North is confident the partnership has enough for game, and knowing that they have at least 8 hearts, bids the heart game.


East leads ♣ K, top of a sequence.

Declarer takes ♣ A, draws trumps with ♥ AK Q and then cashes three top diamonds, starting with ♦ Q, the high card from the shorter holding.

Opening 1 NT and Responses

Board 16

West Deals ♠ A J 10 4
 None Vul ♥ 8 7
 ♦ 10 9 6 5 2
 ♣ 7 4

♠ K 6 3 ♥ K 2 ♦ K J 8 3 ♣ K 6 3 2		♠ 5 2 ♥ A Q J 10 4 3 ♦ Q 7 ♣ A 8 5	♠ Q 9 8 7 ♥ 9 6 5 ♦ A 4 ♣ Q J 10 9
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<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 NT	Pass	4 ♥	All pass

West opens 1 NT, showing 12-14 points. East is confident the partnership has enough for game, and knowing that they have at least 8 hearts, bids the heart game.

Lead ♣ Q

Declarer counts 8 top tricks, 6 ♥, and 2 ♣. Two more will come in diamonds after driving out the ♦ A.

Declarer takes ♣ A, draws trumps with ♥ AKQ and then plays diamonds to drive out ♦ A, starting with ♦ Q, the high card from the shorter holding.

Opening 1 NT and Responses

Board 17	♠ 8 5 4			
North Deals	♥ Q 2			
E-W Vul	♦ A K 6 5			
	♣ A 7 6 4			
	♠ K Q J		♠ A 10 7 6	
	♥ K 5		♥ A 4 3	
	♦ J 9 3 2		♦ 10 8 7	
	♣ J 10 8 2		♣ K Q 5	
	♠ 9 3 2			
	♥ J 10 9 8 7 6			
	♦ Q 4			
	♣ 9 3			
West	North	East	South	
All pass	1 NT	Pass	2 ♥	

North opens 1 NT, showing 12-14 points. South has only 3 HCP but with a 5+ card suit can make a weakness takeout into 2 ♥.

Lead ♠ K

The defenders may take three spade tricks. Then West switches to ♣ J. Declarer wins with the ♣ A. Declarer can count 4 top tricks, 3 ♦, and 1 ♣. four more will come from hearts once the ♥ AK are drawn. That's 8 tricks, but if the defence win the lead they can make three more tricks, the ♥ A and ♥ K and 1 ♣ with ♣ K or ♣ Q, defeating the contract. Declarer cannot afford to draw trumps immediately, which would involve losing the lead, Declarer must start off by cashing ♦ A K Q, discarding a club loser, and hoping that the opponents' diamonds split 4-3 (68% probability).

Despite having only 3 points South makes 2 ♥, a good result because East/West could make 3 NT.

Opening 1 NT and Responses

Board 18	♠ K Q J			
East Deals	♥ K Q 3			
Both Vul	♦ J 9 6 3			
	♣ J 10 8			
	♠ 10 3 2		♠ 8 5 4	
	♥ J 10 9 8 7		♥ 5 2	
	♦ 4 2		♦ A K Q 5	
	♣ 9 3 2		♣ A 7 6 4	
	♠ A 9 7 6			
	♥ A 6 4			
	♦ 10 8 7			
	♣ K Q 5			
West	North	East	South	
2 ♥	All pass	1 NT	Pass	

East opens 1 NT, showing 12-14 points. West makes a weakness takeout into 2 ♥.

North starts with ♠ K, top of a sequence, and the defenders may take three spade tricks. Then North switches to ♣ J. Declarer cannot possibly make 2 ♥, but he can limit the damage by winning ♣ A and playing ♦ A K Q, discarding a club.


Please note that North/South can easily make 3 NT.

Opening 1 NT and Responses

Board 19

South Deals

None Vul

<p>♠ 3 2</p> <p>♥ A K 5 3</p> <p>♦ J 9 5</p> <p>♣ 10 9 8 7</p>		<p>♠ 8 6 4</p> <p>♥ J 10 9 8</p> <p>♦ Q 10</p> <p>♣ A K Q 5</p>	<p>♠ A Q 10 9 7</p> <p>♥ Q 2</p> <p>♦ 8 4 3 2</p> <p>♣ 6 3</p>
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	<p>♠ K J 5</p> <p>♥ 7 6 4</p> <p>♦ A K 7 6</p> <p>♣ J 4 2</p>		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	2 ♠	All pass	1 NT

South opens 1 NT, showing 12-14 points. North makes a weakness takeout into 2 ♠.

Lead ♣ A

East tries to cash ♣ A K Q, but declarer ruffs the third round.

Declarer can count 7 top tricks: 5 ♠ and 2 ♦. There are no ruffing or finessing opportunities. An 8th trick (length) may come from diamonds if the opponents' diamonds split 3-2 (60% probability).

Declarer has no reason for delaying drawing trumps so does so in three rounds. Then he cashes ♦ A K and gives up a diamond trick ("lose to win"). The defenders' diamonds break as hoped for so the ♦ 8 is a length winner.


North makes 2 ♠, but South would have been defeated in 1 NT because of the weakness in hearts and clubs.

Opening 1 NT and Responses

Board 20

West Deals

N-S Vul

<p>♠ A K 5</p> <p>♥ 7 6 4</p> <p>♦ A 9 7 6</p> <p>♣ J 4 2</p>		<p>♠ Q 9 8 7 6 4</p> <p>♥ 2</p> <p>♦ 8 4 3 2</p> <p>♣ 6 3</p>	<p>♠ 3 2</p> <p>♥ A K J 5</p> <p>♦ K J 5</p> <p>♣ 10 9 8 7</p>
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	<p>♠ J 10</p> <p>♥ Q 10 9 8 3</p> <p>♦ Q 10</p> <p>♣ A K Q 5</p>		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 NT	Pass	2 ♠	All pass

West opens 1 NT, showing 12-14 points. East makes a weakness takeout into 2 ♠.

South leads ♣ A K Q. Declarer ruffs ♣ Q.

Declarer can count 7 top tricks, 6 in ♠ and the ♦ A. there are no ruffing or finessing opportunities but an 8th trick may come from diamonds (by length) if diamonds break 3-2. Declarer draws trumps in three rounds and then cashes ♦ A and gives up a diamond trick ("lose to win"). When he next gains the lead he concedes another diamond trick (more "lose to win"). The defenders' diamonds break 3-2 as hoped for so his ♦ 9 is now a winner.

East makes 2 ♠ but North/South could have made 4 ♥.