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**Interesting Board Involving a 1NT Opening,
Transfer to a Minor, And the Possibility of
Setting the Contract Either at 3NT, or 3D**

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Board #4

Tuesday A.M. "49er" game, 10/11/20

**This Board is an excellent reminder of the
importance of providing Partner with the critical
information with which to make the "big" decisions.**

Dealer: WEST

Vul: BOTH

NORTH (9 HCPs)

S: A T 5 4

H: 8 6 4 2

D: J T

C: A T 5

WEST (15 HCPs)

S: K 7 6

H: A K 9 6

D: A 8 7 6

C: J 4

EAST (9 HCPs)

S: J 8

H: J T

D: K Q 9 4 2

C: Q 8 6 3

SOUTH (7 HCPs)

S: Q 9 3 2

H: Q 7 3

D: 5 3

C: K 9 7 2

Bidding

W: 1NT N: PASS E: ???

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¹ Actually, Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen is a fictitious, not a real person. This lesson was actually written by a real person: **Bruce Thompson**.

Here are the **thought processes** of two players, **Bruce West** and **Bruce East**, at each stage of the bidding process, as the bidding progresses.

Bruce West

"I have 15 HCPs, no voids or singletons, and only one doubleton. I **must** show Partner my point count, and that I have a square distribution. Therefore, I **must** bid 1NT."

Bruce East

"North has Passed. Partner has 15 to 17 HCPs, and a square hand. Partner has **limited his hand**: He has shown a *narrow* range for his HCPs (15 to 17), and pretty well described his distribution. Because Partner has "**limited**" his hand, Bruce West **must not** ever bid again, unless I ask him to. I am now **The Captain** of our partnership.

"I have 9 HCPs, with 2 long Minor suits. Our combined point count is roughly $16 + 9 = 25$ HCPs, so 3NT is a possibility, although we are not quite there (to 26) on points. And it is. Indeed, important to remember that, as Yoda teaches, 'Points are for No Trump, and not for Suit contracts, where instead the "Law of Total Tricks" should instead dominate our thinking.' I have 5 Diamonds, including 2 of the top 3 honors, Partner has at least 2 Diamonds, so we have at least **7 Diamonds**. I have 4 Clubs, including the Queen of Clubs, and Partner has at least 2 Clubs, so together we have at least **6 Clubs**. It is likely that in order to be able to open 1NT Bruce West has honors in at least one of the 2 Minors, or both. Thus, being able to run one or both Minors in a 3NT contract is a real possibility. However, I do **not** have side entries to my hand involving winners in Hearts or Spades, but my Clubs might provide an entry to my Diamonds, or my Diamonds might provide an entry to my Clubs."

Bruce East (*Thinking Further*)

"I could bid 3NT thinking that we have roughly 25 HCPs, and probably can run either Diamonds or Clubs. But I have 2 doubletons both to the Jack in the Majors. What if Bruce West has his only doubleton in a Major, and those two cards suck? I think it might be safer to give Partner more info, and let him decide what to do. That way, I can then *blame Partner for anything bad*, which is always a good idea in bridge (although it does lead to partnerships of *short durations!*). So, I will **not** now bid 3NT."

"I could bid 2**NT** to tell Bruce West that I think we have 3**NT**, but are not quite there on points. My bid says, 'If you are at the top of your 1**NT** opening, bid 3**NT**; otherwise, stop.' I will not do this, because Bruce West would have to make this decision *without the knowledge* that I have 2 long Minors, and in particular 5 Diamonds! Instead, I must show my Diamonds!

"If our partnership is playing Minor Transfers Over 1**NT** openings with 3**C** demanding a bid of 3**D**, I will bid 3**C**. If our partnership is playing 2**S** as demanding a 3**C** response, which I can then correct to Diamonds, I will bid 2**S**. I have now "**limited**" my hand as having (1) fewer than 10 points (because I didn't respond 3**NT**), and (2) some points with a long Diamond suit. After my response, Bruce West is now promoted to Captain, or to Admiral, and must make the final decision.

"Bruce West can either leave the contract at 3**D**, or if Bruce West has other suits stopped, and a good fit with my Diamonds, can bid 3**NT**. I, of course, can never bid again."