Micro Bridge Lesson 6

Contested 1NT

Rationale

1NT opening is one of bridge's most descriptive bids. When partner opens 1NT, we have a good idea of his strength and shape. This makes it easier for responder to double the opponents! Do it!

If the opposition bid over our 1NT, all partnerships need to have agreements on the meaning of any bids which we make. The easiest plan is to play "***System Off***". i.e. 2C is to play, not Stayman. Also, no transfers. What if they have doubled? Sometimes, you will hold a shocker and you will want to take the 1NTX out to a suit. Other times, you will think partner has good chances and you want to stop him taking it out to a suit. Here's a summary:-

1NT	(X)	XX	strong – you can make this!
1NT	(X)	2B	To Play

1NT	(X)	P	weak . Please take it out!
XX	(P)	2C	4 card club suit etc.

Here, responder's initial pass is showing weakness and no 5 card suit. Opener now bids a 5 card suit if one is held. Otherwise, opener redoubles which instructs responder to start bidding 4 card suits up-the-line.
Memory Aid:- The *RE*double is for *RE*scue in the *RE*opening Seat only.

- If they overcall a suit, double is penalties. Suit bids by responder are "to play".
- Cue bid of their suit is Stayman.
- Responder shouldn't raise NT without a stopper.
- Jump responses are forcing with 5 card suit

1NT	(2D)	X	Penalties
		2NT	Invitational with a stopper.
		2M	to play in the Major
		3C	to play in 3C
		3D	Stayman
		3M	Natural & forcing, 5 card suit
		3NT	To Play

- If we **OVERCALL** 1NT, again play "*system off*". The 1NT must container a stopper in opener's suit. Since one opponent has already shown an opening hand, they are well-placed to double! The 1NT overcall in the immediate seat is always 15–18 HCP, regardless of your opening 1NT strength. If your stopper is only Ax or Kx, a takeout double may be preferable to 1NT. Remember, they will lead their suit and opener has outside entries. We will need to get our tricks quickly in 1NT. Again, our escapes from 1NTX are the same as for an opening 1NT.

(1B)	1NT	(X)	2C is to play
			2B is Stayman
			P shows weakness & no 5 carder

(1B) 1NT (P) 2C is still to play, sticking to our agreement of "system off".

(1H) 1NT (2C) Most players use 2C as a weak bid and is "to play". With values, they would prefer to double. 2C is saying "I think they were making 1NT"

- If we **REOPEN** 1NT, it has quite a weaker meaning.

i.e. (1B) P (P) 1NT
Here, responder's pass means that our partner almost certainly has some values. Perhaps even an opening hand! Why didn't he double? Probably has the wrong shape. Making a takeout double with the wrong shape is a no-no. So, for the reopening 1NT, we use a range of 10 – 12 HCP. Remember, we are bidding for partner too! This is sometimes called "balancing" or "protecting". We don't want to give up too cheaply. Again, we play "system off". With more than 12 HCP, we need to reopen with a double, then bid NT.

Dlr: W	♠KQ4 ♥72 ♦AJ6 ♣AJT43	
♠J9 ♥AJ63 ♦QT93 ♣KQ7		♠T765 ♥QT ♦8754 ♣65
	♠A832 ♥K954 ♦K2 ♣982	

W	N	E	S	
1D	1NT	P	2D!	2D is Stayman
P	2NT	P	3NT	2NT is no major.

East will probably lead D7. "2nd highest from four small." Although HQ works a little better, declarer covers with HK and the H9 will hold the suit. West is marked with almost all the HCP. Declarer enters dummy to run C9 to establish the suit.

	♠Q8743 ♥754 ♦9 ♣AJ32	
♠J ♥AJ63 ♦KQT43 ♣KQ7		♠T965 ♥KQT ♦875 ♣654
	♠AK2 ♥982 ♦AJ62 ♣T98	

W	N	E	S
1D	P	P	1NT
P	2S	all pass.	

That 1NT looks a bit scary, doesn't it? However, it gives North the chance to bid 2S. Balancing removes the need for north to overcall immediately with that bad suit. This time 2S may be no better than 1NT. However, they can almost certainly make 1NT, 2D or 3D. i.e. They make 90 or 110. Whether our 2S hopefully one off is a good result will depend on vulnerability. i.e. –50 or –100.