

4. Opening 1NT when you shouldn't

What Happened

Literally speaking, South has 14 points. But he hasn't really. Look at his five diamonds including the powerful \spadesuit KJ109 combination, surely worth more than four high-card points. Look at his \heartsuit 109, \heartsuit 9 and \clubsuit 9. His hand is worth nearer 16 points than 14. Opening 1NT does scant justice to his hand. As the play demonstrated.

West led ♥2 v the lowly INT to ♥3, ♥J and ♥K. At trick two, declarer led ♦4 to ♦Q. East won ♦A and switched to ♣6. Declarer ducked to West's ♣Q and won West's ♣3 (to East's ♣J) with ♣A.

Declarer was pretty sure West held ♥Q for his ♥2 lead and now led ♥9, covered by ♥Q and ♥A. Declarer cashed ♥10, throwing ♣9, then crossed to ♦KJ109.

Here was the ending as $\spadesuit 9$ was led. $\spadesuit A4$

1.

West had to keep ♥8, so away went ♠6. Dummy's ♥5 could now be released, having served its purpose. It was then East's turn to be squeezed. Forced to keep ♣K to beat dummy's ♣10, away went ♠5.

At trick 11, declarer led ♠9 to ♠A, followed by ♠4 to ♠K, felling ♠Q and ♠J. He scored the last

Dealer: South, Vulnerability: Neither

♠ A43
♥ A1053
♦ Q2
♣ 10542

♠ J76
♥ Q862
♦ 8753
♣ Q3

♠ Q852
♥ J74
♦ A6
♣ KJ86

♠ K109
♥ K9
♦ KJ1094
♣ A97

Diagram illustrating a bridge hand layout. The diagram shows four hands of cards arranged around a central table. The cards are represented by their suit and rank symbols. The hands are:

- Top Hand: ♠ A43, ♥ A1053, ♦ Q2, ♣ 10542
- Left Hand: ♠ J76, ♥ Q862, ♦ 8753, ♣ Q3
- Right Hand: ♠ Q852, ♥ J74, ♦ A6, ♣ KJ86
- Bottom Hand: ♠ K109, ♥ K9, ♦ KJ1094, ♣ A97

The central table is represented by a square with the letters N, S, E, and W inside, indicating the North, South, East, and West positions.

What Happened

S	W	N	E
1NT(1)	Pass	Pass(2)	Pass

- (1) Big underbid.
(2) Correct to pass 1NT with an unmemorable flat 10-count.

Contract: 1NT , Opening Lead: ♥ 2

What Should Have Happened

S	W	N	E
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT(1)	Pass	3NT(2)	end

- (1) Showing a balanced 15-16(17) – which is what South's hand is worth.
- (2) The partnership have 25 points.

Contract: 3NT, Opening Lead: ♠ 6/♥ 2

trick with ♠10 and that was an incredible 11 tricks — via a double squeeze. Sadly, he was in only 1NT.

What Should Have Happened

South upgrades and the 3NT contract is easily reached. West may choose a spade lead rather than a heart because North bid 1♥ — but that will give declarer a third spade trick. Either way, he'll make ten or 11 tricks without heavy breathing.

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