

### 3. Opening 1NT when you shouldn't

#### What Happened

There is a common misunderstanding that you *have* to open 1NT when you hold 12-14 points. High-card points are only a guideline as to trick-taking potential. If you have a barren 4333 12-count like South's — no intermediates or sequential high cards, feel free to pass. The hand is not worth 12 points. Simply pass. Do not open 1NT.

The contract was great fun to defend. West led ♠10 to East's ♠Q and declarer's ♠K. At trick two, declarer reasonably tried ♦2 to ♦K, expecting West to have ♦A for his double.

East beat ♦K with ♦A and returned ♠5. West won ♠8 and cashed ♠A felling declarer's ♠J, East discarding ♦6. West decided not to cash his spades, squeezing his partner, and switched to ♥Q, placing East with ♥J for his non-heart discard. East signalled with ♥9 and declarer won ♥K.

Declarer had no good play, so exited with ♥4. West won ♥A (retaining ♥10 exit) and cashed ♦Q, letting his partner know what was happening in diamonds, then ♣96, East throwing two clubs.

At trick ten, West led ♥10, East overtaking with ♥J and cashing ♥7. What could declarer discard from ♦J and ♣KJ? Throw ♦J and East's ♦10 is promoted. In practice, he let go ♣J, and at trick 12 East led ♣Q, West beating declarer's ♣K with ♣A and cashing ♣10. Declarer had garnered only two tricks — that was five down and 1,400 to E-W.

Dealer: South, Vulnerability: North-South

	♠ 732		♠ Q5									
	♥ 862		♥ J973									
	♦ K73		♦ A1086									
	♣ 9643		♣ Q52									
♠ A10986	<table><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											
♥ AQ10												
♦ Q9												
♣ A108												
	♠ KJ4											
	♥ K54											
	♦ J542											
	♣ KJ7											

#### What Happened

S	W	N	E
1NT(1)	Dbl(2)	end	

- (1) Yuck. A worse 12-count you will not find.  
(2) Penalties — any hand with 16+ pts should double a 1NT opener.

Contract: 1NT Dbl'd by S, Opening Lead: ♠ 10

#### What Should Have Happened

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

- (1) Many 16-point hands would pass a "dustbin 1NT" response but this 16 is so massive — look at the intermediates.  
(2) Maximum for his 6-9 point bid.

Contract: 3NT by E, Opening Lead: ♦ 2

#### What Should Have Happened

South looks at the worst 12-count in history and passes. E-W sail into 3NT. Trick one will go ♦2, ♦9, ♦K, ♦A, trick two ♠Q, ♠K, ♠A, ♠2 and trick three ♠10, forcing out ♠J. Declarer will romp home — I'm guessing plus one. That's +430 to E-W (counting 300 for the non-vulnerable game) but hardly 1,400.  
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