



## The Real Deal

by Larry Cohen

Larry Cohen, a many-time National champion, is a popular writer and lecturer, living in Boca Raton, Florida. Information on Larry's upcoming activities can be found by visiting [www.larryco.com](http://www.larryco.com).

One of Larry's favorite teaching methods is to analyze random deals. He feels that any time you deal out a deck of cards, there are numerous lessons that can be learned.

South's hand is not quite strong enough to open 2♣, so South is content to open 1♠. West passes, and North responds 1NT.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♠

Pass	1NT
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What does a 1NT response to a major suit show? In the old days, it was 6–9 points. In the modern age, it is slowly changing to 6–12. Why is this?

### THE 1NT RESPONSE

In old-fashioned 'Standard American,' a new-suit response on the two level after a 1♠ opening showed 10+ high-card points. I have students, though, that erroneously perpetrate this bid with fewer than 10 points. In the modern era, however, more and more players are using the "two-over-one" response as 13+ HCP. This is another way of describing "Two-over-One Game Forcing."

I can't help but get a plug in for Audrey Grant's latest work: "Two-Over-One Game Forcing." I reviewed this book for a bridge magazine and gave it an A+. I think everyone, even beginners, should learn this system—it's not only better than 'Standard,' but easier!

When 'two-over-one' promises 13+ points, this slightly affects the 1NT response. In 'Standard,' where two-over-one was 10+, the 1NT response was 6–9. But, if the two-over-one is 13+, then the 1NT range goes all the way up to 6–12. This takes some getting used to.

Anyway, back to our Real Deal—I do go into long tangents, don't I?

THE REAL DEAL

<p>DEAL: 4 DLR: S VUL: N-S</p>	<p><b>NORTH</b></p> <p>♠ J 4 ♥ Q 10 8 5 3 ♦ 10 6 5 ♣ A Q 7</p>										
<p><b>WEST</b></p> <p>♠ 8 7 3 ♥ A K 9 7 ♦ K 9 4 2 ♣ 6 5</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		<p><b>EAST</b></p> <p>♠ 6 2 ♥ 6 4 2 ♦ 8 7 ♣ K 10 9 8 4 3</p>
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	<p><b>SOUTH</b></p> <p>♠ A K Q 10 9 5 ♥ J ♦ A Q J 3 ♣ J 2</p>										

### THE AUCTION CONTINUES

North responds 1NT no matter which system the partnership is using. South now has a difficult rebid. What should it be?

There is no right answer. First, be aware that a jump shift to 3♦ would be forcing to game. This is 100% etched in stone—opener's jump shift rebid is a game force. Is South worth forcing to game? I think South is just a tad short—but I certainly can live

with 3♦. Another possible call is 2♦. This rebid has a very wide range. It could be a dead minimum, but could also contain up to about 17–18 points, as here. I'd feel uncomfortable bidding only 2♦ with this hand.

So, South's hand is too strong for 2♦, but not quite strong enough for 3♦. There is no 2½ diamond bid—a shame—so what can we do? We could eschew the diamonds and rebid spades. If we do, we are too strong for 2♠. I'd think 3♠, invitational, is more like it—or maybe even 4♠.

In summary, there are four viable calls: 2♦, 3♦, 3♠, 4♠. Nothing is perfect, but I think I'd vote for 3♠ as the best compromise.

North, with a decent 9-count and reasonable spade support would raise to 4♠, ending the auction.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

### THE DEFENSE

West leads a high heart. Today's standard is to lead Ace from Ace-King. On this trick, West sees partner's ♥2 and declarer's ♥J. West now has a dilemma. East's ♥2 denies a doubleton heart, since East would play high-low with two hearts. So, West knows that either East or

declarer has a singleton heart. If East has the singleton, West can continue hearts and give East a ruff. But if declarer has the singleton heart, as on the actual deal, another high heart would be a disaster.

How should West know? There is no 100% way to discern the heart layout. However, with declarer showing six or more spades—or diamond length on some other auctions—the odds favor that it is declarer who is short in hearts.

If West goes with those odds, West would likely shift to clubs, through strength. Certainly, if declarer had bid diamonds, the club shift would make even more sense. On a club shift, declarer has to lose to the ♣K and later to the ♦K and the contract is held to ten tricks. If West cannot resist laying down the other top heart at trick two, declarer will ruff, draw trumps, and discard a club on one of dummy's established hearts. Making eleven tricks will result in a top or tied-for-top board. ♦



This issue's Real Deal was dealt by Brian Delfs.



Bryan Delfs

**Bryan Delfs** is a busy young man. He works as an Administrative Assistant at Snap-on Tools by day and as a waiter at the House of Gerhard by night. He attends the University of Wisconsin Parkside, working toward a bachelor's degree in Management Information Systems.

Bryan has been playing bridge since 2002 and is a Bronze Life Master. He was on the 2008 Junior Team that went to Lodz, Poland, and an alternate for the 2009 Junior Team that went to Istanbul, Turkey.

In 2009, the American Contract Bridge League made Bryan its first Junior Advocate. In this new position, Bryan is working diligently to connect the older and younger generations. His goal is to close the communication gap between the ACBL and the Junior Players and to be the voice on their behalf. Anyone reading this who has questions, opinions or suggestions—whether a junior player or a junior player at heart—can email Bryan at [bryandelfs@gmail.com](mailto:bryandelfs@gmail.com).