

## FORCING ONE NO TRUMP

by Maritha Pottenger

Forcing One No Trump can be used by people playing Standard American, but is essential for people playing 2 over 1 Game Force and people using Bergen raises.

The Forcing No Trump is used when responder has between a good 5 to a bad 12 HCP and cannot make an immediate raise of partner's major opening, and cannot bid 1S over partner's 1H opening. If responder has 5+ to 10-HCP, the hand is considered minimum and the bidding will usually be passed out at the two level. If responder has 10+ to 12+, the hand is considered invitational, and responder can make a game try if the rest of the hand is appropriate. (With a 6-card or longer suit and less than 5 HCP—all points in suit—responder can make a weak jump shift if playing WJS. If playing Bergen raises, weak jump shifts in minor suits are not possible.) The Forcing 1NT says more about what your hand is NOT than what it is. Your rebid will clarify the picture for partner.

The following types of hands qualify for a **1NT Forcing response when partner opens one of a major**:

1. **Relatively balanced hands with 5 to 10 HCP** and no support for partner's major, e.g., 1S Opener  
xx KJx xxxx Qxxx or xx Kxxx A9xxx x or xx KQJxx Jxx Qxx
2. **Hands with 5-7 HCP and 3 or 4 card support for major (IF playing constructive raises)**. If not playing constructive raises, just raise major to two level with these hands, e.g.,  
Qxx xxx KJxx xxx // xxxx Jxx 10x AJxx // KQx 10xxx xxx Qxx // Axx Qxx xxxx xxx
3. **Hands with 10-12 HCP and exactly 3-card support for major** (next bid will be 3 of major)  
Kxx Kxxx AJxx xx. // xxx AKxx Kx 109xx // J10x K10x AQJx xxx
4. **Weak, unbalanced hands with long suit(s)**, e.g., x KJxxxx xx Qxxx // xx x AQxx J9xxxx  
Hope that you get to bid your suit at the 2 level next round, and partner can pass or partner bids your minor and you can pass..
5. **Balanced or unbalanced hands strong enough to invite game** (usually 10-12 HCP), e.g.,  
Qx Qxxx KJx KJxx // x Axxx Axxx K10xx // xx x AQJxx A10xxx Such hands will usually rebid 2NT, or bid your suit at 3 level, or raise partner on a doubleton.
6. **Exceptional hands**, e.g., a game-forcing hand that does not have a suit good enough to make a 2/1 bid, e.g., Jx AKQx xxx Axxx Bid 1NT Forcing; then rebid 3NT unless partner shows 6 spades.  
Qxx AKxx Kxx Kxx Bid 1NT Forcing and then rebid 4S to show balanced hand with 3 trumps.

### OPENER'S REBIDS

- 1) With a 6-card suit and 12 to 15- HCP, opener rebids the major at the 2 level.
- 2) With a 6-card suit and 15+ to 18 HCP, opener rebids the major at the 3 level.
- 3) Jumping to 4 of major usually shows a 7-card suit and a hand that chose not to open 4 of the major (or NAMYATS if you are playing it). Denies slam interest.
- 4) Rebid of 2C or 2D promises 12 to 15- points and usually at least 3 cards in the minor. HOWEVER, if Opener is 4-5-2-2 (and you are NOT playing Flannery), could rebid 2C on a 2-card suit.
- 5) Rebid of 2S (after opening 1H) shows at least 4-5 in majors, 16+ HCP and is forcing one round.
- 6) A jump shift by Opener shows 19+ HCP and is forcing.
- 7) A raise to 2NT shows a balanced 18-19 HCP and is virtually forcing (but responder can pass with a terrible 5 or 6 HCP).
- 8) A jump raise to 3NT shows 16-18 HCP and a solid 6-card major suit (source of tricks)
- 9) A rebid of 2H (after opening 1S) guarantees 4 hearts.

**NOTE:** Some people insist that a rebid by Opener of the Major should show a GOOD suit, able to play opposite a singleton. If the Opener has a side 4-card suit and a bad 6-card major, should show side 4-card suit BEFORE rebidding major. Others say rebid 6-card suit with all minimum hands. Bid 4-card side suit when you have extra values (just short of a jump rebid in suit). When you have six spades and four hearts, show the hearts (rather than rebidding the spades) when they have the same HCP or more as the spades, e.g., Q9xxxx AQ9x Ax x: rebid 2H rather than 2S. With AQ9xxxx Kx x AJxx rebid 2C to show (possibility of) extra values. With AQxxxx Jx x A10xx, rebid major to slow partner down and suggest minimum hand.

## **RESPONDER'S REBIDS**

*With a Minimum Hand:* Duty is to Halt the Auction at the Two Level.

- 1) Pass the 2<sup>nd</sup> suit IF you have 5 cards in it & only 1 or 0 in partner's major.
- 2) If partner opens 1S and rebids 2H, pass 2H with 4 hearts, but take a preference to 2S with 2 spades and 3 hearts.
- 3) If partner rebids 2C and you have only 1 in his/her major and fewer than 5 clubs, but you do have 5 or more diamonds, you can bid 2D. Ditto with 5 hearts, you can bid 2H.
- 4) If you have exactly two cards in your partner's major (& no support for minor), return to the major.

**NOTE:** IF you are playing Constructive Raises, the return to two of a major could actually show *three* trumps and 5 to 7 HCP.

*With an Invitational Hand:*

- 1) A delayed limit raise shows exactly 3 trumps and 10 to 12 HCP, e.g., QJx Kx A10xxx xxx
- 2) Responder rebids 2NT with a balanced hand with either 1 or 2 cards in partner's major and good 10 to 12 HCP, e.g., x QJxx KJ9xx KJ9 Opener is expected to bid 3NT with 14 or 15 HCP; pass with less. Promises spade stopper by Responder if Opener's major was hearts..
- 3) Responder jumps to 3 level in a good 6-card suit, inviting game: xx AQJxxx Kxx Qx
- 4) Jump to game in major shows either the balanced hand with 3-card support and no slam interest or a hand that was upgraded on the auction, e.g., 1S-P-1NTF-P-2D-P-Bid 4S with: Kxx Kxxx KQxx xx
- 5) The "impossible spade" shows a really good raise of partner's minor—can only be used when partner opens 1H. For example: 1H-P-1NTF-P-2D-P-2S with xx x AQxxxx KQ9x
- 6) Raising partner's second suit show 5 cards if clubs or diamonds, 4 cards if hearts, and invitational values, e.g., 1S-P-1NTF-P-2C-P-Bid 3C with: K xxxx Kxx KJxxx

**NOTE: all the following auctions carry connotations of extra strength:**

1S-P-1NTF-P-2D-P-2H-P-2S: Opener has 6 spades and 4 or more diamonds and extra strength.

1S-P-1NTF-P-2C-P-3C-P-3S: Opener has 6 spades and extra values (and Responder has invitational strength).

1S-P-1NTF-P-2D-P-2NT-P-3S: Game Force. Opener has extra values and 6 spades. Responder has 10+ to 12 HCP. Opener is offering a choice between 3NT and 4S.