Lesson 38 Teacher's Notes

Limit Responses in No-trump

Aims

- To develop bidding skills.
- To emphasise the importance of the limit bid
- To explain how the bids we choose ***not*** to make tell partner as much as what we actually bid

Content

1 Revise the concept of the ***limit bid***, one of the pillars of the Acol system
A limit bid describes the **strength** of a hand within a very narrow range, and has the great advantage that it allows partner to judge what to do in the bidding
Some ***limit responses*** are ***invitational*** : they say "Partner, my hand contains *x* points, which may be enough for game". Opener passes with a minimum opening bid, bids on to game with a bit extra

2 Revise our three different invitational limit responses.

Over an opening bid of 1♣/♦/♥/♠ we bid	3♣/♦/♥/♠ with 4-card trump support (10-12)
	2NT with a balanced hand without trump support
Over an opening bid of 1NT we can bid	2NT with 11-12 points (we may use Stayman or a transfer first)

3 The weak response of 1NT is also a limit bid, but it is not invitational
The 1NT response shows 6-9 HCP ***and denies a 4-card major that could be bid at the 1-level.***

Eg	1♣	1NT	East does not have 4+ hearts or 4+ spades – he would bid a 4-card major
	1♦	1NT	Similarly, East has no 4+-card major
	1♥	1NT	East does not have 4+ spades (or 4+hearts, he would raise)
	1♠	1NT	East may have 4+ hearts if he is not strong enough for a 2-over-1

What does opener do after a weak 1NT response?

With a balanced hand:	Pass with 15-16HCP Raise to 2NT with 17-18HCP Bid 3NT with 19HCP
With an unbalanced hand:	remove to a second suit (if it is lower-ranking) or rebid your own suit with 6+cards

Emphasise that while a 1NT response is always balanced over one of a minor, over one of a major it may be less balanced if responder has no suit he can bid at the 1-level.
If opener is unbalanced he should look for a fit in a second suit ***provided partner can still have 4-card support for it***
Do not rebid your own suit unless it is ***unexpectedly*** long: you should have at least 6 cards.

4 Discuss the 2NT response to an opening bid of 1♣/♦/♥/♠
This is not a very common response. It shows 10-12 points in a balanced hand, ***but it denies four cards*** in a higher-ranking suit. When there is still the possibility of a 4-4 major suit fit we respond in a suit rather than bidding 2NT.

5 Revise raising 1NT to 2NT: This shows 11-12 points in a balanced hand, and, says there is no possibility of game in a major. ***We do not bid 2NT with 4+cards in a major*** – if we have a 4-card major we use Stayman to look for game in that suit, if we have more than 4 we use a transfer bid.

6 When partner opens 1 of a minor we can make a limit raise to 3 of the minor with the same sorts of hands as raise a major to 3.
But if we have a 4-card major as well as 4-card support we usually prefer to look for the 4-4 fit.
A response of 2NT also denies a biddable 4 card major.