

The Wriggle as an escape from 1NTX

Your partner opens 1NT (12-14 hcp) and your opponents make a penalty X. If you think your side has fewer than half the available points you should rescue partner and escape from 1NTX as the probability is the contract will go down.

With a weak hand responder prefers to play in a safer place eg 2♣/2♦/2♥/2♠

What Is The Wriggle?

How The Helvic Wriggle Works

1NT-X-? You as responder hold fewer than 8 hcp

1. Holding a 5+ card suit, XX

Opener will now bid 2C which you will pass or convert

2. Holding two 4 card suits, bid the lower one so;

2C shows 4 ♣ and a second higher ranked 4 card suit.

2D shows 4 ♦ and a second higher ranked 4 card suit

2H shows 4 ♥ and 4 ♠

1NT-(X)-2C Partner I have 4 Clubs and 4 of a higher ranked suit

If partner holds 3/4 cards in Clubs she will pass. You have found at least a 4/3 fit. If she holds fewer than 3 cards in this suit she will bid the next suit up as she will have 3+ cards in this suit (she has a balanced hand so can only have one doubleton). If responder holds 4 cards in this suit she will pass. If responder's second suit is not this suit she will bid her own 2nd suit. Together you are trying to find a suit where your side holds the majority of the cards ie a 4/3 or a 4/4 fit.

Any suit contract you wriggle into is less likely to be X'd for penalties.

The Wriggle is an escape from a (probable) disastrous 1NTX contract so if the opponents intervene breathe a sigh of relief, you're off the hook! 😊

Examples

You

♠Axxx

♥Axx

♦AJ

♣Jxxx

Partner

♠Jxxx

♥KQx

♦xxxx

♣xx

Auction 1NT-(X)-2D-(P)
2H-(P)-2S

♠Ax

♥Axx

♦AJxx

♣Jxx

♠Jxxx

♥KQxxx

♦xx

♣xx

Auction 1NT-(X)-XX-(P)
2C-(P)-2H