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V. You have a Six (or longer) card suit

A. Six+ Card Minor Suit

Because it requires a 5 bid in a minor suit to make game, and only three in NT, it rarely makes sense to head towards the minor suit game in this case. (The exception is when the opponents are bidding a suit, and neither of you have a stopper in their suit.)

Therefore, even with a long minor suit, you only want to play in the minor if you are very weak (and 1NT probably won't make), or you have a strong hand with great shape. In this case a small or even grand slam in the minor is possible if opener has the "right" cards. There have been examples of these types of hands earlier in the series.

B. Six+ Card Major Suit

The situation is different here because game in a major only requires one more trick than in NT, and making one more trick in the major will result in a better score than playing in NT. Also, with weak hands, transfers allow us to play in two of a major, while playing in minor will require playing at the three level. With a six card or longer major suit, you should insist on playing in your suit, even if partner has only two small.

To best describe these types of hands there is a transfer bid, called a "Texas Transfer", that is very helpful that I would suggest you discuss with partner. A Texas Transfer is just like a Jacoby transfer, except that you do it at the four level. So:

1NT - 4D asks partner to bid 4 hearts.

1NT - 4H asks partner to bid 4 spades.

Because you are forcing partner to bid at the four level, this gives you a way to distinguish between a bad hand with five trump, where you are just trying to avoid a bad score, and a game going hand with six or more trump where you can make game even against two small in partner's hand. To make a Texas Transfer you need at least six trump, and 8 – 12 useful high card points. (You want to be careful about counting too much for distribution; if you are counting heavily on a side-suit void for most of your hand, and partner shows up with AKQ of that suit, it will not turn out well.)

With this in mind, the structure for responding to a 1NT opener with six or more of a

major is:

1. With 0-7 HCP, transfer at the two level and pass partner's response.
2. With 8-12 useful HCP, bid 4D or 4H (Texas Transfer) and pass partner's response.
3. With 13-14 HCP, transfer at the two level, and then raise to 4. This sequence shows mild slam interest, but partner is allowed to pass 4 of the major with poor trumps or a minimum hand.
4. With 15+ HCP, transfer at the two level and push for slam. Either bid a new suit (Forcing!) or 4NT, which should be Blackwood as a suit has been set by the transfer.

Examples:

1. S-Axxxxx H- xx D-x C-J10xx

Bid 2H and pass the 2S response. Be happy you have an extra trump, but 2 is the limit for this hand.

2. S-AQxxxx H-xx D-x C-KJ10x

Bid 4H (Texas) and pass opener's 4S bid. Plenty for game (and occasionally you'll make six when opener has a super double fit), but slam is unlikely.

3. S-AQxxxx H-Ax D-x C-KJ10x

You are interested in slam if partner has good spade support, but not if partner has two or three small spades. Show mild slam interest by bidding two hearts (transfer) and raising partner to 4S. Partner should know you have six spades, this range of hand, and can proceed further with a good spade fit.

4. S-AKQxxx H-Ax D- x C-KJ10x

With this hand you will be disappointed if you don't reach slam, and 7 is certainly possible. (All partner needs is Jx of spades, A of diamonds, and five clubs to the AQ. Not too much to ask!) Remember that the slower you go, the more strength you are showing. Start by transferring with 2H, and then bid 3C over opener's 2S. This is an absolutely forcing bid, and asks partner to evaluate his hand in light of the fact that you have at least a game forcing hand with slam interest, and at least nine black cards. (remember that if you had just a game going hand with five spades, your second bid would be 3NT to allow partner to pick between 3NT and 4S.)

5. S-AKQJxx H-Ax D-xx C-KJ10

This time you pretty much just need to know if partner has two aces or not. After using 4H as a transfer to spades (setting the suit) 4NT is Blackwood. The main question here is which is the best contract - 6S, 6NT, or 7S. (Remember that your spade suit represents 6 tricks at NT too, and NT scores better!)