

# Inverted Minors

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### Sec 1...Beginnings...

Why would you want to play inverted minors? Let's assume your side has the majority of HCP's...

- 1) Even when your side has an 8+ card fit in a minor, there is still a strong desire to attempt to play in Nt.
- 2) Using a jump support 1m-3m to show invite values or even game values with a minor suit fit is inefficient.
  - a) Often neither side is aware of the potential (*or equally the non potential*) of the hand. 3Nt can often end the auction when a minor suit slam is available.
  - b) Another problem is that responder will often suppress support in favor of (2/3)Nt when he has a balanced hand. Again minor suit slams if available, are often missed.
- 3) Now consider when responder has a weak hand with support for partners minor. If 1m-2m shows a weak hand with support, this gives the opponents room at the 2 level to try to find a major suit fit.

### Sec 2...A Word About Terminology...

The term **Game Force** in Bridge is not quite what it seems...

When one usually encounters this term, it means that the auction is forced to 3Nt, or the 4 level. When the auction involves the minors, then clearly Game has not been achieved at 4m. Although strongly suggestive, the term Game Force used here is not absolutely forcing to 5m, but rather only to 3Nt or 4m.

### Sec 3...The Basic Method of Inverted Minors...

As the name suggests...

**1m-P-3m-P-?** a weak distributional raise, usually with preemptive intent, but be aware that you are also preempting partner, so your hand should not be useful in Nt...

- 1) 5+ card support
- 2) no more than 9 HCP's
- 3) not having any K's or A's outside the suit would a useful consideration, (*lack of defensive tricks*)
- 4) should not be balanced.

**1m-P-2m-P-?** a limit+ raise with the following rules...

- 1) 4+ card support
- 2) Either...
  - a) a very good 10+ HCP's when somewhat balanced. (*Remember that Nt is always an option*)
  - b) 11+ dummy points when Nt is not going to be an option.
- 3) Usually denies any 4 card major. (*Some advanced partnerships might want to reconsider this*)
- 4) Creates a force to 2Nt/3m.

### Sec 4...Continued Bidding after the Weak Response 1m-3m

Consider the Auction 1m-3m, opener often has more than a minimum hand here and may have some desire to bid further. Almost all bidding beyond 3m is a guess, responder has usually given his all at 3m. But the following should apply...

**1m-P-3m-P-?** (*note that there is no interference*)

- 1) **3Nt** is to play
- 2) A **New Suit** is a Game Force
- 3) **4m** is an invite to 5m,

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## Sec 5...Continued Bidding after the 1m-2m

There are a number of ways to proceed after the 2m response, I'm going to describe two different basic systems, both are easy to remember without much memory work. (*The HCP's described in the following, assume the use of a 1Nt opener promising 15-17 HCP's, using a different range requires adjustments*)

**Method 1** This method was popularized by Max Hardy, and is the most common method which you will encounter. It's primary goal is to determine if your side has stoppers in the side suits for Nt.

Opener rebids after **1m-2m-?** are...

**2Nt** Shows a balanced hand with 12-14 HCP's (11 if your methods allow), and guarantees stoppers in both majors. Does not guarantee nor deny stoppers in either minor.

**2H/S** Does not promise extras, but is forcing for 1 round, still trying to get to Nt, this shows a stopper(s) in the major suit bid, and usually denies stoppers in the other major.

Note: bidding 2H/S, while not promising extras, could be the start of a slam investigation.

**3Nt** Balanced hand with 18-19 HCP's. (*often players use this for a good 14, you should ask*)

**3m** Unbalanced minimum hand, not suitable for Nt.

**3X** A jump shift is a splinter (*and by it's nature showing extras*). Usually a slam investigation.

**Method 2** A method which is starting to become popular among some players.

Opener rebids after **1m-2m-?** are...

**2Nt** Balanced minimum 12-14 HCP's, does not guarantee nor deny stoppers in any suits. (*non forcing*)

**3m** Unbalanced minimum. (*non forcing*)

**New Suit** Tends to show values there and creates a Game Force. (*This most often is used with unbalanced hands with extras, often looking for slam possibilities*)

**3Nt** Balanced hand with 18-19 HCP's

**3X** A jump shift is a splinter. Usually a slam investigation.

Responder continues after opener has shown a minimum...

**3m** by responder after **2Nt** is to play.

**New Suit** by responder after **2Nt** or **3m**, creates a Game Force

Responder continues after opener has bid a **New Suit** creating a Game Force...

**2Nt** mini/max (10-14 HCP's) or (18-19 HCP's) balanced/semi balanced hand with no obvious holes in unbid suits.

**3Nt** 15-17HCP's balanced/semi balanced hand with no obvious holes in unbid suits.

**New Suit** This is an assumed attempt to get to 3Nt, but could be an exploration for a slam.

A quick description is that a rebid of either **2Nt** or **3m** by opener shows a minimum as does **3m** by responder after **2Nt**. All **New Suits** by either opener or responder create a Game Force.

**Note:** There is one hand type that creates a problem for opener, with a good balanced 14 HCP's, opener does not want to miss 3Nt opposite most minimum limit raises. If opener tries 2Nt, responder would pass with a minimum balanced/semi-balanced hand. Although 3Nt might not make, it often does. An easy fix is for opener to simply rebid a New Suit creating a Game Force and then rebid Nt cheaply. (*1m-2m-2X-?-Nt*)

### Reasoning behind Method 2...

- 1) Showing a limited balanced hand immediately gives the partnership an advantage, the partner opposite the limited hand becomes Captain and should be able to determine the approximate level and strain which the hand should be played at.
- 2) Trying to show or deny stoppers in a balanced hand, might make your side more comfortable about bidding Nt. The down side is that you are also describing your hand to your opponents, making their defense more pin point. Remember that even if you have a hole in one of the suits between your hands, the opponents still have to find the hole and then take advantage of it.
- 3) The really up side of this method is that opener can create a Game Force at the 2 level, this allows a greater ability to investigate minor suit slam possibilities.

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## Sec 6...1m-P-2m-Dbl/2X-? The Opponents Enter Our Limit Raise Auction

Generally the following applies...

**1m-2m** creates a force to 2Nt or 3m...

If the opponents should enter our auction, we need to remember that our side is required to keep the bidding open until we reach either 2Nt, 3m or we double the opponents contract for penalties.

Our side creates a Game Force...

If the opponents interfere in a Game Forcing auction then we are required to keep the bidding open until we reach 3Nt, 4m, or we double the opponents for penalties.

**1m - P - 2m - 2X(some suit)-?** The following should apply...

**2Nt** A balanced min. with a full stopper in X

**3m** An unbalanced min., not good for NT.

**New Suit** Game Force, values in suit bid, usually an attempt to get to 3Nt. But could be a preparation for slam bidding.

**Pass** Uncertain direction, but since partner is forced, will get another bid. Might be any of the following...

A balanced min. with a 3 card minor suit and no stopper in the opponents suit.

A balanced min. with a partial stopper.

A hand with game values, but has 3+ quick losers in the opponents suit, including suit play.

Any other uncertain direction hand

**Dbl.** Game Force values, values in the opponents suit. Usually not intended to defend at the 2 level, except when...

We are white and they are red, or

Partner also has length in the opponents suit and has ruffing possibilities.

**1m - P - 2m - Dbl.-?** The following should apply...

**ReDbl** Usually a balanced hand with defensive values

**2Nt** Balanced Minimum

**New Suit** Game Force, usually an unbalanced hand

**Pass** Uncertain direction.

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## Sec 7...Should Inverted be on after Interference

Most players play that inverted is off over all interference. **You need to ask.**

**Overcalls? 1m-1X/2C-?** You should not play inverted after the opponent overcalls, competitive actions require that you need to be able to compete and/or indicate possible defensive actions.

**2m** To show some values with no other bid available, support partners minor when weak without distributional values.

**CueBid** To indicate invitational values, the current technique is to cue bid the opponents suit.

**3m** With weak distributional hands jump in the minor.

**Doubles?** Most players play that inverted is off over doubles, the following are two common methods used after the double...

**Jordan...1m-Dbl-?**

**2m** Weak non distributional

**2Nt** Limit only (or *Limit+ by agreement*) with minor suit support. (11+ dummy points)

**3m** Weak distributional

**Flip Flop...1m-Dbl-?**

**2m** Weak non distributional

**2Nt** Weak distributional

**3m** Limit only with minor suit support. (11-12 dummy points)

**RDbl** Usually denies support, and shows good defensive values. This would also be used with game going hands with support.

**Jordan** is the most common method used, mostly because it is familiar and commonly used over the majors.

**Some problems with Jordan...**

When Jordan is used over the Majors, the contract will almost always end in the major unless the opponents outbid your side.

When Jordan is used over the minors...

It is not entirely clear whether your side should play in the minor or Nt.

If it is to be Nt, you may have wrong sided the contract.

In fact 2Nt may be the limit of the hand.

Should opener choose to pass 2Nt, he may find the responders hand is not suitable for Nt, or that they are underbid. (*1m-Dbl-2Nt-P-?* should be considered 1 round force)

**Flip Flop** solves some the problems, but creates memory load.

When responder has the limit hand, and opener tries 3Nt, they probably have not wrong sided the hand.

Unfortunately problems still exist when opener has that 18-19 HCP balanced hand, he will still often believe that they might be able to scramble 9 tricks in Nt. If this happens, the hand will definitely be wrong sided (*1m-Dbl-2Nt(weak)-P-3Nt*). The fortunate thing is that these hands are rare.

**The following is a suggestion...1m-Dbl-?** play both **Inverted** and **Flip Flop**

**2m** 10+ HCP's inverted limit+

**2Nt** Weak distributional

**3m** 11+ dummy point, less than 10 HCP's, a distributional limit raise. This hand will play well when opener has 4+ cards in the minor and maybe not so well when he has only 3 cards in the suit.

With weak non distributional hands you might **Pass** and reenter the auction later.

After **2m**, your side could logically end in 2Nt or 3Nt.

After **3m**, opener could still bid **3Nt**, knowing the type of dummy he will get.

**Note:** A reason one would want to use both **Inverted** and **Flip Flop** and not simply just **Inverted**, is that when you have a distributional limit raise of opener's minor, you need the preemptive value that bidding 3m would provide. The fewer HCP values your side has, gives the opponents more values to enter the auction.

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## Sec 8...For Well Established Partnerships Only

The following idea is attributed to Grant Base.

Given the weak auction **1m-3m**, 3m could be a very weak hand or it might have some interesting structure.

The next suit up m+1 (for **1C-3C** this would be **3D**, and for **1D-3D** this would be **3H**) asks responder whether 3Nt might have a chance. The responses should be somewhat obvious...

### **1D-3D-3H-?**

- 3S** 3Nt has a chance, go ahead and bid it.
- 3Nt** 3Nt might have a chance from my side
- 4D** 3Nt has no chance

### **1C-3C-3D-?**

- 3H/S** 3Nt has a chance, go ahead and bid it. I probably have some value here.
- 3Nt** 3Nt might have a chance from my side
- 4C** 3Nt has no chance