

Extending Inverted Minors

By Neil H. Timm

Playing the 2/1 Bidding System, many club players when opening one of a minor play the Inverted Minors Bridge Convention to show 5+card support for the minor bid with no 4+card major, and 10+HCP with no upper limit.

Partner opens 1♣ and one of the following hands:

(1) ♠xxx ♥xxx ♦AQxx ♣KQJ or (2) ♠Kx ♥QJx ♦xxxx ♣KQxx

What is your response with 10+HCP? Many may bid 2NT as an invitational which often causes serious problems if partner next bids 3NT and a minimum 12/13HCP hand!

The “standard” Range for responding to 1m with a balanced hand is:

For 1♣ 1NT = 8-10HCP and for 1♦ 1NT = 6-10HCP

2NT = 10-12

3NT = 13-15

I suggested the Nebulous bid of 2♥* in my September, 2026 Bridge Tip, but have come upon other options after a recent search on the internet (Bidgewinners, 2019).

Andrw Sinclair suggests the following:

After 1m,

2♥ = (10)11-12 bal.

2♠ = mixes raise for minor

2NT = 13-15 or 18+ balanced

3NT = 16-17 balanced

After 1m-2♥,

2♠ = relay to 2NT, after which 3NT is to play

2NT and 3NT are to play

David Loeb suggests:

1m-2♥ can be played as a 3-way bid: a natural strong jump shift, a mixed raise for the minor, or an invitational balanced hand. This allows a 1m-2NT response to be played as natural and game forcing eliminating the awkward 1m-3NT response.

After 1m-2♥, opener bids 2♠ to ask. Responder bids 3m with the mixed raise, 2NT with the balanced invitation. With a strong jump shift, responder rebids hearts.

Bob Crosby (2005) suggests a novel relay structure for Inverted Minors:

1 ♣ Pass 2 ♣ Pass

2 ♦ * Pass ?

* 2 ♦ is accepting the relay. Follow ups are:

- 2 ♥ - limit raise in clubs
 - 3 ♣ - ends the auction
 - 2 ♠ - forcing asking for more information
 - 2NT - minimum with bad clubs
 - 3 ♣ - minimum with good clubs
 - 2NT - invitational to 3NT
 - Pass - minimum with bad clubs
 - 3 ♣ - minimum with good clubs
- 2 ♠ - game forcing club raise with 5 or more clubs
 - 2NT - natural - 3 cards (min)
 - 3 ♣ - waiting (4 or more clubs)
 - 3 ♦ - asks for a singleton (step responses)
 - 3 ♥/3 ♠ - natural
 - 3NT - 4 clubs or more - no 4 card major - minimum
 - 4 ♣ - KCB
- 2NT - game forcing and may have a 4 card major
 - 3 ♣ - constructive
 - 3 ♥/3 ♠ - natural
 - 3 ♦ - Stayman
- 3 ♣ - game force with 4 clubs
 - 3 ♦/3 ♥/3 ♠ - natural
 - 3NT - to play
 - 4 ♣ - KCB
- 3 ♦ - clubs and diamonds 5-4 or 5-5 game force
- 3NT - 15-17 with doubleton club

1 ♦ Pass 2 ♦ Pass

2 ♥ * Pass ?

2 ♥ is accepting the relay.

- 2 ♠ - game force with 5 or more diamonds
 - 2NT - natural - 3 diamonds (min)
 - 3 ♣ - asks for a singleton (step responses)
 - 3 ♦ - waiting, 4 or more diamonds
 - 3 ♥/3 ♠ - natural
 - 3NT - 4 diamonds or more - no 4 card major, minimum

- 4♦ - KCB
- 2NT - game forcing and may have 4 card major. Opener is now allowed to bid a 4 card major and major fits are found that way
 - 3♣ - Stayman
 - 3♦ - distro and minimum
 - 3♥/3♠ - natural
 - 3NT - to play
- 3♣ - limit raise in diamonds
 - 3♦ - ends the auction
 - 3♥/3♠ - asks for stopper in the bid suit
 - 3NT - to play
 - 4♦ - KCB
- 3♦ - game forcing with 4 diamonds
 - 3♥/3♠ - natural
 - 3NT - to play
 - 4♦ - KCB
- 3NT - 15-17 with doubleton diamond.

*Break relay with distro 6-5 etc or with 18-19 bal 5-3-3-2 , 2-3-4-4 , 3-3-3-4 - bid 3NT

** Break relay with 18-19 flat with 4 card major(s) – bid 2NT

2NT should be 18-19 with 1♣ opener 4423, 4324, 3424 or 1♦ opener 4432, 4342, 3442 hands. We need 2NT to find the 4 card major fit if possible. Over the 2NT partner should bid 3 of the minor with 6, 3NT or a 4 card major if he has 1 (or take control). Any subsequent bid to a major is a q-bid in support of the major (or the minor if 6). If partner pulls 3NT to 4 of the minor it is KCB for the minor (he will place the contract).

With this solution, this leaves the one of a minor - 3NT jump response to be a picture bid. A 15-17 HCP hand with 4-3-3-3 distribution is almost impossible to describe anyway.

The relay approach may also be used if you the Crisscross Inverted Minors.

The Invitational three point 10-12HCP range often causes problems playing 2/1. For example, if 1M-#M=10-12HCP what is one to do? There is no asking bid. This is perhaps why many choose Bergen Rases so that after 3♦* becomes an asking bid. Do you have 12HCP and if not bid 3M!