

## INVERTED MINORS & SHOWING STOPPERS FOR NO TRUMP by Maritha Pottenger

Inverted Minors solve the problem of a Responder who has invitational and game-going values and a fit with Opener's minor, but no other suit to bid. A jump raise is now preemptive—showing 5 cards in the minor (can be 4 with diamonds) and less than limit raise values. A single raise, e.g., 1C-P-2C, shows a **great 10** or more HCP (usually 11 or more). The first priority of the partnership is to look for no trump (or slam in the minor if both partners have extra values). If both have minimums, they may sign off below game. If Responder has 13 HCP, must keep bidding alive at least until 3NT or 4 of the minor. Inverted Minors are usually OFF in competition. Partnership agreement as to whether they are on by a passed hand.

### Opener's Responses after an Inverted Minor Raise:

**2D** (after 1C-P-2C): shows diamonds (at least 3 good ones) and a lack of stoppers in one or both majors. Does not promise extra values.

**2H**: shows heart stopper for no trump. Denies balanced hand with stoppers in both majors.

**2S**: shows spade stopper. Denies balanced hand with stoppers in both majors.

**2NT**: shows minimum balanced hand with both majors stopped. May or may not have other minor stopped.

**3 of Opener's Minor**: minimum opener with no stoppers or little interest in no trump.

**3C** (after 1D-P-2D): Natural with extra values (shape or high cards). Invites game.

**3H, 3S** (also **4C** after diamond opening & **3D** after club opening): splinter. Game values.

**3NT**: shows balanced 18-19 HCP with stoppers.

**4 of Opener's Minor**: Minorwood (Key Card asking in that minor)

**5 of Opener's Minor**: Unbalanced hand, lacking stoppers in at least two of the unnamed suits.

### Responder's Rebids

**After Opener shows a stopper in one major**, bidding 3 of the minor is a sign-off. Bidding the other major or the other minor shows a stopper and game values. (For example, 1D-P-2D-P-2H-P-3D is a sign-off. 1D-P-2D-P-2S-P-3H shows a heart stopper, game values & concern about clubs—otherwise Responder could have rebid 3NT.)

**After Opener bids 2NT**, pass is a sign-off. Bidding 3 of minor is a sign-off. Bidding other minor or a major promises a stopper in the suit named, and game-going values.

After both Opener and Responder have denied a stopper in a suit, bidding that suit shows a half-stopper and asks partner to bid 3NT if s/he also has a half-stopper. (Half-stoppers are singleton Kings, doubleton queens or trebleton jacks.) As an example, 1D-P-2D-P-2S (shows spade stopper)-P-3C (shows club stopper and game-going values)-P-3H would show half of a stopper in hearts. With not even half a stopper, Responder must retreat to 4 or 5 of the minor.

### BASIC PRINCIPLES TO REMEMBER:

1. **2NT and 3 of minor can both be passed.**
2. **2NT rebid promises stoppers in BOTH majors. If you only have ONE major stopped and want to look for NT, bid the one you have. ["With two, you tell"--with 2 majors in question, you TELL partner about the one you have.]**
3. **"With one you ask." If an opponent bids a suit, a cue bid in that suit ASKS partner for a stopper. {If YOU had the stopper, you would have already bid NT yourself.}**
4. **Once partner has DENIED a stopper in a specific suit, bidding that suit show HALF a stopper. Denial can be in form of failing to bid NT or bidding other suits.**
5. **If Opener is worried about other MINOR, OK to cue bid lower major (hearts), hoping partner can show minor. Then Opener can bid NT showing s/he had spades covered all along.**