Inverted Minor Suit Raises

- Brian & Gloria teach the following structure in the Monday night class:
- When partner bids 1 of any suit (♣ ♦ ♠ ♣):
  - 2 of the suit shows 6-9 HCP, at least 3 card support (a single raise)
  - 3 of the suit shows 10-12 HCP, at least 4 card support (a limit raise)
  - After a limit raise, opener is supposed to pass with a minimum and raise to game with a maximum
  - They also tell you to “Shun the Minors!” If you have a fit in a minor and enough points for game, look for 3NT.

You get dealt the following hand at matchpoints:

- A J 94
- 83
- A Q 82
- K 93

You open 1♣, and partner responds 3♣ -- a limit raise in diamonds. Should you accept the invitation? What should you bid?

- You should accept the invitation. You have 14 HCP and are just one point away from opening 1NT. You should bid 3NT.

Partner shows up with a nice hand for you (for once!).

- Q 8
- A K 7
- K 7 6 4 3
- 5 4 2

If they lead a club, you now have nine tricks (5♣, 2♣, 1♣ and the club king will set up). If they lead a heart, you can win on the board and play the spade queen. If the finesse wins, you have 9 tricks. If it loses, your club king is protected from attack and you still have 9 tricks. 3NT is ice cold.
Later in the session, you get dealt the same hand (!).

- AJ94
- 83
- AQ82
- K93

Partner again bids 3♦, and once again with 14 HCP you accept and bid 3NT. Unfortunately, this time partner has:

- 872
- J9
- KJT94
- AQJ

The opponents lead a heart and take the first five heart tricks. Despite 26 HCP, no game is good. Oh well – bad luck!

However, you look at the traveler, and there are pairs that are playing game on the first hand and a diamond partial on the second hand. How did they stay out of 3NT?

- The answer is that they were probably playing inverted minor suit raises.

The 5 most common contracts are as follows (data from Richard Pavlicek’s website from team championships scored in IMPS – 59,000 results tabulated)

1. 3NT (19%)
2. 4♣ (15%)
3. 4♦ (13%)
4. 1NT (6%)
5. 2♦ (6%)
6. 3♦ (3%)

The percentage of time you play in each strain from the same data set (all levels)

1. NT -- 28.4%
2. ♠ -- 28.1%
3. ♦ -- 24.2%
4. ♣ -- 10.0%
5. ♢ -- 9.9%

- Hands with a major suit fit drive toward 4 of a major
- Hands with a minor suit fit (or no fit above 7 cards) drive to 3NT
Inverted Minor Suit Raises

- After 1 ♠1 ♠
  - 2♣/2♦ is a limit raise or better (10+) and the bid is forcing
  - 3♠/3♦ is preemptive – around 4-7 HCP, 5+ cards in the minor
  - Hands in between (8-9) can respond 1NT to start; perhaps compete in the minor later
  - All these bids above deny a four card major for responder

Sample hands below presume partner opened 1 ♠

- K72
- 93
- KQ962
- AJ3

After 1 ♠ by partner, playing inverted you bid 2 ♠ which shows 10+ HCP, is forcing for at least one round, and denies a 4 card major. You plan to force to game with an opening hand yourself.

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- 872
- 93
- KQ962
- AJ3

Still worth 2 ♠, a limit raise in diamonds. This hand however will not force to game unless partner shows extras.

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- QT2
- 93
- K9762
- QJ7

This hand is in between the 2 ♠ and 3 ♠ call. Start with 1NT, planning to compete to 3 ♠ over 2 of a major by the opponents.

- 872
- 93
- KQ962
- T73
This hand is about right for a preemptive raise to 3♣.

1. **Do we have to alert these bids?**
   a. Yes. If there is no interference by the opponents, the raise to 2 of a minor (limit raise, forcing) and the raise to 3 of a minor (preemptive) must be alerted.

2. **What happens if the opponents overcall 1♠??**
   a. Inverted minors are now off. The overcall has given you three different raises instead of two, so you should use them.

   1♦-(1♥)-??
   - 10+ HCP, 4+ clubs, < 4 hearts – bid 2♠ -- a limit raise or better (the negative double showing hearts takes priority)
   - 6-9 HCP, 4+ clubs – bid 2♠* -- a single raise
     * This one reverts to the original standard meaning
   - 3-6 HCP, 5+ clubs – bid 3♠** (preemptive)
     ** This one retains the new meaning

   None of these bids need to be alerted after interference – including the preemptive raise.

3. **What happens if the opponents double?**
   a. 1♦-(x)-??

   - 2NT shows a limit raise (Jordan), no four card major, 10+ HCP***
     ***This call is alertable in the ACBL.
   - 2♥ is a single raise (6-9, 4+ clubs, no four card major)
   - 3♥ is preemptive (3-6 HCP, 5+ clubs)

- **The #1 advantage of inverted minors is the space it gives you to explore whether 3NT is good or not**
- **Because opener does not have a five card major, and responder does not have a four card major, you can now bid stoppers instead of needing real length in suits.**
  o No golden fit in a major is possible unless opener’s hand is a freak (6-5 at least).
  - A good principle is that the 2nd and 3rd bids show stoppers, and the 4th bid asks for a stopper.
  o If at any time either player can bid 3NT, he or she should
Back to our original hands……

- ♦ AJ94
- ♦ 83
- ♦ AQ82
- ♦ K93
- ♠ Q8
- ♠ AK7
- ♠ K7643
- ♠ 542

1 ♠ - 2 ♠*
2 ♠** - 3♠***
3NT****

* Limit raise or better in diamonds
** I have the spades stopped
*** I have the hearts stopped
**** Well, with Kxx of clubs, I better bid 3NT!

- ♦ AJ94
- ♦ 83
- ♦ AQ82
- ♦ K93
- ♥ 872
- ♥ J9
- ♥ KJT94
- ♥ AQJ

1♥ - 2♥*
2♥** - 3♥***
3♥**** - pass*****

* limit raise or better in diamonds
** I have the spades stopped
*** I have the clubs stopped
**** Well, I don’t have the hearts stopped – maybe you do?
***** Nope!