



Adventures in Bridge

Leaders in Bridge Entertainment and Education

www.advinbridge.com

This Week in Bridge

(134) Upgrade to Jacoby 2NT

© AiB

Level: 6

Robert S. Todd

robert@advinbridge.com

General

The modern expert 2NT response to a 1M opening showing a limit raise or better (LR+), instead of game forcing, has many different inventors and advocates. In Europe, it is known as Limit Sternberg while in America, Larry Cohen popularized a similar approach. The idea of using 1M – 2NT as LR+ accomplishes a couple of goals:

- First, this opens up 1M – 3M to always be a weak call (a valuable tool for making life difficult on the opponents).
- Second, 1M – 2NT as LR+ approach gives away less information about the Opener's hand (and soon to be declarer's hand).

Let's see how this works.

New Agreement – Limit Raise or better instead of Game Force (LR+)

1M – 2NT* We agree that this shows 4+card support and 10+ points.

This is forcing to 3M. If Responder has a game forcing hand, they can of course bid on to game even if Opener shows a minimum hand and tries to stop in 3M. This leads us to the details of the second valuable part of this agreement, which is the upgrade to Opener's rebid structure to conceal information from the opponents. Let's look at Opener's rebids in detail.



Opener's Rebids

1M 2NT*

___?

- 3♣* All minimum hands
 - Relay asks for more information - NVLMH
- 3♦* Extra values (15+ points)
 - Relay asks for more information -- VLMH (None if you could have balanced 15-17.)
- 3♥* Extra values, extra trump, no shortness (6322, 7222)
 - Relay asks for rest of shape -- LMHN 3-card suit
- 3♠* Extra values, extra shape, 5422
 - Relay asks for rest of shape -- LMH 4-card suit
- 3NT* Balanced 18-19 points
 - Relay asks for rest of shape -- LMH doubleton
- 4-Level 5+card side suit, quality suit, 2 of top 3 honors (no extra values required)
- 4M "Forgot Systems"

Note: Some players choose to use this (or a similar) rebid structure even when they play Jacoby 2NT (2NT as a game forcing rebid.)

***VLMHN = Void Low Middle High None – in reference to the remaining suits.*

Example – Minimum Game Force

1♠ 2NT*

3♣* 4♠

When the Opener has shown a minimum and we have no slam interest (but enough to force to game) we can just bid game and not give any more information away to the opponents.

Example – Slam Interest

1♠ 2NT*

3♣* 3♦*

3NT* ___?

Even when Opener shows a minimum we might still have slam interest. So we ask for more information about their hand (with the 3♦* relay) and partner shows a singleton ♣ (Step 1 - 3♥* = no shortness, Step 2 - 3♠* = void, Step 3 - 3NT* = low singleton ♣, ...) Now Responder can re-evaluate their hand, knowing Opener has this ♣ shortness and 11-14 HCP.

Note: We can play these same rebid structures and agreements when playing Jordan (limit raise or better) if we find it useful – a nice agreement with no additional work required.



Conclusion

This upgrade to Jacoby 2NT allows for a better general Major suit raise structure by always giving us a preemptive 3M response, and a better rebid structure because Opener shows both strength and shape. Responder can further relay to find out more information about Opener's hand. This agreement requires some memory work about the artificial steps of the follow-up bids, but if you and partner are up for the extra work, this is a valuable upgrade to traditional Jacoby 2NT Response.