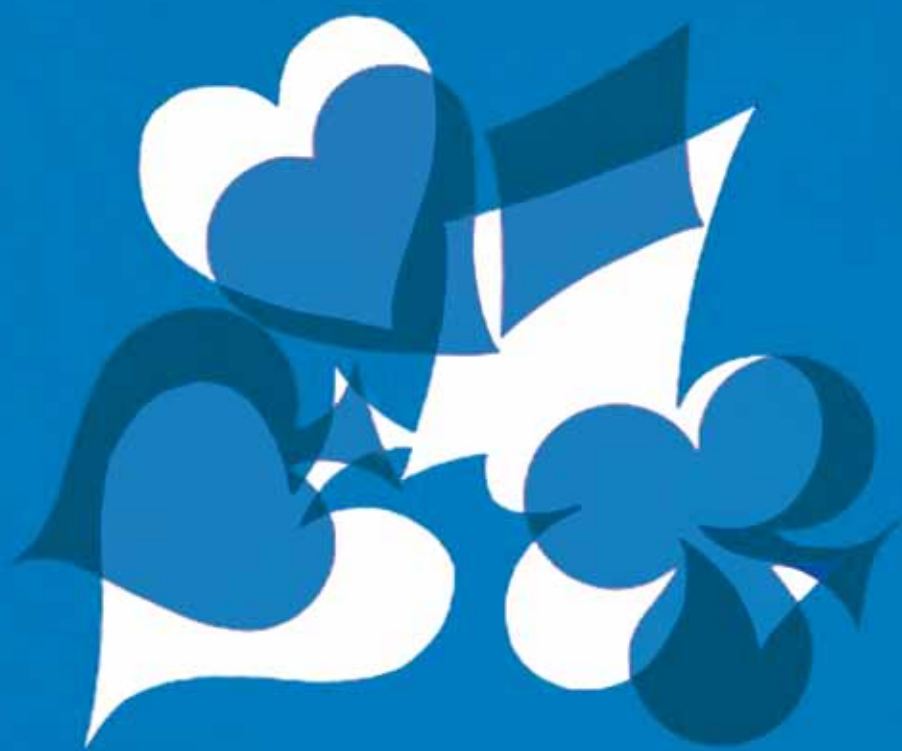


WINNING BRIDGE CONVENTIONS

# THREE SPADES OVER 2NT

Patty Tucker



An Honors eBooklet from Master Point Press

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## Introduction

There are several different conventions that you can play in response to a one notrump opening bid or overcall. Conventions that will allow you to show:

- Weaker hands;
- Stronger high card point hands;
- More distributional hands;
- Hands with a four-card major;
- Hands with a five-card or longer major; and
- Hands with a six-card or longer minor.

There are tools that allow you to force the notrump opening bidder to become declarer, thus allowing responder to more fully describe their hand and conceal the stronger hand. They allow the opening lead to be made by the opening notrump bidder's left-hand opponent, in and of itself, a valuable advantage.

Some of those conventions and tools are discussed fully in this book. As you might expect, they are the conventions and tools I have found most useful.

***Always remember that every time you add a convention you expect to lose some other bid AND that the additional conventions that you choose to adopt influence the rules of other conventions.*** You might ask, "Why would I do that? Why should I lose a

natural bid, to add an artificial bid?” The answer is simple...because it is valuable. As you work your way through this book you will find that the rules of the simplest and most common conventions – Stayman and Jacoby Transfers – will be adjusted as you add other conventions.

For example:

If you choose to adopt Smolen, then responder’s rebid after the initial Stayman bid, when he holds a five-card and a four-card major suit changes; or

If you choose to adopt Texas Transfers, then responder’s rebid after the initial Jacoby Transfer shows a different strength of hand; or

If you choose to adopt Four-Suit Transfers, then responder’s rebid after the initial Stayman bid will change on one specific type of hand.

As you add conventions to your toolbox, you and partner will need to decide which “tools” work best for you. What bids you are both willing to “lose” in order to better describe your hand when you decide to adopt different conventions.

I’ve included the conventions that I believe are worth the extra effort to learn and are worth the few bids that are lost.



## **Three Spades over 2NT**

## Three Spades over 2NT

The 3♠/2NT convention is fast growing in popularity in a variety of treatments and agreements. It grew from a recognized need to be able to “talk” about the possibility of a minor suit slam after a 2NT opening bid (or a 2NT rebid after a Strong 2♣ opening bid).

The concept is simple. When responder to the 2NT bidder has:

- A hand with one or two long minor suits; and
- A hand with the values in either high card strength or trick-taking ability to consider slam is possible.

Responder will bid 3♠ as a relay to 3NT. After opener rebids 3NT, responder’s rebid will describe what type of hand he holds. With:

- A long (6+ cards) club suit responder will bid 4♣;
- A long diamond (6+cards) suit responder will bid 4♦;
- With both minors (5/5) or better responder will bid his shortest major (which will be a

singleton or void), suggesting, but not committing to slam; or

- With 5/4 in the minors (either minor may be the five-card suit) responder will bid 4NT, suggesting, but not committing to slam (a mild slam try).

One of the characteristics I like about this bid is that you don't lose another bid. 3♠ would have had no meaning before you adopted this convention. For once you are able to gain a useful bid without having to give up another natural bid for which you had a use!

There are many continuations that you and your partner can agree to play. The one given in this book is fairly simple and easy to play. If responder:

- Bid 4♣ or 4♦, the bid requires opener to cuebid a control (Ace).
- Bid a short major (4♥ or 4♠), opener will either:
  - Bid 4NT, intending to play 4NT; or
  - Pick the minor suit he prefers which will confirm a slam.
- Bid 4NT, opener will either:
  - Pass, agreeing to play 4NT; or

- Pick the minor suit he prefers which will confirm a slam.
- Bid 5NT requiring opener to pick a slam, opener will either:
  - Bid 6NT; or
  - Pick the minor suit he prefers and bid either 6♣ or 6♦.

In any of the auctions where opener has picked one of responder's minor suits and confirmed a slam, bids of a new suit would be cuebids of a control (Ace) trying to reach a Grand Slam.

As you can see, these are not bids to be used lightly. Your bidding room has been absorbed quickly and your first agreement of a minor suit (in many cases) comes at the five-level, making Blackwood or Key Card virtually impossible.

Let's look at each of these continuations and how the auction might proceed.

***Bid 4♣ or 4♦, the bid requires opener to cuebid a control (Ace).***

**Hand 1**

North   South

2NT     3♠

3NT     4♣

?

2NT = 20-21 HCPs and a balanced hand.

3♠ = A relay to 3NT.

3NT = Forced.

4♣ = 6+ clubs and slam interest.

North's options:

- 4♦ = I have the ♦A.
- 4♥ = I have the ♥A. I do not have the ♦A.
- 4♠ = I have the ♠A. I do not have the ♥A or the ♦A.
- 4NT = I have no Ace. (*Note: I find it unbelievable that responder would hold the values for slam and opener has no ace and does not have the HCPs to have opened 2NT.*)

After North's cuebid of an ace, South may cuebid himself to illicit more information, sign off at 4NT, or bid slam.

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## Three Spades Over 2NT

Bridge students quickly discover that ‘basic’ bidding’ will only get them so far. If they really want to improve, it is necessary to master a certain number of bidding conventions, and be prepared both to play them and play against them. This ebooklet covers the Three Spades Over 2NT convention.



**PATTY TUCKER** (Dunwoody, Georgia) is an ABTA Master Bridge Teacher and cofounder of Whirlwind Bridge and Atlanta Junior Bridge. Her success at the bridge table culminated in her victory in the 2000 Baldwin Flight A North American Open Pairs with long-time bridge partner Kevin Collins. Patty and Kevin were married in 2006.