

# The Gambling 3NT

by Dave Riseborough

A 3NT opening in ACOL is very specific. It shows:

- 1 A long, strong minor which should run with no losers opposite a void; eg, AKQxxxxx or AKQJxxx
- 2 No more than half a hold in one of the other suits. Half a hold is Kx, Qxx, or Jxxx.

If you use it you are getting the advantage of a 4-level minor pre-empt with the chance of playing in 3NT if the hands fit. Also, you have shown pretty near exactly what you have, so any subsequent action is up to partner.

## Responses

- 1 To leave partner in 3NT you must have the other suits held.

How do you know which are the other suits? The majors are obvious; and if you have the A, K or Q of one minor then partner's minor must be the other one. The most important card you can hold, however, is at least a singleton in partner's suit because, by definition, there is probably no other entry to partner's hand.

NB: Kx is not a hold: the opening lead is coming through your hand. Personally, I would think, leave it in 3NT but don't blame me if it's wrong!

With a very good hand and all suits held – eg:

AKx
AKxxx
x
KQxx – call 6NT.

- 2 When your hand does not suit NT.

- If you cannot tell which suit partner has, just call clubs at the level you feel is appropriate. Partner will pass with clubs and transfer to diamonds if that is their suit.

You may want to sacrifice: if you do, call 5C or 6C – partner will still call diamonds if that is their suit.

- If you can tell partner's suit you may want to call it so that the lead will come up to your hand. This is particularly so if you have a good hand which is not suited to

No Trumps; eg:

Kx
AQxxx
x
AKJxx.

Partner opens 3NT. Call 6D. The opposition cannot profitably lead any of the other three suits. However, if you go 6NT or 6C the lead is through your hand which could be disastrous.