

Two Over One

Concealed Splinters and Inverted Trump Swiss

4-card trump support, 12+ to 15- points

Introduction

Concealed Splinters and Inverted Trump Swiss are conventions used by responder when partner opens 1 of a major and responder has 4-card trump support with 12+ to 15- HCP's. The names of these two conventions sound hifalutin, but in fact they are not difficult conventions.

- **Concealed Splinters**
 - 4 – card trump support
 - 12+ to 15- HCP
 - singleton or void
- **Inverted Trump Swiss**
 - 4 – card trump support
 - 12+ to 15- HCP
 - no shortness

We could liken the hands shown by these two conventions to the types of hands shown by the Two-Way 3 Club Raise used in Modified Bergen. In that case we had Mini-splinters (10+ to 12- with shortness) and Limit Raises (10+ to 12- without shortness). Our two new bids are modeled the same, but convey greater strength.

**Both Concealed Splinters and
Inverted Trump Swiss are entirely
game forcing.**

Concealed Splinters

When partner opens 1 of a major, and we hold 4-card trump support with 12+ to 15- HCPs plus a shortness, we announce our Concealed Splinter hand by jumping to 3 of “the other” major.

<u>partner</u>	<u>opp</u>	<u>you</u>	<u>opp</u>
1♥	P	3♠	

Your 3 spade call shows a concealed splinter. You have 4 hearts, 12+ to 15- HCPs, and a singleton or void in an undisclosed suit.

<u>partner</u>	<u>opp</u>	<u>you</u>	<u>opp</u>
1♠	P	3♥	

Your 3 heart call shows a concealed splinter. You have 4 spades, 12+ to 15- HCPs, and a singleton or void in an undisclosed suit.

The purpose of announcing a concealed splinter hand is to suggest that a slam may be possible. If partner has a bare minimum, and therefore no interest in slam facing your point count range, he will simply signoff at game in your agreed suit.

**An opener with no interest in slam
will simply signoff at game in your major.**

He doesn't care which suit is your short suit because he has no slam interest. If partner takes this action, then you should respect his decision and pass his game bid. The location of your singleton or void remains concealed. Therefore the opponent on lead will be in the dark regarding its location and will gain no advantage. He may even try to guess which suit it is and make a distorted lead that favors your side.

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But if, on the other hand, partner has more than a minimum opening hand, your bid should pique his slam interest. Now the location of your singleton or void becomes a matter of interest to him. In this circumstance, he will ask you to identify the location of your short suit.

Opener with slam interest will ask you for the location of your shortness by making the cheapest bid possible.

①

partner	opp	you	opp
1♥	P	3♠	P
3NT			

Partner, by making the cheapest bid possible, asks for the location of your shortness.

②

partner	opp	you	opp
1♠	P	3♥	P
3♠			

Partner, by making the cheapest bid possible, asks for the location of your shortness.

In auction #1 above, you and partner and have agreed upon hearts as trump, and the bid of 3NT asks you to identify the location of your shortness. Here are your responses:

- club shortness.....4 clubs
- diamond shortness.....4 diamonds
- spade shortness.....4 hearts

Note that you do not bid spades to show your spade shortness. Instead, you just rebid hearts. This is possible because you have already promised shortness, and yet you have bid neither clubs nor diamonds. By bidding 4 hearts, you allow partner to pass and play 4 hearts if your spade shortness is not valuable. If partner has strength in spades, then your hands do not seem to fit well together, and so partner may elect to pass and play 4 hearts, his interest in slam having

been cooled by your bid.

In hand #2 above, you and partner have agreed upon spades as your trump suit, and partner's 3 spade call asks you to identify the location of your shortness. In this sequence, where 3 spades asks for the shortness instead of 3NT, you have just a little more bidding room, so in this instance you can tell your partner whether your shortness is a singleton or a void. If your shortness is a singleton, you simply show your short suit directly:

- club shortness.....4 clubs
- diamond shortness.....4 diamonds
- heart shortness.....4 hearts.

But if your shortness is a void, then, over 3 spades you bid 3NT:

partner	opp	you	opp
1♠	P	3♥	P
3♠	P	3NT	

Partner was expecting a suit bid identifying your short suit, but instead, you have bid 3NT to announce that your shortness is a total void. This instructs partner to bid 4 clubs, whereupon you will identify the suit in which you am void.

partner	opp	you	opp
1♠	P	3♥	P
3♠	P	3NT	P
4♣			

You have announced your void, partner has bid 4 clubs to give you room to identify it, and you now respond as follows:

- 4 diamonds.....diamond void
- 4 hearts.....heart void
- 4 spades.....club void.

Once again you have left partner room to pass and play in 4 spades if your club void is not valuable to your combined hands. By the same token, if it is valuable, you have left room for partner to use RKC if he wishes to pursue slam in that manner.

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Concealed Splinters and Standard Splinters

Concealed splinters are rarely played outside of Two Over One. But many players do play standard splinter bids. Standard splinter bids are simply double jumpshifts into the short suit. For example:

<u>partner</u>	<u>opp</u>	<u>you</u>	<u>opp</u>
1♠	P	4♣	

Using standard splinter bids, this jump to 4 clubs show 4 spades and a singleton or void in clubs. Obviously it is game forcing. Partner is given the location of the shortness, whether he needs to know it or not, and the defense is also made entirely aware of the location of responder's shortness. There is no possibility of distinguishing singletons from voids. And the point count requirement is not as rigorous because no distinction is drawn between Concealed Splinters and Mini-splinters. For instance, holding KJxx Axx Qxxxx x, a player may elect to make a standard splinter bid. But playing our system of Modified Bergen together with Concealed Splinters, we would show the same hand as a Mini-splinter. By making a greater distinction regarding our strength, we help partner determine just how powerful he needs to be to pursue slam.

Nonetheless, there are places for the standard splinter within Two Over One. Imagine you have been dealt the following hand:

AQxx Axxx AKJx x

<u>partner</u>	<u>opp</u>	<u>you</u>	<u>opp</u>
1♦	P	1♥	P
1♠	P	4♣	

Your leap to 4 clubs accepts spades as trump

and announces club shortness. Partner will now reevaluate his hand in light of this information, and either signoff in game or pursue slam. (With the particular hand shown here, you would make still another slam try, even if partner elected to signoff.)

Concealed Splinters are available only as a direct response to an opening major suit call. If the auction develops differently, as it does in the example of the previous paragraph, then standard splinter bids are still available and you should play them. All splinter bids, whether concealed or standard, are alerts.

The effect of competition

Concealed splinters should be played on over doubles and off over overcalls. But standard splinters can still be played on over an overcall.

<u>partner</u>	<u>opp</u>	<u>you</u>	<u>opp</u>
1♠	2♣	4♣	

Here you show club shortness with 4 spades and values sufficient to play in game.

<u>partner</u>	<u>opp</u>	<u>you</u>	<u>opp</u>
1♠	2♣	4♦	

Here you accept spades and your shortness is in diamonds with values sufficient for game.

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Inverted Trump Swiss

The Inverted Trump Swiss convention arises when partner opens 1 of a major and you have 12+ to 15- points and no shortness. This type of hand clearly must insist on game, but in and of itself it lacks slam interest. Of course, if partner has extra values, he will be happy to hear about your strength and support. What's more, knowing that you have no shortness can help guide his subsequent bidding decisions.

We show this hand type by a direct leap either to 4 clubs or to 4 diamonds. Which minor we choose reflects the quality of our holding in the trump suit.

- **Jump to 4 clubs** if your 4-card trump holding contains 2 of the top 3 honors, or if your 5-card holding contains the ace or the king.
- **Jump to 4 diamonds** if your 4-card or your 5-card trump suits do not qualify for the jump to 4 clubs.

Notice that your best trump holdings are shown by bidding the lower ranking suit, while the poorer trump holdings are shown by bidding the higher ranking suit. This combination of better holding/ lower suit and poorer holding/higher suit, reflects the "inverted" nature of our use of this convention.

The hand type shown by Inverted Trump Swiss cannot be shown at all by standard methods. It would be just one of many sorts of hands lumped together indiscriminately under Jacoby 2NT. Similarly, players who use only standard splinter bids cannot describe the balanced 12+ to 15- hands either, because the bids of 4 clubs and 4 diamonds are utilized by them to show the standard splinters.

Jacoby 2NT

When responder holds 4 trump and 15+HCP

The Two Over One System does indeed employ the Jacoby 2NT convention. But notice that we have used Concealed Splinters and Inverted Trump Swiss to handle all hands with point count ranges from 12+ to 15-. So when we employ Jacoby 2NT, we are showing hands that contain at least 15+ HCPs. Even though we are indeed "showing" partner such a hand, it is the nature of Jacoby 2NT that the hand utilizing it takes control over the bidding and of the partnership's destiny on that hand. By raising our HCP requirements to at least 15+ for the bid of 2NT, we now tend to insure that the hand that is stronger is in control. That is how it should be. The stronger hand will generally be better able to determine the proper final contract.

Let us just briefly review the agreements that follow the bid of Jacoby 2NT.

- Opener's first responsibility is to show a singleton or void, if he holds one. He does this by bidding his short suit directly.
- If opener does not have a singleton or void, his responsibility is to show his point count, utilizing the principle of fast arrival.
 - With minimal values (12 to 14-), jump to game.
 - With a couple of extra points (14+ to 15-) bid 3NT, not to play, just to show values.
 - With good values (15+ and up), rebid just 3 of the agreed major suit.

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Samples

<u>partner</u>	<u>opp</u>	<u>you</u>	<u>opp</u>
1♥	P		

A. What is your bid with these hands:

1. AJ3 KQ94 6 K9842
2. 6 KQ943 AJ3 K984

What do you bid after partner bids 3NT?

<u>partner</u>	<u>opp</u>	<u>you</u>	<u>opp</u>
1♠	P		

B. What is your bid with these hands:

3. AQ104 7 KJ86 QJ103
4. QJ103 AQ104 KJ86 7
5. AK86 Q10765 KJ72 —

What do you bid after partner bids 3 spades?

C. You open 1 heart and partner responds 3 spades. What next?

6. KQ4 AJ632 Q97 82
7. KQ4 AQJ62 A9 852

With hand 7, after you bid 3NT, what do you bid if partner responds:

8. 4 hearts
 9. 4 clubs
-

D. Pard open 1 heart. How do you respond?

10. 94 K843 AJ2 KQ106
11. 94 KQ83 A52 KJ106
12. A3 K9654 A52 K106
13. AQ KQ654 A52 K106

Discussion

- A.**
 1. Respond 3 spades. Over partner's 3NT, bid 4 diamonds.
 2. Respond 3 spades. Over partner's 3NT, bid 4 hearts
- B.**
 3. Bid 3 hearts. Over partner's 3 spades, bid 4 hearts.
 4. Bid 3 hearts. Over partner's 3 spades, bid 4 clubs.
 5. Bid 3 hearts. Over partner's 3 spades, bid 3NT. When partner then bids 4 clubs, you bid 4 spades.
- C.**
 6. Bid 4 hearts. Your hand lacks slam interest. Signoff in game, following the principle of fast arrival.
 7. Bid 3NT. With extra values, you want to hear more from partner.
 8. Pass and play 4 hearts. Partner's shortness is in spades, where you have high card power. The hands don't fit well.
 9. Ask for aces.* If partner has two, bid 6 hearts. If he has 3, consider 7 hearts. Partner's shortness is clubs, where you have nothing. Your combined high cards will all be working.
- D.**
 10. Bid 4 diamonds. Inverted Trump Swiss with less than 2 top honors in the trump suit.
 11. Bid 4 clubs. This time your trump suit qualifies for the 4 club response.
 12. Bid 4 clubs. With 5-card trump support, you need only have the ace or the king to bid 4 clubs..
 13. Bid 2NT. You are too strong for inverted trump swiss.

*Remember, the king of trump counts as a 5th ace.