



Adventures in Bridge

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This Week in Bridge

(297) Jump Shift Structure

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Level: 6

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General

One of the most difficult opening hands to describe to partner is the unbalanced single-suited (one 6+card suit) hand with 18-19 HCP. This is one of the strongest hands that does not open the bidding 2♣. With this hand we usually open our suit at the 1-level and after partner responds at the 1-level, we lie in a minor suit. If our one suit is a Major, then we show our strength by making a jump shift into 3♣, even when we have very few ♣ (as few as 2-cards). With this bid we create a game-forcing auction (showing our values), but we distort our shape (partner expects that we have at least 4-cards in the ♣ suit). This can cause some confusion with partner if they have a large fit for our ♣ suit. We would like to have a way to let partner know that this jump-shift is done on a single-suited hand, not on a two-suited hand. By adding an asking bid of a relay to 3♦ after our 3♣ jump-shift, we allow our side to better define our shape in the auctions. Let's see how this works to improve our ability to describe our hand to partner.

Jump Shift Structure with Asking Relay

Let's look at how having a 3♦* relay to ask about our shape allows us to better define our shape in these jump-shift auctions. One important part of this structure is that it allows us to better define our pattern while keeping the auction before 3NT on as many hand types as possible. Here are some examples to see how we can better define our hand using these methods.

Example 1

1♠ 1NT

___?

- 3♥ 5+card ♠, 5+card ♥, Game Forcing
- 3♦ 5+card ♠, 4+card ♦, Game Forcing
- 3♣* Artificial Game Force, 3♦* Asks for more information
 - 3♥ 5+card ♠, 4-card ♥, could be no ♣
 - 3♠ 1-Suited in ♠, 6+card ♠
 - 3NT 4-5 card ♣, not willing to go past 3NT
 - 4♣ At least 5-card ♣



Example 2

1♥ 1NT

___?

- 3♦ 5+card ♥, 4+card ♦, Game Forcing
- 3♣* Artificial Game Force, 3♦* Asks for more information
 - 3♥ 1-Suited in ♥, 6+card ♥
 - 3♠ 5-card ♠, not willing to go past 3NT
 - 3NT 4-card ♣
 - 4♣ At least 5-card ♣

Example 3

1♥ 1♠

___?

- 3♦ 5+card ♥, 4+card ♦, Game Forcing
- 3♣* Artificial Game Force, 3♦* Asks for more information
 - 3♥ 1-Suited in ♥, 6+card ♥
 - 3♠ 3-card ♠, Usually 3-5-1-4 or 3-5-0-5
 - 3NT 4-5 card ♣, not willing to go past 3NT
 - 4♣ At least 5-card ♣

Conclusion

Adding a structure to our jump-shift auctions allows us to better define our strong hand to partner. After a 3♣ jump-shift, giving up a natural 3♦ bid in favor of an asking relay does not seem like a significant sacrifice and is a good use of our limited bidding space because of the jump-shift. Look at adding this or a similar structure to your bidding system in your regular partnerships. You will see these methods are extremely helpful in getting to better describe your strong hand in the limited bidding space below 3NT.