

Bidding Lab

The Siebert adjunct to Flannery

By Tim Frick



Art by Shane McDermott

The following was provided to me by David Siebert of Little Rock AR. I don't know if he and his brother, Allan, are the originators, but for lack of a better title I have dubbed it the Siebert adjunct.

Many readers no doubt are aware that the Siebert brothers are one of the premier partnerships in the ACBL, ranking No. 23 (Allan) and No. 31 (David) on the all-time masterpoint list. They are Grand Life Masters.

To use the Siebert adjunct you have to play Flannery (an opening bid of 2♦, usually showing five hearts, four spades and 11–15 high-card points).

One of the problems that arose with Flannery when it was first introduced several decades ago was what to do with idle responses of 3♣ and 3♦ after a 2♦ opening bid. Some played transfers (to hearts and spades). Some used them as asking bids for notrump. For others, a response of three of a minor

was to play. There was no universal agreement as to what these minor-suit bids should mean.

The Siebert adjunct solves that by defining a very specific meaning that requires no memory work and has a valuable application.

When partner opens a Flannery 2♦, 3♣ or 3♦ tells opener you have a limit raise for hearts or spades and a concentration of strength in the minor you bid. This helps opener evaluate his hand for game.

Say you hold

♠J765 ♥83 ♦932 ♣AKQ7.

When partner opens 2♦ Flannery, do you want to be in game?

It depends on what partner holds in the minors, so why not ask? A bid of 3♣ tells partner you have a limit raise for spades or hearts with a source of tricks in clubs.

Partner will bid game with his club losers covered but will decline when he is short in clubs with losers in diamonds. If opener likes his

hand after your bid, he will jump to 4♥, expecting you to correct to 4♠ if necessary. If opener has fast losers in diamonds and duplication in clubs (singleton or void), he will bid 3♥, which you can convert to 3♠.

Similarly, a bid of 3♦ shows a limit raise for one of partner's majors with strength in diamonds.

If you have a normal invitational hand without a concentration of strength, perhaps

♠J743 ♥K6 ♦A54 ♣Q654

you simply bid 3♠. This shows 9–12 HCP with scattered strength.

With a hand such as

♠J7 ♥K1076 ♦A5 ♣Q6543

you would jump to 3♥.

This scheme frees up the 2NT response to Flannery (which asks about shape and strength) as an absolute game force.

Actions after interference should be at the partnership's discretion but should be discussed in advance, especially if the opponents use some sort of gadget bid over Flannery openers.

The author lives in Tulsa OK.

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