

BENJAMINISED ACOL

In standard Acol the bids of 2D, 2H and 2S show strong hands worth eight playing tricks with that suit as trumps. As these hands do not occur very often there are advantages in using 2H & 2S for weak hands with a six card suit.

This bid is pre-emptive and describes the hand very well, allowing partner to judge whether to bid or invite game or to raise the suit even more pre-emptively.

Benjaminised Acol is a system which incorporates these bids:

- 2♣ promises an 'Acol 2' (8 playing tricks) in a suit not specified.
2♦ reply is not a negative but a relay asking partner to name the suit.
- 2♦ is the strong bid: 23+ points or a game going hand.
2♥ reply is a negative.
- 2♥ or 2♠ is weak (6 – 10) and a reasonable six card suit.*
2NT reply asks for further definition from the opener who bids:
 - 3♣ with minimum(6 – 7) points and a poor suit.
 - 3♦ with minimum points and a good suit.
 - 3♥ with maximum (9 – 10) points and a poor suit.
 - 3♠ with maximum points and a good suit.
 - 3NT with AKQxxx

A 'good' suit has two of the top three honours.

Holding eight points one must judge whether to call it maximum or minimum.

A raise of the suit to 3♥/♠ is pre-emptive not an invitation to game and a raise to 4♥/♠ may be genuine or pre-emptive.

* What is a reasonable suit with which to open? Probably not less than two of the top four honours vulnerable and slightly less not vulnerable. QJ10xxx would be acceptable but Qxxxxx would not.