

Major Suits and Slams

Patrick, December 2018

PART 1

3-card major raises

4-card major raises

3-card Raises

- Over 1M showing four ...
 - unless 4333 it is recommended
 - which can affect the choice of opener
- Over 1M showing five ...
 - if you want to compete, you must show
 - immediately unless you are worth a second bid
 - unless weak enough not to care ...
- In competition ...

Over partners 1♠ opener

B1

♠ J 8 3 2
♥ K 7 5
♦ 8 7 5 4
♣ J 5

B3

♠ Q 8 3 2
♥ A 7 5
♦ Q 7 5 4
♣ 6 5

B5

♠ K 8 3 2
♥ A 7 5
♦ K T 5 4
♣ 6 5

B2

♠ Q 8 3 2
♥ A 7 5
♦ 8 7 5 4
♣ J 6

B4

♠ K 8 3 2
♥ A 7 5
♦ Q T 5 4
♣ 6 5

B6

♠ K Q 8 3
♥ A 7 5
♦ J T 5 4
♣ J 5

4-card Raise : short of game

- Traditionally 1M-2M or 1M-3M
- Issues : granularity
- Solution : more alternatives
 - (a) include top game try into Jacoby
 - (b) give up some suit jumps (a la Bergen)

4-card raise : GameTry+

- Jacoby 2N
- Splinters
- Jump to 3N
 - often balanced raise no shortage
 - can be used to distinguish (a) strength of splinter, or (b) void/singleton

Over partners 1♠ opener

B7

♠ A J 3 2
♥ K Q 5
♦ Q 7 5 4
♣ 6 5

B9

♠ A J 3 2
♥ K Q 5
♦ Q 7 5 4
♣ A 5

B11

♠ A J 3 2
♥ A K 5
♦ K T 5 4
♣ A 5

B8

♠ A J 3 2
♥ K Q 5
♦ T 8 7 5 4
♣ 6

B10

♠ K 8 3 2
♥ A 7 5
♦ K Q T 5 4
♣ 6

B12

♠ K Q 8 3
♥ A 7 5
♦ A K Q 5 4
♣ Q

Raises in Competition

- Direct raises more obstructive
- Cue bid first for all good raises
 - some still play 2N = jacoby with 4cd support
- Note : bidding becomes less accurate !

PART 2

Indicating Slam Interest

Why “indicating”?

- The importance of dialogue
- Needs two tricks beyond game
- Needs suitable controls
- Biggest failing I see - making the decision alone

Key slam indicators

- Splinters
- Self supporting splinters
- Unexpected cue bids
 - in impossible trump suits
- Artificial support bids

Self Supporting Splinters

- You have bid a suit
- Partner has bid NT
 - Any splinter sounding bid, sets YOUR suit as trumps

1N-2♥-2♠-4♣

1♦-1♠-2N-4♣

Unexpected Cue Bids

- When suggesting trumps is inappropriate

1N-3♥(slam try)-4♣

1♠-2♥-3♦-4♣

1♥-1♠-3♥-4♣

1♠-2♦-2N-3♠-4♣

- RULE : new suit at 4-level is never suggesting trumps if you could have suggested that suit earlier.
[List exceptions]

Artificial Slam Tries

- Over partner's 3-level preemptive opening
 - Bidding 4♣ as slam interest (4♦ over clubs)
- After Stayman – bidding the other major (3L+)
 - 2N-3♣-3♥-3♠
 - 1N-2♣-2♠-3♥
- Over partner's 4-level pre-empt
 - new suit except major over minor is a cue bid

And after “indicating” ?

- Partner must respond
 - usually return to trumps is the sign off
- The conversation continues
 - cue bidding
 - perhaps RKC to avoid a bad slam

Play this 6♠ Slam with me ...

W West	E East
♠ KJ7642	♠ AQ8
♥ A	♥ QJ85
♦ KQ8754	♦ A2
♣	♣ AQ87

The thinking

Lead is a club through the AQ

1. There are 11 tricks in top cards and long diamonds to help – this is too easy!
2. What can go wrong? A bad diamond break.
3. Can I guarantee 12 tricks without diamonds?
Yes, using ♥QJ.
4. Start with a top spade confirming not 4-0;
then ♥A and back to trumps ending with the
ace; lead the ♥Q and let it run if not covered.

N North

♠ 1095

♥ 9632



♣ J95432

W West

♠ KJ7642

♥ A

♦ KQ8754



E East

♠ AQ8

♥ QJ85

♦ A2

♣ AQ87

S South

♠ 3

♥ K1074

♦ J10963

♣ K106

PART 3

Playing in other suits

When other suits come in ...

- After NT opening and transfer
- After minor opening and support
- Even after an immediate major raise

After NT opening and transfer

- $1N - 2R - 2M - 3m = \text{second suit}$
 - all bids natural, plus $4om = \text{support for both}$
- $2N - 3R - 3M - 4m = \text{second suit}$
 - less space now, sign offs are clear plus ...
 - bids of other suits are slam interest in M,m

♠ 3

♠ AQ54

♥ AJT97

♥ KQ2

♦ K87

♦ AT2

♣ QT94

♣ AJ9

DEALER
EAST

w	E
	2N
3♦	2♥
4♣	?

After minor and raise of major

- Commonly : 1♣ - 1♠ - 2♠ - ?
- Could be 3cd support or 4
- Might be right to play in a different suit
- You need 2N as an asking bid here

♠ KQ63

♠ AT54

♥ AJ7

♥ 72

♦ Q5

♦ AKJ92

♣ KQ73

♣ 98

DEALER
EAST

W	E
	1♦
1♠	2♠
2N	4♦
....	

After major has been supported

- Might only be 3-card support
- Might have 5-4 or better on the side

♠ AT754

♠ KQ2

♥ A5

♥ 52

♦ AKJ32

♦ QT97

♣ 4

♣ 987

Play this 6♥ Slam with me ...

W West	E East
♠ A9752	♠
♥ 108	♥ AKQ953
♦ KJ10	♦ A65
♣ 983	♣ AK64

The thinking ...

Lead is the jack of spades.

1. I must play hearts from the top, so I assume they behave, which gives me 11 top tricks.
2. The twelfth trick could be a diamond finesse (and I throw losing club on the ♠A) or the long club (if they are 3-3, when I throw a diamond on the ♠A).
3. Can I give myself both chances? Yes, but I don't know my discard so I must not cash ♠A yet. Ruff the spade lead, draw trumps – then duck a club, win the return and cash two top clubs. Now I know what to discard, and if clubs 4-2 I must guess the diamonds.

N North

♠ KQ643

♥ J62

♦ Q87

♣ Q10

W West

♠ A9752

♥ 108

♦ KJ10

♣ 983

E East

♠

♥ AKQ953

♦ A65

♣ AK64

S South

♠ J108

♥ 74

♦ 9432

♣ J752

PART 4

Slam bidding tools

Not playing 3N ...

- If you have a known 8-card major fit, and willing to give up 3N, then it has better uses ..
- 3N = waiting bid, so you can cue bid clubs
- 3N = no singleton
- 3N = non-serious slam try

RKC and the Q-ask

- Generally no slam needing a finesse
- So no slam missing an ace and the trump Q
- After $4N - 5\clubsuit$, or $4N - 5\diamondsuit$
 - lowest no-trump bid asks
 - sign off in trumps without the queen
 - else show the queen and any king you can bid

Bidding 5M

- Sometimes the only slam try, but when others are available
- 5M => none of the other tries are suitable
 - so cue bidding would not work
 - so 4N asking would not work
- If one control missing, demands slam with it
- If multiple missing, shows all or none
- If trumps matter, it is the J & T we need

Play this 6NT Slam with me ...

W West	E East
♠ K107652	♠ AJ
♥ A74	♥ QJ9
♦ 8532	♦ A107
♣	♣ AKQ109

The thinking

Lead from South is the $\spadesuit K$ and North shows out

1. Even if clubs are 5 tricks, I need tricks from spades. If spades play for 6 tricks, I have 11 tricks and need either $\clubsuit J$ to fall or the heart finesse.
2. If I play $\spadesuit A$ and $\spadesuit J$ then South will cover and I am stuck in the wrong hand. What about leading $\spadesuit J$ first? That holds, then $\spadesuit A$, clubs which don't work and I am in the right hand for the heart finesse!

N North

♠ 43

♥ 108653



♣ J65432

W West

♠ K107652

♥ A74

♦ 8532



E East

♠ AJ

♥ QJ9

♦ A107

♣ AKQ109

S South

♠ Q98

♥ K2

♦ KQJ964

♣ 87

THE END OF THE DAY

Questions on anything ?

Fill in feedback sheets