

SLAM TRY CUE BIDS

The subject of slam try cue bids is too large for this particular writer. Besides, the whole field is well covered in two books:

How to Win at Duplicate Bridge, by Marshall Miles

Blueprint for Bidding, by Terence Reese and Albert Dormer

Some general principles:

-- When making a first cue bid toward slam, avoid cue bidding a void (except in an opposing suit) or a suit with no losers: singleton ace, doubleton AK, AKQ. Prefer a cue bid in a suit like Axx, where a fit would be welcome. Partner will evaluate his hand on the basis of fit in the first cue bid suit, and you want him to come up with the right answer: a king in the suit is good, xxx is bad.

-- It is not mandatory to cue bid an ace that can be cheaply shown if you have already stretched in the previous bidding:

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	?	

North should bid 4♠, signing off, not 4♦, with ♠Q432 ♥KJ ♦A87 ♣7632. With such a miserable limit raise, if South passes the 4♠ signoff there can surely be no slam. If all South needs for slam is the diamond ace, he should be able to make another move. South has ♠AKJ75 ♥983 ♦K9 ♣AK8. If North bids 4♦, South will bid 5♦, and North will have to bid 6♠ because 5♠ would deny heart control. If one of North's small clubs were traded for the queen of clubs, she could cooperate in the slam try by bidding 4♦. This would lead to a reasonable slam.

-- A cue bid is not possible in partner's major at the four level, unless the *other* major has been tentatively agreed:

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♠ - spade raise, not a cue bid	

The 4♠ bid is not quite forcing, although it will seldom be passed (in view of the club fit).

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	4♠ - forcing, may be a cue bid	

North could have ♠A4 ♥KQJ873 ♦AK3 ♣95. The 4♠ is forcing, because North presumably could have passed 4♥ with a minimum 3♥ jump.