



Adventures in Bridge

Leaders in Bridge Entertainment and Education

www.advinbridge.com

This Week in Bridge

(37) Raising Partner in Competition

© AiB

Level: 1

Robert S. Todd

robert@advinbridge.com

General

One of the most important parts of bridge is raising partner. We try to raise partner whenever possible. We may choose not to support partner immediately if we feel we have something more pressing to communicate, in which case we can respond in our own Major, use a negative double, or bid some number of notrump. But in general we strive to “support with support.”

Raising partner is even more important in competitive auctions. When the opponents have entered the auction they start to take away our valuable bidding space and they may raise or preempt the auction to take away even more bidding space. But if partner knows we have a fit, they will be in a better position to make a good competitive decision. When partner doesn't know that we have a fit it is difficult for them to judge whether to play offense or defense. This is especially true in high level competitive auctions where we want to educate partner about our fit and thus better involve them in the decision making process.

Supporting Partner's Major

We need a good set of agreements about how to raise partner. We will try to communicate to partner two important parts of our hand:

- Size of our fit,
- Total points of our hand (HCP + adjustments + re-evaluation for support points.)

The following table is a set of *modern* agreements about how to raise partner in competition. Partner opens the bidding with 1-Major and we consider the meaning of our options when the opponent doubles, overcalls, or jump overcalls.



Raising Partner in Competition Table

<i>Partner opens 1Major - RHO Interferes</i>	vs. X	vs. Overcall	vs. Jump Overcall
Raise	5-9 pts 3-4c support	5-9 pts 3-4c support	Raise to 3L: 7 to 11- pts, 3+c support
Jump Raise	0-5 pts 4+c support	0-5 pts 4+c support	(n/a)
Bid Game	0-8 pts (LOTT)	0-8 pts (LOTT)	11+ to 14 pts, 3+c support. Bid to make – “We don’t preempt a preempt.”
Bid 2NT	*10+ pts 4+c support (Jordan)	10+ to 12- pts Natural (0-2c support, stopper in Opp suit.)	10+-12- pts, Natural (0-2c support, stopper in Opp suit.)
Cuebid (Q) Opp’s suit	(n/a)	10+ pts 3+c support (Q=LR+)	<i>Slam Try:</i> 15+ pts, 3+c support.
Jump Q	(n/a)	<i>Splinter</i> , 12+ pts, 4+c support, 0-1c Opp suit.	(Rare)

*LOTT = Law of Total Tricks. This is the idea that we “compete to the size of our fit.” We also try to do this as quickly as possible – we jump there. With a 10 card fit (5-card support for partner’s Major) we raise to 4M even if we do not have a great hand.

(Advanced Issue)

Double Jump Shifts in competition are also bids that can show support. If these double jump shifts are below game they are splinters, but if they are jumps to game they are to play.

Ex. 1♠ (2♣) 4♦ *Splinter*, 12+ pts, 4+c♠, 0-1♦

Ex. 1♠ (2♣) 4♥ Natural, To Play. 7+♥, 0-9 HCP

Conclusion

Raising partner’s suit is one of the most important parts of bidding, but knowing how this changes in a competitive auction is even more important (because the opponents are trying to win the auction as well). Get to know your bidding options so you can make the most descriptive bid possible and give partner the best picture of your hand available.