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This Week in Bridge

(268) 3M-1 Mixed Raise

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Level: 4, 5, 6

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General

In a competitive auction we like to have as many ways to raise partner's suit as possible. This is particularly true when partner opens 1-Major and we have 4-card support. In these competitive auctions (either over a takeout double or an overcall), a jump to 3-Major is used to show this 4-card support with a weak hand, 0-6 HCP. But we would also like to have ways to show 4-card support and a bit more values, 7-9 HCP, with one bid. This bid is called a *mixed raise*, a common hand to hold in support of partner, and some partnerships agree to allocate a conventional bid to showing this hand in competitive auctions. Let's see how this is done.

Mixed Raise – Jump Cuebid

Level: 4

When LHO opens the bidding and partner makes an overcall, we (Advancer) can use a cuebid of the opponent's suit to show a limit raise or better (3+card support, 10+ points) or a *jump cuebid* of the opponent's suit to show a mixed raise.

Example 1

1♦ 1♠ P 3♦

Since this 3♦ bid, a jump bid in the opponent's suit, is unlikely to be used as a natural bid, then we lose very little by allocating it to be a conventional bid showing a mixed raise.

3M-1 Mixed Raise

Level: 5

When partner opens the bidding and RHO interferes (with either a takeout double or a simple overcall), we would like to have a way to show a mixed raise in one call. Our goal with this hand is both to preempt the bidding (applying the LOTT) and show values, so as not to miss a game if partner has an extremely strong hand. The bid that eats up the most bidding space (other than jumping to 3-Major) is the bid right below, often called "3M-1".



Example 2

1♠	X	3♥*	Mixed Raise
1♠	2♣	3♥*	Mixed Raise
1♥	X	3♦*	Mixed Raise
1♥	2♣	3♦*	Mixed Raise

These bids are good to use as conventional raises because they are not frequently used as natural and they take away as much bidding space as possible from the opponents (putting maximum pressure on the Advancer).

Note: If this 3M-1 is the same as the cuebid of the opponent's suit (for example, 1♠ - 2♥ - 3♥) then the cuebid showing a limit raise or better takes precedence over the mixed raise.

Mixed-Weak Raise Inversion

The 3-Major bid is more destructive than the 3M-1 bid because after the 3M bid, the Advancer must decide what to do at that moment. After a 3M-1 bid, Advancer knows they will get another chance to bid and can pass, planning to come back into the auction later.

As opening bids have gotten more aggressive, the mixed raise has become a more common bid than the weak raise. Since the mixed raise is a more common bid and since the 3-Major bid puts more pressure on the opponents, some expert partnerships have chosen to use 3-Major as their mixed raise in competition and 3M-1 as their weak raise.

Example 3

1♠	2♣	___?
•	3♠*	Mixed Raise, 4+card ♠, 7-9 HCP
•	3♥*	Weak Raise, 4+card ♠, 0-6 HCP

Conclusion

Adding a conventional bid to our bidding system requires us to give up a natural bid. In doing so, we should give up natural bids that are rarely used and replace them with conventional bids that are useful on more common types of hands. A mixed raise is a hand that comes up frequently and that we would like to show in one call. The bid just below a preemptive raise (3M-1) is an excellent choice for a conventional bid to show this type of hand. If you like to attack the opponents' bidding space, discuss adding this 3M-1 mixed raise to your system.