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(22) Fits: Help Suit Game Tries (HSGT)

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Level: Intermediate / Advanced

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***This Lesson is a previously unpublished companion to the Fits Topic from 2011.*

General

After we find a fit with Partner, what is the next thing we proceed to do?

- If we are not interested in game we pass (signoff).
- If we have enough to play game we bid it.
- If we have values in between pass and game (possibly interested in game) then we need to try to find out more information about Partner's hand.

Getting Information From Partner

What do we want to find out from Partner about their hand?

- How many points they have – maximum or minimum.
- Where are their points are located (In which suits?)
- Does Partner like their hand?

How do we find out this information about Partner's hand?

We could just raise 1M-2M-3M as a quantitative bid asking partner if they have maximum or minimum values. But this does not give partner any additional information to allow them to reevaluate their hand. We want to give Partner more information to help them help us make a decision about whether to go to game or to stop in a part score. We do this by using *Help Suit Game Tries (HSGT)*.

Some Examples of Help Suit Game Tries

1♠ - 2♠ - 3♣/3♦/3♥

1♥ - 2♥ - 2♠/3♣/3♦

1♣ - 1♥ - 2♥ - 2♠/3♣/3♦



Help Suit Game Tries (HSGT)

When we make a HSGT (by bidding a new suit after we have found a fit) we are asking Partner if they can help with our potential losers in that suit. This is our side suit. We are taking the focus away from the total value of their hand and asking them to re-evaluate based on their fitting cards for our side suit. The classic holding for us to make a Game Try into is Axxx. Unfortunately, we can't always have this holding. But we want Partner to visualize us having this holding (or something close to it) and tell us if their holding will be helpful to us. Help means that they cover our losers in this suit – this can be either with honors or ruffing values.

What Partner does after we make a HSGT?

- If Partner has good help in this suit they bid game.
- If Partner has no help they signoff – return to our known fit below game.
- If Partner is in between (they have some help) then they can bid something else (if there is space) to try to give us some additional information about their hand – this is called a “Try Back.”
- With help and an appropriate hand, partner could also offer an alternative game – like 3N.

Do We Have Help?

Let's examine many of the holding that Partner might have and determine if they have enough help (Yes), not enough help (No), or some help (some).

- X Yes
- Xx Some
- Xxx No
- Xxxx+ No
- A Yes
- Ax Yes
- Axx Yes -- but not as much help as Ax or Axxx.
- Axxx+ Yes
- K Yes
- Kx Yes
- Kxx Yes – but not as much help as Kx or Kxxx.
- Kxxx+ Yes
- Q Yes
- Qx Yes
- Qxx Some
- Qxxx+ Some
- J Yes
- Jx Some
- Jxx No
- Jxxx+ No – though better than Jxx.



- QJ Yes
- KJ Yes
- AJ Yes
- KQ Yes
- AQ Yes
- AK Yes
- QJx Yes
- KJx Yes
- AJx Yes
- KQx Yes
- AQx Yes
- AKx Yes

If it is a close decision (some help) and we do not have enough room to make a *Try Back* then we should consider the following other aspects of our hand in order to make a final decision:

- Trump Quality – with good trump, be aggressive and accept the Game Try.
- Spot Cards - with 10s and 9s in Partner's suit(s) accept the Game Try.
- Overall Values – If we are a maximum with some help then we should accept the game try and if we are a minimum with some help then we should reject it.

Conclusion

Help Suit Game Tries are useful in finding out more detailed (specific) information about Partner's hand. Many times it is not how many points Partner has, it's that they have the right points. This tool helps us better determine the usefulness of Partner's cards and make cooperative decisions about bidding game.