

SYSTEMIC CUE BIDS

One of my 'necessary' conventions is the Cue Raise (Unassuming Cue Bid).

This is a necessity to allow weaker lead-directing overcalls, with partner not 'punishing' you by leaping to the 3-level with 10 or 11 TP.

However, there are also other applications for Cue Bids of an opponent's suit.

DELAYED CUE BID IN THE OPPONENT'S SUIT

This relates to either a cu bid that is NOT on the first round of the bidding, or a cue bid after a cue raise!

EXAMPLE 1

<i>You</i>		<i>Partner</i>	
1♥	1♠	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♠	

This cue bid is not an immediate cue bid, so it is not a cue raise. It is, instead, used to create a game forcing auction – rather like fourth-suit forcing. The auction must continue until a game bid has been made.

Obviously, you can start by rebidding 2NT, guaranteeing a spade stopper, so that 3NT can be reached. You may also support partner's clubs with 3-card support, or rebid your own suit to show an even longer suit.

Should you rebid 3NT and partner removes the bid to something at the 4-level (their suit or your suit), this then becomes a slam try.

EXAMPLE 2

<i>You</i>		<i>Partner</i>	
1♦	1♥	2♥ (cue raise)	Pass
3♦ (min)	Pass	3♥	

The first cue bid was a cue raise (being on the first round of the auction). The second cue bid was establishing a game forcing auction, looking for a heart stopper (or perhaps planning to show slam interest next!).

EXAMPLE 3

<i>You</i>		<i>Partner</i>	
1♦	1♥	2♥ (cue raise)	Pass
3♥			

Similarly, responding to the cue raise with a cue bid is creating a game forcing auction (or perhaps a slam-auction). Certainly, responder's first consideration should be to show a heart stopper by rebidding 3NT.

CUE BIDS AFTER THE OPPONENTS HAVE BID TWO SUITS

The situation changes if the opponents have bid (or shown) two suits. Now you should play that bidding one of the opponents' suits SHOWS a stopper, asking partner to rebid 3NT with the other suit stopped.

CUE BIDS AFTER PARTNER MAKES A TAKEOUT DOUBLE

Imagine you held:

♠ K Q 5 4
 ♥ K Q 4 3
 ♦ A 5 4
 ♣ 5 3

LHO opens 1♦ and your partner makes a takeout double. How will you show this hand?

You know you belong in game, but which game? You would like to know whether partner has four cards in hearts or spades, without picking the wrong suit!

After partner makes a takeout double, a cue bid of the opening bid shows a good hand – 10+ HCP and usually two 4-card suits – i.e. no clear-cut bid in terms of a fit with partner. Rather than choosing a suit yourself, you use the cue bid to ask partner to bid.

The cue bid says: *Partner, I have plenty of values to bid but I'm not sure which suit to bid. Please bid your longest suit.*

It is also forcing until a fit has been found and raised.

If doubler has two 4-card suits, they should usually start with the cheapest suit. If the cue bidder does not have that suit, they correct to the next suit, until a fit is found.

EXAMPLE 4

			♠ K Q 5 4
			♥ K Q 4 3
			♦ 5 4
			♣ 5 3 2
	<i>Partner</i>		<i>You</i>
1♦	Double	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥

This is a simple invitation to game, showing 10-11 TP and a heart fit. With 12/13+ TP, you would jump to game yourself.

EXAMPLE 5

			♠ K Q 5 4
			♥ Q 4 3
			♦ 5 4
			♣ K 5 3 2
	<i>Partner</i>		<i>You</i>
1♦	Double	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠

Correcting to 2♠ shows 4 spades (and very likely 4 clubs) and 10+ HCP. You are still in a forcing auction, since no suit has yet been bid and raised.

EXAMPLE 6

			♠ K Q 5 4
			♥ K Q 4 3
			♦ A 4
			♣ 5 3 2
	<i>Partner</i>		<i>You</i>
1♦	Double	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥

Raise to game in your known fit.

These cue bids can also be used after pre-emptive opening bids and partner's double. In fact, they are probably even more useful in such auctions (because of the potential for bad breaks).

EXAMPLE 7

			♠ K Q 5 4
			♥ K Q 4 3
			♦ A 4
			♣ 5 3 2
	<i>Partner</i>		<i>You</i>
3♣	Double	Pass	4♣
Pass	4-Major		

Now you have found your Major fit, rather than guessing.

(When this hand actually occurred, the person with this hand jumped to 4♥. They found partner with a 4-3-5-1, but unfortunately the hearts broke 6-0. 4♥ became unmanageable, whereas 4♠ was cold.)

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