



Lesson 43 Teaching Notes

Cue-bidding

Aims

- To introduce the class to Slam Bidding
- To demonstrate the importance of cue-bidding as the basis for sound slam bidding
- To emphasise that the first step in slam bidding need not be to ask for aces.

Content

- 1 Bidding and making slams is one of the great pleasures in bridge
For a slam we need to make **12 or 13 tricks**.
Which means we need a *source of tricks* – lots of high cards, or lots of distribution, or lots of trump.
Put it another way, we cannot afford to **lose more than one trick in a small slam**, and no tricks at all in a Grand Slam
This means we must have *control* of every suit: we cannot afford to have opponents cash 2 tricks against a small slam (1 against a Grand) or we will go down.
First Round Controls are **aces** (which can win the first round of a suit) and, in a trump contract, **voids** (which allow you to trump the first round of a suit)

In a small slam we can afford to lose one trick, so there can be one suit with no first round control – but we will need a *second round control*: a **king** or a **singleton**.
For our first acquaintance with slam bidding we will concentrate on First Round Controls.
- 2 When we think we may have the values to make a slam we can check on Controls by *cue-bidding*
A Cue-bid is a bid in a suit where we have First Round Control, either an ace or a void.
We make a cue-bid **after a suit has been agreed as trump**, when we sense that there may be a slam on the hand: now a new suit is **not** somewhere to play, it is a way of showing a control.

Once a trump suit is firmly agreed a bid in a new suit says “Partner, we have bid strongly enough to play in at least game, but I have such a good hand that I think we may have a slam. I am showing you a first round control so that we can decide whether slam is making or not.”
This way of investigating slam keeps the bidding low and allows you to stop if you find that you have two losers in one suit
- 3 Look at the kind of auctions where a trump suit is agreed:
1M-3M; 1any-1M-3M 1any-jump shift-raise

In auctions like this when one player bids a new suit that is a **cue-bid**.
It shows interest in slam and first round control in the suit bid.
It goes without saying that a cue-bid is forcing! Partner cannot pass.
It is the best way forward when you have slam interest in a hand where one suit has no control – it gives partner the chance to show whether he can control that suit or not.
When you realise that there is one suit with no control you **sign off** by bidding the agreed trump suit.
- 4 Summarise what you have learnt
A cue-bid is a bid **in a new suit** made **after the trump suit is agreed**
It shows First Round Control in the bid suit which means: the ace or a void.
A cue-bid carries the message that you are interested in slam
We make **the cheapest cue bid available**: if we skip over a suit we **deny** first round control in it.
In response to a cue-bid partner should make a return cue-bid if he can.
But if he has no control in a suit you have skipped over, denying control, he should sign off in game.