

TRIAL BIDS AND CUE BIDS

Mr.Wajahat's Question :-“ Pl let us know the difference between -Trial Bid, Cue Bid, Directional Bid and a False Cue Bid. What is the specific purpose of these bids? How to distinguish these bids?. Thanks “

Sridhar's views: -

These Bids represent a huge aspect of the game and as such deserve a book each for a good understanding; I have attempted a synopsis which can be supplemented with detailed reading for a thorough understanding.

TRIAL BID :- This is usually referred to natural and unnatural bids made to explore possibility of reaching a game . Typically , let us say the auction has commenced 1S-P-2S-P-? You hold ♠AKXXX ♥XXX ♦X ♣AKJX , You wish to be in game opposite ♠QXXX ♥KQX ♦JXX ♣XXX (4S makes on one out of 2 finesses) ; and do not wish to reach game opp ♠QXXX ♥JXX ♦KQX ♣XXX (same shape and HCP , but no play for game) . Here you can bid 3H saying , “ partner I am interested in Game but I need some help from you in Hearts” ; over this he will bid 4S with the first example hand and sign off 3S with the second. The Trial bid can also be used in competition – for eg you hold ♠AKXXX ♥X ♦KQX ♣AXXX – You open 1S-P-2S-(3H by RHO)- you can DOUBLE now saying “ partner, I am interested in game, but I cannot bid it myself unilaterally , pl treat this X as an invitation and evaluate if you can bid game”. He should bid 4S with a GOOD hand , say ♠QXX ♥AXX ♦XX ♣QJXXX; and bid only 3S with ♠QXX ♥KXX ♦QJXX ♣XXX.

CUE BID :- This comes in several varieties – game try, slam try , DAB, show support, Michaels etc. Most popular form is in SLAM bidding where you investigate and ensure that opponents cannot cash ACE and King of a side suit, though you may have enough winners- eg. You open 1H, and with opponents remaining silent, your pair bids:-

1H - 2D
2NT-3H
3S

This 3S is not a suit – you have already found a heart fit and denied spade suit (when you bid 2NT) , but a cue bid showing spade control and asking partner to show his controls in other suits; the two hands could be ♠AQX ♥KQJXX ♦KX ♣XXX with you and ♠KJX ♥AXX ♦AQJXX ♣QX. Over your 3S partner will cue bid 4D, DENYING club control and having no club control yourself you can sign off in 4H. Please note that your side has a combined 32 HCP with good fit, but cannot make 6H as opponents can cash two clubs to start with !

DIRECTIONAL ASKING BID (DAB):-

Often you have values and source of tricks for 3NT , but worried that opponents may take 5 tricks in side suit before you can take your 9; here you can employ this DAB.

Eg:- You open 1D on ♠AKX ♥XX ♦AQ10XXX ♣AX ; LHO bids 1H-partner bids 2D and RHO bids 2H; you can see 9 tricks on top if partner has dia king and wish to know if partner has a Heart stopper lest they cash 5 + tricks in H on lead. You can bid 3H (DAB) asking partner “ can you 3NT if you have a stopper in H?” As little as ♠XXX ♥QJX ♦KXXX ♣XXX with partner will produce a certain play for 3N, whereas even if partner has a better hand like ♠QJX ♥JXX ♦KJXX ♣QXX you will fail in game. The DAB can be used effectively in such situations; it normally occurs when your side has bid Minor suit/s and has less applicability after you have found a Major fit.

FALSE CUE BID – As I understand it, this is not part of pure bridge; I know of a few experts who bluff successfully using this, especially when looking to swing, but I do not recommend it for the upcoming player .