



# Adventures in Bridge

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## ***This Week in Bridge***

### **(116) Q=LR+ by Passed Hand**

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Level: 2

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#### **General**

When partner opens the bidding in the third seat and we have a fit for their suit we are likely to raise - especially if they open 1M. Of course, if we need to look for a better fit (say we have a 4-card Major when partner opens a minor), we will do that first. But if we do not have interest in a "better fit" then we will plan to raise partner if possible.

Raising partner when the opponents do not interfere is done with a standard set of tools - Inverted minors, Drury, or simple raises - but when the opponents overcall (or the auctions are generally competitive) we are faced with a different set of decisions for how to raise partner. We will look at these options and specifically focus on raising partner with a maximum passed hand.

#### **Opposite a 3<sup>rd</sup> Seat Opener**

When we are a maximum passed hand, partner opens the bidding in the third seat, and the opponents overcall:

*Example*

P    P    1♥    1♠  
\_\_?

We will make a simple raise to 2♥ with 3-card support and 6-9 points, but we will cuebid 2♠ to show a limit raise with 10-11 points. We also must remember, partner could easily have a 4-card Major for opening 1♥, so we need to have either 4-card support or 3-cards and something extra to make a limit raise (cuebid). Since partner also could have opened light, we should not try to stretch to make a limit raise with a borderline hand. Instead, we should be conservative with our invitations to game. The flip side of this approach is that if partner has opened "normally" in the 3<sup>rd</sup> seat they should know that we are going to be conservative. If they have any interest in game, they must be the one that pushes on - knowing Responder will tend to underbid with borderline hands in this situation.

If partner opens 1-minor in 3<sup>rd</sup> seat, they still could be light (though 1♦ is the soundest opening and 1♣ the second soundest) but we know that they have length in that suit (not just 3-cards) – they actually are more likely to have length in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> seat than they are in the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> seat since they could have opened a 4-card Major some of the time. Thus, we have the protection of the LOTT (which we were not certain we would have opposite a 1-Major opening bid). This LOTT protection allows us to stretch a bit more for our limit raises in competitive auctions when partner opens a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> seat minor than we would opposite a Major suit opening - we will raise this minor more freely!

### Other Q=LR+ Auctions

When partner is an overcall we also can make a cuebid to show a limit raise (whether we are a passed hand or not).

#### Example

P     1♦    1♠    X  
2♦

In this case, we actually return to one of our core philosophies of bidding – *It is better to overbid early in the auction than to underbid and have to catch up later!* This is particularly valuable here, because stretching to make a limit raise does not cost us anything. Our 2♦ bid keeps the auction at the 2-level, just as a 2♠ bid would. So in this auction we should strive to show our hand and overbid early – even with as few as a good 9 HCP. Since we would have opened many 11 HCP hands partner should know that a limit raise in this kind of auction shows a good 9 HCP to a bad 11 HCP.

### Conclusion

Bidding as a passed hand can be difficult. We strive to show our hand in one bid (not bidding too many times, in case partner has stuck their neck out with their first bid) but we also need to be careful to cut partner some slack when we think they may have taken a “tactical action”. Remember, when we are a passed hand, partner is really the Captain of the auction – they know more about what is going on than we do! So we must strike a balance between showing our hand completely and not getting our side too high. This is a delicate matter, but if we keep the two goals in mind it will help us accomplish both!