

# Raising partner's major with 3 Card Support

With 6-9 points it is often better to raise partner's major with three cards than to respond 1NT. e.g.

<b>South</b> ♠ 10 8 4 ♥ Q 8 2 ♦ K Q 7 6 3 2 ♣ 4	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> <th>West</th> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>P</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </table>	North	East	South	West	1♥	P	2♥	?
North	East	South	West						
1♥	P	2♥	?						

There is very little risk because if partner has not opened with a 5 card major, he has a balanced hand with 15-19 points (with only 12-14 balanced would have opened 1NT!)

Only raise partner's opening bid with three cards when:

- 1) Partner opened a major.
- 2) You have 6-9 points (not more) and an honour in partner's suit.
- 3) You have a shortage (at least a doubleton), so dummy's trumps can generate extra tricks.
- 4) If partner opened 1♥ don't raise with three hearts holding four spades. Bid 1♠.

Warning: Opener should bear the above in mind when his hand is strong enough to invite (or bid) game:

<b>North</b> ♠ K Q 10 6 ♥ K 8 4 3 ♦ A 2 ♣ A J 7	<b>South</b> ♠ 8 2 ♥ A J 9 ♦ K 7 6 4 ♣ 10 9 5 3	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>North</th> <th>South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>1♥</td> <td>2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2NT</td> <td>3NT</td> </tr> </table>	North	South	1♥	2♥	2NT	3NT
North	South							
1♥	2♥							
2NT	3NT							

With 4-4 in the majors and a hand too strong for a 1NT opening, North starts with 1♥, since this gives South the opportunity to show a 4 card spade suit at the one level. South has a small doubleton in spades and three strong hearts, so chooses a raise to 2♥ in preference to 1NT.

With 17 points North is strong enough to invite game, but with only 4 hearts it would be wrong to continue to 3♥, or make a trial bid\* in a new suit, as South has only promised three hearts. Instead, North takes the opportunity to show 17-18 points balanced by rebidding 2NT. This allows the partnership to reach the best contract of 3NT.

It is important that both partners understand that a simple raise of opener's major may only show 3 card support.