



Marty Bergen

www.martybergen.com

Better Bridge with Bergen

Re-evaluation by declarer after a fit

Distribution plays a crucial role in good slam bidding. Here's a review of the steps that should be used by the declarer after his suit has been supported:

1. Begin with your starting points (your high-card points).
2. Short suits: Add 2 points for a singleton, 4 points for a void and 1 for two or three doubletons.
3. Extra length in trumps: Add 1 for each trump after five, so 1 point for a six-card suit, 2 points for a seven-card suit, etc.
4. Side suits: Add 1 point for a four-card suit or five-card side suit.

I needed a name for declarer's points after re-evaluating. Because I introduced some of the relevant factors, several players suggested the name Bergen Points. Once you use steps 1-4 above, the sum will be the number of Bergen Points you have. Add your Bergen Points to the number of points partner promised. That will tell you whether or not your

side has 33 total points needed for a possible slam.

Let's practice re-evaluating by declarer after finding a fit. Ask these questions:

1. How many starting points do you have?
2. How many Bergen Points do you have?
3. What's your bid?

You	Partner
1♥	3♥
?	

3♥ shows a limit raise with four trumps. You hold:

1. ♠A 10 ♥AK7652 ♦3 ♣AJ 10 9, so you start with 16 HCP.

Adjust-3: Add 1 point (five upgrades, one downgrade). If you don't remember how to apply Adjust-3, see my Oct. 2008 and Nov. 2008 columns.

Quality suit: Add 1 point (lovely club suit).

Length points: Add 2 points (six-card suit).

So you have 20 starting points: (16 + 1 + 1 + 2 = 20).

Short suits: Add 2 points for the singleton.

Six plus trumps: Add 1 point for six trumps.

Side suits: Add 1 point (four-card club suit).

Total: 24 Bergen Points (20 + 2 + 1 + 1 = 24).

Partner's limit raise promises 10-12 dummy points, so your side

definitely has at least 34 total points. You know you have enough aces (and key cards), so there is no need to bid Blackwood. Because the partnership has at least 10 trumps headed by the A-K, you don't need to be concerned about the ♥Q. Therefore, you should bid 6♥.

2. ♠KQ ♥AKJ64 ♦K763 ♣QJ

You start with 19 HCP.

Adjust-3: Subtract 1 point (one upgrade, four downgrades).

Subtract 2 points for the two dubious doubletons.

Length points: Add 1 point (five-card suit).

That makes 17 starting points: (19 - 1 - 2 + 1 = 17).

Short Suits: Add 1 point (2 doubletons).

Side Suits: Add 1 point (four-card diamond suit).

Total: 19 Bergen Points (17 + 1 + 1 = 19).

You do *not* have enough strength for a small slam, so the correct bid is 4♥. □

All details at www.martybergen.com

Monthly online lessons: helpful topics.

Jan. 7, 9: Playing suit contracts

Feb. 11, 13: Balancing

All lesson material is also available. 8 new booklets with free shipping.

Getaway Naples seminar: Jan. 30, 31. Cruises in March and November.

Email: mbergen@mindspring.com or call him at (800) 386-7432.