

Bergen Raises

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Kootenay Jewel Bridge Club

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Bergen Raises

- 1M 3♣ constructive raise with 4-card support
- 3♦ limit raise with 4-card support
- 3M weak with 4-card support

If I have to use Bergen Raises, I prefer reverse Bergen because it gives room for a game try.

Reverse Bergen Raises

- 1M 3♦ constructive raise with 4-card support
- 3♣ limit raise with 4-card support
- 3M weak with 4-card support

Disadvantages

There are disadvantages to Bergen:

- 3M may go down when 2M is cold.
- The Law of Total Tricks may be over-used.
- Partner has no idea on your side suits and side shortness.
 - Side suit limit raises are also more useful.
 - Minisplinters are much more useful.

Law of Total Tricks

The Law of Total Tricks is not a law that cards follow. It is a law that players impose on themselves. I think it is a good guideline but there are many factors that affect the final contract besides the trump fit such as:

- location of the adverse strength
- double fits or misfits
- intermediate cards and touching honours
- Are honours opposite partner's shortness?
- Are the controls good or bad (flat hand, quacks and jacks)?

I used Bergen with my ex-wife because it stopped her from doing weak jump shifts into a minor (3m) over my major (1M). Why risk two-misfits when stranded at the three-level? Weak Jump Shifts are 2M over 1m. I play Reverse Bergen with an online regular partner because he likes them. The method does have benefits in knowing a nine-card trump fit and the information a simple raise now gives. I think constructive raises and minisplinters are better.

I wonder if Marty Bergen uses Bergen raises?