LIMIT JUMP RAISE IN A MAJOR

The jump raise of a major suit is not forcing, whether made in competition or not. Requirements are:

-- Four-card trump support, headed by queen or better, or any five
-- About 11 points counting distribution, a game-try hand

-- A balanced hand with generally scattered strength

The limit jump raise implies that it is not important where opener's strength lies; any high cards in his hand will be useful. This in turn implies a balanced hand for the raise, with no good side suit. When the degree of fit may be important, as when responder has a short suit or a good side suit, it is usually better to make a temporizing bid in a new suit before inviting game. This action will help opener in judging whether to bid game or not when he has a close decision.

Partner opens 1♠ and you have ♠Q1042 ♥K3 ♦AJ42 ♣976. This is a good raise to 3♠. But with ♠Q1042 ♥J86 ♦AQ943 ♣8 respond 2♦ and bid 3♠ on the next round. The bidding might go:

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♦
2♠	3♠

or:

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♦
2♥	3♠ - not forcing

Note that responder must go to the three level to *raise* spades. A 2♠ rebid over 2♥ would be a *preference*, not a raise, showing something like ♠J3 ♥4 ♦AJ8763 ♣J764.

In competition one must usually forget about bidding a side suit, both for preemptive reasons and because the overcall often takes away bidding space. If you have ♠KJ54 ♥63 ♦AQ763 ♣95 and partner opens 1♠, then next hand bids 2♥, you cannot bid 3♦--you won't know what to do if partner bids 3♠--so you jump to 3♠ over 2♥.

If RHO had passed, you would have bid 2♦ before raising spades. If RHO had bid 2♣ instead of 2♥, you could bid 2♦, but even then 3♠ is better. An immediate jump might shut out a club raise by LHO, and partner does not need much guidance as to fit. With an opponent bidding clubs, he will know that a singleton or xxx in diamonds is a poor holding.

The trump support is sometimes not up to par in competition. Suppose partner opens 1♠, RHO bids 2♥, and you have ♠KQ8 ♥7 ♦A10874 ♣J953. This hand is too good for a 2♠ raise, but 3♦ over 2♥ is out of the question; the hand is not good enough. In a case like this you must bid 3♠ with three-card support.

When in doubt whether to give a single or double raise, look at the trumps. With good four-card support, lean toward the jump raise. A jump with three trumps should only be made when a single raise is completely ruled out.

As with the preceding hand, a jump raise in competition will often be made with an unbalanced hand.

A passed hand jump raise may also have an unbalanced hand and/or trumps weaker than Qxxx, perhaps only three-card support. See section 3-17, Responses by a Passed Hand.

A limit raiser cannot use Blackwood, so his 4NT bids are natural:

Opener	Responder
1♥	3♥
4♣	4♦
4♠	4NT - natural, club king

A jump raise over an opposing takeout double is a weak preemptive bid. A good raise (not a limit raise) is shown by an artificial jump to 2NT when the hand lacks sufficient HCP for a redouble. See section 3-19, Bidding Over a Double.