

SIMPLE LOSING TRICK COUNT in Evaluating Major Hands with Fits by Maritha Pottenger

OPENING Hand

Average opening hand has 7 losers

Bad opening hand has 8 losers

Above average opening hand has 6 losers

With 9 or more losers, should not open unless you have 13 HCP.

RESPONDER'S HAND

A simple raise (raising partner's one of a major to 2) shows 9 losers.

A limit raise (going to 3 of major) shows 8 losers.

With 7 or fewer losers, should be forcing partner to game.

If Opener has 8 losers, do NOT move over simple OR limit raise.

If Opener has 7 losers, do NOT move over simple raise.

If Opener has 7 losers, take a guess opposite a Limit Raise (may take only 9 tricks; sometimes take 10).

Kantar's guideline is that if you have 5-3-3-2 shape, game opposite a 3-card limit raise is unlikely unless you have NT (15-17) or better values in HCP.

If Opener has 6 losers, go to game opposite any LR.

If Opener has 6 losers, make a Game Try (Help Suit or other) opposite a Simple Raise--partner is expected to cover 2 of your losers, but sometimes she will cover 3 of them.

If Opener has a 5 loser hand, go to game opposite ANY raise.

REMEMBER CAVEATS:

1. Losing Trick Count over-values 5-4 hands.
2. Qxx in LTC should really be 2-1/2 to 3 Losers—NOT just 2 losers. If you have Jack or 10 WITH the Queen, can count that suit as only 2 Losers.
3. You are allowed to reevaluate (Kings, etc.) based on the bidding and whether the Ace is likely to be behind or in front of your King.