

## **Bridge Lesson**

# **Introduction to Slam Bidding Techniques**

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**In this this lesson you will learn several slam bidding techniques which many club and tournament duplicate bridge players use to investigate slam in a suit and notrump contracts.**

- (1) The Blackwood and Gerber Conventions
- (2) 1430 Roman Keycard Blackwood (RKCB)
- (3) Roman Keycard Blackwood (RKC) - 3014
- (4) 1430 RKCB with Kickback
- (5) 1430 RKCB Minorwood
- (6) 1430 RKCB Over Preempts (Weak RKCB)

Slam bidding techniques like Exclusion Keycard Blackwood, Cue Bidding, and other methods like 1430 Keycard Gerber will not be discussed.

**To make a slam, one usually requires first-round control in three suits and second round control in the fourth suit.**

When looking for a possible slam, one often asks the following questions.

- 1. What cards should my partner have to be able to make a slam?**
- 2. How may I obtain the required information?**
- 3. Are there any bidding techniques or conventions that I can use to obtain the required information?**
- 4. If my partner does not have the required cards for a slam, can I stop short or slam, and if not is the risk of going down worth it?**

While there are many techniques/conventions to investigate slam, with some hands one needs to only count points.

To see this, consider the following hand:

Partner opens 1♣ (playing 2/1 or Standard) and you bid 1♠ with the following hand:

♠K87542 ♥7 ♦43 ♣A763

Partner bids 4♠, showing at least 19+ points!

Do you pass?

**NO!**

♠K87542 ♥7 ♦43 ♣A763

You have 7HCP + 2 Length Points = 9 Starting Points, but with re-evaluation you have 9 Starting Points + 3 for singleton heart (with 4+ spades) + 1 for the doubleton = 13 Dummy Points;

Partner's Jump to 4♠ bid shows 19-20 +13=32-33 points, YOU MUST PUSH ON. Do you need any slam bidding techniques here? No, just count points!

**FAST ARRIVAL DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN PASS!**

**Bid 6♠**

Points for a Small Slam are 33+ and for a Grand Slam 37+.

Partner Opens 1♠ and you have the same hand:

♠K87542 ♥7 ♦43 ♣A763 what is your bid?

With a fit, you have 13 Dummy points (7HCP + 2 Length points + 1 for doubleton and 3 for singleton with 4+ trumps), bid 3♥\*, a concealed/ambiguous splinter; singleton/void somewhere. \*=Alert

If you do not play ambiguous splinters, you would bid 4♥\* as a direct splinter to show singleton/void. \*=Alert

Now you need methods to investigate slam. If the SST for the two hands is one (a singleton facing a void) you make 12 tricks with only 19-21 working points.

Shortness and voids produce slam hands with a fit and require less points.

## Short Suit Total (SST) Rule

When opening one of a major, a splinter bid shows 4 card support (some only require 3) for the major suit bid and usually 13+ Dummy Points.

Using the SST Rule, to determine tricks:

**Opener adds his Starting Points to 13.**

**With 19-21 Working Points then  $13 - \text{SST} = \#$  of tricks possible.**

If the SST for both hands = 2, then we have 11 tricks with a singleton in both hands, with a **void and singleton**  $13 - (\text{SST}=1) = 12$ . **A SLAM**

If the total points = 22-24 Working Points in both hands, you gain ONE more trick. So, with singletons in both hands  $13 - (\text{SST}=2) + 1 = 12!$

And with 25-27 Working points you gain 2 more tricks, etc.

## **The Blackwood 4NT Convention**

While the Blackwood convention does not require knowing the trump suit, it does require that one know whether or not slam is possible. The convention augments this knowledge by helping one find the number of aces and kings for suit contracts.

### **The convention should NOT BE USED when:**

- (1) Holding two or more cards in an un-bid suit with no ace or king (e.g. xx, Qx, Jx).**
- (2) Holding a void (there are special methods).**
- (3) One has a slam invitational hand (e.g. 1NT facing 1NT hands or Balanced Notrump hands).**



The Blackwood responses to the bid of 4NT are:

5♣	0/4 aces
5♦	1 ace
5♥	2 aces
5♠	3 aces

**Knowing you have all the aces, 5NT is the king ask (without a void response) the responses are:**

6♣	0/4 kings
6♦	1 king
6♥	2 kings
6♠	3 kings

The bid of 5NT tells partner that you have all the aces, having all the aces and kings, one is in the grand slam zone; about 37 points (33 Points for small slam).

## Responding with voids

Using the Blackwood convention, and having a void, the responses to the 4NT ace asking bid are:

**5NT** = 2/4 an even number of aces with a void (with 0, bid 5♣ -- ignore the void)

**6** of void suit if the suit is **below** the trump suit = odd (1/3) number aces

**6** of trump suit with a void in higher ranking suit = odd number of aces

**Never count the VOID as an ACE.**

Blackwood is used with suit contracts and Gerber is used over Notrump.

## The Gerber Convention (Modern Version)

After the **OPENING** bids of 1NT or 2NT, the bid of 4♣ is known as the Gerber Convention. It was devised by John Gerber of Houston, Texas in 1938. It asks partner about the number of aces and subsequently about the number of kings. When using Gerber, remember that you should not use the convention if (1) you have a void, (2) you have worthless doubletons (e.g. Qx, Jx, xx) in an unbid suit, and (3) if you need to know if partner has controls in a specific suit.

The responses to the 4♣ Gerber ask are:

4♦	0/4 aces
4♥	1 ace
4♠	2 aces
4NT	3 aces

Having all the aces, you may next ask for the number of kings by bidding 5♣. The responses are:

5♦	0/4 kings
5♥	1 king
5♠	2 kings
5NT	3 kings

We have said that Blackwood is used for Suit Contracts and Gerber is used over strong Notrump (15-17). If partner bids 4NT when bidding Notrump (15-17), what does it mean (e.g. 1NT-4NT or 2NT-4NT)? It is called a **Quantitative ask**, bid 6NT with a Maximum HCPs (17 over 1NT and 21 over 2NT); otherwise Pass if your HCP are not a maximum.

**I recommend that Gerber be used only if you opened 1NT/2NT; otherwise, it is a natural bid, a cue bid or perhaps Minorwood!**

## **POSSIBLE partnership agreements for distinguishing 4♣ as Gerber from other meanings of 4♣ are:**

4♣ is Gerber; however over 3NT if clubs were bid use 5♣ (Super Gerber)

4♣ is Gerber only if the immediate preceding bid by partner was in notrump (called first and last notrump – agreement).

4♣ is Gerber unless a natural club suit bid has been made by the partnership.

4♣ is only Gerber when in response to opening bids of 1NT, 2NT or a strong artificial 2♣ bid.

4♣ is Gerber if it is a 2-level jump bid or if a suit has not been agreed as trump.

4♣ is 1430 Roman Keycard Gerber after an opening 1NT/2NT bid and a major was bid.

**Other agreements are required when responder is holding a void and over interference.**

Super Gerber example:

Opener	Responder
1♥	2♦ (2/1 bid)
2♥	3♣
3NT	4♣ is Natural and 5♣ is Super Gerber

Playing Super Gerber, slam Ace asking sequences always begin with a Club jump above 3NT.

Super Gerber Ace asking sequences are:

1♣ - 3NT;	5♣		
2NT - 3♣;	3♦ - 5♣		
1♣ - 2♦;	3♣ - 5♣		
1♣ - 1♥;	2♦ - 2♠;	3♣ - 3♠;	3NT - 5♣

## Slam Bidding Example (1)

Opener :       ♠AQJ1073 ♥76 ♦AK5 ♣Q3

Responder:     ♠K98 ♥AKJ53 ♦Q98 ♣K8

Opener 16HCP + 2 length points +1 for a Quality Suit – 1 for Dubious doubleton = 18 starting points - **Bids 1♠**

Responder with 16 HCP + 1 length point + 1 for doubleton + 1 Quality suit = 19 Dummy Points - **Makes the 2/1 Bid of 2♥ (13+ Points Dummy points)**

Opener has extra trump length (+1) and two shortness (+2) = 21 Bergen Points next bids 3♠. With slam interest and support for spades, Responder bids 4NT (Blackwood).

With 2 aces, Opener bids 5♥, and Responder bids 6♠, missing one Ace  
**Slam bid and made – Congratulations!**

## Slam Bidding Example (2)

Opener:           ♠K7 ♥J109 ♦AK7 ♣QJ1098

Responder:       ♠AQJ9 ♥KQ3 ♦QJ9 ♣K72

Opener has 14HCP + 1 length point + 1 for quality suit = 16 points

**Bids 1NT**

Responder bids 2♣ (Stayman) with 18HCP – 1 for Flatness + 1 for a Quality suit = 18 Starting Points

Opener bids 2♦ (no 4-card Major)

Responder bids 4♣ (Gerber) and Opener responds 4♥ = 1 Ace.

Responder next bids 4NT --- Glad I asked!

**Note - Do not bid 4NT (Quantitative) as Responder since you may miss your major suit fit.**



## Slam Bidding Example (3)

Opener:           ♠AJ10 ♥K9532 ♦K93 ♣A4

Responder:       ♠KQ4 ♥A10 ♦A752 ♣KQ65

Opener has 15HCP and 1 Length Point - **Bid 1NT (when 5-3 in majors)**

Responder has 18 HCP and is semi-balanced hand.

With no long suit and no 4-card major, responder bids 4NT Quantitative.

With the long heart suit, opener bids 6NT (some may just bid 6NT as responder).

**The hands have 33 HCP; however, careful play is required to make the contract since there are only 10 quick tricks.**

**Two extra tricks must come from the heart suit by playing a low heart to the 10!**

## Slam Bidding Example (4)

Opener:           ♠AQJ1073 ♥ void ♦K7654 ♣Q3

Responder:       ♠K9 ♥AKJ53 ♦AQJ9 ♣A8

Opener has 12HCP + 3 length points -1 for Dubious Qx doubleton + 1 for Quality suit = 15 points - **Bids 1♠**

Responder with 22 HCP + 1 length point + 2 for Quality suits = 25 Starting Points (with No fit cannot count shortness) - **Bids 2♥ (2/1)**.

Opener, with extra length in spades and a 4+ card side suit, bids 3♠. With slam interest and support for spades, responder bids 4NT (Blackwood).

With 1 Ace and a void Opener bids 6♥ (1 ace and a heart void), responder bids 6♠ - All Pass

**Slam bid and Made!**

## Slam Bidding Example (5)

Opener:                   ♠AQ9 ♥7 ♦AK3 ♣KJ7652  
Responder:               ♠87 ♥AJ43 ♦Q96 ♣A984

Opener has 17HCP +2 length points - **Bid 1♣**

Responder with 11 HCP - **Bid 1♥**

The bidding goes:	Opener	Responder
	1♣	1♥
	3♣ 16+ Points	4♣ (club fit)
	4NT(Blackwood)	5♥ (Two Aces)
	5NT (King Ask)	6♣ (None)
	7♣	Pass

## Slam Bidding Example (6)

Opener:           ♠AJ10732 ♥A6 ♦K5 ♣Q3

Responder:       ♠98 ♥KJ563 ♦A1098 ♣AK

Opener has 14HCP + 2 length points -1 for Dubious doubleton + 1  
Quality suit = 16 points - **Bid 1♠**

Responder with 15 HCP + 1 length point = 16 Starter Points  
**Makes the 2/1 Bid of 2♥**

Opener, with extra length in spades bids 3♠. With slam interest and  
NO AGREED SUIT, responder bids 4NT (Blackwood).

With 2 aces, Opener bids 5♥ (shows 2 aces) and Responder bids 6♠ -  
All Pass

**The slam fails - You lose the KQ of Spades! What went wrong?**

The major problem with the Blackwood Convention **for suit contracts** is that you have no way of knowing about the Ace and Queen of trump and the specific location of kings.

To solve these shortcomings, one uses the Roman Keycard Blackwood Convention (RKCB), with or without Kickback, or Minorwood for the minors and cue bids with perhaps the 5NT trump ask (Grand Slam Force/Pick a Slam) and Exclusion Keycard Blackwood.

The two most popular Roman Keycard Blackwood methods are 1430 Roman Keycard Blackwood (RKCB) and Roman Keycard Blackwood (RKC) also called 3014.

## Roman Keycard Blackwood (RKCB) Convention – 1430

When using the 1430 RKCB Convention, there are now five keycards, the four aces, and the king of trump. Another keycard is the queen of trump. If you do not use kickback (to be explained later), the 1430 RKCB ask is again 4NT (**ONLY used for the Majors**). The responses are:

- 5♣ 1/4 keycards (the 14 step)
- 5♦ 3/0 keycards (the 30 step)
- 5♥ 2/5 keycards without the queen of trump in the agreed upon suit
- 5♠ 2/5 keycards with the queen of trump in the agreed upon suit

Observe that the sequence of bids involve 4 steps! The 5<sup>th</sup> step is a King Ask!

## Roman Keycard (RKC) Blackwood Convention – 3014

Using the RKC (3014) Blackwood Convention, there are again five keycards, the four aces, and the king of trump. The Queen of trumps is also a keycard and 4NT is again the ask; however, for the responses, **the first two steps are interchanged!**

- 5♣ 3/0 keycards (the 30 step)
- 5♦ 1/4 keycards (the 14 step)
- 5♥ 2/5 keycards without the queen of trump in the agreed upon suit
- 5♠ 2/5 keycards with the queen of trump in the agreed upon suit

Observe that this sequence of bids also involve 4 steps! The 5<sup>th</sup> step is again a King's ask.

## Which Method Should You Use?

If the weak hand asks one should use 1430 (RKCB) and if the strong hand (by showing extra values) asks one should use 3014 (RKC). **Why?**

To facilitate the frequency of the 5♣ Responder response which allows more room for the Queen ask bid!

Many find this too complicated. If you have to choose one method, it is almost always better to play 1430 since asker usually has two keycards.

**A final note --- ONLY USE 1430 RKCB if you have agreed upon the trump suit.** More on this later. With “Blackwood”, knowing the trump suit is not required.

For this Lesson the 4NT will always mean the 1430 RKCB Version!



When one responds five clubs or five diamonds, the queen ask may be needed. After the response of 5♣, the bid of 5♦ is the queen ask (next step). After the bid of 5♦, the bid of 5♥ is the queen asks (next step).

## **Queen Ask**

After 5♣ and 5♦, the queen ask bids are:

5♦ and 5♥ (the next step bids).

## **Responding to the 5♦ Queen ask – (next step)**

(1) If you **do not** hold the queen\*, responder **returns to the agreed upon suit at the five - level (5♥/5♠).**

(2) 5NT shows the queen, but no outside king!

(3) With both (Q of trump and one or more kings), bid at the six-level of the lowest ranking king. If the King is higher ranking bid to the 6-level, **6♥/6♠.**

**\*Note:** With a known 10-card trump suit including the Ace and King of trump, assume no losers in trump suit Queen or no queen. So answer yes and bid 6M.

## Responding to the 5♥ Queen ask (next step)

- (1) If you do not hold the queen\*, **pass if hearts are trump and bid 5♠ if spades are trump.** \* Note: With 10 trump and A&K, assume you have the queen equivalent and bid 6M.
- (2) With the queen, with spades or hearts, bid 5NT with no side king.
- (3) With the queen and a king in the lower ranking suit, bid the suit at the sixth level (e.g. 6♣/6♦/6♥).
- (4) If you have the queen the higher ranking spade king, return to the six-level of the agreed upon suit, 6♥ (hearts trump).

Note how high your responses get over 5♥ --- for this reason many only play Queen Asks for the majors --- for the minors one uses Minorwood.

## **King Ask (Note that there are now only 3 unknown Kings)**

Knowing you hold all the aces and the king and queen of trump, **5NT is the specific king's ask!**

The specific king's ask is needed for a grand slam try in the **agreed upon suit**; it tells partner that we have all the keycards.

**(Note that the king's ask is NEVER used if you employed the Queen ask bid).**

Some partnerships do not require all the Keycards with the Queen when making the bid of 5NT --- this practice is not recommended.

## **King Ask Responses to 5NT are:**

**(1) None** - Returning to the agreed upon trump suit at the six-level **denies** any kings (6♥/6♠).

(2) With two kings, bid the cheapest at the six-level king (below agreed upon trump suit); if the second king is of higher rank (hearts agreed), again bid 6♥ (**only bid 6♠ if spades were bid or it is a splinter K**).

(3) With three kings, bid 6NT.

(4) With a higher ranking king **7♥/7♠ (the agreed major suit)**.

**To find a second king below the trump suit, bid the suit.** Without the second king, responder bids the trump suit at the six-level. With the higher ranking king, jump to **7♥/7♠ (the agreed major suit)**. Partner can always bid 7NT.

**Playing 1430 RKCB, the accepted “standard” is to use the specific king ask (SKA); however, some may still play the number of kings ask from the Blackwood Convention excluding the trump suit.**

**The responses are when spades are trump:**

**6♣= 0, 6♦=1, 6♥=2, 6♠=3**

**And when hearts\* are trump!**

**6♣= 0/3, 6♦=1, 6♥=2**

**\* Some use this method for both majors!**

**YOU BETTER ASK your partner what they play?**

**RECOMMEDATION-- USE SPECIFIC KING ASK**

## Responding with voids

Using the 1430 RKCB convention, and having a void, the responses to the 4NT RKCB ask are:

**5NT** = an even number of keycards (2/4) with a void (with 0, bid 5♦ -- ignore the void)

**6** of suit below the trump suit = odd number keycards (1 or 3)  
6♣/6♦/6♥ (for spades)

**6** trump suit = odd number of keycards (1 or 3) with a void in higher ranking suit

## Specific Suit Control Ask (SSA)

Many times when using 1430 one responds (after 4NT) 5♠: showing 2/5 Keycards with the Queen of trumps.

Or, one has the Queen of trumps and needs to know about a Q in another suit, a third-round control (e.g. does one hold **x, xx, Qxx, Kxx, Axx** in a suit that is not trump?)

Skipping the Specific King Ask (SKA) 5NT bid – 5<sup>th</sup> step, the bids of 6♣, 6♦, 6♥, and 6♠ are specific suit queen control asking (SSA) bids (6<sup>th</sup> step).

Or skipping all the Queen ask bids and the SKA bid, the bids are the (SSA) bid. After 5♣: 5♥, 5♠, 6♣, 6♦ are SSA bids and after 5♦: 5♥, 5♠, 6♣, 6♦ are SSA bids.



## Responding to SSA

**Lacking** a third-round control (holding Jxx or worse) simply sign-off in the trump suit at the 6-level. This allows partner to bid 6NT.

**With the Control in the Suit (Axx/Kxx/Qxx/xx/x)**

**Jump** to the 7-level in the agreed trump, this allows partner to bid 7NT.

There are more complicated responses, but these should work for most cases. You have only two step **No control (Bid trump suit at the 6-level)** and **Yes with 3<sup>rd</sup> control ( Bid the trump suit at the 7-level)**.

Both allow partner to pass or bid 6NT or 7NT.

## **Over Interference D0P1-R0P1 or DEP0**

When the opponents interfere, most players play D0P1/R0P1. Another option is to use DEP0. While most do not use both, I recommend the use of both which depends on the level of interference.

**If the opponents interfere at the five levels with a bid, use D0P1,**

Double	Zero Keycards
Pass	One keycard
1 <sup>st</sup> Step suit above	Two keycards
2 <sup>nd</sup> Step up	Three keycards

**If the opponents interfere at the five levels with a double, use ROP1,**

Re-Double	Zero keycards
Pass	One keycard
1 <sup>st</sup> Step suit above	Two keycards
2 <sup>nd</sup> Step up	Three keycards

**If the opponents interfere at the six-levels, use DEP0,**

Double	Even Number of keycards (0, 2, 4)
Pass	Odd Number of keycards (1, 3)

**And use DEP0 if the 5-level interference suit bid is ABOVE above your agreed upon trump suit (e.g. you agree hearts and they bid spades over the 4NT bid).**

## Examples of 1430 RKCB

### Example 1

Opener            ♠J943   ♥AKQ   ♦AQJ2   ♣Q7  
Responder       ♠Q10875   ♥7   ♦K108   ♣AJ5

Open	Responder
1♦	1♠
4♠	4NT (RKCB for spades)
5♥ (2/5 w/o Q)	5♠ (No slam interest)
Pass	Pass

Because 2 of the 5 Keycards are Missing, responder bids 5♠, and all pass.

## Example 2

Opener            ♠AJ7    ♥AQJ753    ♦AQ4    ♣7  
Responder        ♠K5     ♥K1084    ♦8765    ♣AK9

Opener	Responder
1♥	2NT* (Jacoby – agreed hearts)
4NT (hearts agreed)	5♥ (2/5 w/o Q)
5NT (SKA)	6♣ (club King)
6♦ (2 <sup>nd</sup> King ask)	6♥ (no diamond king - bids small slam)**
Pass*	Pass

\*Without the Diamond King, opener Passes

\*\* If responder had the diamond King he would have bid 7♥ which allows the opener to bid 7NT!

## Example 3

Opener            ♠A542    ♥7    ♦AKQJ64    ♣K3  
Responder       ♠K843    ♥AJ985    ♦7    ♣A72

Open	Responder
1♦	1♥
1♠	4♠
4NT (1430 Ask)	5♦ (0/3 most likely 3 with the jump)
6♦**	Pass ***

\*\*When the RKCB bidder returns to his first bid suit at the 6-level it is to play even with an agreement in spades

\*\*\* If Partner wanted to bid spades --- he must bid it here and not pass!

## Example 4

Opener            ♠AQ7542 ♥A ♦AK432 ♣7  
Responder       ♠KJ43    ♥J85    ♦75 ♣AKJ2

Open	Responder
1♠	2NT* (Jacoby – agreed spades)
4NT (1430 Ask)	5♥ (2/5 w/o Q)
6♦ (SSA)	7♠ (Confirms 3rd control)
Pass	Pass

Note that opener does not need to ask about the King of trumps since responder has 2 Keycards (Spade King and Club Ace) so 5NT (SKA) is not needed. The bid of 6♦ is the control asking bid and partner confirms that he has the needed control with a doubleton. With the singleton club, opener passes and does not bid 7NT.

**We have Reviewed 1430 when either Hearts or Spades (the majors) are the agreed upon suits.**

However, if hearts is the agreed major suit and 4NT is used as the keycard ask, the response of 5♠ (2/5 keycards with the Queen) is **beyond the 5-level.**

**One cannot sign-off at the 5-level, 5♥!**

So why ask?

To solve this problem one may use the 1430 RKCB Kickback asking bid of 4♠ instead of 4NT as the asking ask bid when hearts and not spades is the agreed trump suit. This allows more room to sign-off at the 5-level and not bid slam.

And it facilitates the Queen ask bid!



## Kickback when Hearts is the Agreed Suit

One responds to the ask using each suit in order. For Hearts, 4♠ is 1430 RKCB, The responses are:

4NT 1/4 keycards (the 14 step) **1<sup>st</sup> step**

5♣ 3/0 keycards (the 30 step) **2<sup>nd</sup> step**

5♦ 2/5 keycards w/o queen of trump in agreed suit **3<sup>rd</sup> step**

5♥ 2/5 keycards with queen of trump in agreed suit **4<sup>th</sup> step**

What is the queen ask? After 4NT, it is 5♣ and after 5♣, it is 5♦ (the next step). Note that without the queen, you are at the five-level of the agreed upon heart trump suit.

## Queen Ask

### Responding to the 4NT/5♣ Queen ask – (next step)

(1) If you **do not** hold the queen, responder **returns to the agreed upon suit at the five-level (5♥)**.

(2) 5NT shows the queen, but no outside king!

(3) With both (Q of trump and one or more kings), bid at the six-level of the lowest ranking king.

**Knowing you have all Keycards, 5♠\* is now the (SKA) when using Kickback for Hearts.**

**The responses for specific kings are:**

5NT	0 outside kings
6♥/6♣/6♦	1 king (cheapest lower rank)

One may make a second lower ranking king ask.

Asks that are not the Queen Ask bid or the (SKA) are again used for the SSA (third-round control) bids with the kickback sequence.

**\*Some use 5NT and not 5♠ for the SKA using kickback for hearts. So ask your partner what they do playing Kickback.**

## Example 5

Opener            ♠A7   ♥AQ65   ♦84   ♣AKQ98  
Responder       ♠KQ5   ♥K843   ♦KQJ6   ♣7

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
4♥	4NT (for hearts)
5♦ (0/3)	5♥ (Queen ask)*
6♣ (Q♥ with K♣)	6♥

\*VERY Dangerous bid since some may pass!

Opener has 19 HCP + 1 length – 1 dubious doubleton = 19 starting points. Responder has fourteen starting points.

Opener bids 1♣, responder bids 1♥. Finding a fit, opener reevaluates his hand. He has 19 starting + 2 doubletons = 21 Dummy Points and bids 4♥; we have game.

Finding the heart fit, responder bids 4NT. The response of 5♦ shows 0 or 3 keycards. The bid of 5♥ is the queen ask. The bid of 6♣ shows the queen of hearts and the club king. Opener bids the slam 6♥.

**In this example, we did not use kickback.**

We could have because it may be difficult to determine if the 5♥ bid is sign-off or the queen ask, but with 3 keycards you must assume it is the Queen ask.

Instead of bidding 4NT, using **kickback** one bids 4♠; as follows.

## Example 5 (with kickback)

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
4♥	4♠ (RKCB for hearts)
5♣ (0/3)	5♦ (Queen ask)
6♣ (Q with K♣)	6♥

Now, 5♣ shows 0/3 keycards and 5♦ becomes the queen ask. Denying the queen, the bid would be 5♥, which is short of game. However, 6♣ shows the queen plus the king of clubs. Responder again bids 6♥.

Using kickback for hearts, the Queen ask is EASY!

**We have reviewed the Kickback bid of 4♠ when hearts is the agreed suit (My recommendation).**

The asking kickback bids may also be used for the Minors; however, now it is commonly called Redwood.

The bids for the minors follow the same structure as the bids for hearts, using spades!

The first step is 1/4, second is 0/3, third step is 2/5 w/o Queen, and fourth step is 2/5 with the Queen. The table of Kickback asking bids follow. I have included them for reference, but we will not use them. They require significant memorization. Next two slides.

## The Keycard-Ask and Response Structure for Kickback

Trump Suit	♠	♥	♦	♣
<b>Keycard Ask</b>	<b>4NT</b>	<b>4♠</b>	<b>4♥</b>	<b>4♦</b>
Responses				
1st Step: 1 or 4	5♣	4NT	4♠	4♥
2nd Step: 0 or 3	5♦	5♣	4NT	4♠
3rd Step: 2 or 5, no Queen	5♥	5♦	5♣	4NT
4th Step: 2 or 5, with Queen	5♠	5♥	5♦	5♣



**How do you show Voids using Kickback? The bids follow.**

**The bid of 5NT is a surrogate bid when not spades!**

<b>Trump Suit</b>	<b>♠</b>	<b>♥</b>	<b>♦</b>	<b>♣</b>
<b>Keycard Ask</b>	<b>4N</b>	<b>4♠</b>	<b>4♥</b>	<b>4♦</b>
<b><i>Void-Showing Responses</i></b>				
5th Step: even #, any void	5N	5♠	5♥	5♦
6th Step: odd #, cue-bid void	6♣	5N=Spades	5♠	5♥
7th Step: odd #, cue-bid void	6♦	6♣	5N=Hearts	5♠
8th Step: odd #, cue-bid void	6♥	6♦	6♣	5N=Diamond

If you want to use the Kickback bids for all suits, you can again ask about the Queen.

After 1/4 or 0/3 responses, the next step bid again initiates the Queen ask.

One can also use the (SKA) bids with all suits.

They always the 5<sup>th</sup> step in the bidding sequence!

For Spades - 5NT -- For Hearts - 5♠

For Diamonds - 5♥ and for Clubs - 5♦

SSA bids are not Queen ask or SKA bids as before!

Because these bids become complicated quickly for the minors: see **Robert Munger (2014) “ Kickback Slam Bidding at Bridge”**.

I recommend that one not use Redwood, but instead use Minorwood for investigating slams in the minors.

## **Minorwood**

When the agreed upon suit is a minor, the use of 4NT as a keycard ask will often get the responses too high. To avoid this problem, we saw that we can use Roman Keycard Blackwood with kickback called Redwood if used with the minors.

A better (easier) alternative approach is to use Minorwood and not Redwood.

Again one can use 1430 or 3014 Minorwood so be careful when using the Minorwood Convention. Ask your partner what they play. Again, I recommend the 1430 version because the strong hand asks most often.

The Minorwood Convention\* uses four of the agreed minor (4♣/4♦) for the 1430 RKCB ask.

For example, in the auction 1♦ - 2♦\*, the bid of 4♦ is Minorwood; it is used instead of 4♥, kickback/redwood. It can be played in sequences when kickback/redwood may be confusing.

The use of both kickback (**spades for hearts only**) and minorwood bids is sometimes called “Bothwood”.

“Crosswood” is when you use clubs for diamonds and diamonds for clubs!

\* There are many variations of the Minorwood convention, so it is best to review the bids with a new partner --- what follows is what I use with my partners.

## Minorwood (1430 Recommended) – Clubs agreed

Keycard Ask is 4♣

### Responses

4♦	1/4 keycards (the 14 step)	1 <sup>st</sup> step
4♥	3/0 keycards (the 30 step)	2 <sup>nd</sup> step
4♠	2/5 keycards w/o queen	3 <sup>rd</sup> step
4NT	2/5 keycards with queen	4 <sup>th</sup> step
5♣	<b>To PLAY</b>	

### Voids

**5NT** = an even number of keycards (2/4) with a void (with 0, bid 5♣ -- ignore the void)

5♦/5♥/5♠ void with an odd number of keycards (1 or 3)

# Minorwood (1430 Recommended) – Diamonds agreed

## Keycard Ask 4♦

### Responses

4♥	1/4 keycards (the 14 step)	1 <sup>st</sup> step
4♠	3/0 keycards (the 30 step)	2 <sup>nd</sup> step
4NT	2/5 keycards w/o queen	3 <sup>rd</sup> step
5♣	2/5 keycards with queen	4 <sup>th</sup> step
5♦	<b>To PLAY</b>	

### Voids

**5NT** = an even number of keycards (2/4) with a void (with 0, bid 5♦ -- ignore the void)

**5♥/5♠/6♣** void with an odd number of keycards (1 or 3)

## Minorwood Queen Ask\*

Over 4♣

4♥/4♠ are the Queen Asks bids  
(next steps over 1/4 or 0/3).

Over 4♦

4♠/4NT are the Queen Ask bids  
(next steps over 1/4 or 0/3).

## **Minorwood - Queen Ask Responses\***

**The simple responses to any Minorwood Queen ask bid are:**

(1) No Queen bid the agreed upon minor suit at the 5-level (5♣/5♦).

(2) With the Queen bid 5NT.

(3) With the Queen and a lower/higher king bid 6♣ (diamonds agreed).

(4) With Queen and higher ranking King bid 6NT.

**More complicated responses have been developed depending on the asking bid which involve steps, the above works best and requires less memorization.**

**\*Over the first-step bids of 4♥ or 4♠, the 1/4 responses, the bid of 4NT by your partner is usually to play.**



## Minorwood King Specific King Ask (SKA)

With all the Keycards, one may ask for specific Kings.

The SKA bid is **one level HIGHER** than the agreed upon Minor suit.

The SKA\* bids are next step 5-level bids:

5♦ (clubs agreed)

5♥ (diamonds agreed)

Responses are:

(1) The bid of 5NT denies any kings (some use next cheapest step)

(2) With two kings, bid the cheapest at the 6-level (below the agreed upon trump suit 6♣ for diamonds); if the second king is of higher rank, bid 6NT.

(3) With three kings, bid 7NT.

\* Some use 5NT as the SKA – Discuss this with your partner and others use # of kings.

## **Minorwood King Ask (# of Kings)**

With all the Keycards, some may again use # of Kings for the King's Ask.

The # of King-Ask is again one level HIGHER than the Minor level trump (since 5-level is sign-off). Again  $5\spadesuit$  (clubs) or  $5\heartsuit$  (diamonds); however, the responses are:

After  $5\spadesuit$ :  $5\heartsuit=0$ ,  $5\clubsuit=1$ ,  $5NT=2$ ,  $6\clubsuit=3$  (partner can bid  $7\clubsuit$  or  $7NT$ ).

After  $5\heartsuit$ :  $5\spadesuit=0$ ,  $5NT=1$ ,  $6\clubsuit=2$ ,  $6\heartsuit=3$  (partner can bid  $7\heartsuit$  or  $7NT$ ).

**Playing Minorwood, again it is best to ask Partner's what they play, SKA or #?**

## Specific Suit Control Ask (SSA) using Minorwood

To ask for a third-round control in a suit using Minorwood (e.g. does one hold **x**, **xx**, **Qxx**, **Kxx**, **Axx** in the suit)

One may again use any bid that is NOT a Queen ask or a SKA bid for the SSA control bid.

♣: Recall that the SKA bid was 5♦ for clubs and the Queen ask bids were either 4♥/4♠.

♦: Recall that the SKA bid was 5♥ for diamonds and the Queen ask bids were either 4♠/4NT.

**Lacking the control again sign-off in 6 of the agreed suit and with the control jump to 7 of the agreed suit.**

This again allows partner to bid 6NT or 7NT.

## Examples of 1420 RKCB Using Minorwood

### Example 1

Opener            ♠7   ♥AQ954   ♦AKJ2   ♣Q107

Responder       ♠A875   ♥78   ♦QJ10832   ♣A

Opener	Responder
1♥	2♦ (2/1 bid)
3♠* (Splinter for ♦)	4♦ (RKCB Minorwood for ♦)
4♠ (0/3)	5♥ (SKA)
6♦ (Yes no club King)	Pass

Minorwood was initiated by 4♦. Now 4♥=1/4, 4♠=0/3, etc.

Because Responder has the ♦Q, 5♥ is (SKA). Without the King, opener would respond 5NT, so 6♦ says yes but no club king. The bid of 4NT by Responder would have been a Q ask and 5♠, 6♣, 6♥ would have been SSAs.

## Example 2

Opener            ♠AK1086   ♥5   ♦A5432   ♣K9  
Responder       ♠J2   ♥A96   ♦Q87   ♣AJ1052

Opener	Responder
1♠	2♣ (2/1 bid)
2♦	3♦
4♦ (1430 Minorwood)	5♣ (2 Keycards with Q of Diamonds)
5♥ (SKA)	5NT (No Kings)
6♦	

If responder had a higher ranking king he would bid 6NT while 6♣ would show the club king.

### Example 3 (Inverted Minor Bid)

Opener            ♠KJ6   ♥A10   ♦A92   ♣AQJ105

Responder        ♠A2   ♥K96   ♦Q87   ♣K9673

**Opener**

**Responder**

1♣

2♣\* (Inverted Minor, 13+, playing 2/1)

4♣ (1430 Minorwood) 4♠ (2/5 Keycards w/o Queen)

5♣ (To Play)

Note: if you did not play Minorwood and instead bid 4NT, partner next bids 5♥ and you are forced to 6♣. A poor result.

## Example (4) (Inverted Minor Bid)

North: ♠AK54 ♥void ♦KQ9872 ♣KQ2

South: ♠32 ♥KQ7 ♦A6543 ♣A73

North	South
1♦	2♦* (inverted raise - 13+ playing crisscross)
4♥ (EKCB)	5♣ (3 <sup>rd</sup> step – 2/5 w/o Q)
5♠ (SSA)	7♦ (Yes)
pass	pass

In the example we again used the SSA; if you do not play SSA bids, you may miss the Grand Slam.

Recall the SSA bid is positive with x/xx/Qxx/Axx/Kxx.

## Responding to 2NT with both Minors (Slam in a Minor)

### **Opener**

2NT (20-21)

### **Responder**

3♣ Muppet\*/Puppet Stayman

3♦/4♦ slam/game interest in hearts

3♥/4♥ slam/game interest in spades

3♠ (4+ cards in minors, slam try 13+ Dummy Pts)

Responses (I play this; for other options see Kantar (2008 P. 180))

3NT (no 4-card minor)-Partner Pass (No slam Interest) or bids 4♣ Gerber

4♣ (4+clubs and Minorwood for clubs)

4♦ (4+diamonds and Minorwood for diamonds)

\*Muppet (Modified Puppet) is better than Puppet – it allows the strong hand to declare all major suit contracts. The 3NT\* and 3♥\* bids by opener are interchanged and after the 3♥ the bid of 3NT asks do you have 3 spades, if yes bid spade game (4♠) or pass 3NT. If responder is 5♥-4♠ in the majors, transfer to hearts and then bid spades, no Muppet.



## Example (Minorwood Over 2NT)

Opener            ♠A6   ♥AKQ9   ♦Q9   ♣AJ53  
Responder       ♠K7   ♥6   ♦KJ654   ♣K10542

Opener	Responder
2NT (20-21)	3♠* (Interested in minor suit slam)
4♣ (1430 Minorwood)	4♦ (1/3 – Likely One)
4♥ (Queen Ask)	5♣ (No Queen)
Pass	Pass

Note: Missing Diamond Ace and the trump Queen opener passes.

What do you bid with a 6+ card single minor with slam going values?

DO NOT bid 3♠.

(1) Instead bid 4♣ as Minorwood for diamonds (6+).

And with 6+ clubs bid 4♦ as Minorwood for clubs.

This is called the Crosswood convention.

(2) Or you may bid 4♣ directly as Minorwood for Clubs.

And 4♦ as Minorwood for Diamonds.

Partnership agreement!

What is your agreement for the bid of 3♠ over 2NT?

See the booklet by Patty Tucker (2014) “Three Spades over 2NT”,  
Master Point Press - An Honors eBooklet for yet another approach.

## **Slam Bidding with No Agreed Upon Suit**

When playing 1430 RKC, how should one proceed if there is not a prior agreement on the trump suit? Some recommend that

(1) it should always be the last-bid suit

(2) one should not play any form of RKC, but instead just use Blackwood as an ace only ask (no keycards)

(3) RKC is used only if the last-bid suit is a minor (opener or responder) but not a major and others recommend

**PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT!**

The approach you use must be discussed with your partner when you make out your convention card. There is no “best” or standard approach. However, let’s consider a few examples.

Suppose you open one spade and partner responds two hearts (a 2/1 response), and as opener, you hold the hand:

♠AKQJ763 ♥4 ♦KQ53 ♣7

If you play the last-bid suit, you cannot bid 4NT. You might try three spades and then 4NT, but if partner bids four hearts over three spades, you are back to square one.

**The last-bid suit works whenever you have a fit for the last-bid suit. But if you do not, it usually does not work.**

We consider an example.

**Opener**

♠KQJ863

♥K10942

♦Q8

♣Void

**Responder**

♠A2

♥J7

♦AK5

♣AKQJ104

The bidding goes:

**Opener**

1♠

2♥ (second suit)

3♥ (5<sup>th</sup> heart)

6♣ (odd with void)

Pass

**Responder**

2♣ (2/1 GF)

3♦ (second suit)

4NT

7NT

Responder leaps to 4NT to ask for keycards. Since the last-bid suit was hearts, opener bids 6♣ which shows an odd number of keycards, the king of hearts and a void in clubs.

Thinking that the one keycard is the ace of hearts, responder bids a grand slam, 7NT. Whose fault?

The fault was that they lacked a mutual agreement as to what 4NT means when there is no agreed upon suit.

If you play the last-bid suit, you will only survive a 4NT ask when you intend to play in your own suit as long as you hold the king of the last-bid suit. Partner is forced to answer only aces!

In the above example, responder did not hold the king. Because there was no agreed upon suit, one would bid 5♣ (zero keycards - Blackwood). Partner would bid 6NT.

**The above example suggests that one use Standard Blackwood if there is no agreed upon suit or an implicit agreed upon suit.**

### **This is my Recommendation**

If it goes 1♥/1♠ – 4NT; there is by definition NO AGREED SUIT. Hence the 4NT bid is Blackwood NOT RKCB! Just like when it goes 1NT - 4♣ (Gerber).

In general if partner bids one of any suit, 4NT should almost never be your first bid; instead bid slowly --- there are exceptions. Here is an exception: ♠KQJ10987 ♥A ♦A ♣KQ2. And 4NT is ace asking!

Consider this example from the October 2015 “Bridge Bulletin”- Per Marty Bergen P56. Your partner opens 1♥ and you have the following hand.

♠AKQ108753 ♥A ♦7 ♣KQ10

**Opener**

- 1♥
- 2♦
- 3♥
- 4♦
- 5♠ (1)

**Responder**

- 1♠
- 3♣ (Fourth Suit Forcing)
- 3♠
- 4NT (Using Last bid Suit)
- ?

(1) 2 keycards with ♦Q

**Now what do you bid? 6♠ or 7NT**

**Are you Off a keycard? You cannot tell!**

**Better to use Blackwood – Partner bids 5♥ (2 Aces) and you bid 7NT.**

Partner’s hand is: ♠4 ♥Q109653 ♦AQJ54 ♣A



## Another Example

### Opener

♠ AKQ107

♥ K1087

♦ A7

♣ K4

### Responder

♠ J

♥ AQ642

♦ Q1085

♣ A32

### Opener

1♠

4NT (Blackwood)

7♥

### Responder

2♥ (2/1 Bid)

5♥ (2 Aces No agreed Suit)

All Pass

### Opener

1♠

3♥

5♦ (0/3)

6♣ (Yes and Club King)

### Responder

2♥ (2/1 Bid)

4NT (1430)

5NT (SKA)\*

7♥

\* If you did not ask you may miss grand slam and # of Kings of no help!

**Always use Blackwood NEVER LAST BID SUIT when you have not agreed upon a suit and with exceptional hands just bid 4NT as asking – 1M-4NT.**

### **1430 RKCB Over Preempts (Weak RKCB)**

When your partner preempts, there are ways to investigate the hand further. For two-level preempts, one may bid 2NT to ask your partner for a feature or you may use the Ogust Convention.

Or, you may play Modified Ogust, Two-step Ogust, Roudinesco rebids, Romex rebids, the McCabe Adjunct Convention, etc.

How about RCKB?

Using 4♣ as RKCB over 2 or 3 level pre-emptive bids!

The responses are:

4♦	first step	0 keycards in the agreed suit
4♥	second step	1 keycard without the Queen
4♠	third step	1 keycard with the Queen
4NT	fourth step	2 keycards without the Queen
5♣	fifth step	2 keycards with the Queen

After the pre-emptive bid of 3♣, the bid of 4♣ is natural and advances the preempt; a jump to 4♦ is RKCB for clubs, Crosswood.

Over the weak 1430 response of 4♦, the next step bid of 4♥ is the Queen ASK. The next step bid of 4♠ denies the Queen and 4NT says yes with no side king. A 5-level suit bid shows the Queen and an outside king in the suit bid. If you by-pass the Queen ask, then a 5-level bid is the SSA and 5NT is the king ask.

Let's look at an example.

Opener

♠ A 7

♥ K 10 9 8 7 6 5

♦ 7

♣ 3 4 5

Responder

♠ K 2

♥ A Q 2

♦ A Q 6 5 4 2

♣ A 7

Opener

3♥

4NT (2/5 w/o Q)

6♥ (singleton ♦)\*

Responder

4♣ (1430 RKCB for hearts)

5♦ (**SSA for diamond-Skip Queen ASK**)

7♥

\*Without the control in the diamond suit opener would bid 5♥ and responder would only bid a small slam by bidding 6♥. The Queen Ask step over 4NT would have been the next step 5♣. The SKA bid is again 5NT.

Let's look at another example.

Opener

♠ 72

♥ J10

♦ 10

♣ AK1098732

Responder

♠ AJ105

♥ AQ73

♦ QJ6 5 4 2

♣ QJ

Opener

3♣ (preempt)

4♦ (One ace)

6♣

Responder

4NT (Blackwood – no agreed suit)

5♣

Pass

Do not forget the basics --- Keep it simple!

# Problems from Bergen's Book on "Slam Bidding Made Easier" Pages 119-122

**Bid the following Hand**

**1. Opener**

♠ Q83

♥ J9732

♦ KQ10

♣ AJ

**Responder**

♠ J742

♥ AKQ2

♦ 5

♣ KQ64

## **Solution problem 1, do not bid 2NT--- splinter**

**1.Opener**

**Responder**

**♠ Q83**

**♠ J742**

**♥ J9732**

**♥ AKQ2**

**♦ KQ10**

**♦ 5**

**♣ AJ**

**♣ KQ64**

**Opener**

**Responder**

**1♥**

**3♠\* (Ambiguous splinter with 13+)**

**3NT(ask)**

**4♦\* (diamonds)**

**4♥ (12 Starter Points)**

**Fast Arrival bid by Opener with minimum hand.**

## 2. Opener

♠ A3

♥ A7542

♦ A1087

♣ 86

## Responder

♠ 92

♥ KJ63

♦ K2

♣ KQ753



## Problem 2 (Solution)

♠ A3

♥ A7542

♦ A1087

♣ 86

♠ 92

♥ KJ63

♦ K2

♣ KQ753

**Opener**

**Responder**

**1♥**

**2NT\* (Jacoby with 15 Dummy Pts)**

**3NT (16 Bergen Pts) 4♥**

**East adds 15+17 (since 3NT=15-17) =32**

**Points NOT 33 for slam so Responder does not go on and bids game.**

## Problem 3

**Opener**

♠ AJ876

♥ 2

♦ 72

♣ AQ975

**Responder**

♠ KQ32

♥ J97

♦ A6

♣ KJ43

## Problem 3 (Solutions)

**Opener**

♠ AJ876

♥ 2

♦ 72

♣ AQ975

**Responder**

♠ KQ32

♥ J97

♦ A6

♣ KJ43

**Opener**

1♠

3♥\* (singleton/void)

5♥ (two w/o Q)

**Responder**

2NT\*

4NT (RKCB)

6♠

## Problem 3 --- Bergen's Solution

### Opener

1♠

4♣ (Club suit)

4♥ (Control Bid)

5♥

### Responder

2NT\*

4♦ (Control Bid)

4NT(RKCB)

6♠

## Problem 4

**4. Opener**

♠ **AQ9753**

♥ **VOID**

♦ **KQ76**

♣ **K85**

**Responder**

♠ **K642**

♥ **AK6**

♦ **A5**

♣ **7642**

## Problem 4 (solution)

### Opener

♠ AQ9753

♥ Void

♦ KQ76

♣ K85

### Responder

♠ K642

♥ AK6

♦ A5

♣ 7642

### Opener

1♠

3♥\* (singleton/void)

4♣ (Control bid)

4♥ (shows heart void)

5♣ (1/4 keycards)

6♣ (Yes and club king)

### Responder

2NT\*

3♠

4♦ (Control bid)

4NT (1430)

5♦ (Queen Ask)

6♠

## Problem 5

**Opener**

♠ KQ965

♥ K

♦ KQ1043

♣ 84

**Responder**

♠ A8742

♥ 1076

♦ AJ6

♣ AK

## Problem 5 (Solution)

**Opener**

♠ KQ965

♥ K

♦ KQ1043

♣ 84

**Responder**

♠ A8742

♥ 1076

♦ AJ6

♣ AK

**Opener**

1♠

3♥(Singleton/void)

5♣ (1/4)

6♦ (Yes and ♦K)

Pass

**Responder**

2NT\* (Jacoby)

4NT (1430)

5♦ (Queen Ask)

6♠

Pass



## EXAMPLE (Problem 5 Revisited)

**Opener**

♠ KQ965

♥ K

♦ KQ1043

♣ 84

**Responder**

♠ A8742

♥ 1076

♦ AJ6

♣ AK

**Opener**

1♠

3♣ (1/4 keycards)

4♦ (Trump Q and ♦K)

4NT (Yes and no ♣K)

**Responder**

2NT\* (1430)

3♦ (Queen Ask)

4♥ (SKA for heart king – next step)

6♠

**Note that in this bidding sequence without the heart king one may still sign-off in 4♠. With a 4NT ask you would be at the 5-level.**

## Problem 6 (Daily Sun - Earth Day - June 22, 2015)

**North**

♠ K1032  
♥ AKJ83  
♦ 542  
♣ 3

**South**

♠ AQJ864  
♥ 95  
♦ AJ3  
♣ A5

**North**

1♥  
2♠  
4♠  
5♥ (2Keycards)

**East**

Pass  
3♣  
Pass  
Pass

**South**

1♠  
3♦(cuebid)  
4NT(1430)  
6♠

**West**

2♣  
Pass  
Pass

**Full Deal Follows Neither Vulnerable North is Dealer**

	♠ K1032	
	♥ AKJ83	
	♦ 542	
	♣ 3	
♠ 95	<div style="background-color: green; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 10px;">           N            W      E            S         </div>	♠ 7
♥ 7		♥ Q10642
♦ Q1086		♦ K97
♣ KQJ1076		♣ 9842
	♠ AQJ864	
	♥ 95	
	♦ AJ3	
	♣ A5	

Because the opening lead was the singleton 7♥, the contract was bid and made with very careful play.

However, with a diamond lead one cannot make 6♠; even though the bidding was without fault!

### **Some New Stuff**

Many bridge players use the bid of 2NT over a major suit bid as the Jacoby/Swedish/Modified 2NT\* bid; however, another option is to use it as a 1430 RKCB which must also be alerted. Any ace/keycard asking bid that is at or below the level of 3NT MUST BE ALERTED.

What follows is a new 1430 Convention when one opens a major and partner bids 2NT\*.

## A New Version of 1430 – After 2NT for the Majors

After a Major suit bid, the response of 2NT\* is a 1430 Keycard ask and replaces the Jacoby 2NT bid. It promises 4+ trump support and 13+ dummy points. It must also be alerted.

Given the low level of the ask, I have made up new responses if the Opening bidder only has only 11-15 HCP, like in Precision.

- 3♣ = 1/4 Keycards
- 3♦ = 0 Keycards
- 3♥ = 2/5 Keycards without the Queen of Trump
- 3♠ = 2/5 Keycards with the Queen of Trump/holding a 6<sup>th</sup> Trump
- 3NT = 3 Keycards without the Queen of Trump
- 4♣ = 3 Keycards with the Queen of Trump

**QUEEN ASK** – Next step 3♦ after 3♣ and 3♥ after 3♦  
4NT is the SKA.

## **Voids**

Used ONLY after Sign-Off in Major 4♥/4♠

5♣/5♦/5♥ Void in bid Suit

4♠=Void in Spades if Hearts are Trump

Another option is to play 2NT\* as Jacoby, but after a 3-level bid which shows a singleton/void one bids 3NT\* as 1430 RKCB for the major. This is the “Baby” Blackwood 1430 Convention. The 3NT bid must be alerted.

However, some play it as serious 3NT with slam interest. It would ask partner to cue bid.

**If you do not like this new Version --- Over 2NT\* you may instead play the standard 1430 system of bids over 2NT**

## Serious 3NT Bid (Definition)

When an 8-card or longer major suit fit is agreed at the 3-level and the bidding is forced to game, a bid of 3NT by either partner is completely artificial and was developed by Eric Rodwell.

It says: “partner I have serious slam interest, please cue bid for me.”

If you fail to bid serious 3NT when you have the opportunity and cue bid instead, that carries the following message:

"Partner, I do not have serious slam interest, but I am cue bidding in case you do.”

We will see in another lesson how one may combine the Baby Blackwood 1430 3NT\* bid within “Serious 3NT” --- another approach!

**Much of the material presented in this lesson is in my current book.**

**Neil H. Timm (2014) “2/1 Game Force a Modern Approach - For Beginning and Intermediate Players”, Fourth Edition. Trafford Publishing. The new material will be in the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition of my book.**

**You may also want to review the following books:**

**(1) Marty Bergen (2008) “Slam Bidding Made Easier”**

**(2) Eddie Kantar (2008) “Roman Keycard Blackwood – The Final Word”**

**(3) Patty Tucker (2014) “Slam Bidding Conventions”**

**(4) Robert Munger (2014) “ Kickback Slam Bidding at Bridge”**

**(5) Krzysztof Martens (2014) “Proceessional Slam Bidding” Part1 and Part 2**

**(6) Patty Tucker (2014) “Three Spades Over 2NT” –eBooklet Series**

**(7) Bridge Keycard Video’s --- [www.bridghands.com](http://www.bridghands.com)**



## **In a future Lesson, we will review some Intermediate Slam Bidding Techniques**

**Intermediate Slam Bidding Techniques used to investigate slam in a suit and notrump contracts will include**

- (1) Exclusion Roman Keycard Blackwood (ERKCB)
- (2) Double Roman Keycard Blackwood (DRKCB)
- (3) The Baron 4NT Convention
- (4) Quantitative Bids
- (5) Scroll Bids
- (6) Roman Keycard Gerber (RKCG)
- (7) Grand Slam Force and Pick a Slam bids
- (8) Cue Bidding Techniques
- (9) Serious 3NT as Baby Blackwood