



by Steve & Mike
Oct 2, 2013 Tues Eve
6:30 PM Sharp!

Yesterday we got together and had 2 questions:

- 1) How do you ask for the Trump Q and K's with 1430?
- 2) How do you use Minorwood?

These questions are related. The 1st is simpler than the 2nd.

Let's start with 1430. Most know 4NT as the Blackwood Convention. This time-honored slam convention was intended to **KEEP US OUT OF SLAM** when we are missing 2 fast losers (top tricks). When should we use Blackwood?

Responses to 4N Blackwood:

- 5♣ 0 or 4; 5♦ 1 Ace;
- 5♥ 2 Aces; 5♠ 3 Aces
- 5N shows 4 !'s and ask for K's:
- 6♣ 0 or 4; 6♦ 1 King;
- 6♥ 2 Kings; 6♠ 3 Kings

When we have strength and distribution beyond the minimum necessary for game, when control bidding shows we have at least 2nd round control in all side suits,

and when we have good trumps (A, K, Q). We should avoid using Blackwood when we have small doubletons or tripletons, and do not know if partner stops that suit. (If we end up missing an Ace we will never know if partner has the ace of the suit where we are weak). We should also avoid bidding Blackwood with an unshown void. Partner's Ace opposite our void is much less valuable, and would be better placed opposite a weak side suit holding. Control bidding helps sort that out.

The Italians introduced Roman Blackwood in the 1960's. The responses helped responder show specific aces when holding exactly 2: 5♣ 0 or 3 Aces, 5♦ 1 or 4 Aces, 5♥ 2 Aces the same color or rank (♦/♥. ♣/♠ ♣/♦, ♠/♥), 5♠ 2 Aces the different color (♦/♠, ♣/♥). Asker knows based on what Ace(s) they hold. A later innovation is Roman Keycard Blackwood documented in detail by Eddie Kantar. The 4 Aces and the King of trump have the same importance – Key Cards. Focusing on the 5 Key Cards and the trump Q, Roman Key Card Blackwood (RKB) was born (top of next column).

Why 1430 not 0314? We need space in certain auctions so that we can ask for the trump Q. In a slam auction responder will have at least one key card. If responder has 3 then the asker should have one or 2 with the trump Q already. **Asker should NEVER hold 0 Key Cards.**

How do you know how many Keys partner has when showing 2 possibilities? Usually the bidding tells us partner is strong and must have 3 or 4 instead of 0 or 1. Most pairs simply agree that responder continues to slam over a signoff with the higher number. So if you've agreed ♠s and partner bids 4N then rebids 5♠ (signoff) over your 5♣ or 5♦ response bid 6 holding 3 or 4 keys.

10/2 - 99er Leaders

- 1st OA: **Sharon Koster & Robert Roark** (55.6%)
- 2nd OA: **Barbara Cooper & Judy Crotty Hall** (53.3%)
- 3rd OA: **Darlene Young & Natalie Crowe** (52.9%)



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Mon <2000 7 PM Tues NLM 11 AM Tues 99er 7 PM
Wed Home Style 11:00 AM [Wed 199er 6:30 PM NKY]
Thu Eve 7 PM (if attendance warrants)
Fri NLM 11 AM (Lecture 10:30) [1st Fri 99er 10AM NKY]
Sat 99er 10 AM to 12 Noon Supervised Play

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 - Nov 15-17 Dayton, OH S
 - Nov 24 Cincinnati OH Hold the Date → Celebration**
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4N RKB 1430:

- 5♣ 1 or 4 Keys;
- 5♦ 3 or 0 Keys;
- 5♥ 2 Keys w/o Trump Q;
- 5♠ 2 Keys w/Trump Q
- 5N Useful Void+2 or 4 keys
- 6 bid: Void in suit+1 or 3 keys
- 5N Count K (Not Trump K):
- Never bypass 6 agreed suit
- 6 Agreed Suit = 0 Kings
- 6♣ 1; 6♦ 2 K;
- 7 Agreed Suit = 3 Kings
- OR-
- Specific Kings (Not trump K):
- Bid 6 agreed suit with 0 Kings
- Bid the suit of your lowest ranking King with 1 or 2
- Bid 7 agreed suit with 3.

How do we ask for the Trump Q?

We ask only after a 5♣ or 5♦ response. (5♥ & 5♠ deny or show the Q). Look at this:
 1♠ - P - 2N (Forcing Raise) - P
 3♠(Extras) - P - 4N - P
 5♣ - P - 5♦: **The step above the Key Card answer asks for the Trump Queen.** Deny the Queen by bidding 5♠ (your suit). Show the Queen by bidding anything else. If you play Specific Kings (more soon) then show your lowest ranking King above ♦s. Look at a more compressed auction. Now the keycard response takes the auction

beyond where we can safely ask for the trump Q. **Once the response gets to 1**

1♥ - P - 2N - P	1♦ - P - 2♦ - P
3♥ - P - 4N - P	3♦ - P - 4N - P
5♦ - P - ???	5♣ - P - ???

step UNDER the trump suit, we can no longer ask for the Q.

Not so good. This is why people play Minorwood and Kickback. Jeff Rubens proposed this approach in the 70's based on the Useful Space Principle.

Specific Kings or Count? That's personal preference. We recommend specific Kings if you want more precision in your slam bidding. Specific Kings is also more compatible with the Trump Q ask. Let's look at a few auctions to understand how

this works. Remember we bid slam missing 1 Key or the Trump Queen. We do not bid slam missing 2 Keys or 1 Key and the Q. We leave the early steps in the auction out, showing the agreed trump suit:

♠ agreed then: 5♦ asks for the ♠Q. 5♠ denies the ♠Q, so 5♥ shows the ♥K and the ♠Q! Now asker shows all Keys and the trump Q by bidding 5N. The specific K search continues... 6♦ shows the ♦K, while denying the ♣K. 6♥ shows extras with a strong interest in a grand slam (partner would retreat to 6♠ missing the ♣K if the ♣K were important for a grand slam). When all Kings are known you can show side suit queens to help count 13 tricks and find 7NT (or 7♠ if ruffing is essential for success).
 4N – 5♣ (1 or 4)
 5♦ - 5♥
 5N - 6♦
 6♥ -

♥ agreed then: Holding ♠ Kxxx ♥KQxx ♣QJx ♦Kx – Pass. You hold only one Keycard.
 4N – 5♣ (1 or 4) Holding ♠ AKxx ♥KQxx ♣Axx ♦Ax – Bid 5♠. Our side must hold all Keycards. Show partner and begin the specific kings discussion showing the ♠ King.
 5♥ -

♣ agreed then: Now we see the problem again – when using 4N as 1430 over minor suits, we have little room to explore without committing to slam. Indeed if responder has 0 Keys and we are forced to 6♣, we are not bidding wisely. The solution is to use Minorwood when minors are trumps.
 4N – 5♦ (0 or 3)
 ???

Minorwood (1430) - Experts avoid minor suits except when they are the only strain that can make, and when they offer a slam while others languish in a NT game. Here are some guidelines:

- 1) The minor suit is explicitly agreed (or demanded) before we get to the 4-level.
- 2) A rebid of 4N or 5 of our minor by the ASKER is always to play. (Some relax the 4N requirement, but 5 of our minor must be to play).
- 3) We never bid past 5 of our minor unless key cards are favorable for slam.

What does Minorwood look like? Here are a few examples for you and your partner to discuss:

Auction	Minorwood?	Comments
1♣ - 2♣ 4♣	Yes!	Whether you play 2♣ as a simple raise or an inverted raise, this is minorwood.
1♣ - 3♣ 4♣	Yes!	Whether you play 3♣ as a weak raise or an invitational or game forcing raise, this is minorwood.
1♣ - 4♣	No	This is a classic preempt. If you want to ask for aces, make a forcing ♣ raise first then bid Minorwood!
1♣ - 2♠ 3♦ - 4♣	No & Yes	If 2♠ is a weak Jump Shift, then NO this is not Minorwood , but a forced preference to opener's original suit. If 2♠ is a strong Jump Shift, then this is one time when 4♣ should be Minorwood even though we had not agreed to the suit before the 4-level. Why? Look at all the bidding space we consumed...We need space to find key cards. Let's start now.
1♣ - 1♥ 3♣ - 3♣ 4♣	Maybe	If you agree that 3♣ demands ♣ be trump, then 4♣ should be minorwood. If not then this is a way to show we cannot play 3N and might have a misfit. I prefer NOT MINORWOOD as we have rejected 3N and not yet agreed to a strain.
2♣ - 2♦ 3♣ - 3N 4♣	Yes!	Opener shows a GF and a good ♣ suit, demanding ♣ be trumps. Minorwood is ON.
1♥ - 2♣ 3♣ - 4♣	Yes!	Playing 2/1 Game force, 2♣ forces to game. 3♣ agrees ♣. 4♣ is searching for ♣ slam. 3♦, 3♥, 3♠ searches for 3N first.
1♥ - 2♣ 3♣ - 3♦ 3♥ - 4♣	Maybe	Much less clear. After 1♥-2♣ - 3♣ first priority is to find stoppers for 3N. This auction suggests no ♠ stopper. One way to handle this and like situations is to bid 5♣ with game only interest and respond to minorwood with slam interest.

It is important that you and your partner decide what triggers a minorwood 1430 ask. Some like it simple. Any 4♣ or 4♦ bid is minorwood if that suit could be trumps. This risks missing auctions where game is in the picture but stopping at 4♣ or 4♦ is necessary for a good score. Many experts willingly sacrifice the 4♣ or 4♦ invite to game on the belief that we can treat invitational hands as Game Forces or as partials without having to consult partner. I'm not sure I agree with that idea either. The simplest is to **use minorwood whenever you have agreed to the minor suit prior to the 4-level.**

Now let's turn to what the Minorwood bidding structure looks like. Again we recommend specific Kings here, not how many kings do you hold. Here is a scheme comparing the use of 4♣, 4♦, and 4N as 1430 bids.

4♣ Minorwood 1430:	4♦ Minorwood 1430:	Major Suits 4N RKB 1430:
4♦ 1 or 4 Keys; then 4♥ asks ♣Q 4♥ 3 or 0 Keys; then 4♣ asks ♣Q 4♣ 2 Keys w/o Trump Q; 4N 2 Keys w/Trump Q 5N: Useful Void + 2 or 4 Keys 5♦/♥/♠: Void + 1 or 3 Keys 4N & 5♣ by ASKER to play 5♦ Asks Specific Kings (NOT ♣K) (Never bypass 6♣ the agreed suit) 6♣ the Agreed Suit = 0 Kings Bid lowest ranking King with 1 or 2 5♥ = ♥K, 5♠ = ♠K 5N = ♦K (the ask suit king) Bidding ♠, denies ♥. Bidding 5N denies both Major Kings. Bid 7♣ the agreed suit with 3.	4♥ 1 or 4 Keys; then 4♠ asks ♦Q 4♠ 3 or 0 Keys; then 5♣ asks ♦Q 4N 2 Keys w/o Trump Q; 5♣ 2 Keys w/Trump Q 5♦(♣)/♥/♠: Void + 2 or 4 Keys 5N: Useful Void + 1 or 3 Keys 4N & 5♦ by ASKER to play 5♥ asks Specific Kings (Not ♦K) Never bypass 6♦ the agreed suit) 6♦ the Agreed Suit = 0 Kings Bid the suit of your lowest ranking King with 1 or 2 5♠ = ♠K 5N = ♥K (the ask suit king), 6♣ = ♣K Bidding 5N denies the ♠K. Bidding 6♣ denies a Major King. Bid 7♦ the agreed suit with 3 Kings.	5♣ 1 or 4 Keys; 5♦ 3 or 0 Keys; 5♥ 2 Keys w/o Trump Q; 5♠ 2 Keys w/Trump Q 5N Useful Void + 1 or 3 Keys 6♣/♦/♥: Void in ♣/♦/OM and 2 or 4 Keys 5N asks K's (Not trump K): Never bypass 6 agreed suit) 6 Agreed Suit = 0 Kings 6♣ 1; 6♦ 2 K; 7 Agreed Suit = 3 Kings -OR- Specific Kings (Not trump K): Bid 6 of the agreed suit with 0 Kings Bid the suit of your lowest ranking King with 1 or 2 A suit bid denies K's in lower ranking suits. Bid 7 agreed suit with 3.

In all cases, when ASKER rebids 5 of our agreed trump suit, it is to play.

Adopting a new convention requires we spend time on the implications of the change. How will the next few rounds of bidding change as a result of the choice? What have we given up? How will we choose to handle those hands (having given up our usual approach)? Can we remember the detail? Sadly, a brave attempt to innovate can lead to disaster when we forget agreements. How many special agreements do we have? How many different partners do we have?

Can we improve slam bidding without Minorwood or 1430? We strongly urge you adopt 1430. But if you choose not to, then develop a sound **control bidding** approach with partner so that you can locate keycards before you ever get to 4NT! Control bidding can be more important than 1430 or Blackwood! Happy Slam Bidding!!!

Newcomer News – Mike “Keeping Fun On My Convention Card” Purcell 513 702 4007

This coming Saturday Bob Fisk and I will be running our Informal Supervised Play session 10-12. This week's hand challenges us to reach game when opponents open and use their bidding to our advantage during the play. Enjoy!

Board 17 ♠ 9 5 3 **Tues 10/1**

North ♥ 6 5 4

Deals ♦ 9 3 2

None Vul ♣ K 9 7 4

♠ A K J 8 2 ♥ K 10 3 ♦ K Q ♣ Q 6 5	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">N</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">W</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">S</td><td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q 10 7 6 ♥ A J 8 7 ♦ J 10 ♣ J 3 2
	N										
W		E									
	S										

EW 4N; 4♣;
4♥; 1♠;
NS 1♦

♠ 4
♥ Q 9 2
♦ A 8 7 6 5 4
♣ A 10 8

Bidding – Both North and East passed. South in 3rd seat opened a weakish 1♦ with 10 HCP and 6 ♦s. West has 18 HCP and 5 ♠s. What should West bid? With ♦KQ doubleton and lots of possible losers in ♥s and ♣s a simple 1♠ overcall (5+ ♠s, 8-16 HCP) seems right. East with 9 HCP and 4 ♠s in support can raise to 2♠ (6-9 HCP, 3+ ♠s). Many Wests will go straight game after this but if they choose to invite game with 3♠ or a help suit try, East will have no problem going to game on their maximum support hand.

If West doubles to show a big hand – After South's 1♦ open, West could double and bid their suit. This typically shows 17+ HCP and 6+ cards in their suit. After the double East with 9 HCP and 4 ♠s should bid 2♠ (8-11 support points, 4+ ♠s). West will have no trouble raising to game after that.

Can West overcall 1NT? – a 1NT overcall shows a balanced 15-18 HCP hand with the opened suit stopped. This hand with a ♦KQ doubleton and such a strong ♠ suit is not well suited for this bid.

Play of the Hand – Assuming a ♦3 lead (middle card leading to partner's suit), West has 4 losers (1♥, 1♦, 2♣). The key to making this hand is finding the ♥Q. You can finesse for the ♥Q in either direction but remembering the bidding your best bet is to finesse South because they opened. Doing this with make the hand for +420.

Post Mortem – Remember to use the bidding to plan your play. Even when opponent's open first, game can still be a possibility.

	Scores		MPs	
Bd 17	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W
4♠ W	50		5	1
4♣ W	50		5	1
4♠ W	50		5	1
3♠ W		170	2.5	3.5
2♠ W		170	2.5	3.5
4♠ E		420	0.5	5.5
4♣ W		420	0.5	5.5
4♠ W	50		5	0
2♠ W		140	3	2
3♠ W		140	3	2
3♠ W		140	3	2
4♠ W		420	0.5	4.5
4♠ W		420	0.5	4.5

Looking to improve your game? If you have an Intel Computer we highly recommend the free software offered by the ACBL and developed by Mr. Fred Gitelman. Check it out at: <https://web.acbl.org/LearnToPlayBridge/>