

USEFUL BIDDING AGREEMENTS – 2

FINDING SLAMS

Rakesh Kumar

1

Partner opens 1S. You have a game-forcing hand with 4-card support.
What will you do?

If you agree to play the Jacoby 2NT convention over 1M, you can show exactly that in one bid.

♠ A1075
♥ K9
♦ Q75
♣ KJ98

Partner rebids to show extra strength; or extra strength with extra length; or a shortage; or none of these.

♠ J2	♠ 86
♥ Q732	♥ J864
♦ J92	♦ AK843
♣ Q432	♣ 75
♠ KQ943	
♥ A105	
♦ 106	
♣ A106	

With this South hand, lacking any extra strength or a shortage, partner signs off by jumping to 4S.

2

What if partner has extras? How do you find out more?

With this South hand, partner would rebid 3S, which promises extra strength *and* length.

♠ A1075
♥ K9
♦ Q75
♣ KJ98

Now you can both bid new suits below game to show controls (A or K). On this deal, North can bid 4C and South can bid 4D.

♠ J	♠ 86
♥ Q732	♥ J864
♦ J92	♦ A843
♣ Q432	♣ 765
♠ KQ9432	
♥ A105	
♦ K10	
♣ A10	

Now North knows there won't be 2 quick losers in diamonds so will bid 4NT RKCB.

3

Roman Keycard Blackwood – a quick summary

4NT asks for keycards (the 4 aces + the king of trumps) with replies as follows:

5C	=	1 or 4
5D	=	0 or 3
5H	=	2 without the queen of trumps
5S	=	2 with the queen of trumps

Then after a 5C/5D reply, a bid of the cheapest suit *other than* the trump suit asks for the queen, with these replies:

Bid of trump suit	=	no queen
5NT	=	queen but no additional king
Bid of new suit	=	queen + king of bid suit

When all keycards are held, a bid of 5NT asks for the cheapest king.

4

Applying RKCB

The auction so far:
1S-2NT-3S-4C-4D
North knows of at least
28 hcp between the two
hands and a 10-card fit,
with diamonds covered.

Now North bids 4NT
RKCB and South
replies 5D showing 0 or
3 keycards, obviously 3.

Then 5H as a queen
ask gets a 6D reply i.e.
trump queen and
diamond king – so you
play in 6S.

♠ J	♠ A1075	♠ 86
♥ Q732	♥ K9	♥ J864
♦ J92	♦ Q75	♦ A843
♣ Q432	♣ KJ98	♣ 765
	♠ KQ9432	
	♥ A105	
	♦ K10	
	♣ A10	

5

What about this South hand?

This time partner has
extra strength, but no
extra length in the
trump suit.

This sort of hand can
be shown by rebidding
3NT (an 18-19 hcp
5332 hand would also
bid 3NT). After that,
control bids and RKCB
still apply.

♠ J3	♠ A1075	♠ 86
♥ Q7532	♥ K9	♥ J864
♦ 62	♦ Q75	♦ A843
♣ Q432	♣ KJ98	♣ 765
	♠ KQ942	
	♥ A10	
	♦ KJ109	
	♣ A10	

6

And how about this hand?

This South hand has a
shortage. Showing a
shortage in reply to a
Jacoby 2NT response
helps to assess slam
prospects.

So with the South hand
shown, opener would
rebid 3D – this does not
promise extra strength.
Again, control bids and
RKCB apply. It's also
possible to ask about
opener's strength.

♠ J2	♠ A1075	♠ 86
♥ Q732	♥ K9	♥ J864
♦ J92	♦ Q75	♦ AK8643
♣ Q432	♣ KJ98	♣ 7
	♠ KQ943	
	♥ A105	
	♦ 10	
	♣ A1065	

7

The bidding commences 1D-1S-1NT-2C (checkback)-2D. What now?

North's hand has great
slam potential. To ask
for keycards without
going past 5D, use
"minorwood".

A jump to 4-of-a-minor
or going past 3NT to bid
4-of-a-minor asks for
keycards in that suit.
Responses are as after
4NT RKCB, but lower.

On this deal, that would
mean: 4D-4H (1)-4S (Q
ask)-5C (♦Q + ♣K)-6D.

♠ 932	♠ AJ864	♠ Q107
♥ 843	♥ AK	♥ J10965
♦ K53	♦ J1098	♦ 42
♣ J852	♣ A3	♣ Q96
	♠ K5	
	♥ Q72	
	♦ AQ76	
	♣ K1074	

8

Which of these hands is worth a 2C opening?

♠ KQ9	♠ KQ9	♠ KQ9
♥ AQJ973	♥ AQJ9	♥ AK
♦ AK9	♦ K954	♦ AKJ1096
♣ 9	♣ AJ8	♣ 94

- A 4-loser hand with 18+ hcp and good-quality 6-card *major* suit is worth 2C. So definitely open 2C with the first hand.
- The second is a 20 hcp balanced hand. It should fit somewhere into your table of notrump openings – typically 2NT.
- The third is 4-loser hand with a 6-card *minor* suit. That's not good enough. Start with 1D or consider treating it as a balanced hand and open 2NT despite the worthless clubs.

9

The notrump "ladder"

Open 1-of-a-suit, rebid 1NT	12-14 hcp
Open 1NT	15-17 hcp
Open 1-of-a-suit, rebid 2NT	18-19 hcp
Open 2NT	20-22 hcp
Open 2C, rebid 2NT	23+ hcp

10

Why would you open a 4-loser hand with a good major suit with 2C?

A 4-loser hand needs very little to make game. For example on this deal, North has a misfitting 7 hcp, yet 4H is unbeatable.

♠ J5432	♠ 86	♠ A107
♥ K42	♥ 86	♥ 105
♦ 1032	♦ Q874	♦ J65
♣ 42	♣ KQ1065	♣ AJ873

If North is completely broke, you can stop in 2M if you bid appropriately.

Respond 2D "waiting" to 2C, then a 4-loser hand rebids 2M and a 3-loser hand rebids 3M.

♠ KQ9	♠ 86	♠ A107
♥ AQJ973	♥ 86	♥ 105
♦ AK9	♦ Q874	♦ J65
♣ 9	♣ KQ1065	♣ AJ873

11

How does defining the 2C opening help finding a slam?

With suitable controls, any 8-loser hand with some support should be looking for slam opposite a 4-loser hand with a good suit.

♠ J5432	♠ 86	♠ A107
♥ 84	♥ K62	♥ 105
♦ 10732	♦ Q84	♦ J65
♣ 42	♣ A10865	♣ KQJ73

So on this deal, the auction should be 2C-2D-2H-3H (strong raise, better than a jump to 4H) -3S (now North knows there will not be 2 quick spade losers)-4NT-5S (2+Q)-6H

♠ KQ9	♠ 86	♠ A107
♥ AQJ973	♥ K62	♥ 105
♦ AK9	♦ Q84	♦ J65
♣ 9	♣ A10865	♣ KQJ73

12

With a good minor suit, you need a 3-loser hand to open 2C

In a minor suit, you are trying for an extra trick.

Note that minorwood is available to look for a slam after a 3m rebid, so a jump to 5m shows a minimum responding hand as on this deal: 2C-2D-3D-5D.

	♠ 86	
	♥ 86	
	♦ Q874	
	♣ KQ1065	
♠ J5432		♠ A107
♥ QJ942		♥ 10753
♦ 2		♦ 5
♣ 42	♠ KQ9	♣ AJ873
	♥ AK	
	♦ AKJ10963	
	♣ 9	

13

If you promise a 3-loser hand with a minor suit, reaching slam is easy

Again, an 8-loser or better hand with top controls and a fit should look for slam.

So on this deal, with North's cards covering 2 of opener's 3 losers, the auction should be: 2C-2D-3C-4C (minorwood)-4H (0 or 3, obviously 3)-6C.

	♠ A6	
	♥ 862	
	♦ K1065	
	♣ Q874	
♠ J53		♠ 108742
♥ QJ943		♥ 1075
♦ AJ42		♦ Q873
♣ 4	♠ KQ9	♣ 2
	♥ AK	
	♦ 9	
	♣ AKJ10963	

14