



## BIDDING 6-PACK 16<sup>th</sup> Apr 08

### Problems

<b>Board 1</b>	<b>None Vul</b>
♠ J543	<i>North East South West</i>
♥ AKQJ3	1♥ Pass 2NT Pass
♦ J93	??
♣ K	

<b>Board 9</b>	<b>E-W Vul</b>
♠ AQJ9754	<i>South West North East</i>
♥ 63	1♥ Pass
♦ KQT	1♠ Pass 3♦ Pass
♣ A	3♠ Pass 4♥ Pass
	4NT Pass 5♦ Pass
	??

<b>Board 21</b>	<b>N-S Vul</b>
♠	<i>West South North East</i>
♥ AT9854	Pass Pass
♦ AKQT93	2♣ Pass 2♦ Pass
♣ A	2♥ Pass 3♥ Pass
	??

<b>Board 24</b>	<b>None Vul</b>
♠ 2	<i>North East South West</i>
♥ KQT54	Pass
♦ AK952	1♥ Pass 1♠ Pass
♣ AK	3♦ Pass 3♠ Pass
	3NT Pass 4♣ Pass
	??

<b>Board 25</b>	<b>E-W Vul</b>
♠ 875	<i>West North East South</i>
♥ AJ	3♦ Dbl Pass
♦ AQ	??
♣ KJT983	

<b>Board 31</b>	<b>N-S Vul</b>
♠ QT85	<i>East South West North</i>
♥ 4	1♣ 1♦ 1♥
♦ Q952	??
♣ AK86	

### Solutions

<b>Board 1</b>	<b>None Vul</b>
♠ J543	<i>North East South West</i>
♥ AKQJ3	1♥ Pass 2NT Pass
♦ J93	??
♣ K	

Partner's Jacoby 2NT shows a game-forcing raise and in standard responses Opener shows a singleton or void if he has one. Does that mean that 3♣ is the bid here? We don't think so, for the same reason that we avoid splinters with a singleton Ace or King, it's likely to mislead Partner. For example, if she holds xxx in Clubs, that will look like a good holding opposite shortness, having no wastage. But there is wastage, and it's in the short hand!

Partner's actual hand is: ♠ A98, ♥ T9874, ♦ KQ7, ♣ A7. Opposite North's collection that will be worth only 10 or 11 tricks (10 with normal play in the Spade suit). Now let's tweak the North hand by getting rid of some wastage. First, we'll move the useless K♣ into the Spades. The J♥ is overkill in that suit, so we'll combine it with the J♠ and transform it into the Q♠. We've still got 15 HCP's, and the same shape but look at the difference: ♠ KQ43, ♥ AKQ32, ♦ J93, ♣ 2. Now, all the high cards are working and the slam is cold!

<b>Board 9</b>	<b>E-W Vul</b>
♠ AQJ9754	<i>South West North East</i>
♥ 63	1♥ Pass
♦ KQT	1♠ Pass 3♦ Pass
♣ A	3♠ Pass 4♥ Pass
	4NT Pass 5♦ Pass
	??

Opposite an opening bid, South immediately had slam in her sights, and that jump shift by North raised her sights even higher. 4NT was Roman Key Card, and 5♦ showed 0 or 3 Key Cards (1430 responses). Before taking a stab at a grand slam, it would be nice to make sure that Partner has the Q♥. How does South do that? The standard method is to use the "cheapest non-signoff", so obviously not 5♥. How about 5♠? Couldn't Partner misinterpret this as an attempt to play in 5♠? Surely not, it hardly makes sense to invoke RKCB in Hearts and then to play below slam in another suit. So, we'd bid 5♣ as the Queen Ask, trusting in Partner's

unfailing good judgment (but we might be just a little bit nervous!).

OK, we bid 5♠ as the Queen Ask, and here are the responses available to Partner:

- 6♥: No Q♥
- 6♣: Q♥ and K♣
- 6♦: Q♥ and K♦ (but not the K♣)
- 5NT: Q♥ but no King to show

There's some logic to these responses. We bid the trump suit with no Q♥, and when we do have the Queen we show a side-suit King if possible, or else bid 5NT. As can be seen, there is no way to show the K♣ in this particular sequence, just not enough room available without going beyond 6♥.

Board 21	N-S Vul			
♠	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>
♥ AT9854				Pass
♦ AKQT93	2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
♣ A	2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
	??			

We have agreed Hearts and whether we belong in 6♥ or 7♥ depends entirely on Partner's trump holding. If she has KQx or Kxxx we want to be in 7♥, and with lesser holdings we just hope that 6♥ will be making. There are two ways to tackle this one:

**Exclusion Key Card:** Bid 4♠ (or 5♠ if you prefer) asking for Partner's Key Cards *excluding* the A♠. Pretty exotic stuff, small wonder that Exclusion been voted by an expert panel as their *least* favorite convention (as in "most accident-prone"). Those same experts also usually play 3014 responses to Exclusion even though they prefer 1430 for normal Roman Key Card (no wonder this is sometimes called Confusion Key Card!).

**Grand Slam Force:** Another rare convention, 5NT here would be an asking bid for Partner's trump holding, and for the answers to this please visit the System Library.

Board 24	None Vul			
♠ 2	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>
♥ KQT54				Pass
♦ AK952	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
♣ AK	3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
	3NT	Pass	4♣	Pass
	??			

4♣ looks like Gerber to us. What are your responses? Some players like to keep things consistent, so they agree to play "1430", just like their Roman Key Card method. That's fine, but what about "two without" and "two with"? You could just ignore that and use the third step to show two Aces (with no need for a 4<sup>th</sup> step). Better than that though is the following:

- 4♦: 1 or 4 Aces
- 4♥: 0 or 3 Aces
- 4♠: 2 Aces, minimum hand
- 4NT: 2 Aces, hand with extras

That's right, the steps are identical to Roman Key Card except that the trump Queen has been replaced with "extras".

Board 25	E-W Vul			
♠ 875	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
♥ AJ		3♦	Dbl	Pass
♦ AQ	??			
♣ KJT983				

That West hand is too good merely to bid 3NT, but if not that then what? Slam is not certain, we need Partner's cooperation, so a direct 6♣ would be too much. How about a cue-bid of 4♦? No, that would be confusing, Partner will probably expect a hand with both majors. Surely the right call is 4NT, which we would expect Partner to interpret as invitational to slam rather than Ace-asking.

Board 31	N-S Vul			
♠ QT85	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>
♥ 4		1♣	1♦	1♥
♦ Q952	??			
♣ AK86				

In competitive auctions, when we cue-bid the opponents' suit we are generally showing some values and support for Partner's suit. Here East has the values and he has the support and he also has *two* cue-bids available. So, what is the difference here between a 2♣ cue-bid and a 2♥ cue-bid? Our own preferred treatment here is to use the cheaper cue-bid to show *three*-card support, and the more expensive cue-bid to show *four*-card support. This treatment makes it easier for Partner to judge the auction from a "total tricks" perspective, and it has the added benefit of getting the auction higher more quickly when there is the bigger fit.