

SLAM BIDDING
SEMINAR
25 NOVEMBER 2019

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

- Roman Key Card Blackwood
- Splinters
- Cue bids
- Fourth suit forcing

ROMAN KEY CARD BLACKWOOD

When to use it:

- when the bidding suggests you have the values for slam
 - to check there aren't two immediate losers
 - When the answer will give all the information you need
 - Don't use it: if you have a void or if you have a suit with two top losers
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- 4NT asks for information
 - Applies when a suit has been agreed
 - The king of trumps counts as one of five aces

Responses by Partner:

- 5C shows 0 or 3 key cards
- 5D shows 1 or 4 key cards
- 5H shows 2 key cards but not Q of trumps
- 5S shows 2 key cards and the Q of trumps

Responses by Asker

- After a response of 5C or 5D, the next suit up (if not trumps) asks for the Q of trumps
- Responder signs off in the trump suit without it, and bids any useful card with it
- A bid of 5NT asks for kings
- With one king bid that suit
- With two kings bid the other (non-trump) suit (the 5NT bidder must have at least one king)

SPLINTER BIDS

What is a splinter bid?

A splinter bid is an unnecessary jump in a new suit that shows:

- Shortage in the bid suit (singleton or void)
- Support for the last suit bid (the trump suit)
- Values for game

Splinters are used opposite an opening 1H/1S, and also during an auction (e.g. 1S – 2D – 2H – 4C agrees H and shows short C)

How strong is a splinter bid?

- Over an opening 1 of a major, it shows 10-13 points and a shortage in the suit bid (the shortage should not be an ace or king)
- In other sequences it shows at least game values (e.g. 1D – 1S – 3H shows 17+)

How to respond to a splinter bid

- With a bad holding (e.g. KJ87), sign off unless you have a much stronger hand
- With a good holding (e.g. 754) make a cue bid (or bid RKCB if suitable)

CUE BIDS

What is a cue bid?

- A cue bid is a bid of a new suit after you have agreed a trump suit, for example after 1S-3S, or 1C-1H-3H. It is not an attempt to show a new possible trump suit: you have already agreed that. Instead it shows a control in the suit bid and interest in slam if partner has the right cards.
- Good slams are less about how many points you have and more about distribution and where the points are. Cue bidding allows you to share useful information with your partner.

First or second round controls?

- There are two styles of cue bidding. Some people prefer only to cue bid first round controls initially; others choose to bid either first or second round control. We recommend playing first or second round controls, because we think it is more effective and allows more information to be shared at a lower level. In particular, it identifies suits in which neither hand has a control more quickly.

What counts as a new suit?

- All suits other than the agreed trump suit can be cue bid. So in the sequence 1C-1H-3H, 4C would be a cue bid, showing a control in C and denying one in S.

When is it a cue bid?

- After a suit is agreed. This can be by a direct raise (1H-3H), or by inference. This can be after a transfer, e.g. after 2NT – 3D (transfer) – 4C would be a cue bid showing control in C and good support for H. It denies a spade control.

We've started cue bidding – what is 4NT now?

- There are different ways to play this, but we recommend that it should still be RKCB.

Does a cue bid show extra values?

- After a sequence such as 1S – 3S, partner has limited their hand, so a cue bid by opener shows enough extra to consider slam opposite a maximum raise. After 1S – 3S – 4C, responder should cue bid below game with any hand, as partner is unlimited. If opener now signs off in game, responder must only bid on with extras.

FOURTH SUIT FORCING (FSF)

- When your side has bid three suits (not nt), a bid of the other suit is 'fourth suit forcing'. It asks for more information about partner's hand.
- It can be used to ask for a stop for no trumps but it is also used to create a forcing situation so that you can exchange information at a lower level, including finding out if partner has 3 card support for your suit.
- This can be invaluable in helping to find out if you have the values and right cards for a slam
- Some people play that fsf is forcing to suit agreement, but we strongly recommend that you play it as game forcing.

HAND 1

KQ82 ♥ A9 ♦ 5 ♣ KQJ865

YOU OPEN 1C

PARTNER BIDS 1S

HAND 1

- ♠ KQ82 ♥ A9 ♦ 5 ♣ KQJ865
- 1C – 3D – 4NT – 6S
- 1S – 4C – 5H
- ♠ A J9754 ♥ Q 3 ♦ 763 ♣ A7

HAND 2

- ♠ 4 ♥ J532 ♦ AKQ107 ♣ AJ2
- YOU OPEN 1D
- PARTNER BIDS 1H

HAND 2

- ♠ 4 ♥ J532 ♦ AKQ107 ♣ AJ2
- 1D – 3S – 4NT – 6S
- 1H – 4C – 5H
- ♠ 1032 ♥ AKQ7 ♦ 82 ♣ KQ53

HAND 3

- ♠ K 7 6 5 4 ♥ A J 5 ♦ J 6 ♣ A Q 3
- PARTNER OPENS 1H
- YOU BID 1S
- PARTNER BIDS 3S

HAND 3

♠ K 7 6 5 4 ♥ A J 5 ♦ J 6 ♣ A Q 3

1S - 4C – 4S

1H - 3S - 4H - PASS

♠ A Q 3 2 ♥ K Q 7 3 2 ♦ Q 10 ♣ K 7

HAND 4

♠ 9 ♥ AKJ96 ♦ A953 ♣ K95
YOU OPEN 1H
PARTNER BIDS 2D

HAND 4

♠ 9 ♥ AKJ96 ♦ A953 ♣ K95
1H – 3S – 4NT – 6D
2D – 4C - 5H
♠ Q32 ♥ 3 ♦ KQ10742 ♣ A42

HAND 5

♠ AKQ842 ♥ A852 ♦ K ♣ K7
YOU OPEN 1S
PARTNER BIDS 2C
YOU BID....??

HAND 5

♠ AKQ842 ♥ A852 ♦ K ♣ K7
1S - ?? - 3S
This is a tricky hand – the danger is agreeing H. I prefer to rebid my S.
2C - 4C
♠ J ♥ 9643 ♦ 9 ♣ AQJ9854

HAND 6

♠ A9 ♥ AQ85 ♦ 2 ♣ KQ6432
YOU OPEN 1C
PARTNER BIDS 1D, YOU BID 1H
WHAT SHOULD YOUR PARTNER BID?
♠ K103 ♥ J4 ♦ AQ984 ♣ A85

HAND 6

♠ A9 ♥ AQ85 ♦ 2 ♣ KQ6432
♠ K103 ♥ J4 ♦ AQ984 ♣ A85
1C – 1D – 1H - ? 2S (FOURTH SUIT FORCING)
THEN 2NT – 3C (agrees C) – 3H (cue) – 3S (cue)
And you will reach 6C

HAND 7

♠ AK654 ♥ AQ5 ♦ K953 ♣ 6

YOU OPEN 1S

PARTNER BIDS 2D

HAND 7

♠ AK654 ♥ AQ5 ♦ K953 ♣ 6

After 1S – 2D:

4C – 4H – 4S – 4NT – 5H – 6D

OR:

4C – 4H – 4NT – 5D – 6D

♠ QJ2 ♥ K102 ♦ QJ102 ♣ A94