

5thOctober2016 - RKCBRefresher

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

	♠ A		
	♥ A Q 7 6 5 4		
	♦ 6 3		
	♣ A K 8 7		
♠ Q J 7 3 2		♠ 10 9 8 6 4	
♥ 10 8		♥ 9	
♦ Q 10 7 2		♦ A K 9	
♣ J 4		♣ 10 9 6 3	
	♠ K 5		
	♥ K J 3 2		
	♦ J 8 5 4		
	♣ Q 5 2		

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥ ¹
Pass	4 N ²	Pass	5 ♣ ³
Pass	6 ♥	All pass	

- 10-12, 4+hearts ("limit raise").
- Roman Key Card Blackwood ("RKCB").
- 1 of the 5 "aces".

An Example of Inappropriate Use of (RKC) Blackwood

North launches into RKCB. He has three key cards (in the three aces held) and the queen of trumps. South provides one key card. There are five key cards in total so declarer knows he is missing just one. With ♥ Q he feels entitled to bid the slam.

Unfortunately East cashes two top diamonds and the slam is quickly defeated. What has gone wrong? North has used RKCB when he cannot be sure that the partnership has control of the diamond suit. That control only exists if the defence is unable to cash two quick tricks there. It's important that North and South, between them, to hold some diamond control (ace, king, singleton or void). Those holdings (barring a lead through a vulnerable unsupported king when the other hand doesn't hold the queen) stop the defence defeating the slam quickly.

East would have been reluctant to double 6 ♥ as he wouldn't believe North had bid the slam without having control of the diamond suit.

A better auction would have been 1 ♥ - 3 ♥; 3 ♠ (cue bid) - 4 ♥ (no minor suit ace); 5 ♣ (cue bid) - 5 ♥ (denies king or singleton diamond) all pass.

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Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

	♠ 9 6		
	♥ 10 3 2		
	♦ K 8 5 4		
	♣ Q 6 5 4		
♠ Q 5 2		♠ A K J 10 4 3	
♥ K 8 7		♥ A Q J 6	
♦ A 10 6 2		♦ 9	
♣ 10 7 3		♣ A K	
	♠ 8 7		
	♥ 9 5 4		
	♦ Q J 7 3		
	♣ J 9 8 2		

EW 7N; EW 7 ♠; EW 7 ♥; EW 3 ♦; EW 2 ♣; Par -1520

West	North	East	South
		2 ♣ ¹	Pass
2 ♦ ²	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
4 ♦ ³	Pass	4 N ⁴	Pass
5 ♣ ⁵	Pass	5 ♦ ⁶	Pass
5 ♥ ⁷	Pass	7 N	All pass

- 21-22, balanced; or 8 playing tricks in an unbalanced hand (see text).
- Relay.
- Ace-showing cue bid agreeing spades.
- RKCB.
- 1 of the 5 "aces".
- "Do you have the queen of trumps?"
- "Yes, I have ♠ Q and also ♥ K."
- Can count thirteen tricks and plays it in the higher-scoring grand slam.

It wouldn't be wrong to open the East hand 2 ♦. The hand is a little between a 2 ♣ opener and a hand that always wants to be in game.

When West jumps to 4 ♦ East knows that his losing diamond (♦ 9) is covered by partner's ace. He now has just three potential losers - two in hearts (if ♥ Q or ♥ J loses to ♥ K; and ♥ 6) and one in trumps (with the queen missing). He enquires about the queen of trumps. West can show that card but make the co-operative bid of 5 ♥. This bid, in a side suit, confirms possession of ♠ Q and shows the king of the bid suit. Now the spade loser is covered and the potential heart losers disappear. **An excellent use of RKCB.**

Had West not held the queen of trumps he would have signed off in 5 ♠. East will have raised that to 6 ♠ as all the key cards are present (four in hand and ♦ A with partner) and partner's jump to 4 ♦ has promised some values.