Jacoby 2N

	♠KQ10983 ♥104 ♦KJ ♣K53	
♠2 ♥K965 ♦10987 ♣Q1096		♠76 ♥J872 ♦Q65 ♣AJ84
	♠AJ54 ♥AQ3 ♦A432 ♣72	

Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
	1♠	Pass	2N(1)
Pass	4♠(2)	Pass	

1 *4+trump support, 13+points, no shortage*
2 *11 to a bad 13*

By using Jacoby 2N South is able to lock onto the spade fit very quickly. In these auctions it can be very useful to warn responder that the opener has a very minimum hand. We do that by jumping directly to game and use lower level bids (where we have more space) to develop better hands. North has an aceless twelve count (including a none-too-great king knave doubleton in diamonds). South has a little in reserve for his 2N bid but respects partner's bid.

East does best to protect his minor suit holdings by not leading from there. A heart or a neutral trump work well. Left to his own devices declarer will finesse against ♥K and lead up to ♣K. Neither play is successful but the contract is assured – six spades, a heart, two diamonds and a club ruff.

It's also worth noting that when the auction follows this path, little is revealed about the responder's hand (apart from the good trump holding).

	♠10 ♥J865 ♦AQ873 ♣1097	
♠KJ76 ♥KQ42 ♦965 ♣A4		♠AQ542 ♥A107 ♦2 ♣KJ52
	♠983 ♥93 ♦KJ104 ♣Q863	

Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
		1♠	Pass
2N(1)	Pass	4♦(2)	Pass
4N(3)	Pass	5♠(4)	Pass
6♠	All pass		

1 *Game forcing raise without a shortage (4+spades and 13+ points)* **2** *Non-minimum with a diamond shortage*
3 *Roman Key Card Blackwood ("RKCB")* **4** *2 of the 5 "aces" with ♠Q*

East has a decent fourteen count and good shape (5431). When East shows a splinter in diamonds West's holding of three small cards couldn't be much better. West has controls in the other side suits (not to mention good trumps) and can invoke RKCB. Partner's reply means that East West have four of the five key cards and they have the trump queen too. With only one missing and knowing of the singleton diamond West can raise 5♠ to slam.

Because of East's known diamond holding South can lead an aggressive ♦J with impunity (the lead is not going round to what could be an embarrassing ♦AQ in the East hand). North wins the first trick and exits with a neutral, second diamond. Declarer can play reasonable carefully by drawing two rounds of trumps (including playing one of dummy's honours) then ruffing a club low. He comes to hand with a heart to the ace and ruffs the other club high. East's hand is reached through another diamond ruff. The third trump is drawn and the contract is claimed. The 3-1 trump break made the hand a little trickier.

	♠AQ ♥J987 ♦AQ4 ♣QJ32	
♠1076 ♥A10 ♦10753 ♣10984		♠9853 ♥K6 ♦J986 ♣765
	♠KJ42 ♥Q5432 ♦K2 ♣AK	

Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable

West	***North***	***East***	***South***
			1♥
Pass	2N(1)	Pass	3♠(2)
Pass	4♦(3)	Pass	4N(4)
Pass	5♥(5)	All pass	

1 *13+points with 4 or more hearts (game forcing raise without a shortage)* **2** *Non-minimum hand with a side suit (promises 5+hearts)* **3** *Ace-showing cue bid* **4** *RKCB*
5 *2 of the 5 aces without the queen of trumps*

South is able to show his second suit over which North cue bids his ace of diamonds. He would have done this anyway, as a cooperative manoeuvre, but North will be buoyed by the good holding in partner's spade suit. With diamonds and clubs under some control South uses RKCB. With only one key card in hand and two now known to be in North's hand there are two key cards missing. That spells caution and South is able to pass North's RKCB response as the reply coincides with the trump suit.

There is nothing to the play with declarer controlling the side suits completely. The trump suit is different. With two losers there the small slam has been successfully avoided.

	♠63 ♥Q ♦106532 ♣J6543	
♠KQ2 ♥AKJ9876 ♦9 ♣K9		♠A98 ♥10542 ♦AJ74 ♣A2
	♠J10754 ♥3 ♦KQ8 ♣Q1087	

Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable

West	***North***	***East***	***South***
1♥	Pass	2N(1)	Pass
4N(2)	Pass	5♦(3)	Pass
7N	All pass		

1 *Game forcing heart raise without a shortage* **2** *RKCB*
3 *0 or 3 of the 5 "aces"*

Sometimes in these auctions the responder takes control but cannot always appreciate the extra length of opener's trump suit. Here opener avoids that possibility by seizing control himself. West appreciates that if East has three aces (and he's looking for "real" aces as he holds the king of trumps) he has cover for his three losers - ♠2, ♦9 and ♣9. He can jump to 4N and, as hearts have already been agreed via 2N, that is always RKCB for hearts. East makes the ambiguous reply of 5♦. At this point a cautious bidder will bid 5♥, which is a sign-off if partner has no aces. In such circumstances *it is imperative* that partner raises to the small slam if holding the better option. If that happened here West would convert partner's 6♥ to 7N.

In the auction above West takes a small chance by bidding 7N directly. If East didn't hold an ace he could have 12hcps with some doubleton … just allowing him to respond 2N.

	♠A432 ♥KQ106 ♦A8 ♣K97	
♠10876 ♥43 ♦KQ4 ♣10865		♠J9 ♥852 ♦J109732 ♣32
	♠KQ5 ♥AJ97 ♦65 ♣AQJ4	

Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable

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

1 13+, 4+trumps and no shortage **2** 15-18, balanced
3 Ace-showing cue bid **4** RKCB **5** 0 or 3 of the 5 "aces"
6 Do you have the queen of trumps? **7** Yes, and ♣K

Most times you see auctions featuring Jacoby 2N you'll notice that the opener has at least five cards in the bid major. That's partly a matter of the bid's American heritage where five card majors are *de rigeur* but also because, in a four card major system, an opened major often has at least five cards. When opener does open one-of-a-major with only four cards he'll generally be 15+, balanced with no lower-ranking four card suit.

This is an example of that and shows that Jacoby works well opposite a four card opening bid too. North shows his big, balanced hand by rebidding 3N. This allows partner to cue bid 4♣. Cue bidding can be a bit of an art form and that applies here. North doesn't hold any secondary honours (queens and knaves) outside the trump suit so returns the cue bid with 4♦. This allows South to bid RKCB. When North shows the king of clubs South can appreciate the power of those working secondary honour cards in clubs.

South can count twelve top tricks (three spades, four trumps, one diamond and four club winners). There must be good play for a grand slam (the worst thing would be North having the same distribution as South) and the seven level is reached. A little optimistic perhaps but it works well here. After trumps are drawn declarer can play four rounds of clubs throwing North's diamond loser. South's diamond loser can now be ruffed.

	♠Q754 ♥4 ♦KJ742 ♣1095	
♠K8 ♥A653 ♦Q98 ♣KJ82		♠AJ9 ♥KQJ1092 ♦53 ♣AQ
	♠10632 ♥87 ♦A106 ♣7643	

Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable

West	***North***	***East***	***South***
		1♥	Pass
2N(1)	Pass	3♥(2)	Pass
4♥	Pass	4♠(3)	Pass
5♣(4)	Pass	5♥	All pass

1 Heart raise, forcing to game with no shortage **2** Extra values, usually 6/7hearts without a shortage **3** Ace-showing cue bid **4** King-showing cue bid

East shows his long heart hand without a shortage by rebidding the suit at the three level. West has little in reserve for the 2N bid and merely raises to game. This is forced by his not holding a side suit ace (i.e. no cue bid). East has a decent seventeen count so makes a further try for slam. West cooperates by showing the king of clubs (the earlier 4♥ ruled out the ace) but East bids 5♥.

What can this mean? East has made that extra try, West has shown him something good but East gives up. It means one thing – East is lacking a diamond control and is asking West to bid 6♥ if he holds ♦K. Without that card West passes … probably after a little thought to interpret correctly the subtlety of the auction.

	♠J982 ♥K10954 ♦A2 ♣A10	
♠43 ♥63 ♦KQ765 ♣K952		♠-VOID- ♥QJ87 ♦J10983 ♣J876
	♠AKQ10765 ♥A2 ♦4 ♣Q43	

Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable

West	***North***	***East***	***South***
			1♠
Pass	2N(1)	Pass	4♦(2)
Pass	4N(3)	Pass	5♦(4)
Pass	5♥(4)	Pass	6♠
All pass			

1 *Game forcing spade raise (some value in the doubletons)* **2** *Diamond shortage and non-minimum hand* **3** *RKCB* **4** *0 or 3 of the 5 "aces"* **5** *Do you have ♠Q?* **6** *Yes, but no side suit kings*

This is a hand where responder will take control (see comment for board 4) though not be in a position to know of partner's great length in the trump suit. Opener will show his diamond shortage and responder will use RKCB and find out that there are no missing key cards. A further ask shows that the partnership has the queen of trumps (though with such length, South would show this card even if he didn't hold it). When opener shows that queen he simultaneously denies any side suit king and responder aborts his search for the grand slam.

Declarer will make twelve tricks by ruffing a club in dummy – seven trumps, two hearts, one diamond, a club and that ruff. The grand slam would have been against the odds and, more or less, would have needed a 3-3 break in hearts. That would have allowed declarer to pitch two clubs from hand.

	♠106 ♥J762 ♦1065 ♣QJ86	
♠AJ852 ♥A5 ♦AK98 ♣94		♠KQ97 ♥K108 ♦QJ72 ♣A10
	♠43 ♥Q943 ♦43 ♣K7532	

Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all

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

1 4+spades, game forcing raise without a shortage
2 Natural, non-minimum, guaranteeing 5+spades
3 Good support for second suit **4** Ace-showing cue bid
5 RKCB **6** 1 or 4 of the 5 "aces"

This is a bit of a rarity but it shows that the form of Jacoby we're using (yes, there are other approaches) allows the partnership to change tack and fix a second suit as the trump suit. We would do this if we think there is a benefit in playing in a 4-4 fit rather than a 5-4 fit. That can be important when the 5card suit can provide a useful discard and allow an extra trick to be made.

Here West has a good hand including a very good second suit, diamonds. He makes a trial bid in diamonds and East is able to raise. Once West confirms the ace of hearts East can use RKCB. He finds four key cards in partner's hand. With his hand holding the other key card and the queen of trumps (backed by the more-than-useful knave) he can bid the grand slam. From his spade holding he knows that suit is solid.

It would be unfortunate if diamonds broke 4-1. When opener shows at least nine cards in spades and diamonds he is known to have at most four cards in hearts and clubs. East knows that the partnership has ♥A, ♥K and ♣A so three of those four cards are definitely winners. If opener is 2-2 in the two suits, declarer can throw dummy's club loser on the long spade and ruff opener's club loser; if opener has 3 hearts and one club, dummy's club can be ruffed and that hand's third heart can be thrown on the long spade; and if opener has one heart and three clubs, one of that hand's clubs can be thrown on ♥K, dummy's club is thrown on the long spade and the declarer's club ruffed in the East hand.

… and if hearts and clubs break 4-0 either way round, you'll have a problem.

	♠KQ7542 ♥A63 ♦7 ♣A85	
♠109 ♥J72 ♦AQ95 ♣9764		♠J ♥10984 ♦K1043 ♣QJ102
	♠A863 ♥KQ5 ♦J862 ♣K3	

Board 1 (Talk) : Dealer North : Love All

West	***North***	***East***	***South***
	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All pass			

Both hands are minimum and North's holding in diamonds, where partner has advertised length (and usually values) is very poor. This is a reasonable, natural auction but it's well nigh impossible for North South to advance beyond game.

Bidding using Jacoby 2N

	1♠	Pass	2N(1)
Pass	4♦ (2)	Pass	4N(3)
Pass	5♦ (3)	Pass	5♥(4)
Pass	6♠ (5)	All pass	

1 *4+spades, 13+points, no shortage, forcing to game*
2 *Non-minimum, shortage in diamonds* **3** RKCB
4 *0 or 3 of the 5 "aces"* **5** *Do you have the queen of trumps?*
6 *Yes, but no side suit king*

The use of Jacoby 2N changes the auction radically. With the trump suit agreed at a low level opener has a series of informative continuations. Here he is able to make a splinter bid in diamonds. Partner has length there but the holding is so poor (in terms of hcps) that he appreciates that there is no wastage in the suit. If partner has ♥A, ♣A and the king and queen of trumps, 6♠ will be very playable. He uses RKCB and then a delayed ask for the queen of trumps. Opener answers in the affirmative and the 26 hcp slam is reached. With six trumps and a known ten+ card fit, North would have pretended to hold the queen of trumps even if the spades were king high.

There is little to the play. Declarer draws trumps and can ruff a club in dummy for the twelfth trick.