Fixing the Quantitative 4NT Bid over 1NT and 2NT

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The primary tool used by many pairs who play 2/1 to determine whether to be in a small slam after the opening bid of 1NT = 15-17 or 2NT = 20-21 is to make the 4NT quantitative bid which asks the question: Are you at a maximum for you NT bid? If yes, bid 6NT and if no, pass the 4NT bid.

Partner (the 4NT bidder) normally has 16HCP if partner opened 1NT and 12 HCP if partner opened 2NT. Recall that a slam using HCP normally requires 33-36HCP and 10+ controls (A=2 and K=1) for a small slam and 12 tricks and 37-40HCP and 11 controls for a grand slam and 13 tricks. In practice if you are:

- Missing **2 aces**: don't bid slam.
- Missing **1 ace**: usually don't bid grand slam; small slam may be fine.
- Missing **0 aces but 1 king**: often a good for a small slam.
- Missing **0 key cards**: investigate grand slam.

For **6NT**, in pr**actice your**:

- Combined strength is around **33-36 HCP**, and
- Partnership holds **10 or more controls**, especially if all four aces are present.

The 4NT quantitative bid only **addresses** the joint HCP between two bridge hands and **ignores** controls which are needed to generate tricks with balanced hands.

What then is the solution, is there a better tool? Yes, we need to combine the information of maximum HCP with controls. This may be accomplished using the **1430 Expert Gerber Convention** having the following responses (this is a modification of Gerber).

The 1430 Expert Gerber responses to 4♣ are:

- Step 1: 4♦ 1 or 4 Aces
- Step 2: 4♥ 3 or 0 Aces
- Step 3: 4♠ 2 Aces with a Min (declining the Quantitative Bid)
- Step 4: 4NT 2 Aces with a Max (accepting the Quantitative Bid)

For more information after first two steps, one may use pseudo "Queen Ask" bids. If partner bids 4♦ (1 or 4 Aces) or 4♥ (3 or 0 Aces) then we are asking if partner has a maximum or minimum in a similar way as we ask for the Queen in 1430 – we make the cheapest bid.

- If partner has a maximum, bid their cheapest King or 5NT.
- If partner has a minimum, bid 4NT.

The above approach is a significant improvement over the 4NT Quantitative bid. Over 2NT there is a clear Min=20 and a clear Max=21; however, this is not the case when bidding 1NT. What is one to do with 16HCP? Now you must consider the value of 10's in combination with Ks or Qs.

Example (1)

Opener:

- ♠ AQ4
- ♥ KJ2
- ♦ AQ84
- ♣ K73
- 17 HCP

Responder:

- ♠ KJ3
- ♥ AQ4
- ♦ KJ62
- ♣ AQ8
- 16 HCP

Auction:

Plain Text
1NT - 4NT
6NT
Show more lines

Reasoning:

- Responder knows opener is balanced.
- Combined points likely 33+HCP

Example (2)

Opener:

- ♠ AQ4
- ♥ K102
- ♦ AQ84
- ♣ K103
- 16 HCP

Responder:

- ♠ KJ3
- ♥ AQ4
- ♦ KJ62
- ♣ AQ8
- 16 HCP

Auction:

Plain Text
1NT - 4♣
6NT

Reasoning:

- Responder knows opener is balanced
- Combined points only 32, the two K10 combinations add 1 point (each=0.5) =17 points

When using 1430 Expert Gerber, the 5♣ bid becomes the Specific King Ask (SKA) bid, if needed.

<u>5NT = Quantitative to Grand</u>

1NT - 5NT

Meaning:

- We are too strong for 6NT.
- Bid 7NT with a maximum.
- Otherwise bid 6NT.

Typically shows about 20-21 HCP opposite a 15-17 NT.

<u>5NT = Quantitative</u>

2NT - 5NT

Meaning:

- Invite 7NT.
- Bid 7NT with a maximum.
- Bid 6NT with a minimum
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Example (3)

North Dealer and Opens 1NT

		♠	A532		
		♥	AQ6		
		♦	104		
		♣	AJ42		
♠	J87			♠	Q1064
♥	K1082		N W E S	♥	J972
♦	J8753			♦	9
♣	7			♣	10986
		♠	K9		
		♥	43		
		♦	AKQ62		
		♣	KQ53		

After North's bid of 1NT, if South next bids 4NT as Quantitative – North will pass with 15HCP. If instead suppose South bids 4♣, North next bids 4♥ with 3 Aces; South's next bid is 5NT to ask; Do you have zero or three? North with three, responds 6NT, bidding the slam.

The lead was the ♣10. You have 10 tricks and play the diamonds the diamonds carefully to make the slam!

There is yet another Modification of the "Gerber" Convention. It may also be used after the bid of 3NT in the following 2/1 bidding sequences: 1♠/1♥-2♣-2♦-3NT-4♣ or 1♠-2♥-3NT-4♣ Where 3NT shows 16-17HCP, by either responder or opener, it is not a "Fast Arrival" bid; the next bid of 4♣ allows one to investigate slam. However, in this special situation we may use a Modified 1430 Gerber Convention: The responses to 4♣ not become (there is not min or max).

Modified 1430 Gerber Convention over 3NT

4♦ = 1 or 4 aces
4♥ = 0 or 3 aces
4♠ = 2 aces

Just a note, one may also use the bid of 4♣ as a weak 1430 keycard asking bid when partner opens at the 2/3 level with a preemptive suit bid:

Responses to 4♣ now follow as steps with sequence 0,1,1,2,2:

4♦ = 0 keycards
4♥ = 1 keycard without the Q
4♠ = 1 keycard with the Q
4NT = 2 keycards without the Q
5♣= 2 keycards with the Q

A similar step sequence may be used as exclusion blackwood when a pair has agreed upon a suit and partner next bids 5m/5M at the 5-level showing a void and asking about keycards, excluding the bid ask suit. This is not 1430. Indeed, some may only use 3-steps at the 5-level: 0,1,2 keycards and forget about the Q and other may use the 1430 responses by agreement.