

Roman Keycard Blackwood 1430

By Neil H. Timm

Eddie Kantar (2008) in his book "Roman Keycard Blackwood – The Final Word" 5th Edition, published by Master Point Press recommends that 1430 be used if the weak hand asks and that 0314 Roman Keycard Blackwood (RKCB), often just called Roman Keycard (RKC) as on the Convention Card, be used if the very strong hand asks. If you do not follow his guidelines and have to choose one, it is best to use RKCB 1430 since more often than not the hand that asks has two keycards queen which facilitates the queen ask (with only one keycard, you usually have the queen). The conventional bids for RKCB 1430 follow.

4NT when Hearts or Spades are the agreed upon suit (Keycard Ask)

5♣ = 1 or 4 Key Cards

5♦ = 0 or 3 Key Cards

5♥ = 2 or 5 Key Cards without the Queen of Trump

5♠ = 2 or 5 Key Cards with the Queen of Trump or holding a 6th Trump

Kickback/Redwood

Use 4 of the suit above the agreed upon suit: diamonds for clubs, hearts for diamonds, spades for hearts and notrump for spades. While the term kickback always applies to all suits, some reserve the term Redwood only for the minors.

Voids (NEVER show a void with Zero Keycards, ignore the Void)

5NT = 2 or 4 an even number of Key Cards with a void

6 of suit below the trump suit = odd number key cards (1/3) in the suit below the trump suit

6 trump suit = odd number of key cards (1/3) with a void in higher ranking suit

Note that 4NT is used ONLY if the AGREED suits are the MAJORS, NOT for the Minors. For the minors one uses 1430 Minorwood (where 4♦ and 4♣ are used for diamonds and clubs, respectively)/Redwood. Furthermore with no agreed major, some recommend that the last bid suit be used for RCKB 1430. This approach only works if the partnership has a fit for the last bid suit. When this is not the case, it usually does not work since one cannot tell the difference between holding the ace or the king in the last bid suit. With no agreed upon suit Kantar recommends that 4NT be used for Blackwood where only aces count.

DOPI/ROPI Interference at the 5 level **DBL/RE-DBL**: 0 or 3 Key Cards and **PASS**: 1 or 4 Keycards

DEPO Interference at the 6 level **DBL**: Even # Key Cards (0/2/4) or **PASS**: Odd # (1/3)

QUEEN ASK:

After 5♣, 5♦s is Queen Ask

Denial: Return to the five-level of the agreed upon suit

6 Level of agreed Suit: With Queen and **no** side-suit king or extra trump

6 Level of Lower King Suit: With Queen and 1/2 side-suit kings

5NT: With Queen **without** a side-suit king, but trump extra

After 5♦, 5♥s is the Queen Ask

Denial: If spades are trump, bid 5♠, with hearts PASS.

6 Level of Lower King Suit: With queen and side king

5NT: With queen **without** a side-suit king, but trump extra

6NT: With queen **without** a side-suit king and 4-3-3-3 distribution

5NT is a Specific King ASK (NOT NUMBER OF KINGS)

(1) Returning to the agreed upon trump suit at the six-level denies any kings.

(2) With two kings, bid the cheapest at the six-level (below agreed upon trump suit); if the second king is of higher rank, again bid 6 of agreed major. Only show the spade king if hearts are trump if spades were bid or it was a splinter suit.

(3) With three kings, bid 6NT.

To find a second king below the trump suit, bid the suit. Without the second king, responder bids the trump suit at the six-level; with the king, jump to 7♥/7♠ (the agreed major suit). Partner can always bid 7NT.

SPECIFIC SUIT ASK (SSA) After 5♣: 5♥, 6♣, 6♦ is SSA. After 5♦: 5♠, 6♦, 6♥ is SSA

Make a 1st step response, including 6NT with third-round control Qx(x), Ax, AQx, xx

Make a 2nd step response with second-round control Kxx(x)

Make a 3rd step response with Kx

Raise the ask bid with KQx and JUMP to the trump suit with a singleton

While RKCB 1430 is a valuable convention for investigating small/grand slams, it is not the only tool for slam bidding. Other methods include cue bidding; Simple Gerber, Roman Keycard Gerber, exclusion Keycard Blackwood (EKB) sometimes called Voidwood, Minorwood/ Kickback/Redwood sometimes referred to as Bothwood, Double Roman Keycard Blackwood (DRKCB) when the partnership has agreed two suits (Major-Major, Major-Minor, Minor-Minor), ACOL 4NT, Variable Roman Keycard Blackwood, Spiral Scan bids, Baby Blackwood, and many more. An overview of several methods may be found on www.bridgeguys.com.