

Roman Key Card Blackwood and Slam Bidding

Quick Review of Blackwood:

1. Blackwood is a convention designed to keep partnerships out of bad slams when you have lots of high card points but lack 1 or 2 aces.
2. After **suit agreement**, a bid of 4NT asks partner how many aces he or she has:

5♣ = 0 or 4

5♦ = 1

5♥ = 2

5♠ = 3

3. After hearing partner's response, you may bid 5NT to ask for the number of kings if you have all four aces. 5NT is forcing and invites a grand slam. Here is a 29 HCP grand slam below.

♠ KQ63

♥ 83

♦ 9

♣ AKQJ93

♠ AT876

♥ AQ962

♦ A65

♣ 8

1♣

3♠

5♦ (1 ace)

7NT (we must have 13 top tricks!)

1♠

4NT (blackwood, suit was agreed)

5NT (do you have any kings?)

- If West cannot count on East to have 3 aces, West cannot bid 7NT.
4. Jumps to 4NT over 1NT or big balanced hands are quantitative invites. Here are the main sequences that are quantitative.

1NT – 4NT (quantitative, invites 6NT, 16-18 HCP)

1NT-2♣; 2♦ - 4NT (same as above with a 4 card major)

1♦-1♥; 2NT – 4NT (need 13-14 HCP since partner has 18-19)

2NT-4NT (need 11-12 HCP since partner has 20-21)

2C-2D; 2NT-4NT (need 8-10 since partner has 22-24)

- Opener should accept with most hands; pass with bare minimums for previous bidding
- For instance, after 1NT-4NT, opener should accept with all balanced 17 counts and almost all 16 counts via 6NT.

Roman Keycard Blackwood

1. The main improvement of Roman Keycard Blackwood over “regular” Blackwood is its focus on the king and queen of the trump suit

♠ A92	♠ KJT3
♥ JT832	♥ Q754
♦ 7	♦ AT62
♣ AKQJ	♣ 5

1♥-3♥

3♠-4♦

5♣-5♠

6♥ (x)

- Cuebidding kept improving each hand, but they never diagnosed the weakness in the trump suit.

2. Roman Keycard Blackwood treats the trump king as an equal to the other 4 aces. Instead of asking for how many of the 4 aces there are, you're asking for how many of the 5 keycards there are.
3. Roman Keycard also has bids to ask about the trump queen.

Roman Keycard Blackwood 0314 (or "3014"). After 4NT:

5♣ -- 0 or 3 keycards
 5♦ -- 1 or 4 keycards
 5♥ -- 2 keycards, no trump queen
 5♠ -- 2 keycards with the trump queen

♠ A92	♠ KJT3
♥ JT832	♥ Q754
♦ 7	♦ AT62
♣ AKQJ	♣ 5

1♥-3♥
 3♠-4♦
 4NT - 5♦ (1 keycard)
 5♥ (much better!)

Many play RKC 1430 (same number as a vulnerable major suit slam).

5♣ -- 1 or 4 keycards
 5♦ -- 0 or 3 keycards
 5♥ -- 2 keycards, no trump queen
 5♠ -- 2 keycards with the trump queen

- RKC 0314 works better for club slams, RKC 1430 better for heart slams

4. The player who bid 4NT can ask about the queen of trumps by bidding the next step

♠ AK743	♠ 952
♥ AKQJ	♥ 985
♦ 4	♦ AQ52
♣ AQT	♣ J83

2♣-2♦

2♠-3♠ (shows some stuff)

4♣-4♦

4NT-5♦ (1 key)

5♥ (queen?) - 5♠ (I don't have it)

♠ AK743	♠ Q52
♥ AKQJ	♥ 985
♦ 4	♦ A652
♣ AQT	♣ J83

2♣-2♦

2♠-3♠

4♣-4♦

4NT-5♦ (1 key)

5♥ (queen?) - 6♠ (I have the queen, but nothing else)

♠ AK743	♠ Q52
♥ AKQJ	♥ 985
♦ 4	♦ A652
♣ AQT	♣ K83

2♣-2♦

2♠-3♠

4♣-4♦

4NT-5♦ (1 key)

5♥ (queen?) - 6♣ (I have the spade queen and the club king!)

7♠ (Nice cards partner!)