

Cool Convention to Use in Slam Auctions

Most partnerships use Texas Transfers over a one no trump opener to put the no trump bidder in a major suit game contract. For example one no trump followed by four diamonds by your partner is an alert (transfer to hearts) so you bid four hearts. In the same auction partner will bid 4 hearts when he wants you to bid 4 spades.

After you bid 4 hearts or four spades what does four no trump mean? First let us discuss a convention called roman keycard. In the roman keycard convention your partner is asking you to show how many cards you have out of five very specific cards and occasionally a sixth card. The five key cards are the four aces and the king of the agreed upon trump suit. The responses to the convention are as follows.

5 clubs – this bid shows zero or three key cards

5 diamonds – this bid shows one or four key cards

5 hearts – shows two cards without the queen of trumps

5 spades – shows two key cards with the queen of trumps

The above responses are considered what is called 3014 roman keycard.

Using 1430 roman keycard the 5 club and five diamond responses are reversed (3014 is used more often, I personally think 1430 is a better tactical treatment.)

If your partner has room between your response at the five level and the agreed upon suit he may bid that suit to ask about the trump queen.

There are further responses to ask about kings (partner will bid 5 no trump to ask about kings).

Now, after that long winded sidetrack, it is time for the cool convention! What does it mean when partner bids 4 spades after transferring you to hearts or for that matter what does 5 clubs or diamonds mean?

Trumpet blaring!!! **Exclusion Blackwood!!!!**

The bid of 4 spades says partner, I have a void in spades and I want to know specifically the keycards in the other three suits.

First step – 4 no trump – partner I have one or four keycards outside of spades

Second step – 5 clubs – partner I have 3 or zero keycards outside of spades

Third step – 5 diamonds – partner I have 2 keycards without the trump queen outside of spades.

Fourth step – 5 hearts – partner I have two keycards and the trump queen outside of spades.