How to Play Kickback

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Contents

Introduction

Keycard Difficulties

If your partnership uses Roman Keycard with standard (3014) responses, you will be familiar with two difficulties associated with RKC3014 when a suit other than ♠ has been agreed:

1. There may not be room for a Queen-ask following a 2ⁿᵈ step response. For example

Pard	You	
1♥	2**N**	
4**N**	5♦	Keycard-ask; 2ⁿᵈ step response 1 or 4
5♥		

   Is 5♥ a sign-off, or is it the Queen-ask?

2. A 3ʳᵈ or 4ᵗʰ step response may force the contract beyond the safety level of 5 of the agreed suit. For example

Pard	You	
1♥	2**N**	
4**N**	5♠	Keycard-ask; 4ᵗʰ step with 2 Keycards and Q♥

   The 4ᵗʰ step response forces to the 6 level.

Since a Queen-ask is more likely when the response shows 1 Keycard than when it shows 0, the 1430 response structure reverses the order of the 1ˢᵗ and 2ⁿᵈ step responses. This approach reduces the frequency of the first problem, but does not at all impact the second.

In both illustrations, the agreed trump suit is ♥. It is easy to see that both problems are exacerbated when the trump suit is a minor, ♣ or ♦.

The Kickback Solution

The underlying source of the difficulties with both 3014 and 1430 Keycard responses is that the same asking bid, 4**N**, is employed for all trump suits. Partial solutions are offered in a variety of methods including Redwood or Minorwood, or by imposing suit-dependent pre-conditions for the 4**N** ask.

A theoretical basis for addressing the RKC (and other) short-comings has been known for some time. In the November and December 1980 issues of **The Bridge World**, Jeff Rubens espoused *The Useful Space Principle (USP): Available bidding space should be assigned by a system to those devices that can best use it.* Employing an identical 4**N** asking bid independent of the agreed trump suit clearly violates the USP, and is the source of the RKC difficulties illustrated above. The 4**N** response structure affords progressively

less space below the safety level of 5 of the trump suit as the suit varies from ♠ to ♥ to ♦ to ♣.

Kickback is one application of the USP and is proposed in the January and February 1981 issues of **The Bridge World**. In brief, it defines

a) the Keycard-ask as 4 of the next higher strain after the trump suit,
b) responses, in steps, beginning at the next available bid.

Thus,

Trump Suit	Keycard Ask	Responses
♠	4N	5♣, 5♦, 5♥, 5♠
♥	4♠	4N, 5♣, 5♦, 5♥
♦	4♥	4♠, 4N, 5♣, 5♦
♣	4♦	4♥, 4♠, 4N, 5♣

Figure 1: *Kickback Keycard-ask and standard step responses*

The principal advantages of Kickback are discernable in this Figure – both difficulties alluded to in the earlier discussion have evaporated:

1. Following a 1st or 2nd step response, there is always room for a 3rd step Queen-ask below 5 of the agreed trump suit.
2. The safety level of 5 of the agreed trump suit is never violated since the standard response structure always ends at 5 of the trump suit.

As Rubens postulates, an essential requirement when employing Kickback is to *think in steps and not in denomination*. Thus,

> **a) the <u>Keycard-ask</u> is the next higher bid after 4 of the trump suit**
> **b) the <u>response structure</u> is calibrated in steps**
>   **1st Step   0 or 3 Keycards**
>   **2nd Step   1 or 4 Keycards**
>   **3rd Step   2 or 5 Keycards, without the trump Queen**
>   **4th Step   2 or 5 Keycards, also holding the trump Queen**

Figure 2: *Kickback Keycard-ask response structure*

Note that the responses are described using the original 3014 structure. There is now no advantage to 1430, although that structure may still be adopted, if preferred, without loss of utility. The following sections elaborate upon one complete implementation of Kickback including Keycard-ask, King-ask and Queen-ask responses. <u>There is no universally agreed structure, so a partnership adopting Kickback, must discuss and refine their agreements</u>.

The Keycard-ask and Standard Responses

The generalized Keycard-ask responses are defined in Figure 2.

a) the Keycard-ask is 4 of the next higher strain after the trump suit
b) the responses begin at the next available bid and continue in steps

The basic responses are specialized here for each trump suit. The responses to show voids are described in a later section.

Trump Suit	Keycard Ask	1st Step 0 or 3	2nd Step 1 or 4	3rd Step 2 or 5	4th Step 2 or 5 & Queen
♠	4N	5♣	5♦	5♥	5♠
♥	4♠	4N	5♣	5♦	5♥
♦	4♥	4♠	4N	5♣	5♦
♣	4♦	4♥	4♠	4N	5♣

Figure 3: *Keycard-ask and Responses by suit*

Note that the Keycard responses when the agreed trump suit is ♠ are simply the accustomed Keycard responses. For the next lower suit, ♥, the responses are transposed one level lower; and so on for ♦ and ♣. Examples follow.

Example 1: ♥ agreed, 4♠ Keycard-ask				
♠ A 2		♠ Q		
♥ A K Q 5 3 2		♥ J T 9 7 4		
♦ K		♦ A 7 3		
♣ K Q 7 5		♣ A J T 3		
<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	
2♣	pass	2♦	pass	; 2♦ - waiting
2♥	pass	3♠	pass	; 3♠ - splinter-raise, ♥ agreed
4♠	pass	5♥	pass	; Keycard-ask, 2 + Q♥ (extra length)
7♥	pass	pass	pass	

Example 2: ♣ agreed, 4♦ Keycard-ask				
♠ A 8 3		♠ K 5 2		
♥ A Q J		♥ K		
♦ J 7 5		♦ A K 8 6		
♣ A T 9 6		♣ K Q 8 7 4		
<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	
1N	pass	3♥	pass	; 3♥ splinter, game force, 3=1=4-5
4♣	pass	4♦	pass	; ♣ agreed, 4♦ - Keycard-ask
4♥	pass	7♣	pass	; 3 Keycards
pass	pass			

The King-ask and Responses

Following the response to a Keycard-ask, asker may want to enquire about the outside (non-trump) Kings. A usual pre-condition is that the partnership is known to hold all 5 Keycards; often, the trump Queen as well. Regardless, there are only 3 outside Kings since the King of the trump suit is counted as a Keycard. In this version of Kickback,

  a) the King-ask is 5 of the next higher strain after the trump suit
  b) the responses, in steps, begin at the next available bid and end at 6 of the agreed trump suit

Thus,

Trump Suit	King Ask	King-Ask Responses			
		1st Step	2nd Step	3rd Step	4th Step
♠	5N	6♣	6♦	6♥	6♠
♥	5♠	5N	6♣	6♦	6♥
♦	5♥	5♠	5N	6♣	6♦
♣	5♦	5♥	5♠	5N	6♣

Figure 4: *King-ask and Responses by suit*

The common King-ask agreements show either the number of Kings, or the cheapest specific King. Under either agreement, Kickback provides safety as the response structure does not extend beyond 6 of the trump suit.

Number of Kings

a) the <u>King-ask</u> is the next higher bid after 5 of the trump suit
b) the <u>response structure</u> is calibrated in steps
1st Step   0 side Kings
2nd Step   1 side King
3rd Step   2 side Kings
4th Step   3 side Kings

Figure 5: *King-ask Response Structure to show # of Kings*

This is the simplest of possible agreements. Responder (and asker) simply counts the number of steps after the King-ask to show the number of side Kings held by responder. Unlike standard Blackwood, the 1st step response is not ambiguous/overloaded to show 0 or 4 side Kings since there are only 3.

Under this agreement, the number of steps is not significant. Any response below 6 of the agreed trump suit is a cue-bid telling a specific side King held by responder. Responder must make the cheapest available cue-bid, so bypassing a cue-bid denies possession of the corresponding side suit King:

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a) **_Asking Suit_: The King-ask is a cue-bid of 5 of the next higher strain after the trump suit; this is the <u>asking suit</u> (see Figure 4)**

b) **_Negative Response_: Responding _6 of the trump suit_ denies possession of any side suit King**

c) **_Three-Kings Response_: Responding _6 of the asking suit_ shows possession of all three side suit Kings**

d) **_Cheapest Specific King_: Responding _below 6 of the trump suit_ shows possession of the King of the cue-bid suit; if the response is not the cheapest available cue-bid, then it denies possession of the King of any bypassed (cheaper) cue-bid suit**

e) **_Surrogate_ 5N: when the trump suit is other than ♠, a response of 5N is a specific King response for the _King of the asking suit_**

Figure 6: _King-ask Response Structure to show specific Kings_

The following Figures specialize this agreement for each trump suit. In each Figure, there are a <u>side-King column</u> and 5 <u>response columns</u>.

The initial <u>side-King column</u> lists the 3 side suit Kings in their cheapest-first cue-bid order. It is especially important to understand the effect of the surrogate 5**N** on the order in which a specific King is shown (or denied).

- When the trump suit is ♠, the King-ask is 5**N**, and the responses, in order 6♣, 6♦, 6♥, describe a specific King in the natural suit order.
- When the trump suit is ♥, the King-ask is 5♠, and the responses, in order 5**N** = ♠, 5♣, 5♦ describe a specific King in the natural order.
- When the trump suit is ♦, the King-ask is 5♥; now the response order 5♠, 5**N** = ♥, 6♣ interpolates the ♥ suit between ♠ and ♣.
- When the trump suit is ♣, the King-ask is 5♦, and the response order is 5♥, 5♠, 5**N** = ♦, again in the natural suit order.

There are 5 response columns

- one column for each of the 3 _cheapest specific King_ responses
- a column for the _negative response_
- a column for the _3-Kings response_

√ indicates a side King that is shown, X indicates a side King that is denied; A – (dash) indicates an unresolved side King (neither shown nor denied).

(♠ agreed)	5N King-Ask Response				
Side King	**6♣**	**6♦**	**6♥**	**6♠**	**6N**
K♣	√	X	X	X	√
K♦	-	√	X	X	√
K♥	-	-	√	X	√

Figure 7-1*: Specific King Responses to the 5**N** ask (♠ agreed)*

(♥ agreed)	5♠ King-Ask Response				
Side King	**5N**	**6♣**	**6♦**	**6♥**	**6♠**
K♠	√	X	X	X	√
K♣	-	√	X	X	√
K♦	-	-	√	X	√

Figure 7-2*: Specific King Responses to the 5♠ ask (♥ agreed)*

(♦ agreed)	5♥ King-Ask Response				
Side King	**5♠**	**5N**	**6♣**	**6♦**	**6♥**
K♠	√	X	X	X	√
K♥	-	√	X	X	√
K♣	-	-	√	X	√

Figure 7-3*: Specific King Responses to the 5♥ ask (♦ agreed)*

(♣ agreed)	5♦ King-Ask Response				
Side King	**5♥**	**5♠**	**5N**	**6♣**	**6♦**
K♥	√	X	X	X	√
K♠	-	√	X	X	√
K♦	-	-	√	X	√

Figure 7-4*: Specific King Responses to the 5♦ ask (♣ agreed)*

These Figures document *The King-Ask Surrogate Principle: When the King-ask is other than 5**N**, a 5**N** response to the King-Ask is a **surrogate** cue-bid to show the specific King of the asking suit.*

Specific Kings (Secondary Ask)

As seen in any **Figure 7**, a 1st or 2nd step *Cheapest-Specific-King* response leaves open the possibility of holding a higher side King.

Asker may make the next available bid to ask if another higher side King is held. Since any *Specific-King* response to the King-Ask denies the ability to make the *Three-Kings* response, only one additional side King may be held.

a) **Secondary Ask**: A 2nd step or 3rd step cue-bid following a 1st or 2nd step *Cheapest-Specific-King* response b) **Negative Response**: 6 of the trump suit denies any additional side King c) **Positive Response**: 6 of the asking suit shows the King of the side suit of the *Secondary Ask* cue-bid d) **Specific King Response**: Following a 2nd step *Secondary Ask*, a 3rd step cue-bid response shows the 3rd step side King (but denies the 2nd step side King)

Figure 8: *Secondary King-ask Response Structure*

Example 3: ♠ agreed, 4N Keycard-ask, 5N King-ask, Secondary King-ask	
The Bridge World, February 2015, Challenge the Champs #10	

♠ A K Q J 2   ♠ T 5 4
♥ A 8 2   ♥ Q 7 3
♦ 6 5 4   ♦ A K Q T 7
♣ A 4   ♣ K 5

West	North	East	South	
		1♦	pass	
1♠	pass	1N	pass	
2♦	pass	2♠	pass	;2♦ - xyz game force, 2♠ agrees ♠
4N	pass	5♦	pass	;4N - Keycard-ask, 5♦ - 1 Keycard
5N	pass	6♣	pass	;5N King ask, 6♣: Cheapest Specific King(K♣)
6♦	pass	6N	pass	;6♦ - Secondary ask, 6N - Positive (K♦)
7♦	pass	7N	pass	;7♦ - 3rd round Control ask

Note: The 6♣ Cheapest Specific King Response denied holding all 3 side-suit Kings. Had East held K♥ instead of Q♥, the appropriate response would have been 6N instead of 6♣ to show all 3 side Kings.

Note: The 6♣ Cheapest Specific King Response denied holding all 3 side-suit Kings. Having shown K♣, East may hold only one of K♦ or K♥. The actual 6N response affirmed East's holding K♦. Had East held K♥ instead of K♦, the appropriate response to the secondary ask would have been 6♥ instead of 6N.

The Queen-Ask and Responses

The Queen-ask is employed only following a 1st step or 2nd step response to a Keycard-ask, and asks responder to tell whether the trump Queen is held. The Queen-ask takes the form of the next available bid after a 1st step or 2nd step response.

In the original, and simplest, response structure, responder makes the first available bid to deny holding the trump Queen, or the second bid to show it.

Since the Queen-ask is a slam try, the structure described here denies the Queen by bidding 5 of the trump suit. Responses above 5 of the trump suit promise the Queen and, in the process, describe the side suit Kings held.

> **a) The Queen-ask**: The next available bid following a 1st Step or 2nd Step response to a Keycard-ask
> **b) Denying the trump Queen**: 5 of the trump suit denies the Queen
> **c) Showing the trump Queen**: any King-ask response promises the trump Queen and simultaneously shows side-suit Kings:
>   **1) Bid *6 of the trump suit* with no side-suit King**
>   **2) Bid *6 of the asking suit* with all 3 side-suit Kings**
>   **3) Cue-bid the *Cheapest Specific King* with 1 or 2 side-suit Kings**

Figure 9: *The Queen-ask Response Structure*

Example 4: ♥ agreed, 4♠ Keycard-ask, Queen-ask
The Bridge World, August 2015, Challenge the Champs #2

♠ K 6 4		♠ A Q 7 3	
♥ J T 7 3 2		♥ K Q 4	
♦ 3		♦ A 9 8 4	
♣ K Q T 9		♣ A 6	

West	North	East	South	
		1♦	pass	
1♥	pass	2N	pass	
3♦	pass	3♠	pass	; 3♦ - Checkback
3N	pass	4♥	pass	; East shows 3 ♥'s (and 4 ♠'s), ♥'s agreed
4♠	pass	5♣	pass	; 4♠ Kickback -- 5♣ shows 4 Keycards
5♦	pass	6♥	pass	; 5♦ Queen-ask – 6♥ shows Q♥ but no Kings
pass	pass			

Note: 3♦ Checkback assuming Wolff sign-off, otherwise 3♣ New Minor Forcing with the same effect locating the 5-3 ♥-fit

Note: Positive Queen-ask response with no side-suit Kings is 6 of the trump suit, 6♥.
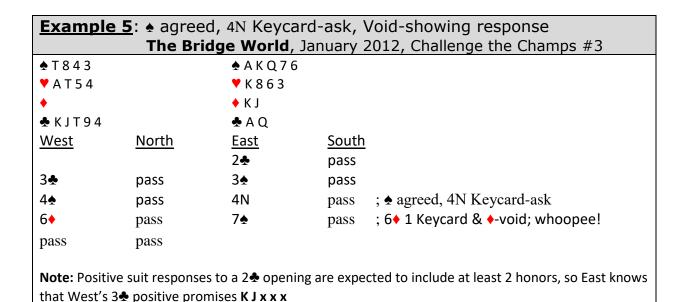
Void-Showing Responses

The Kickback schedule of standard responses is extended in a consistent and coherent way to include showing useful voids. For all four suits,

- The 4th step, 5 of the trump suit, is the highest standard response and shows 2 or 5 Keycards plus the Queen of the trump suit.
- The 5th step, *5 of the asking suit*, shows an even number of Keycards with a useful void in any of the three side suits.
- The 6th, 7th, and 8th steps correspond to the three side suits, and show an odd number of Keycards with a void in the cue-bid side suit. Unless the trump suit is ♠, one of these cue-bids will be a **surrogate** 5**N**!

Trump Suit	Keycard Ask	Standard Responses				Void-Showing Responses			
		1st Step 0 or 3	2nd Step 1 or 4	3rd Step 2 or 5	4th Step 2 or 5 + Q	5th Step 0, 2 or 4	6th Step 1 or 3	7th Step 1 or 3	8th Step 1 or 3
♠	4N	5♣	5♦	5♥	5♠	5N	6♣	6♦	6♥
♥	4♠	4N	5♣	5♦	5♥	5♠	5N	6♣	6♦
♦	4♥	4♠	4N	♣	5♦	5♥	5♠	5N	6♣
♣	4♦	4♥	4♠	4N	5♣	5♦	5♥	5♠	5N

Figure 10: *Kickback: Standard and Void-Showing Response Structure*

Example 5: ♠ agreed, 4N Keycard-ask, Void-showing response
The Bridge World, January 2012, Challenge the Champs #3

♠ T 8 4 3   ♠ A K Q 7 6
♥ A T 5 4   ♥ K 8 6 3
♦   ♦ K J
♣ K J T 9 4   ♣ A Q

West	North	East	South	
		2♣	pass	
3♣	pass	3♠	pass	
4♠	pass	4N	pass	; ♠ agreed, 4N Keycard-ask
6♦	pass	7♠	pass	; 6♦ 1 Keycard & ♦-void; whoopee!
pass	pass			

Note: Positive suit responses to a 2♣ opening are expected to include at least 2 honors, so East knows that West's 3♣ positive promises **K J x x x**

Exclusionary Asks

Keycard-Ask and Responses

An exclusionary Keycard-ask requires responder to answer the number of Keycards held, but excluding the Keycard from a designated side suit. The response is given in steps, exactly as for the standard (inclusionary) ask.

- The exclusionary Keycard-ask is a **jump beyond the standard ask**
- When the agreed trump suit is other than ♠, a jump bid of **5N is a surrogate exclusionary ask** excluding the standard asking suit

Trump Suit	Inclusionary (All Suits)	Exclusionary ♣	Exclusionary ♦	Exclusionary ♥	Exclusionary ♠
♠	4N	5♣	5♦	5♥	----
♥	4♠	5♣	5♦	----	4N
♦	4♥	5♣	----	4N	4♠
♣	4♦	----	4N	4♥	4♠

Figure 11: *Kickback Exclusionary Keycard-Asks*

The responses are in steps, following on the Exclusionary ask, in the usual 3014 schedule. 1st Step: 0 or 3 Keycards, 2nd Step: 1 or 4 Keycards, etc.

Queen-Ask and King-Ask

Following the response to an exclusionary Keycard-ask, asker may wish to enquire about the trump Queen, or about a specific King(s). Since a side suit has been excluded from consideration, there are now only 2 relevant Kings. The most common system defines the Queen-ask as the next available (non-trump) bid following a 1st Step or 2nd Step response to an exclusionary ask; the King-ask, then, is defined as the second available (non-trump suit) bid. We propose the following modified exclusionary agreements instead:

---
a) The <u>King-Ask</u> is exactly one level higher that the Keycard-Ask, in the same denomination as the exclusionary Keycard-Ask
b) The <u>Negative King-Ask Response</u> is 6 of the agreed trump suit
c) The <u>Positive King-Ask Responses</u> are the two steps immediately above 6 of the trump suit to show, in order, the lower or higher of the two side suit Kings (the exclusion suit King is ignored)
<u>Example</u>
    Trump Suit: ♠, Exclusionary Keycard-Ask: 5♣, King-Ask: 6♣
    6♠ – No Kings, 6N = K♦ (may have K♥), 7♣ = K♥ (denies K♦)

Figure 12: *The Exclusionary King-ask and Response Structure*

> **a)** The <u>**Queen-Ask**</u> **is the next available bid following a 1st Step or 2nd Step response to an exclusionary Keycard-Ask**
> **b)** The <u>**Negative Queen-Ask Response**</u> **is the step immediately after the Queen-ask**
> **c)** The <u>**Positive Queen-Ask Responses**</u> **are the King-Ask responses, showing the Queen of trumps and specific Kings held (if any)**

Figure 13: *The Exclusionary Queen-ask and Response Structure*

Example 6: ♦ agreed, 5♣ Exclusionary Keycard-ask, 6♣ King-ask
The Bridge World, April 2012, Challenge the Champs #4

♠ A K 5		♠ Q T 9 4		
♥ A J 9 6		♥ T		
♦ A Q 8 5 4 2		♦ K J T		
♣		♣ Q 5 4 3 2		

West	North	East	South	
1♦	pass	1♠	pass	
2♥	pass	3♦	pass	;♦ agreed, 3♦ forcing after the reverse
5♣	pass	5♥	pass	;5♣-exclusionary ask -- 1 Keycard (K♦)
6♣	pass	6♦	pass	;King-ask -- no side Kings

Example 7: ♦ agreed, 4N Exclusionary Keycard-ask, Queen-ask
The Bridge World, April 2012, Challenge the Champs #7

♠ K 9 7 5		♠ A 8 6		
♥		♥ J 7		
♦ A K 7 5		♦ Q J T 8		
♣ A K J T 2		♣ Q 7 4 3		

West	North	East	South	
1♣	pass	1N	pass	
2♦	pass	3♦	pass	;♦ agreed, 3♦ forcing after the reverse
4N	pass	5♦	pass	;♥-exclusionary ask -- 1 Keycard
5♥	pass	6♦	pass	;Queen-ask -- yes Q♦, but no side Kings
pass	pass			

Note: 4♥ is the Kickback Keycard-ask for ♦, so 4N is a surrogate exclusionary ask in ♥

Other Considerations

The Surrogate Principle

In preceding sections surrogate responses and surrogate asks have occurred in three contexts:

1. 5**N** response to a King-ask (Figure 4, Figure 7.2, 7.3, 7.4),
2. 5**N** void-showing response to a Keycard ask (Figure 10),
3. 4**N** Exclusionary Keycard-asks (Figure 11).

There is one other context,

4. A 4**N** surrogate cue-bid.

Consider the sequence 1♥ - 2**N**; 4♥ - 4**N**. Since the agreed trump suit is ♥, the Keycard-ask is 4♠, so the <u>non-jump</u> 4**N** is a surrogate ♠ cue-bid. This applies for each non-♠ trump suit.

In each of these contexts,

- ✓ the trump suit is a suit other than ♠
- ✓ the surrogate **5N** response, or the surrogate **4N** exclusionary ask or cue-bid, always represents the Keycard asking suit

The **surrogate no-trump** is not itself a convention. It is a consequence of utilizing a response structure defined in steps rather than by denomination.

Wolsey's King-Ask pre-condition

A usual pre-condition to a King-ask is that the partnership is known to hold all 5 Keycards. The King-ask is usually treated as a try for the grand slam in the agreed trump suit. Then, a responder to a specific-King ask holding all 3 side Kings, or giving a positive response to a secondary specific King-ask, is expected to bid 7 of the agreed trump suit.

Kit Wolsey has argued for relaxing the King-ask precondition to holding 4 of the 5 Keycards. This agreement allows a King-ask when trying to improve a match-point contract from 6 of the agreed suit to 6**N**. To accommodate this flexibility, the positive King-ask responses are defined as 6**N** rather than as 7 of the trump suit (as is more usual). Asker is expected to correct a positive 6**N** response to the sought grand slam if the grand was the target all along.

Coping with Interference

Because Kickback employs suit bids to ask for Keycards, interference over a Keycard-ask occurs more frequently. The DOPI/ROPI agreement seems well suited: (re)double = 0 or 3, pass = 1 or 4, etc.

When a King-ask is doubled, *redouble* shows the specific King of the asking suit, or willingness to play 4**N** redoubled (when the King-ask is 4**N**).

- bid 6 of the agreed trump suit to deny any side Kings
- **pass** to show all 3 side Kings
- **redouble** to show the specific King of the asking-suit
- make a higher **specific King** cue-bid to deny the King of the asking suit

(♠ agreed)	5Nx King-Ask Response				
Side King	6♣	6♦	6♥	6♠	pass
K♣	√	X	X	X	√
K♦	-	√	X	X	√
K♥	-	-	√	X	√

*Figure 14-1: Specific King Responses to the 5**Nx** ask (♠ agreed)*

(♥ agreed)	5♠X King-Ask Response				
Side King	XX	6♣	6♦	6♥	pass
K♠	√	X	X	X	√
K♣	-	√	X	X	√
K♦	-	-	√	X	√

*Figure 14-2: Specific King Responses to the 5♠**x** ask (♥ agreed)*

(♦ agreed)	5♥x King-Ask Response				
Side King	XX	5♠	6♣	6♦	pass
K♥	√	X	X	X	√
K♠	-	√	X	X	√
K♣	-	-	√	X	√

*Figure 14-3: Specific King Responses to the 5♥**x** ask (♦ agreed)*

(♣ agreed)	5♦x King-Ask Response				
Side King	XX	5♥	5♠	6♣	pass
K♦	√	X	X	X	√
K♥	-	√	X	X	√
K♠	-	-	√	X	√

*Figure 14-4: Specific King Responses to the 5♦**x** ask (♣ agreed)*

Additional Examples

Example 8: ♦ agreed, Keycard-ask, Queen-ask			
The Bridge World, July 2007, Challenge the Champs #8			

♠ K J 5 4   ♠ A 9
♥ Q   ♥ A J T 7 3
♦ K T 9 5 4 3   ♦ A J 8 7 6
♣ A K   ♣ 3

West	North	East	South	
1♦	pass	1♥	pass	
1♠	pass	2♦	pass	; 2♦ artificial game force
3♦	pass	4♦	pass	; ♦ agreed
4♥	pass	4♠	pass	; 4♥ Kickback – 3 Keycards
4N	pass	6♦	pass	; Queen-ask – Yes (extra length), no Kings
7♦	pass	pass	pass	

Example 9: ♥ agreed, Keycard-ask, King-ask, Secondary King-ask			
The Bridge World, February 2008, Challenge the Champs #2			

♠ A K 6 3 2   ♠
♥ 8 7 5   ♥ A K Q 4 3 2
♦ Q J 5   ♦ A K 6 2
♣ J 9   ♣ A 7 3

West	North	East	South	
		2♣	pass	
2♠	pass	3♥	pass	
4♥	pass	4♠	pass	; ♥ agreed – 4♠ Keycard-ask
5♣	pass	5♠	pass	; 1 Keycard - 5♠ King-ask
5N	pass	6♣	pass	; K♠ (surrogate) – 6♣ secondary ask
6♥	pass	pass	pass	; No 2nd King

Example 10: ♣ agreed, Keycard-ask, King-ask			
The Bridge World, April 2008, Challenge the Champs #3			

♠ 6 4 3   ♠ A K Q J T 8
♥ A 9 5   ♥ T
♦ A 4 3   ♦ 8 2
♣ K J 6 2   ♣ A Q 4 3

West	North	East	South	
			pass	
1♣	pass	1♠	pass	
1N	pass	2♦	pass	; 2♦ game-forcing check-back
2♠	pass	3♣	pass	; 1 Keycard - 5♠ King-ask
4♣	pass	4♦	pass	; ♣ agreed – 4♦ Keycard-ask
4♥	pass	5♦	pass	; 3 Keycards – King-ask (trying for 6N)
6♣	pass	7♣	pass	; No Kings
pass	pass			

Example 11	♣ agreed, Keycard-ask, void-showing response		
	The Bridge World, August 2008, Challenge the Champs #9		

♠ A T 9
♥ 4
♦ A 8 6 3
♣ A K 8 4 2

♠ 8 6 4
♥ A K 7 3 2
♦
♣ J 9 7 5 3

West	North	East	South	
	pass	pass	pass	
1♣	pass	1♥	pass	
2♣	pass	4♣	pass	
4♦	pass	5N	pass	; Keycard-ask – 1 & ♦-void (surrogate)
6♣	pass	pass	pass	

Example 12	♦ agreed, Keycard-ask, void-showing response		
	The Bridge World, November 2008, Challenge the Champs #8		

♠ J T 8 3
♥ A K 7 4
♦ Q 2
♣ K J 9

♠
♥ Q J 6
♦ A K J T 9 4 3
♣ Q 6 4

West	North	East	South	
1♣	pass	1♦	pass	
1♥	pass	2♦	pass	; 2♦ artificial game force
2N	pass	3♦	pass	
4♥	pass	5♥	pass	; Keycard-ask – 2 Keycards & ♠-void
6♦	pass	pass	pass	

Note: East has bid both ♣ and ♥ naturally, therefore the only "*useful void*" suit is ♠

Example 13	♠ agreed, Keycard-ask, void-showing response		
	The Bridge World, December 2008, Challenge the Champs #2		

♠ T 8 4 3
♥ A T 5 4
♦
♣ K J T 9 4

♠ A K Q 7 6
♥ K 8 6 3
♦ K J
♣ A Q

West	North	East	South	
		2♣	pass	
3♣	pass	3♠	pass	
4♠	pass	4N	pass	; ♠ agreed – Keycard-ask
6♦	pass	7♠	pass	; 1 Keycard & ♦-void
pass	pass			

Note: The positive 3♣ response promises 2 honors in a suit of 5+ cards

Example 14: ♠ agreed, Exclusionary Keycard-ask
The Bridge World, October 2008, Challenge the Champs #2

♠ A Q 9 7		♠ K J T 4	
♥ A 9 6 5		♥ J T	
♦ J		♦ A K Q T 9 8 6	
♣ K 8 4 2		♣	

West	North	East	South	
		1♦	pass	
1♥	pass	1♠	pass	
2♦	pass	3♦	pass	; 2♦ artificial game force
3♠	pass	5♣	pass	; ♠ agreed – 5♣ exclusionary Keycard-ask
5N	pass	7♠	pass	; 2 Keycards and Q♠
pass	pass			

Example 15: ♦ agreed, Exclusionary Keycard-ask, Queen-ask
The Bridge World, May 2010, Challenge the Champs #7

♠		♠ J 7 5 4	
♥ K 6		♥ A T 3	
♦ A K 5 4		♦ Q T 9 7 2	
♣ A K Q J T 8 2		♣ 5	

West	North	East	South	
			1♠	
double	pass	2♦	pass	
4♠	pass	5♣	pass	; 4♠ exclusionary Keycard-ask – 1 Keycard
5♥	pass	6♦	pass	; Queen-ask – Yes, Q♦ but no side Kings
7♦	pass	pass	pass	

Example 16: ♦ agreed, Exclusionary Keycard-ask
The Bridge World, August 2010, Challenge the Champs #9

♠ 4		♠ A Q T 8 6	
♥ Q T 7 3		♥	
♦ A J 2		♦ K 5	
♣ Q T 8 6 4		♣ K 9 7 5 3 2	

West	North	East	South	
	pass	1♣	pass	
1♥	pass	1♠	pass	
2♣	pass	2♦	pass	; 2♣ artificial xyz game try - 2♦ relay
3♣	pass	4♥	pass	; 3♣ game try – 4♥ exclusionary Keycard-ask
4N	pass	5♣	pass	; 1 Keycard - game sign-off
pass	pass			

Table of Figures

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