



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



While waiting for 10am – Week 12

**{W} holds this weak hand.**

**What is his opening lead after the auction shown?**

♠ 43	{S}	{W}	{N}	{E}
♥ 95	1NT!	P	#3NT	P
♦ 985	P	P		
♣ 987643				

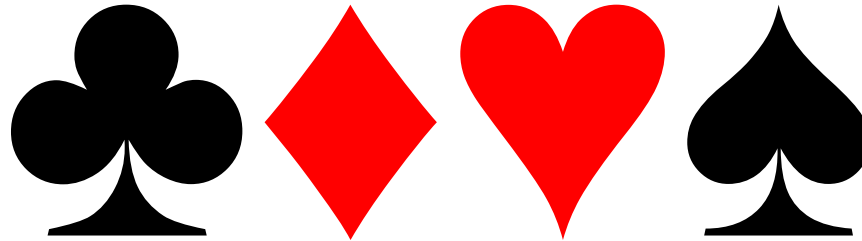
*"!" is alert/announce. # is "stop".*



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



Week 12 Welcome



Steve Bailey



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



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♦ 985	P	P		

♣ 987643

What would the bookish lead be in each suit?

S: 4S Top of doubleton.

May be interpreted as 4<sup>th</sup> highest promising an honour, oops.

H: 9H Top of doubleton.

High spot, saying no honours, do not return this suit.

D: 8D Near top of rubbish.

High spot, saying no honours, do not return this suit.

C: 8C Near top of rubbish.

High spot, saying no honours, do not return this suit.



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4S	9H	8D	8C		

Are there any other candidates for an opening lead?



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♦ 985		P	P		
♣ 987643					
4S	9H	8D	8C		

Are there any other candidates for an opening lead?

Not really. Not 6C since the qualification is "4<sup>th</sup> highest of longest and strongest (true here) to an honour (not true here)".

Which of the 4 candidates are we going with?



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♦ 985		P	P		
♣ 987643					
4S	9H	8D	8C		

Which of the 4 candidates are we going with?

Look at the auction:

{S} is showing 12..14Pts and a balanced hand.

{N} is showing 13..18Pts and a balanced hand, enough for game regardless, but out of range of a NT slam.

That is 25..32 JPts, {W} has 0Pts, so {E} has approximately 8..15 Pts.

{E} is quite strong and should get the lead several times.

{W} will never get the lead after the initial opening lead.



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♥ 95	1NT!	P	#3NT	P
♦ 985	P	P		
♣ 987643				
4S	9H	8D	8C	

Which of the 4 candidates are we going with?

8C is possible, but for it to work, requires {E} to have a strong L4C (C:KQTx) and each of {NS} L2-C. {E} needs xC to crossover to {W}'s established clubs after 2 or 3 C tricks. Unlikely.

When {NS} just bid to 3NT like this, they generally do not have good majors as they may have been bid if they did. Therefore a major lead for the defenders is probably good.

We noted that 4S would be confusing. So lead 9H.



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While waiting for 10am – Week 12

**{W} holds this weak hand.**

**What is his opening lead after the auction shown?**

♥ T432

♠ 43

♠ AT65

♥ 95

♥ AQJ8

♦ 985

♦ T762

♣ 987643

♣ A

♥ K76

On most opening leads {E} wins AS AH AC & JH (QH losing to KH) = 4 tricks.

When {W} leads 9H, assuming that {N} plays low, {E} ducks and to win the trick {S} has to play KH now. This promotes QH for a 5<sup>th</sup> trick.





# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Slams

There are four categories of slams:

Small suited slam  
6C 6D 6H 6S

Small No Trump slam  
6NT

Grand suited slam  
7C 7D 7H 7S

Grand No Trump slam  
7NT

We looked at No Trump slams last time.

Today we will take a first look at bidding suited Small Slams using some form of Blackwood. *I assume that you all know the basic 4 Aces Blackwood.*

Extra tools such a Grand Slam tries, Trial bids, Cue bids and Splinters are left for later weeks.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Slams

The key to a suited slam is control of the suits.

For every Ace you are missing, expect to lose (at least) one trick.

You generally need fewer high card points in a suited slam than in a NT slam, since often small trumps (of no *hcp* value) will win tricks. 30+*hcp* is quoted as enough to make a small suited slam and occasionally, with shapely hands, far fewer. Contrast this with the 33*hcp* needed in NT.

There is one major conventional bid that is used in most suit slam bidding, Blackwood, which is an Ace asking convention.

Basic Blackwood:

4NT

Partner, how many aces do you have?

5C/5D/5H/5S

I have 0(4)/1/2/3

eg 5S/6S

Either bail out (eg 5S) or bid slam (eg 6S)

*You also have to work out where the cards are and **play** them in the right way.*



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Blackwood and Variants

There are several Blackwood variants: *(my abbreviations)*

Blackwood *(the original, or basic Blackwood ~ "Bw")*

Keycard Blackwood *(as simple as "Bw" but better ~ "KBw")*

Roman Keycard Blackwood *(Complicated ~ "RKBw")*

(Basic) **Blackwood:**

Having agreed a suit as trumps, use "Bw" bid to enquire how many Aces partner has.

Determine your response to **every** reply **before** you bid Blackwood.

**Keycard Blackwood:**

As basic Blackwood but asking of 4 Aces and the King of Trumps.

**Roman Keycard Blackwood:**

Involved and with its own variants (0314 and 1430);

Asks about 4 Aces and the King and Queen of Trumps.

U3AIB is recommending Keycard Blackwood.

*Be aware that many players refer to RKBw as "Keycard Blackwood".*



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Blackwood and Variants

All the Blackwoods are invoked with a **4NT** bid. Which variant you are playing is determined by agreement with partner before the deal starts and is recorded on your *system card*.

(If you haven't discussed it with your partner, assume basic Blackwood.)

Being above 3NT, Blackwood does not need alerting unless used on the first round of bidding.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Blackwood and Variants

Do not use (any variety of) Blackwood if:

- **You have a void.**  
If Partner is missing an Ace **is it** the useful one where you have a weak suit or the useless one opposite a void which would allow you to ruff a trick good?
- **You (as a pair) have a weak suit with 2 easy losers.**  
You need first or second round control of every suit. **A K L1.**
- **You do not have enough Joint Points to make a slam viable.**  
Usually **30+** JPts.
- **Some answer to the question could take you too high?**  
**Before** using any Blackwood, determine your response to **every** reply.  
Sometimes you will discover that the reply takes your contract higher than you want, in which case do not use it.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Keycard Blackwood

U3AIB is recommending Keycard Blackwood.

Prior to initiating Keycard Blackwood, you must have decided that a slam is a possibility and know what suit will be trumps.

If both partners have bid a suit, then trumps is explicitly agreed.

If that has not happened, then the use of the 4NT bid means that the 4NT bidder is agreeing the pair's most recently bid suit as trumps.

Thus                    1S (P) #3S (P) / #4NT  
explicitly agrees Spades as trumps.

And                    1S (P) #4C (P) / 4NT  
where 4C is a **splinter** bid "**agreeing Spades**, Game points and a shortage in Clubs". *(Ignore this for several weeks. Next year?)*

But                    1S (P) 2H (P) / #4NT  
**implicitly** agrees Hearts as trumps.

However            1NT! (P) #4NT                    is a Quantitative **NT** bid,  
asking "Pass(4NT) or 6NT"?



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Keycard Blackwood

The five keycards are AS AH AD AC and KTrumps.

As responder to 4NT, count your keycards.

If you hold:       S:KJT6   H:AQ43   D:QJ4   C:A7

When Spades are trumps, you have KS, AH, AC, so you answer "3 keycards".

But if Hearts are trumps, you only have AH, AC, and so answer "2 keycards".

Some responses have two possible meanings. Which one is meant should be obvious from the context of the auction. If in doubt assume the smaller quantity and let responder correct if appropriate.

Respond:

5C	0 or 4 keycards
5D	1 (or 5 ~ very rare) keycards
5H	2 keycards
5S	3 keycards



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Keycard Blackwood

When you use Keycard Blackwood, you have decided what you will rebid **before** responder responds.

If, jointly, missing 2+ keycards, bail out.

If, jointly, missing 1 keycard, bid a small slam in the agreed trump suit.

If, jointly, missing NO keycards, investigate a grand slam.

*If that is not your plan, then do not use Blackwood in the first place.*





# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Example 1

{W} (Dealer)

♠ A765

♥ AQ832

♦ 4

♣ K53

{E}

♠ KQ842

♥ K54

♦ A765

♣ 2

Initial hand evaluation

{W} 13hcp, 14Pts, 5431

{E} 12hcp, 13Pts, 5431

{S}

.

P

{W}

1H

#3S

{N}

P

P

{E}

1S

#4NT

Description

12..19Pts, L4+H

6+Pts, L3-H, L4+S

Re-evaluate {W} for S fit.

14Pts + 3Pts(L1D,135) = 17Pts.

Jointly 17Pts + 6+Pts = 23+ JPts.

Re-evaluate {E} for S fit.

13Pts + 2Pts(L1C,123) = 15Pts.

Jointly 15Pts + 16+Pts = 31 JPts.

Keycard Blackwood. Holds KS AD. Rebids 0,1>5S, 2>6S, 3>?7S.

P

5H

P

#6S

2 keycards (AS AH)

{E} has 2 keycards (KS AD). Bid slam.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Example 2

{W} (Dealer)

♠ AQT654

♥ K4

♦ AKQ2

♣ 2

{E}

♠ K982

♥ A962

♦ 84

♣ A73

Initial hand evaluation

{W} 18hcp, 20½Pts, 6421

{E} 11hcp, 10Pts, 4432

{S}

.

{W}

1S

{N}

P

{E}

#3S

Description

12..19Pts, L4+S

Re-evaluate {E} for S fit.

10Pts + 1Pt(L2D,135) = 11Pts

Re-evaluate {W} for S fit. 20½Pts + 1Pt(L2H) + 2Pts(L1C,123) = 23½Pts

Jointly 23½Pts + 10..12Pts =

33½..35½ JPts. Slam possible.

Keycard Blackwood. Holds AS AD. Rebids 0,1>5S, 2>6S, 3>?7S.

P

#7S

P

5S

3 keycards (KS AH AC) (11hcp)

All 5 keycards. 34½ JPts.

Bid Grand Slam.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Example 2

{W} (Dealer)

♠ AQT654

♥ K4

♦ AKQ2

♣ 2

{E}

♠ K982

♥ A962

♦ 84

♣ A73

Initial hand evaluation

{W} 18hcp, 20½Pts, 6421

{E} 11hcp, 10Pts, 4432

Having contracted to 7S by {W}, what is the plan?

Aim ~ 13 tricks

Top Tricks ~ S:AKQ H:AK D:AKQ C:A = 9 TT.

eXtra Tricks ~ 3\*L6S assuming a 2:2 or 3:1 split. *Replan if 4:0.* [3]  
1\*D ruff in {E} [1]

Plan ~

Win trick 1. (Say AC)	(1)
Draw trumps (in 3- rounds).	(2,3,4)
Win D:AKQ.	(5,6,7)
Ruff 2D with 9S in {E}.	(8)
Win H:AK	(9,10)
Win S:T65	(11,12,13)



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 When not to use Blackwood

Do not initiate Blackwood if you have a void. The problem there is that if partner has one of two missing keycards, might it be the useful one that works with your KQJxx or the mostly useless one in the void suit?

Do not use Blackwood if an answer can force you to bid a small slam without providing enough keycards. This typically occurs with minor suit slams.

Eg 1C (P) #3C (P)  
#4NT

(P) 5D

(P)

6C

Having 2 keycards and wanting 2,3,or 4 more

Partner has 1 keycard, insufficient, so bail out in C.

"Oh no", the bail out is too high.

**Determine how each response from 0,1,2,3,4,5 keycards will work.**

Do not use Blackwood unless you have control (as a pair) of all suits. Control is A or K or L1.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Gerber

Gerber is similar to Blackwood but uses 4C as the asking bid. Do **NOT** use this, we want the 4C bid for other purposes.

*The only scenario where Gerber may be used is whilst investigating NT slams, but not in auctions where Clubs have been bid naturally.*



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Spring Tournament

There is only one session in April due to Easter. On Friday April 11, I propose having our (grandiose title) **Spring Tournament**.

There will be no presentation, instead boards will be shuffled and dealt and a regular Duplicate Pairs morning will be played. No discussion, only one traveller, pairs will move.

Please find a partner for your pair (and agree your system). Then find another pair to form a starting table. Then let me know the foursome. I have had one foursome enter so far.

Those fours that notify me in advance will play. If anyone else turns up that day, they can watch but won't play. If you have said you will play, then you should turn up.

I will endeavour to do the scoring before the end of the session and award a couple of trophies to the winning pair.

Feel free to use the group email address to find your U3AIB partner.

If you cannot find a partner, I'll ask elsewhere for another person.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Play

### Play

**Play as if "Duplicate Pairs".**

{NS} have the pair number of their table, {N} has his back to the stage.  
{EW} have the pair number of their table plus 8.

Play boards in sequence. Have an incoming pile and an outgoing pile.  
Pass outgoing to next lower numbered table – Table 1 to highest table.

Some boards have instructions on card. **The appropriate people should read each card at the time it says and follow its instructions.**

**If you play a board twice, record the second play on the traveller using your pair numbers PLUS TEN (eg 1 v 9 becomes 11 v 19)**

*If you wish to fill in a personal results card, they are available here.  
They are commonly used at duplicate clubs.*

*Don't forget to describe partner's bids and plays to the table.*

**Any questions?**

**Tea / coffee & biscuit. (25p)**

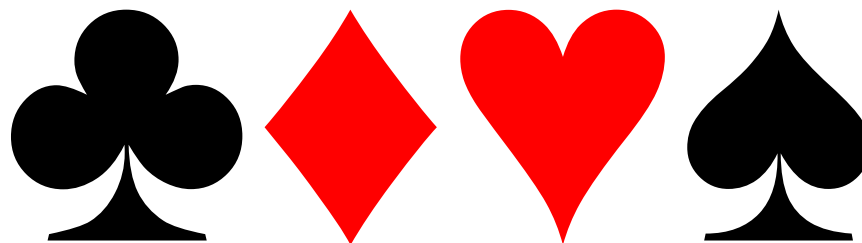
**PLAY**



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



Week 12



The end

Week 12 set hand  
references follow.





# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Set hands

### Set hand sources

BSA

Bernard Magee "Big Seminar"

AR:BL~S

Andrew Robson: Bridge Lessons ~ Slam



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Set hands

### Set hand abbreviations

Bd	Board	Number of the board. Rarely may include a colour! Eg 5red or 5blue.
Dlr	Dealer	(NESW).
Vul	Vulnerability	(None NS EW All).
Rotn	Rotation	Defined by one card, usually A♠. Mostly different to source publication.
Dcl	Declarer	(NESW)
OL	Opening Lead	
Trk	Tricks	(0..13)
NS# EW#		Score for NS or EW
NS% EW%		Percentage of NS and EW
Ref	Reference result	(Sometimes there may be more than one)

Blue results as played.

Red results are reference results.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Set hands

**BdDir** Vul **Source** **Rotn**  
 7 S All BSA002@01:15+Deal A♠=S

<b>NSEW</b>	<b>Contract</b>	<b>Dcl</b>	<b>OL</b>	<b>Trk</b>	<b>NS#</b>	<b>EW#</b>	<b>NS%</b>	<b>EW%</b>
1 9	5H+1	S	KC	12	680	-	0%	100%
2 10	6H+1	S	7D	13	1460	-	100%	0%
3 11	6H=	S	KC	12	1430	-	50%	50%
4 12	6H=	S	KC	12	1430	-	50%	50%
<b>Ref</b>	<b>6H=</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>KC</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1430</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>

{N} 4S.....  
 {W} S:QJ7 H:97 D:74 C:KQT532 {E} S:T986 H:8 D:JT952 C:A98  
 {S} AS.....

This was the first set hand played, with one copy at each table simultaneously.

After being played we discussed the results.

At table 2, the wrong opening lead gave a trick away for a {NS} top.

At table 1, a flustered declarer failed to bid the slam. Maybe wrong maths or "no time to do maths" or nervous?



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Set hands

With only 5 official minutes left, 3 tables opted to overrun slightly and play one more board each. One table packed up.

<b>BdDir</b>	<b>Vul</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Rotn</b>
8 W	None	AR:BL~S#7	A♠=W

<b>NSEW</b>	<b>Contract</b>	<b>Dcl</b>	<b>OL</b>	<b>Trk</b>	<b>NS#</b>	<b>EW#</b>	<b>NS%</b>	<b>EW%</b>
3 11	6S-2	W	JH	10	100	-	100%	0%
Ref	5S=	W	JH	11	-	450	0%	100%



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Set hands

With only 5 official minutes left, 3 tables opted to overrun slightly and play one more board each. One table packed up.

<b>BdDir</b>	<b>Vul</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Rotn</b>
10 E	All	AR:BL~S#23	A♠=E

<b>NSEW</b>	<b>Contract</b>	<b>Dcl</b>	<b>OL</b>	<b>Trk</b>	<b>NS#</b>	<b>EW#</b>	<b>NS%</b>	<b>EW%</b>
1 9	2S+4	E	3C	12 -	230		100%	0%
Ref	6S=	E	JH	12 -	1430		0%	100%

Pair 9 failed to bid a slam. How did they fail to bid game? Curious.



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



## Week 12 Set hands

With only 5 official minutes left, 3 tables opted to overrun slightly and play one more board each. One table packed up.

<b>BdDir</b>	<b>Vul</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Rotn</b>
11 S	None	AR:BL~S#7var	A♠=W

Variation: S↔H; D↔C; Then {E}↔{W}. So original AS now AH.  
Compare with board 8.

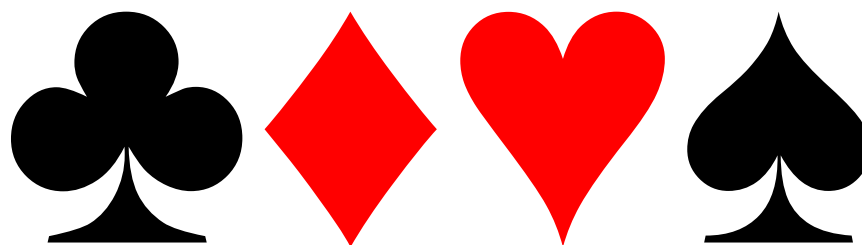
<b>NSEW</b>	<b>Contract</b>	<b>Dcl</b>	<b>OL</b>	<b>Trk</b>	<b>NS#</b>	<b>EW#</b>	<b>NS%</b>	<b>EW%</b>
4 12	5H-1	S	JD	10 -	50	50%	50%	
Ref	5H-1	S	JD	10 -	50	50%	50%	



# U3A Intermediate Bridge 2024-25



Week 12



The very end