***This Week in Bridge***

**(176) Responding to 4NT Keycard with a Void**

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**General**

When partner bids 4NT as Keycard in our established fit, a void in a side suit can be useful. We may still be able to make a slam if we are missing two Aces/Keycards if the void is in a suit of one of those missing side Aces. We need a way to tell partner about this void if we haven’t already done so earlier in the auction.

**Traditional Responses**

*Level: 4*

With an outside void, you can use 5NT and 6♣, the next two cheapest unused bids in response to a Keycard ask, to describe a hand with a void.

4NT \_\_?

* 5NT Even # of Keycards and a *useful* void
* 6♣ Odd # of Keycards and a *useful* void

Partner can now either stop in a small slam OR bid a grand slam if they can determine if the void makes this a good contract.

**“Useful” Void**

*Level: 4*

It is important to use our judgement when considering showing a void to partner. We should only show a void if we think it is going to be useful to partner. If partner has shown length in the suit in which we are void or if partner has cuebid the Ace in our void suit, then the void is not likely to be useful and we should not show it over 4NT. In this case, we can just answer Keycards normally at the 5-level.

**Showing Void at 6-level (Optional Treatment)**

*Level: 4*

Some partnerships choose to bid at the 6-level in a new suit (not just 6♣) to show an odd number of Keycards and a void in the bid suit. This is possible as long as the void suit is lower-ranking than the trump suit. If the void is above the trump suit, we jump to 6 of our trump suit.

*Examples*

1♠ 3♠

4NT 6♦ ♦ void, odd # of Keycards

1♥♥ 3♥

4NT 6♥ ♠ void (♠ above the trump suit), odd # of Keycards

This bidding allows partner to know the void for certain and make a better decision about a grand slam when we have an odd number of Keycards.

**Keycard “Recycling” (Optional Treatment)**

*Level: 6*

Using the traditional approach to showing voids over 4NT Keycard ask (as previously discussed), one potential issue that can make it difficult for partner to bid a grand slam is knowledge of the trump Queen. Often in these void auctions, the presence of the trump Queen is not known. An alternative method can be used to solve this problem.

Playing this “Recycling” approach of void responses to 4NT Keycard, we can show a void and our “regular” Keycard answer by starting the same 1430 steps (or 3014) over again at 5NT and higher.

4NT \_\_?

* 5NT 1 or 4 Keycards with a useful void
* 6♣ 3 or 0 Keycards with a useful void
* 6♦ 2 Keycards without the trump Queen with a useful void
* 6♥ 2 Keycards with the trump Queen with a useful void

Over the 5NT or 6♣ response (ones that have not discussed the queen yet), the asker can make the next cheapest available non-trump suit bid to say “bid the grand if you have the trump Queen.”

*Example*

1♠ 3♠

4NT 6♥ 2 Keycards, no ♠Q, and a useful void

**Conclusion**

In many “slower” auctions, voids can be shown to partner through control showing cuebids, but if partner chooses to explore slam by bidding 4NT and we have a useful void that we have not yet shown then we can show this void to partner by using the bids beyond our traditional Keycard answers (5NT+). This commits our side to slam and may allow us to bid a grand slam even if we are missing an Ace.