

## INTERMEDIATE LESSON 13: STUDENT NOTES

### Splinters

A **double jump** in a new suit is always a splinter. A splinter bid can be used by either player in the partnership..

They are used to show

- a fit for partner's suit
- a singleton or void in the bid suit
- at least game values with interest in slam

Example 1: by Responder	
North	South
1♥	4♣
4♣ = 4+ Hearts and a singleton or void in Clubs	

Example 2: by Responder	
North	South
1♦	3♥
3♥ = 4+ Diamonds and a singleton or void in Hearts	

Example 3: by Opener	
North	South
1♥	1♠
4♦	
4♦ = Spade fit with a singleton or void in Diamonds	

Example 4: by Opener	
North	South
1♦	1♥
3♠	
3♠ = 4+ Hearts and a singleton or void in Spades	

Example 5: after an overcall			
West	North	East	South
(1♦)	1♠	Pass	4♦
4♦ = 3+ hearts with a singleton or void in Diamonds			

However, if the bid of a suit shows strength (ie natural and/or forcing bid), then a jump in that suit is a splinter.

Example 6: by Opener	
North	South
1♥	2♦
3♠	
3♠ = 4+ Diamonds with a singleton or void in Spades NB: 2♠ is a natural, strong bid and forcing (reverse)	

Example 7: by Opener	
North	South
1♥	1♠
2♥	4♣
4♣ = 3+ Hearts with a singleton or void in Clubs NB: 3♣ is natural and forcing to game	

Once partner has made a splinter, you can re-evaluate your hand, knowing where there is a shortage. Holding three or four small cards opposite a singleton means you will be able to ruff them, and your high cards will be fitting with partner. Holding split honours such as KJ53 may mean some wasted values.

Following a splinter, you can sign off in game with a minimum hand or you can use Roman Keycard Blackwood to search for slam. Cue bidding is another method to find out where partner's controls are held, but will not be covered in this lesson.

You will have seen that a double jump is always a splinter. In a couple of situations above, a single jump is also a splinter but only in those situations shown.

## Roman Key Card Blackwood (RKCB)

This asks for the number of keycards. All the aces plus the **king of trumps** are key cards. In other words there are a total of five key cards. The **queen of trumps** can also be shown if you have two key cards. If trumps have yet to be ascertained, RKC is asking in the last bid suit.

Example 1	
North	South
1♥	4♣
4NT	

4♣ is a splinter agreeing hearts, therefore 4NT is keycarding in Hearts

Example 2	
North	South
1♥	1♠
3♦	4NT

Trumps have not been agreed so 4NT is keycarding in Diamonds

### Responses:

5♣ = 1 or 4 key cards

5♦ = 0 or 3 key cards

5♥ = 2 key cards without the Q of trumps

5♠ = 2 key cards with the Q of trumps

After 5♣ or 5♦, the next suit up (as long as it isn't the trump suit) asks for the Q trumps. The answers are:

First step = denies the Q trumps

2nd step = Q trumps and no outside kings

3rd step = Q trumps and 1 outside king ....etc

The reason 5♣ shows 1 or 4 and 5♦ 0 or 3 key cards is that it makes asking for the trump queen possible after the 5♣ response and, where the trump suit is a major, the partnership can stop in 5 of the major if the trump queen is not held. The question about the trump queen is more likely to arise if the response shows 1 rather than 0 key cards. This precaution is not needed at the 6 level in asking for side suit kings.

After any response to 4NT, 5NT asks for outside kings and is looking for a grand slam. The assumption of 5NT is that the partnership holds all 5 key cards and the trump queen

Responses:

6♣ = 0

6♦ = 1

6♥ = 2

6♠ = 3

Partner opens 1♠, what is your bid?

1)	2)	3)	4)	5)
♠ K754	♠ 9854	♠ Q854	♠ A975	♠ KQ543
♥ K76	♥ A5	♥ QJ85	♥ A	♥ K976
♦ AQJ85	♦ KQJ108	♦ A54	♦ K63	♦ 7
♣ 2	♣ K3	♣ KQ	♣ AQJ97	♣ Q98

Example bidding sequences

Example 1			
North	Notes	South	Notes
1♥		1♠	
4♣	Splinter agreeing spades (slam interest)	4NT	RKCB
5♥	2 key cards, no Q♠	5NT	Asks for Kings, will have Q♠ or extra length
6♥	2 outside kings	7♠	Can count 13 tricks including club ruffs

Example 2			
North	Notes	South	Notes
1♠		4NT	RKCB
5♦	0 or 3 key cards	5♠	Pass if you have no key cards
6♠	I have 3 key cards		

Example 3			
North	Notes	South	Notes
1♦		1♥	
4NT	RKCB in Hearts	5♣	1 or 4 key cards
5♦	Do you have the Q♥	5♥	No
Pass	We are high enough		

Example 4			
North	Notes	South	Notes
1♠		4♦	Splinter agreeing spades (slam interest)
4♠	Minimum hand	4NT	RKCB
5♣	1 or 4 key cards	5♦	Do you have the Q♠
5NT	Yes plus 1 outside king	6♠	

Example 5			
North	Notes	South	Notes
1♥		4♦	Splinter agreeing hearts (slam interest)
4♥	Minimum hand	Pass	High enough

**Answers to the quiz on page 2**

- |  |       |       |   |                          |
|--|-------|-------|---|--------------------------|
| 1) 4♣<br><i>Splinter</i><br><i>NOT ace ask !</i> | 2) 2♦ | 3) 4♠ | 4) 4NT<br><i>RKCB - Only wanting to</i><br><i>know about keycards</i> | 5) 4♦<br><i>Splinter</i> |
|--|-------|-------|---|--------------------------|