

The collection of non trump conventions

1. Gerber, Blackwood, many cue-bids, half-bided suits & Ukra-check

One time I have read a good and detailed description of the Gerber convention:

- “1. 4c is a natural bid if clubs are already bid.*
- 2. 4c is Gerber if there is a fit (1s-3s-4c). That is why Gerber rejects a cue-bid mechanism.*
- 3. Jump in 4c is Gerber if the bid of 3c would be forcing (1s-2h-4c). That is why Gerber rejects splinters.*
- 4. 4c is Gerber in cases 1nt-4c or 2nt-4c.*
- 5. 4c is natural bid if that is not a jump and a fit isn't found yet (1s-2h-3s-4c). This situation often occurs when the opponents have done their bidding and pushed the bidding to the third level.”*

(Ron Klinger, translated two times, sorry faults)

But Gerber is described here as a convention using instead of Blackwood. It won't go! We really don't need points 2 & 3, but the rest..!

A time ago famous Polish Bridge players K. Martens & T. Pszybora wrote: “Any raising of no-trump is natural”. It means that 4nt after any natural nt is an invite. It allows Gerber to co-exist with Blackwood, cue-bids and splinters.

1nt – 4nt

3nt – 4nt (if 3nt – 25+)

1c/d – 2nt (if 2nt - 13-15)

4nt

1c/d – 3nt

4nt

2c – 2nt (balanced control hand: Qxxx QJx Qx Qxxx or better)

4nt

2c – 2d

3nt – 4nt

2d – 2h

2nt – 4nt (if 2nt – 22-24).

These are all sure invites.

1d – 1h

1s – 3nt (opener has 16-17 semi-balanced with diamonds 5+)

4nt

1d – 2c

2h/s – 3nt (the same)

4nt

1s – 2d

2nt – 3h (opener does not have 4 hearts; 3h shows diamonds 5+)

3nt – 4nt

In the last three examples 4nt are invites with addition to hcp or fit with figure in half-bid (or half-showed) suit. Here in diamonds.

Well. Let's go deeper. This article is about nt.

1nt – 2c

2h – 4nt INVIT, first of all, if opener has 4 in HALF-BID spades (it's enough 31 hcp for 6s, but for 6nt needs 33). The split (layout) of responder's hand is 4-3-3-3, 15-16 hcp. Do you see another way to show that?

1nt – 2d/h

2h/s – 4nt invite, if opener has fit or figure edition in major of responder (half-bid!) or maximum hcp.

1nt – 2c

2s – 4nt is a normal invite, 3-4-3-3. Hearts of responder can not be named half-bid suit because it doesn't have perspective.

The split is important in cases:

2nt – 3c

3h – 4nt

2nt – 3d/h

3h/s – 4nt, because the range of opener is very small: 20-21 hcp.

To accept an invite 4nt we don't have to jump in 6nt. Answer (Take (get) it as) RKCB.

If responder has 14+ hcp and 4 cards in any minor he can seek a fit there. Let's call this Ukrainian check-back or UKRA-CHECK.

The task of the check-back 3c

1c/d/h – 1h/s
2nt – 3c (!)

is either seeking 3-card-fit in shown major or fit 4-4 in clubs for slam in clubs (the bid 3d works the same with diamonds).

Ukra-check means half-bid major and called minor. It looks as the following one:

1nt – 2c/d/h
2d/h/s – 3c/d (!)

Responses are typical.

After transfer:

- 3d – fit in clubs only, minimum.
- 3 in other major – minor fit only, maximum if there was 3c, and undetermined power (?hcp?) if it was 3d.
- 3 in shown major – BOTH fits*. ?hcp? Invite to cue-bidding.
- 3nt – misfits, ?hcp?. After that 4c - Gerber (nothing to do), 4d/(s)/h - cue-bids, 4nt
- invite in edition to shown major or hcp. Choose please!
- 4c/d/(h) – cue-bids, fit in MAJOR ONLY, ?hcp?.

* - It is better to play on 4-4 with two fits - 4-4 and 5-3 (or 5-4) because there is possibility to throw something with forts of other fit.

After Stayman:

- 3d – fit in clubs, minimum.
- 3h – MINOR fit, maximum if it was 3c, & ?hcp? if it was 3d.
- 3s – 4 spades without minor fit, answerer can have 4-1-4-4, 4-4-1-4 or 4-4-4-1.
- 3nt – misfits, ? hcp?.

Sometimes Ukra-check 3c is used as forcing only, without longer in clubs. That is why it must be alerted. A bid 3d is always natural.

CONCLUSION: A bid 4c is Gerber (always 04-1-2-3)

1. If it was made just after natural nt bid,
2. After 1nt opening if a fit was not fined.

Bluntly speaking: NO FIT – NO BLACKWOOD!

2. “Non forcing” Stayman (near Garbage), 5-5, 5-4, 4-4, simply 4 & simply 5

Don't worry if responder has 5-4, 4-5 or 5-5 in majors. Here are some ideas.

1nt – 2c...

It is a famous “non forcing” Stayman which sometimes can be used with 0-7 hcp & splits such as;

4-4-5-0, 3-4-5-1, 4-3-5-1, 3-3-5-2, 4-4-4-1 & 3-4-4-2 (worse with 4-3-4-2),
4-5-x-x, 5-5-x-x, 4-4-x-x,
5-4-x-x, 6-4-x-x.

1nt – 2c

2d – ?

- pass – first six splits
- 2h – second 3 splits (play or correct)
- 2s – last 2 splits (to play).

It's a priority of sign-off-hands ([priority of weak responder's hands](#)).

It's impossible to show an invitational hand with 5 cards in spades and 4 cards in hearts:

(1nt – 2c – 2d – 2nt only). With more power Smolen convention is in use.

If responder has a game power and 5-5 in majors he uses Leszek Wesoiewski (Poland) transfer:

1nt – 2d (!)

2h – 2s... **FORCING-ROUND** because 0-7 hcp is ([should be](#)) shown by Stayman (in this moment answerer showed invite hand with 5 hearts and 4 spades)

...2nt – 3s (!)...

After that there is a possibility to play any game including 3nt or slam.

[Our addition: Wesoiewski transfer is in use when hearts are stronger than spades.](#)

[Vice versa:](#)

[1nt – 2h](#)

[2s – 3h...](#)

[Such sequence shows a game-plus power and 5-5 in majors because 5-4 & 6-4 shows by Smolen.](#)

This sequence shows stronger spades than hearts.

Our transfers (can be named TERNO-TRANSFERS, Ternopil is a town where author lived near 40 years) work if answerer has an INVITE power & 5-5 in majors:

1nt – 2s (if hearts are stronger & if answer 2s is invite of cause)
2nt/3c – 3h (!) play or correct.

1nt – 2nt (if spades are stronger)
3d – 3h (!) play or correct.

Remember about minors too.

Some pairs use convention 5431: 1nt – 3suit. It's very comfortable. Here are 5 & 4 & shortness & slam intentions. Eldorado!

But is it really so good?

1. Half of splits as 5431 contain 5 cards in major.
2. Jump in 3major (half of the rest) shows 5-4 in minors but does not show where 5 is. However t's very important if we have slam intentions.
3. What are our chances to find exception? ...especially if our opening 1nt is (was) strong? They are too poor. So why should we show our shortness to the opponents?

Here is our alternative convention which can be named "5minor-4":
1nt – ?

3c – 5+d 4=major
3d – 5+c 4=major
3h – 5+c 4=d
3s – 5+d 4=c.

Drawback (we don't seek an exception) isn't so real.

Advantages:

1. ANY 5-4 can be shown.
2. 56% increase of probability, that is (so) frequency of usage.

Let's return to Terno-transfers.

5-5 in minors with slam intentions would be shown as followed:

1nt – 2s
... – 3d, after this - cue-bids.

To show x-x-4-4 uses a sequence:

1nt – 2s

... – 3s.

To show 3-3-4-3:

1nt – 2nt

3d – 3s.

There are two sequences to show 3-3-3-4:

1nt – 4c - Gerber, normal testing 6nt.

If answerer has grand slam intention he uses Stayman & Ukra-check.
...& invite (non forcing) sequence, which is more useful:

1nt – 4nt.

All Terno-transfers build dissonance sequences, and so they are easy to remember.

There is no necessary (no need) to say that with answer 2s/nt strong hand (14+) with minor 5332 (x-x-x-5+ or x-x-5+-x) can be shown:

1nt – 2s/nt

2nt/3c/d – ?

3nt – invite to 6minor with fit or to 6minor/nt with maximum

4c/d – minor Blackwood (not Gerber) because 5 key card asked. More detailed description is in my article “Minor Blackwood or another one (second) using of fourth suit”.

4d/c/h – cue-bids.

3. 2nt and transfers, transfers...

What is your attitude to 2nt as to the opening?

In due course they opened on 22-24 hcp and this was good for all (and all liked that). Afterwards variants appeared. Really, why to deprive itself two levels, if is possible open 1c and all research without hurrying. As well as multi is capable to include this type of hand. Position is freed (liberated) for something destructive.

What? From 5-5 in minors with power lower the opening?

Excellent idea! Mildly disagrees total number of tricks, but it isn't a problem for destructive. Worse that no place for invite, needs the intuition. But this isn't a problem for us too. We are accustomed!

Variant with minors isn't single. Someone will open 2nt with the seventh figure in unknown suit, someone – on the split not worse 6-5 without clubs, someone without spades, someone on the contrary, with spades... As it is spoken, the tastes are very different.

But what to do in vulnerability (we are in red zone, opponents are in white zone)?

Use THE TRANSFER PREEMPTIVES:

- 2nt – the hand corresponds (likes) opening 3c

- 3c – the hand corresponds (likes) opening 3d, and so on up to 5c.

We can put on the table a gambling too in the same mode, but isn't good do that, because LHO receives (get) a possibility ask (or NOT ask) a spade attack:

- 3s – the hand corresponds (likes) opening 4c.

For supporters of strong 2nt:
2nt – ?

- 3c – Stayman (or Puppet Stayman),

- 3d/h – transfers,

- 3s – BARON, forcing up to 4nt, split without 5-card suits, guarantees one or both 4-card minor, after which 3nt shows 4-card SPADES, for example:

2nt – 3s

3nt – ?

- 4c/d – nearest 4-card suit,

- 4h/s – asking-bids,

- 4nt – RKCB with spades agreement (seems this is a single sequence allowing use Blackwood after Baron 3s),

- 3nt – contract,

- 4c/d – MINOR MUTUAL TRANSFERS: club shows diamonds 5+, diamond shows clubs 5+, after which (this):

- 4h – fitting or super-maximum, start relay bidding,

- 4nt – misfit, sign-off (see my article about minor Blackwood).

With agreement with partner:
2nt – 4c
?

- 4d – fitting without heart cue-bid, after which:

4h – start of cue-bidding,

4s – Blackwood,

4nt – sign-off (as always if (when) major fit isn't founded)

- 4h – fitting with heart cue-bid, after which 4s is the same Blackwood,

- 4nt – the same misfit, the same sign-off.

This scheme can be use after sequences:

2c (strong) – 2d – 2nt – ...

1c (strong) – 1d – 2nt – ...

2d (multi with strong balanced) – 2h – 2nt – ...

and other similar situations.