

A good defensive inference plus a good play -- Problem

North Deals
None Vul

♠ 3 2		♠ 10 8 7 6			
♥ A K J 6		♥ Q			
♦ Q 7 5		♦ A 6 4			
♣ Q J 8 4		♣ 10 7 6 5 2			
♠ A 9 5 4	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	
N					
W E					
S					
♥ 10 9 8 7 5 2					
♦ 2					
♣ 9 3					
♠ K Q J					
♥ 4 3					
♦ K J 10 9 8 3					
♣ A K					

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♣	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	4 NT ¹
Pass	5 ♣ ²	Pass	5 ♦

All pass

1. Roman Keycard Blackwood

2. One or four key cards (aces or ♦ K).

5 ♦ by South

Lead: ♥ 10

This deal was presented in Mike Lawrence's column for Intermediate Players in the *Bridge Bulletin*, January 2022. The main point of this deal is a fine defense to set 5 ♦: East wins the *second* round of trumps, obtains a signal for a spade lead from West's discard, leads to West's ace, and ruffs the second round of hearts.

Lawrence provides further discussion, including "Don't use Blackwood with an unstopped suit." He ends with:

Do players still use strong jump-shifts? They have a lot of merit. I use them and can tell you that when a strong jump-shift comes up, your bidding is always easy. Don't let someone tell you they are old-fashioned. They are, but they work.

What do you think of all this?

A good defensive inference plus a good play -- Solution

North Deals
None Vul

	♠ 3 2		
	♥ A K J 6		
	♦ Q 7 5		
	♣ Q J 8 4		
♠ A 9 5 4	N	♠ 10 8 7 6	
♥ 10 9 8 7 5 2	W	♥ Q	
♦ 2	S	♦ A 6 4	
♣ 9 3	E	♣ 10 7 6 5 2	
	♠ K Q J		
	♥ 4 3		
	♦ K J 10 9 8 3		
	♣ A K		

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♣	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	4 ♣ ¹
Pass	4 ♦ ²	Pass	4 NT

All pass

1. Crosswood: asks for keycards in diamonds.

2. 1430 response: one or four.

4 NT by South

Yes, a strong jump shift can simplify the auction, but this deal is not a good advertisement for it, since the resulting contract should be set after a heart lead. The strong jump shift is not automatic - it needs discussion, and it comes up so seldom that I don't play it. (For methods, look up "Soloway Jump Shifts" on the web.)

Look at the auction above: it stops short of slam, but in the higher-scoring and safer contract of 4 NT, which should make five. Crosswood, which I introduced in 2011, is well worth your time. The most recent version of my article, "Roman Keycard Blackwood, Delayed Kickback and Crosswood" is on this web site, posted July 2017. When a minor suit is trump, four of the other minor asks for keycards. In this case, diamonds has been confirmed as trump. Crosswood also applies when a minor suit is implied to be trump, for example, after a jump rebid in a minor or when partner has made a natural bid in notrump. There are some wrinkles, such as when diamonds become trump at the four level. Without a strong JS, opener gets to show hearts:

1 ♣ - 1 ♦; 1 ♥ - 1 ♠ [art. 4th suit force]; 2 ♦ - ? Now, either 4 NT (natural) or 4 ♣ (Crosswood) reaches 4 NT.

Other Jump Shift Options That I Play

1. Natural (6+ cards), invitational and non-forcing - highly sensible in a lower-ranking suit and useful at 2 ♠ over 1 ♥ - often taught to beginners. All the other methods leave a 1 NT response and a 2 NT rebid as the main way to invite game over a major suit opening, balanced or not, when a 2/1 would set a game force.
2. Weak jump shifts are what I play with new or casual partners - all the other methods take discussion.
3. Bergen raises and similar systems, over major suits.
4. Fit-showing - either invitational or slamming, with secondary honors in the suit of the jump shift. (Axxxx is a terrible fit-jump suit.) Gary Schwartz, my tournament partner, and I played this for many years, and still do over minors (our repeat of the 2/1 suit is not forcing). See *Partnership Bidding at Bridge*, by Robson & Segal.
5. Mini-splinter: short in the bid suit with support - constructive, invitational, or slamming. (A double jump shift is a game-splinter.) Gary and I play this way over major suit openings - see "Major Suit Game Tries and Raises at Bridge," posted Feb 2019 on this site. A major theme is, a simple raise of a major suit should provide two to three winners, no more and no less. Over 2 ♥, opener jumps to game on ♠ K Q 4 ♥ A K 10 8 4 3 ♦ 4 ♣ A 4 3; opener has five losers (one in each suit, plus a second club), so three winners won't make slam, but two make game. If responder has raised on ♠ A 7 3 ♥ Q 9 7 2 ♦ 9 8 7 6 5 ♣ 8, a laydown slam is missed. This hand has *four* winners (♠ A, ♥ Q, and two ruffs). Unfortunately, mini-splinters don't come up often.