

Quest Transfers - A New Approach to 5-4, 6-4 etc. - Quest Transfers

If you browse through section 2.6.2 of the NT bidding book you will realise that there is no common solution to the problem of an invitational 5-4 (or 4-5) major suited hand opposite partner's 1NT opening.

How do we solve this? What is the solution to our invitational sequences? We just need a little lateral thinking and to forget about gadgets such as Smolen and Weissberger.

The 3♦ after a negative 2♦ Stayman response is not needed (this is fully described in the NT bidding book if you think that the sequence 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♦ has another useful purpose). Thus we use it (and 3♥) as transfers – simple.

After 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦,

3♦ = transfer to ♥'s

3♥ = transfer to ♠'s

This is now so straightforward that I hardly need to write any more (but I will). This initial transfer may be game invitational or stronger, 5-4 or 6-4 types. Unlike Smolen (which is game forcing), Quest transfers are invitational or better (unlimited).

After a Quest transfer opener has the obvious super-accepts available whichever suit is trumps. What's more, you can choose whatever type of super-accept suits your partnership style – perhaps similar to what you do over a Jacoby Transfer? But, as responder is known to be short in both minor suits, I prefer to show an ace. Let's assume that we use super accepts to show an ace, then we have: -

After 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♦

and after 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♥

3♥ = normal accept

3♠ = normal accept

where a normal accept is a minimal hand with two card support or perhaps three. And we have the super-accepts: -

3♠ = three ♥'s + ♠A

3NT = natural, non-min,
normally 2-3 in the majors

3NT = natural, non-min,

normally 3-2 in the majors

4♣ = three ♠'s + ♣A

4♣ = three ♥'s + ♣A

4♦ = three ♠'s + ♦A

4♦ = three ♥'s + ♦A *

4♥ = three ♠'s + ♥A *

4♥ = three ♥'s (no ace to cue)

4♠ = three ♠'s (no ace to cue)

* Note Some players prefer not to use the bid below the agreed suit as a super-accept as they want to reserve it for partner's use as the re-transfer. In that case the 4-of-the-major super-accept may have the ace of the re-transfer suit. I much prefer to have the complete set of super-accepts and assume this in the examples.

After a super-accept responder will normally re-transfer if possible, and then either pass or investigate slam.

This all works fine, but we still have no bid to explicitly show the invitational hand if you opt for these simpler Quest transfers rather than Smolen or natural. No problem, it is up to opener to super-accept with a suitable hand: -

Quest transfers are defined as invitational or better.

They can be treated in a similar way to Jacoby transfers but there is one very big (and very important) difference – super-accepts. When playing Jacoby transfers super-accepts are often very useful, but they are usually not essential as responder can invite after a normal accept. With Quest transfers it is different, you are at the 3 level and there is no room for a polite 2nd invitation. Quest transfers are defined as **invitational** or better and opener **must** super-accept with a suitable hand. This also makes slam bidding much easier of course.

First of all, let's look at a typical hand that's difficult without Quest Transfers: -

Hand A Partner opens a strong NT. You start with Stayman but get a 2♦ response. What now? 2NT is reasonable, but there may be a better 5-3 ♥ fit (either partscore or game). 3♥/♠ is forcing (whether you play Smolen or not).
 ♠ K1042 So you simply have to give up on a possible fit and bid 2NT?
 ♥ KJ752
 ♦ 75
 ♣ 52

Playing Quest Transfers it's easy. Stayman to start and then transfer over a 2♦ response. Partner simply accepts the transfer with an unsuitable hand and will super-accept if game is on. Occasionally you will end up in 3♥ or 3♠ with a 5-2 fit, but that's probably just as good (often better) than 2NT.

Example A

West	East (A)	West	East	
♠ A73	♠ K1042	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest transfer
♥ 983	♥ KJ752	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) normal accept
♦ KQ6	♦ 75	3♥ (2)	pass (3)	(3) with no more than an
♣ AQJ7	♣ 52			invitational hand, East
				passes

With a minimum (a flat hand) West correctly does not super-accept.

Example B

West	East (A)	West	East	
♠ Q3	♠ KJ102	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest transfer
♥ Q93	♥ KJ752	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) Super-accept, ♣A
♦ KQ64	♦ 75	4♣ (2)	4♦ (3)	(3) re-transfer
♣ AK76	♣ 52	4♥	pass	

This West has good trumps and reasonable shape, so he super-accepts.

So clearly Quest transfers work in this otherwise difficult scenario. We now have to look at all the cases that we covered earlier, but this time using Quest transfers: -

- 2.6.2.1 invitational 5-4's, where we want to invite game.
- 2.6.2.2 invitational 6-4's, where we want to invite game.
- 2.6.2.3 game going 5-4's, where we want to play in just 3NT or 4♥/♠.
- 2.6.2.4 game going 6-4's, where we want to play in just 4♥ or 4♠.
- 2.6.2.5 game going 5-4's, but with slam interest.
- 2.6.2.6 game going 6-4's, but with slam interest.
- 2.6.2.7 slam going 5-4's, how to investigate slam.
- 2.6.2.8 slam going 6-4's, how to investigate slam.

Now Quest transfers, although straightforward, are new! There are most certainly die-hards out there who have always played Smolen or natural methods, and so I accommodated them in the previous sections. I will now cover Quest transfers in the same detail. And to make it easy for everybody I will use the same examples and chapter titles for the Quest and Smolen sections. Just see which you think works best!

2.6.2.1 Invitational 5-4's, where we want to invite game.

Simple. We start with Stayman and if we get a 2♦ response we make a Quest Transfer.

Example 1

West	East	West	East	
♠ AQ3	♠ K842	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest transfer
♥ Q9	♥ KJ854	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) normal accept
♦ K964	♦ J52	3♥ (2)	pass (3)	(3) only invitational, so pass
♣ A753	♣ 2			

A good contract, better than 2NT which is what we reached earlier when not playing Quest transfers (1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT - pass). A 5-2 fit will often play better than NT, as in this case.

Example 2

West	East	West	East	
♠ AJ3	♠ K842	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest transfer
♥ AQ3	♥ KJ854	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) Super-accept, ♠ A
♦ KQ64	♦ J52	3♠ (2)	4♦ (3)	(3) re-transfer
♣ J53	♣ 2	4♥	pass	

Playing standard methods we landed up in the inferior 3NT.

Example 3

Occasionally opener may super-accept with just two trumps – when he has top cards in both the majors: -

West	East	West	East	
♠ AKJ	♠ Q1042	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest transfer
♥ KQ	♥ AJ854	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) super-accept. ♠ A
♦ A864	♦ 532	3♠ (2)	4♦ (3)	(3) re-transfer
♣ 9853	♣ 2	4♥	pass	

West knows that East has a maximum of 4 cards in the minors and so there are at most 3 losers there.

Playing traditional methods we end up in 3NT if East invites with 2NT. And East may not even elect to invite, but simply bid 2♥.

Example 4

East has a clear invitation in this example, but the knowledge of responder's shape may mean that poor games are avoided on mis-fits: -

West	East	West	East	
♠ 96	♠ KJ842	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest transfer
♥ A54	♥ KJ82	2♦	3♥ (1)	(2) an excellent bid with the
♦ AK64	♦ 105	3♠ (2)	pass	knowledge of the mis-fit
♣ AQ85	♣ 32			

A combined 25 points, so most pairs will reach 3NT. The poor 3NT game was reached earlier with the sequence 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2NT - 3NT. 3♠ may not make but it's better than 3NT which stands very little chance. Playing the invitational Quest transfer is superior to the invitational 2NT, as West knows it's a mis-fit and can avoid 3NT.

2.6.2.2 Invitational 6-4's, where we want to invite game.

We handle 6-4 invitational hands in the same way and can use the re-transfer if necessary.

Example 5

West	East	West	East	
♠ AQ3	♠ KJ9542	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest transfer
♥ AK3	♥ Q942	2♦	3♥ (1)	(2) Super-accept, ♥A
♦ K64	♦ 105	4♥ (2)	4♠	
♣ 9753	♣ 2	pass		

With great major suit cards, west should accept. We floundered in a silly 2NT when we had no Quest transfer and East bid an invitational 2NT. Note that as we play 4-way transfers West has no way of knowing that East even has a 4 card major and so does not know how good his major suit holdings are if east bids 2NT.

This 4♠ contract is played from the 'wrong' hand. But it's better to play in the correct contract than to play in a poor one from the 'right' hand. Even if South does lead a ♦ and you lose the first 3 tricks, 4♠ is still odds-on to make.

With the following example playing Smolen etc we were fed up with being in the wrong contract using Stayman and 2NT, so we used a Jacoby transfer. Needless to say, that did not work either. It's no problem playing Quest transfers as the original Stayman always finds the 4-4 fit: -

Example 6

West	East	West	East	
♠ 63	♠ KJ9542	1NT	2♣	(1) with great shape, worth an invitation
♥ AK103	♥ Q942	2♥	3♥ (1)	
♦ KQJ4	♦ 105	4♥	pass	
♣ A73	♣ 2			

We managed to land in a poor 3NT (or 4♠) when we bid this example via a Jacoby transfer.

2.6.2.3 Game 5-4's where we want to play in just 3NT or 4♥/♠.

This is quite simple, and the best contract should be reached whether you play Smolen or Quest. We've seen these before, but let's just check that Quest transfers work equally well: -

Example 7

West	East	West	East	
♠ Q3	♠ KJ954	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5+ ♠'s
♥ K103	♥ AJ42	2♦	3♥ (1)	(2) min
♦ K984	♦ Q5	3♠ (2)	3NT (3)	(3) offering the choice of 3NT
♣ AKJ3	♣ 52	pass		or 4♠.

Looks good to me. Same final contract as before.

Example 8

West	East	West	East	
♠ A83	♠ KJ954	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5+ ♠'s
♥ K103	♥ AJ42	2♦	3♥ (1)	(2) super accept, ♦A.
♦ AKJ3	♦ Q5	4♦ (2)	4♥ (3)	(3) re-transfer
♣ J84	♣ 52	4♠	pass	

The super accept at (2) is marginal (West is minimum but does have good top cards and trumps) but 4♠ would be reached either way.

2.6.2.4 Game going 6-4's, where we want to play in just 4♥ or 4♠.

This is exactly the same whatever scheme you use. Stayman followed by Extended Texas jumps to 4♦/♥ if no fit is found. Quest or Smolen do not feature.

2.6.2.5 Game Going 5-4's with some Slam Interest

Here we are concerned with hand types that are not adverse to a slam suggestion from partner or may wish to make a mild try themselves. We start with Stayman of course and then a Quest transfer.

Example 9

West	East	West	East	
♠ J73	♠ AK42	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5+ ♥'s
♥ K3	♥ AJ954	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) non-min
♦ AQ84	♦ K5	3NT (2)	4NT (3)	(3) quantitative
♣ AK93	♣ J2	pass (4)		

Note that 4NT is quantitative after a 3NT bid from opener, so what does responder do when he had 5 or 6 ♠'s and wants to bid Blackwood? The answer is that with just 5 ♠'s he normally would not, and with 6 ♠'s he can re-transfer, we come onto that shortly when we discuss the 6-4 type hands

When we bid this hand using Smolen we ended up in a poor 6♥ after East bid the quantitative 4NT at (3). It was perhaps debatable if West should have accepted the slam invitation with a mis-fit, but he is max. Playing Quest transfers it's slightly different. West's 3NT bid has already promised a maximum (otherwise he would simply accept the transfer) and so East's quantitative bid ask for something extra – this can only mean good ♥'s and/or ♠'s. West's ♥Kx is good, but the poor ♠'s are not good enough and so he, aware of ♠ QJ3 the mis-fit, correctly declines the invitation at (4). But exchange the ♠7 and ♦Q

♥ K3	to get this hand and opener should accept by bidding 6NT. Points in partner's
♦ A874	suits are all important – it's what you need when you have already shown a
♣ AK93	maximum.

Example 10

West	East	West	East	
♠ Q7	♠ AK42	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5+ ♥'s
♥ KQ3	♥ AJ954	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) max, 3 ♥'s + ♣A
♦ QJ42	♦ K5	4♣ (2)	4♠ (3)	(3) RKCB (Kickback)*
♣ AQ93	♣ J2	5♥ (4)	6♥	(4) 2 key cards + ♥Q
	pass			

We reached the same good slam playing Smolen but that sequence really was not a good one because East launched into Blackwood with a small doubleton (♣) – not good practice. Here it's fine as West has cue bid the ♣A.

* Now I said that 4♠ at (3) is RKCB, but is simple RKCB really the best meaning? We will discuss it shortly, but let's first do the examples 11 & 12 that we saw earlier.

Example 11

When we bid this one earlier East bid the poor slam because he knew nothing much other than that there was a key card missing.

West	East	West	East	
♠ QJ	♠ AK42	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5+ ♥'s
♥ KQ3	♥ AJ954	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) 3 ♥'s + ♦A
♦ AQJ84	♦ K5	4♦ (2)	4NT (3)	(3) ♠ cue bid
♣ Q93	♣ J2	5♥ (4)	pass	

West super-accepted and so East is certainly in slam mode. But he knows to be very careful as West has denied the ♣A. Blackwood is not a good idea with a weak doubleton and so he cue bids instead. Note that when you play Kickback then 4NT is the ♠ cue bid. West's 5♥ at (4) denies the ♣K and so the poor slam is avoided. If West did have the ♣K then he had two options – he could cue it, in which case East would bid 6♦ to transfer the 6♥ contract to West. West could also simply bid 6♥.

Example 12

West	East	West	East	
♠ J87	♠ AK42	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5+ ♥'s
♥ Q63	♥ AJ954	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) min
♦ AQJ	♦ K5	3♥ (2)	3NT (3)	
♣ AQ83	♣ J2	4♥	pass	

When we bid this example earlier West had no chance to inform East that he was minimum and so the poor ♥ slam was reached. Here East knows that West is minimum and so elects not to go slamming. Very wise. He bids 3NT at (3) to give opener the choice of 3NT or 4♥.

Note that the West hand is certainly minimum here as the queens in partner's short suits (the minors) may not be worth much. Since responder is known to hold 4 ♠'s West might consider passing 3NT at pairs scoring.

2.6.2.6 Game Going 6-4's with some Slam Interest

Let's look at 6-4's where we would not be adverse to partner's advances towards slam with a 6-3 fit. If opener responds 3NT to our Quest transfer then we can re-transfer. This shows slam interest as we did not use Extended Texas.

Example 13

West	East	West	East	
♠ 107	♠ AK9542	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5 ♠'s & 4 ♥'s
♥ KJ3	♥ AQ42	2♦	3♥ (1)	(2) I prefer NT, non min.
♦ AK83	♦ 105	3NT (2)	4♥ (3)	(3) re-transfer, slam interest
♣ KQ53	♣ 2	4♠ (4)	pass	(4) no slam interest

As it happens, exactly the same as the Smolen sequence. Fine.

In the next example we got too high (5♠) playing Smolen.

Example 14

West	East	West	East	
♠ QJ7	♠ AK9542	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5 ♠'s & 4 ♥'s
♥ KJ3	♥ AQ42	2♦	3♥ (1)	(2) 3 ♠'s, non-min, no ace to cue
♦ QJ8	♦ 105	4♠ (2)	pass	
♣ KQJ3	♣ 2			

Playing Quest transfers it's easy to stop low (4♠).

When opener has just a doubleton trump, slam may still be on. After responder's Quest transfer opener bid 3NT showing a non-min, when responder re-transfers to show a 6 card suit and slam interest (no Texas), opener breaks the transfer with a suitable hand: -

Example 15

West	East	West	East	
♠ QJ	♠ AK9542	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5 ♠'s & 4 ♥'s
♥ KJ3	♥ AQ42	2♦	3♥ (1)	(2) 2 ♠'s, non-min
♦ AJ87	♦ 105	3NT (2)	4♥ (3)	(3) 6 ♠'s, slam interest
♣ AJ53	♣ 2	4NT (4)	etc to 6♠	(4) *(D)RKCB for ♠'s

* The same as the previous Smolen auction except that the 4NT at (4) is to be discussed shortly.

2.6.2.7

Slam going 5-4's, how to investigate slam.

Hand H	Hand J	Partner opens 1NT (strong).
♠ AQJ2	♠ AK954	Much the same as when using Smolen. We are obviously looking for a slam here, preferably in a major suit. So we start with Stayman. After a 2♦ response we bid Quest and then whatever your favourite slam seeking method is.
♥ KQ854	♥ AQ42	
♦ K52	♦ 1052	
♣ 2	♣ A	

Of course you do have a big advantage when using Quest in that opener will cue bid an ace in response to Quest if he has 3 trumps and is non-min. It certainly would be handy to know if partner has the ♣A or not with Hand H.

So what is the best method to investigate slam with these types of hand? A 5♣ cue bid is possibly a good move with Hand J, but what about Hand H? ...

1NT	2♣	You hold Hand H and the bidding has started like this. What now?
2♦	3♦	Note that we are already way ahead of the previous Smolen auction
4♣	? (1)	in that the level is just 4♣, opener has cue bid indicating the ♣A, 3 trumps and a non-min. Playing Smolen the auction would be at 4♥ with responder in the dark.

A key card ask looks like a good idea, but it's going to be difficult to establish if partner has the ♠K rather than the ♣K. There are ways to establish specific kings after RKCB but generally only if all key cards are present.

The answer is that responder should employ Double Roman Key Card Blackwood – DRKCB. With these major 2-suited hands the kings (and queens) in the major suits are very important and minor suit kings are often insignificant.

The trump suit has been established but East really also needs to know about key cards in the other major as well. So East uses two suit, or Double RKCB (DRKCB); there are thus 6 key cards.

DRKCB after a Quest transfer

When responder has shown at least 9 cards in the majors then the king (and sometimes queen – as we shall see later) in both major suits are important. So our RKCB (Kickback) bid is now DRKCB, with both major suit kings counted as key cards. The responses are: -

Next step = 0 or 3 key cards
Next step + 1 = 1 or 4 key cards
Next step + 2 = 2 or 5 key cards
Next step + 3 = 2 or 5 key cards + the ‘trump’ queen

Where, by ‘trump’ queen I mean the queen of responder’s longer suit.

Example 16

West	East	West	East	
♠ K9	♠ AQJ2	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5 ♥’s & 4 ♠’s
♥ AJ3	♥ KQ854	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) 3 ♥’s, non-min + ♣A
♦ QJ87	♦ K52	4♣ (2)	4♠ (3)	(3) DRKCB (Kickback)
♣ AJ53	♣ 2	4NT (4)	6♥ (5)	(4) 3 key cards
		pass		

(5) As long as the ♠K is included along with the key cards then 3 key cards is all East needs.

If the ♠K was not included then a 2 key card response would leave slam dubious.

If the DRKCB reply was 0/3 or 1/4 and so gave no information about the trump queen, asker may enquire about both queens with the next free bid, the responses are: -

Next step = no queen
Next step + 1 = ♥Q
Next step + 2 = ♠Q
Next step + 3 = ♥Q & ♠Q

And if the response was 2/5 and thus indicated the presence or absence of the trump queen, asker may enquire about the other queen. The responses are up to you but best is that you simply use the same procedure as you do with your normal RKCB trump queen ask. Here I assume that the next bid up denies the major suit queen and that any other bid acknowledges it – show a king or else return to the trump suit, so: -

Next step = denies the other major suit queen
Return to the trump suit = shows the other queen but denies ♣K or ♦K.
any other bid = shows the other queen and the king of the suit bid.

Note that a queen ask does not necessarily guarantee that all key cards are present, asker may simply be looking for the small slam.

2.6.2.8 Slam going 6-4's, how to investigate slam.

Hand K	Hand L	Partner opens 1NT (strong).
♠ AKJ542	♠ AQJ2	And the same here. Stayman, Quest and then onto slam; either
♥ AQJ2	♥ KQ8542	small or grand. Again you have more to go on using Quest
♦ A5	♦ -	because of the possible super accept response (or lack of it).
♣ 2	♣ KQ2	

Now you could choose to use either RKCB or DRKCB with 5-4's but with 6-4's responder really should use DRKCB. The problem is that opener will not always know if responder is 5-4 or 6-4 and so it's best to always use DRKCB with these two-suited (5-4 or 6-4 type) hands.

Example 17		West	East	
West	East	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5 ♠'s & 4 ♥'s
		2♦	3♥ (1)	(2) min, 2 or 3 ♠'s
♠ Q9	♠ AKJ542	3♠ (2)	4♥ (3)	(3) 6 ♠'s, slam interest
♥ 953	♥ AQJ2	4♠ (4)	4NT (5)	(4) nothing extra
♦ KQJ3	♦ A5	5♦ (6)	6♠	(5) DRKCB
♣ AQJ6	♣ 2	pass		(6) 1 key card

West has a good doubleton ♠, but with poor ♥'s he really can do nothing more than complete the re-transfer at (4). However, the East hand is still looking for slam, possibly even a grand, but when West's response at (6) revealed that either the ♣A or ♥K was missing he gave up on the grand.

There is another interesting point in this auction; the re-transfer at (3) is not really a re-transfer of course, as West has already bid ♠'s. Thus East can bid either 4♥ or 4♠ at (3). It's best to play 4♠ as a sign off and 4♥ as looking for slam with a 6 card suit. A subsequent Blackwood bid by either opener or responder is then DRKCB.

But with this Hand K it is certainly worth looking for the grand. Consider the situation where West has a more suitable hand. This one's the same strength but the king in responder's 2nd suit is worth more than 3 points elsewhere: -

Example 18		West	East	(1) Quest, 5 ♠'s & 4 ♥'s
				(2) min, 2 or 3 ♠'s
West	East	1NT	2♣	(3) 6 ♠'s, slam interest
		2♦	3♥ (1)	(4) completing the re-transfer
♠ Q9	♠ AKJ542	3♠ (2)	4♥ (3)	(5) DRKCB
♥ K83	♥ AQJ2	4♠ (4)	4NT (5)	(6) 2 key cards + ♠Q
♦ KJ83	♦ A5	5♠ (6)	6♣ (7)	(7) minor suit kings?
♣ AQ65	♣ 2	6♠ (8)	7NT	(8) ♦K only
		pass		

5NT at (7) would have been queen clarification, so 6♣ is the (♣/♦) king ask.
6♠ at (8) is next step + 2.

So that's fine, but what if the DRKCB reply shows 0/3 or 1/4 keycards and says nothing about the trump queen? Then the next bid up then asks about queens: -

Let's change the ♦ suit in example 18 very slightly: -

Example 19		West	East	(1) Quest, 5 ♠'s & 4 ♥'s
				(2) min, 2 or 3 ♠'s
West	East	1NT	2♣	(3) 6 ♠'s, slam interest
		2♦	3♥ (1)	(4) completing the re-transfer
♠ Q9	♠ AKJ542	3♠ (2)	4♥ (3)	(5) DRKCB
♥ K83	♥ AQJ2	4♠ (4)	4NT (5)	(6) 3 key cards
♦ AJ83	♦ K5	5♣ (6)	5♦ (7)	(7) queens?
♣ AQ65	♣ 2	5NT (8)	7NT	(8) ♠Q
		pass		

And sometimes the information about the other major suit queen is useful: -

Example 20		West	East	(1) Quest, 5 ♠'s & 4 ♥'s
				(2) min, 2 or 3 ♠'s
West	East	1NT	2♣	(3) 6 ♠'s, slam interest
		2♦	3♥ (1)	(4) completing the re-transfer
♠ Q9	♠ AKJ542	3♠ (2)	4♥ (3)	(5) DRKCB
♥ Q93	♥ AKJ2	4♠ (4)	4NT (5)	(6) 2 key card + ♠Q
♦ AJ83	♦ K4	5♠ (6)	5NT (7)	(7) ♥ queen?
♣ AQ65	♣ 2	6♠ (8)	7NT	(8) yes, no king.
		Pass		

- ♠ Q9 If West had denied the ♥Q, say with this hand, then the grand is not a good bet.
- ♥ 983 Note that the ♥Q is more important than the ♣K.
- ♦ AJ83
- ♣ AKJ5

So DRKCB works like a treat with Hand K and similar hands, but what about Hand L?

Exclusion Double Roman Keycard Blackwood (EDRKCB)

Hand L is not interested in the ♦ A and so should use Exclusion DRKCB = EDRKCB.

A rare beast, but there are situations where we are only interested in the kings (and perhaps queens) of two suits and have a void. Exclusion RKCB (ERKCB) would enable us to ask for key cards outside the exclusion suit and Double RKCB (DRKCB) would enable us to locate the king in the other major directly but responder would not know about our void (and thus include that ace in his reply). So when our partner does not know about our void and we are in a situation where DRKCB is the Blackwood bid, then a bid of 5 of a minor is EDRKCB. So with EDRKCB we have 5 key cards; the three aces outside the exclusion suit and the two key kings. The step responses are the obvious 0/3, 1/4, 2.

Example 21

West	East (L)	West	East	
♠ K9	♠ AQJ2	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5 ♥'s & 4 ♠'s
♥ AJ3	♥ KQ8542	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) 3 ♠'s, non-min + ♣A
♦ KJ853	♦ -	4♣ (2)	4♦ (3)	(3) re-transfer, 6 ♥'s
♣ A87	♣ KQ2	4♥	5♦ (4)	(4) EDRKCB
		5♥ (5)	7♥	(5) 3 key cards
		pass		

But is opener did not have the ♠ K it's different: -

Example 22

West	East (L)	West	East	
♠ 98	♠ AQJ2	1NT	2♣	(1) Quest, 5 ♥'s & 4 ♠'s
♥ AJ3	♥ KQ8542	2♦	3♦ (1)	(2) 3 ♠'s, non-min + ♣A
♦ AQ853	♦ -	4♣ (2)	4♦ (3)	(3) re-transfer, 6 ♥'s
♣ AJ7	♣ KQ2	4♥	5♦ (4)	(4) EDRKCB
		5NT (5)	6♥	(5) 2 key cards
		pass		

So DRKCB and EDRKCB work fine in this scenario, whether opener has super-accepted or not. It's up to you if you wish to include them in your armoury, and we come upon them again in section 3.1.4 when we discuss hands that are 5-5 in the majors (where I believe that they are even more important). Let's move on to something different: -

2.6.2.9 The 3♠ bid using Quest Transfers

Now that we are using Quest transfers, the previous Smolen/natural sequence

1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♠ is a spare bid.

I guess that you could use it for whatever you like, but it needs to be a hand type that can cope with a 2♥/♠ response to Stayman. There are a few possibilities, but my favourite is strong 4-4 (game forcing) in the majors with both minor suits weak: -

Hand M	Hand N	Partner opens 1NT (strong).
♠ AQ92	♠ AK94	You try Stayman but get a 2♦ response. Now 3NT is the standard bid and will often be fine. But a Moysian fit may be best if partner has good 3 card support for one major and a weak minor.
♥ KQJ5	♥ AQ102	
♦ J85	♦ 105	
♣ 72	♣ 743	

Example 1

West	East	West	East	
♠ KJ7	♠ AQ92	1NT	2♣	(1) both majors, weak minors
♥ A3	♥ KQJ5	2♦	3♠ (1)	(2) With very weak ♣'s, West elects to play in the Moysian fit.
♦ AK973	♦ J85	4♠ (2)	pass	
♣ J53	♣ 72			

Example 2

Sometimes 3NT would be a very poor contract: -

West	East	West	East	
♠ QJ6	♠ AK94	1NT	2♣	(1) both majors, weak minors
♥ K73	♥ AQ102	2♦	3♠ (1)	(2) West knows that the opponents have 4 or 5 ♦ tricks off the top.
♦ 73	♦ 105	4♥ (2)	pass	
♣ AKQ102	♣ 743			

Example 3

And nothing is lost if West has both minors well covered: -

West	East	West	East	
♠ Q7	♠ AK94	1NT	2♣	(1) both majors, weak minors
♥ J73	♥ AQ102	2♦	3♠ (1)	(2) let then lead a minor, see if I care.
♦ AK973	♦ 105	3NT (2)	pass	
♣ AQ10	♣ 743			