

## Kickback

'Everybody' these days plays Roman Keycard Blackwood (RKCB), and quite right too – it is far superior to the standard version and it is in most situation within this site. However, whenever you use Blackwood (whatever variety you choose) there is always a problem with the lower ranking suits as trumps because the reply may get you too high. In fact, you may even have a problem with RKCB when ♥'s are trumps: -

West	East	West	East	
♠ KQ762	♠ J	1♠	2♥	(1) RKCB
♥ KQ8	♥ AJ109765	3♥	4NT (1)	(2) two key cards + ♥Q
♦ AJ54	♦ KQ	5♠ (2)	? (3)	
♣ 10	♣ KQJ			

The point is that 4NT does not work as RKCB when ♥'s are trumps. East justifiably had visions of slam but now 5NT at (3) would be asking for kings and we are too high! The problems are even worse with a minor suit and you may also get problems when asking for the trump queen. The only real way to solve this is to ensure that you have 4 steps between your Blackwood asking bid and the trump suit.

There are a few solutions; 4-of-the-minor as Blackwood for minor suits is one of them. But probably the best is Kickback; this uses the suit above trumps as the key card ask. So in this actual example 4♠ at (1) would be RKCB and then east would pass the 5♥ response.