

SOUTH HAS A YARBOROUGH

NORTH

83
108
AQ10
AKJ1093

S 9
H 97432
D K84
C 8764

S AKQJ10
H AKQJ
D J7
C Q5

SOUTH

76542
65
96532
2

N	E	S	W
1C	Dbl	P	1H
2C	4H	All Pass	

OPENING LEAD: CLUB ACE

You may be wondering why East doubled instead of overcalling Spades in the first place. A simple overcall at the one level guarantees 8-17 points only. East has more than that so has to double first and then plans to bid Spades next UNLESS West happens to bid Hearts (imagine East's happy surprise!)

Over to South who is quietly moaning to himself: "I never get any cards." Indeed South's hand is classified as a Yarborough. This is the term given to a hand with no card higher than the 9. Named because of the Earl of Yarborough who was fond of betting 1000:1 odds that such a hand would never be dealt.

North leads The Club Ace, followed the King. South is yawning. South is about to discard the D 2 or the S 2 but then wakes up. South does the Rule of 40. There are 40 HCP in the deck. East (dummy) is showing with 23 HCP. North opened the bidding so has approximately 13. South has none so he knows that West has approximately 3 or 4 points.

Here is South's HUGE clue. Dummy's Spade suit is a big threat to NS. Declarer will pull trump and throw away all his losers on dummy's long Spade suit. Whenever

you see that as a defender, it is time to cash tricks in another suit. Clearly there are no more tricks to be had in Clubs. That Spade suit is a BIG wake-up call!

It would be great if North could cash Club Ace and King and now the Diamond Ace and King but what if North does not have both pairs of Ace - Kings. North may frantically need South to be on lead to lead a Diamond through West's (Declarer's) honour in Diamonds. At Trick # 2, South must wake up and ruff North's Club King. Now, looking dummy's weak Diamonds, South leads the Diamond 9. Whatever West does now will be wrong. If he plays the King, North wins it with the D Ace and cashed the D Q for down one.

If S had just made a discard at trick two, North would remain on lead and now if he led his D Ace, Declarer's D King will become a trick. Declarer will make the contract.

Look for those long threatening suits in dummy and recognize the need to cash tricks quickly. And even if you have a Yarborough, stay awake and see what you can do to help partner!

EXCLUSION BLACKWOOD
by LARRY COHEN
www.larryco.com

I can't believe I am writing this article.

I wouldn't recommend this convention to anyone other than a full-time expert with a full-time regular partner.

Still, it is a sexy convention, and I get asked about it all the time.

This is a way to ask for aces outside of a suit in which you are void. For example, suppose you hold:

S KJ107632
H AK
D--
C KQJ2

Your 1S opening is raised to 3S (limit raise).

All you want to know is how many aces partner has outside of diamonds. Regular Blackwood (a no-no when holding a void) won't do you any good. If partner has, say, one ace, but it is in diamonds, you have no slam. If he has 2 aces, you might belong in 7 (if the aces are black), but only 6S if one of the aces in diamonds.

By jumping to 5D ("Exclusion Blackwood") you are asking for aces **"excluding"** the suit you jumped into (diamonds, in this case). Partner will bid the first step for 0-4, next step for 1, next step for 2, etc.

So, 5H=0 aces outside of diamonds (note that with only the DA, this is the answer partner would give). 5S=1 ace outside of diamonds and so on.

(Ed Note: Above is if you are playing regular old-fashioned Blackwood)

Since anyone reading/using this likely plays Roman Keycard Blackwood, presumably the jump would actually ask for "Keycards outside the void suit." So, the answers would be (assuming 1430),

Step 1 = 1 or 4 Keycards outside the void suit

Step 2 = 0-3, etc.

So, when is a bid Exclusion RKC? **The asker must jump to a suit above the game level.** That unusual bid shows a void and asks for keycards outside that suit. Typically, there will be an agreed trump suit, but if not, it would be in the last-bid suit. You must be absolutely sure the bid can't logically be natural.

Here are some examples:

OPENER	RESPONDER	OPENER	RESPONDER	Link
1.1H 5C *	1S	2.2C 5H*	2S	

3.1C 5D*	3C			

OPENER'S HAND

1.

S AKQ107

H KQ8762

D KJ

C --

2.

OPENER'S HAND

S QJ97

H --

D AKQJ1076

C AK

3.

OPENER'S HAND

S AKQ

H KQ2

D –

C K1087652

Warning: Don't try this at home unless you have a partner who is in on the secret!!!

Alerting Exclusion Blackwood: This falls under the category of "delayed alert." That means that you say nothing during the auction. When the auction is over (presuming your side is the declaring side), before the opening lead is made, either player informs the defenders what the bidding meant.