

4NT after Stayman or Jacoby Transfers is Quantitative, not Blackwood

4NT after Stayman

Playing Standard Acol, when opener's 1NT and responder bids 2NT, this is a quantitative bid, invitational to 3NT showing 11-12 HCP. If responder take a short detour by bidding Stayman before bidding 2NT, responder is hoping that opener's rebid will uncover an 8+ card fit in a major, which usually plays and scores better than No Trumps. If the detour does not reveal a fit in a major then responder bids 2NT – nothing is lost in the process.

The sequences 1NT-2♣-2♥-4NT and 2NT-3♣-3♥-4NT carry exactly the same meaning but these sequences are invitational to 6NT. Responder is using Stayman along the way to check whether opener has a 4 card major, which might lead to a superior slam contract in the major. Since a direct bid of 4NT is quantitative, a clever device is needed if opener's response to Stayman has revealed a fit in a major and responder wants to ask for aces. Responder first **bids the other major**, 3♠, an artificial and alertable bid which confirms hearts as trumps and asks partner to bid 4♥. Responder's subsequent 4NT rebid is Blackwood.

Conversely, after the sequence 2NT-3♣- 3♠, if responder bids the other major, 4♥, she is confirming spades as trumps and is asking partner to bid 4♠. Responder's 4NT rebid is then Blackwood.

With four hearts and four spades, opener will bid 3♥. If responder has four spades but does not have four hearts, then responder will bid 4NT (quantitative) which shows four spades. (Responder must have a 4 card major to bid Stayman and has not 'bid the other major', 3♠, to show a heart fit, so must have four spades). Now if opener has four spades he can choose between between 6♠ with a minimum or 6NT with a maximum. With no fit in hearts or spades opener can choose between passing 4NT with a minimum or bidding 6NT with a maximum.

- 2NT - 3♣ - 3♦ - 4NT is quantitative – opener has denied a 4 card major
- 2NT - 3♣ - 3♥ - 4NT is quantitative, with 4 spades and no 4 hearts
- 2NT - 3♣ - 3♠ - 4NT is quantitative with 4 hearts but no 4 spades
- 2NT - 3♣ - 3♥ - 3♠ - 4♥ - 4NT is Blackwood, with hearts agreed as trumps
- 2NT - 3♣ - 3♠ - 4♥ - 4♠ - 4NT is Blackwood, with spades agreed as trumps

4NT after a Jacoby Transfer

Playing standard methods, the sequence 1NT-2NT is a quantitative invitation to 3NT. Jacoby Transfers allow responder to show opener a 5+ card major before making the invitational 2NT bid. In the sequence 1NT- 2♦ - 2♥ - 2NT, responder is still making a quantitative invitation to 3NT but is letting opener know that responder also has EXACTLY five hearts (with 6+ hearts responder would have bid 4♥).

The sequences 1NT- 4NT and 2NT - 4NT are quantitative invitations to 6NT. By using Jacoby Transfers before the quantitative 4NT bid, (e.g. 1NT- 2♦ - 2♥ - 4NT) responder is guaranteeing at least five cards in a major, which offers opener an alternative choice of slam contract if opener has three or more cards in the major. The 4NT bid is still a quantitative invitation to 6NT, since there is no guarantee that an 8+ card heart fit exists. But if responder has 6+ hearts (an 8 card fit exists) he has no way of asking for 'aces' with hearts agreed as trumps - 4NT cannot be both quantitative/invitational AND Blackwood.

One solution is that:

1. with exactly 5 cards in a major responder makes a Jacoby Transfer (e.g. 1NT - 2♦; 2NT- 3♦) . Responder's subsequent 4NT bid is a quantitative invitation to 6NT.
2. with a 6+ card major responder transfers at the 4-level (e.g. 1NT- 4♦ ; 2NT- 4♦). This is known as a **Texas Transfer**. Responder's subsequent 4NT bid is Blackwood.

Jacoby Transfer

- 2NT - 3♦ or 1NT - 2♦ shows either:
 - a) a weak hand with 5+ hearts, planning to pass opener's heart rebid, or...
 - b) EXACTLY 5 hearts, planning to rebid 3NT with no slam aspirations, or a quantitative 4NT invitation to 6NT. If the latter then opener chooses the final contract (Pass, 5♥, 6♥, 6NT) depending on whether opener is minimum or maximum and opener's holding in responder's major

Texas Transfer

- 2NT - 4♦ or 1NT- 4♦ shows 6+ hearts (an 8+ card heart fit), planning to either:
 - a) pass opener's 4♥ rebid, or....
 - b) bid 4NT (Blackwood)