

RECOGNISING SLAM HANDS



© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017

THIS LESSON



- Requirements for slams
- Forcing sequences
- Strong openings

© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017

HCP REQUIRED FOR SLAMS



The combined HCP can help us decide the level of the final contract

- For a small slam, we usually need about 33+ points
- For a grand slam, we usually need about 37+ points

© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017

TRUMP SLAMS



- Where there is an agreed trump suit, slams can be bid with fewer than the recommended HCP
 - especially if the hands contain voids or singletons and/or long running side suits

♠ A
♥ Axx
♦ Axxx
♣ AKQxx
21 HCP

♠ xxxx
♥ KQxxx
♦ Kxx
♣ x
8 HCP

© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017

CONTROLS AND TRICKS



To bid slam, we need:

- a source of tricks
 - A, K and Q (high card points),
 - long suits (distributional points), or
 - short suits with long trump support (distributional points)
- controls
 - at least second round control of all suits, and
 - first round control in at least 3 suits

© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017

BIDDING SLAMS



- Establish a forcing sequence
- Concept of “captaincy”
- Find out about controls
 - Blackwood and variations
 - Minorwood
 - splinter bids
 - cue bids

© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017

SLAM HANDS???

If partner opens 1♠ what will you do with ...

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

© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017

PRINCIPLE OF FAST ARRIVAL

- In forcing situations, an immediate game bid is the weakest bid possible
 - the more bids you make, the stronger you are
- Examples:

Strong sequence	Weak sequence
2♣ [†] - 2♦ - 2♥ - 3♥	2♣ [†] - 2♦ - 2♥ - 4♥
1♥ - 1♠ - 2♦ - 3♣ - 3♥	1♥ - 1♠ - 2♦ - 3♣ - 4♥
1♠ - 2NT* - 3♣	1♠ - 2NT* - 4♣
1♥ - 2♣ - 2♥ - 2♠ - 2NT - 3♥	1♥ - 2♣ - 2♥ - 4♥

[†] Game force

* 13-15 points, 4 card spade support

© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- Consider playing that a change of suit is forcing
eg: 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♣
- A bid of the fourth suit should be a game force
eg: 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♣ - 2♦
- Bids below the level of game are generally used to investigate games
- Bids above 3NT are slam tries
- A bid of 3NT when a major suit has been agreed is a mild slam try eg: 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♣ - 3♥ - 3NT
- The principle of fast arrival says that, in forcing sequences, game bids are weak.

© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017

SYSTEMS AND CONVENTIONS

Some systems are designed to facilitate slam bidding, such as:

- 2 over 1 Game Force
- Systems with strong 1♠ openings
 - eg: Precision Club or Blue Club

Conventions that can help to investigate slam potential are:

- Jacoby 2NT response to 1 of major
- Inverted minor raises
- Change of suit forcing
- Fourth suit forcing to game
- Splinter bids
- Strong sequences over 1NT openings
- Control showing responses to 2♣ openings

© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017

FINDING OUT ABOUT CONTROLS

Asking

- Blackwood, Gerber, Minorwood
- Responses to 2♣ opening
- Jump to 5 of major
- Jump to 5NT
- 4NT opening
- 5NT grand slam force
- Splinter bids

Showing

- Cue bids

More of this in a later lesson

© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017

FORCING SEQUENCES

1♥	2♣
2♦	2♠
2NT/3♥/3♦	3♥

Sets hearts and is a slam try. Why?

1♥	2♣
2♦	2♠
2NT	3♦

Strong with diamonds.

1♦	1♠
2♥	2♠
3♣	3NT
4♦	

Removing a game bid.

1♥	1♠
3♣	4♣/4♦

What does 3NT mean?

1♥	1♠
3♣/3♦	

What does 3♣/3♦ mean?

1♥	1♠
2NT	4♦

Jump to 4 of minor.

1♣	1♥
4♥	4♣

What does 4♥ mean?

© Malcolm and Lyn Carter 2017