



Conventional Wisdom Lite

Filling out a basic 2/1 convention card – part 6

BY LARRY COHEN

Larry Cohen is a multiple NABC champion, author and longtime contributor to the Bridge Bulletin.

LEADS

The standard leads are indicated in bold. If you and your partner have no special agreements, there isn't much to be filled in here. Standard will be presumed. If you do something fancy (like 10 or 9 leads to show 0 or 2 higher), you would have to circle such a special agreement by marking the card (not in bold) that your partnership would lead. Notice that under "versus Suits," A K x has no bold. Just circle the card you would lead; "standard" these days is to lead the ace.

For Length Leads, standard would be 4th Best against both suits and notrump. Mark your agreement accordingly. If you do something else, such as 3rd/5th Best against suits or Attitude against notrump, you would mark that instead. Unless you've played many years and have an equally experienced partner, I suggest settling on "Standard" in this area. The advantages of fancier methods are negligible.

For the "Primary signal to partner's leads," the standard choice would be "Attitude."

SLAM CONVENTIONS

You can check the "Gerber" box, but I recommend using it only if the prior bid was 1NT or 2NT. Gerber is a 4♣ bid which asks for aces. Since it is in black, Gerber is not Alertable; nor are the responses.

For 4NT, mark either "Blackwood" if you play plain-old aces. If you use RKC (Roman Keycard Blackwood) with the old-fashioned responses where 5♣ = 0 or 3 and 5♦ = 1 or 4, check RKC. If you use the more modern responses of 5♣ = 1 or 4 and 5♦ = 0 or 3, check the 1430 box. **Note:** Whatever you play, make sure your partner is playing it the same way! No kind of Blackwood nor any responses to it are Alertable.

Interference in Blackwood auctions is so rare that it isn't really practical for newer players, so you can ignore the last line of this section.

SLAM CONVENTIONS Gerber <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> : 4NT: Blackwood <input type="checkbox"/> RKC <input type="checkbox"/> 1430 <input type="checkbox"/>			
vs Interference: DOPI <input type="checkbox"/> DEPO <input type="checkbox"/> Level: _____ ROPI <input type="checkbox"/>			
LEADS (circle card led, if not in bold)		DEFENSIVE CARDING	
versus Suits	versus Notrump	vs SUITS vs NT	
X X X X X X	X X X X X X	Standard:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
X X X X X X X X	X X X X X X X X	Except <input type="checkbox"/>	
A K x T 9 x	A K J x A Q J x	Upside-Down:	
K Q x K J T x	A J T 9 A T 9 x	count <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q J x K T 9 x	K Q J x K Q T 9	attitude <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
J T 9 Q T 9 x	Q J T x Q T 9 x	FIRST DISCARD	
K Q T 9	J T 9 x T 9 x x	Lavinthal <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LENGTH LEADS:		Odd/Even <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4th Best	vs SUITS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vs NT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OTHER CARDING	
3rd/5th Best	vs SUITS <input type="checkbox"/> vs NT <input type="checkbox"/>	Smith Echo <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Attitude vs NT <input type="checkbox"/>	Trump Suit Pref. <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Primary signal to partner's leads		Foster Echo <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attitude <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Count <input type="checkbox"/> Suit preference <input type="checkbox"/>	SPECIAL CARDING <input type="checkbox"/> PLEASE ASK	

DEFENSIVE CARDING

Unless you and your partner are using something nonstandard, this is easy to fill in. Check both boxes next to "Standard" (under "vs SUITS" and under "vs NT"). This would mean that *high* means you like it (or an even number as in hi-lo with a doubleton) and that *low* means you don't like it (or an odd number of cards if giving a count signal). There is no need to mark anything else in this section. Yes, there are some good nonstandard methods available here – most experts use them – but until you've played bridge for many years, it is impractical to use anything other than standard.