

Another Ace Asking Convention – Low-Level Gerber

Many folks like Gerber, introduced by John Gerber, because it starts almost a whole level below Blackwood.. As we have seen there are very few reasons to Bid 4NT so identifying 4NT as an Ace asking Convention is relatively easy. The same can not be said about the 'trigger Bid' for the Gerber Convention, 4♣. 4NT is an unnatural Bid because Game in NT is below it; there are very few reasons for Biding 4NT. Game in ♠'s is at the 5-level and 4♣ can be a very natural Bid on the way to Game. Due to the possible ambiguity of the 4♣ Bid most players agree to only consider 4♣ to be the Gerber Convention if it was immediately preceded by a NT Bid at any level. Now that we have covered all the caveats we find that the responses follow the same pattern as Blackwood, just a little lower on the bidding ladder. In response to 4♣ Ace ask and 5♣ King ask:

5NT = 3 A's	6NT = 3 K's
4♠ = 2 A's	6♠ = 2 A's
4♥ = 1 A's	6♥ = 1 A's
4♦ = 0 or 4 A's	6♦ = 0 or 4 A's

Note: Some players relax the prior NT bid to invoke the Gerber convention and agree that any unusual jump or introduction of ♣'s at the 4-level is to be interpreted as Gerber. One has to be careful if they use the Splinter bid; e.g. 1♠ – P – 4♣ might be Gerber but it could also be a Splinter showing 4♠'s a singleton or void in ♣'s and game going points. **Make sure you and your Partners are clear on the meaning of bids!**