

Cuebidding - Book Review

By Jared Johnson

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File this one under "For experts Only."

Cuebidding at Bridge, a Modern Approach by Ken Rexford (Master Point Press, Toronto) is a 200-page book just about cuebidding. And it is heavy reading, with a variety of complex special conventions and treatments.

The easiest (and often less certain and less scientific) way to bid slams is to use ace and king asking bids, either good old-fashioned Blackwood or Gerber or some modern updates such as Roman Key Card Blackwood (the king of trumps counts as an ace).

But often just finding out about those top controls won't answer the questions you need answered. A more precise way to get to (or stay out of, when necessary) slam is cuebidding specific suits to show either controls or other specific information.

The author was motivated to write this book after repeatedly watching even top flight players in major competition suffer slam auctions where the wheels came off.

Just a look at the table of contents in this book shows you are headed into tough terrain. Topics include the Delayed Picture Jump Cuebid, Picture Splinter into Opener's First Suit, Wrap-Around Answering, Cuebidding without the Three Diamond Relay, Self-Splintering, the Empathetic Splinter, Using Cuebidding after Two-Way Checkback Stayman, Flags for Majors and Minors, and Last Train as the Only Cuebid.

You get the picture. If the above intrigues you, get the book. If it gives you a headache, you may not be up for a 200-page book on just one topic.

Or get the book anyway to sit on the shelf right next to that copy of *War and Peace* that you've never read either, just to impress your bridge friends.