

Unusual Positives

These suit-below-singleton responses are designed to be easy to remember. Jump responses in notrump show shortness in clubs. Responses of 2 and 3 show solid suits (see separate chapter.)

When responder shows an 8-13 HCP unusual positive, opener can bid the short suit to ask for total controls (Beta). The steps are 0-2, 3, 4...excluding a singleton king. After Beta, opener sets the trump suit. A game-level bid is a signoff. If the trump suit bid is below game, however, responder answers according to the Eta steps. Opener can then make additional Etas until signing off in the trump suit.

When responder shows a 13+ HCP unusual positive, opener can bid 4NT Beta before signing off in the trump suit. 4NT followed by 5NT asks for queens (0, 1, 2, 3)

| Response | HCP | Meaning |
|----------|------|------------------|
| 2♥ | 8-13 | 4441 singleton ♠ |
| 2NT | 8-13 | 4441 singleton ♣ |
| 3♣ | 8-13 | 4441 singleton ♦ |
| 3♦ | 8-13 | 4441 singleton ♥ |
| 3♥ | 13+ | 4441 singleton ♠ |
| 3NT | 13+ | 4441 singleton ♣ |
| 4♣ | 13+ | 4441 singleton ♦ |
| 4♦ | 13+ | 4441 singleton ♥ |

1 - 2 (8-13 shortness in)

| | |
|-------|--|
| 2 | Beta, can be followed by below-game Eta |
| 2NT | Natural, shows??? asks??? |
| 3 3 3 | Eta |
| 3 | Self-sufficient suit (playable opposite singleton), Beta |
| 3NT | Signoff |
| 4 | |
| 4 | |
| 4 4 | Signoff |
| 4NT | Exclusion Blackwood |
| 5 5 | Signoff |

1 - 2NT (8-13 shortness in)

| | |
|-------|--|
| 3 | Beta, can be followed by below-game Eta |
| 3 3 3 | Eta |
| 3NT | Signoff |
| 4 | Self-sufficient suit (playable opposite singleton), Beta |
| 4 | |
| 4 4 | Signoff |
| 4NT | Exclusion Blackwood |
| 5 | |
| 5 | Signoff |

1 - 3 (8-13 shortness in)

| | |
|-----|--|
| 3 | Beta, can be followed by below-game Eta |
| 3 3 | Eta |
| 3NT | Signoff |
| 4 | Eta |
| 4 | Self-sufficient suit (playable opposite singleton), Beta |
| 4 4 | Signoff |
| 4NT | Exclusion Blackwood |

| | |
|---|---------|
| 5 | Signoff |
|---|---------|

1 - 3 (8-13 shortness in)

| | |
|-----|--|
| 3 | Beta, can be followed by below-game Eta |
| 3 | Eta |
| 3NT | Signoff |
| 4 4 | Eta |
| 4 | Self-sufficient suit (playable opposite singleton), Beta |
| 4 | Signoff |
| 4NT | Exclusion Blackwood |
| 5 5 | Signoff |

1 - 3 (13+ shortness in)

| | |
|-----|---|
| 3 | Beta |
| 3NT | Signoff |
| 4 4 | Eta |
| 4 | Signoff |
| 4 | Self-sufficient suit (playable opposite singleton), Beta, forcing to slam |
| 4NT | Exclusion Blackwood |
| 5 5 | Signoff |

1 - 3NT (13+ shortness in)

| | |
|-----|---|
| 4 | Beta |
| 4 | Eta |
| 4 4 | Signoff |
| 4NT | Exclusion Blackwood |
| 5 | Self-sufficient suit (playable opposite singleton), Beta, forcing to slam |
| 5 | Signoff |

1 - 4 (13+ shortness in)

| | |
|-----|---|
| 4 | Beta |
| 4 4 | Signoff |
| 4NT | Exclusion Blackwood |
| 5 | Signoff |
| 5 | Self-sufficient suit (playable opposite singleton), Beta, forcing to slam |

1 - 4 (13+ shortness in)

| | |
|-----|---|
| 4 | Beta |
| 4 | Signoff |
| 4NT | Exclusion Blackwood |
| 5 5 | Signoff |
| 5 | Self-sufficient suit (playable opposite singleton), Beta, forcing to slam |

Examples

Regional, Newton, MA, 2014-01-03

West Deals

E-W Vul

♠ A K Q J 8

♥ A 8 6 4

♦ J 10 9 2

♣ —



♠ 10 5 4 3

♥ 5

♦ K Q 6 4

♣ A K 10 8

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| West | East |
| <i>Barry</i> | <i>John</i> |
| 1♣ | 3♦ ¹ |
| 3♠ ² | 3NT ³ |
| 4♦ ⁴ | 4NT ⁵ |
| 6♠ | Pass |

1. 8-13 HCP, 4-1-4-4
2. Eta
3. No top honor
4. Eta
5. Two top honors

The vulnerable slam swing gained 12 IMPs and helped win the match.