



# Adventures in Bridge

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## *This Week in Bridge*

### **(296) Carmichael-Baze Follow-ups to Stayman**

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Level: 6

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#### **General**

It is common for partner to open the bidding 1NT and for us to use Stayman to discover if partner has a 4-card Major. After partner shows us a 4-card Major we want to have a way to explore for the best game and possible slam. The most common expert methods at this point in the auction are to use a version of Baze to allow Responder to show a variety of different hands that hold a fit. This is an effective tool, but we can do better. Carmichael-Baze raises are a further improvement on Baze raises that gives us even more sophisticated ways to describe our hand in this auction.

#### **Carmichael-Baze**

This structure allows Responder even more ways to raise Opener in a Stayman auction. In some auctions, there are relays to ask for further information. In these cases, we use steps to further describe our hand. These steps may be expressed as LMH, meaning that the first step is the “Low Suit”, second step the “Middle Suit”, and the third step the “High Suit”.

#### *Example 1*

1NT 2♣  
2♥ \_\_\_?

- 3♣\* Artificial, GF, 4c♠, and 5+c minor (3♦ Relay asks for minor, LH).
- 3♦\* Balanced GF with Fit, either Choice of Games or Slammish
  - 3♥ Choice of Games, leaning to 4♥
  - 3NT Prefer 3NT to 4♥
  - 4♥ Prefer ♥ to 3NT
- 3♥ Invitational
- 3♠\* GF, 4+♥, Shortness (Relay Asks, LMH)
- 3NT GF, 4c♠
- 4♣ 6♠-4♥, choice of games
  - 4♦ Slam Cooperation
  - 4M Offer to Play (no slam cooperation)
- 4♦ Keycard in ♥
- 4♥ To Play



*Example 2*

1NT 2♣  
2♠ \_\_\_?

- 3♣\* Artificial, GF, 4c♥ and 5+c minor (3♦ relay asks for minor, LH)
- 3♦\* Balanced GF with Fit, either Choice of Games or Slammish
  - 3♠ Choice of Games, leaning to 4M
  - 3NT Prefers 3NT to 4♠
  - 4♠ Prefers ♠ to 3NT
- 3♥\* GF, 4+♠, Shortness (Relay Asks, VLMH)
- 3♠ Invitational
- 3NT GF, 4c♥, To Play
- 4♣ 4♠-6♥, choice of games
  - 4♦ Slam Cooperation
  - 4M Offer to Play (no slam cooperation)
- 4♦ Keycard in ♠
- 4♠ To Play

*Note: Notice that when ♠ is our suit, we have a bit more space than when our suit is ♥. Thus, we are able to use an additional step in the shortness-showing bid, differentiating a void from a singleton (VLMH vs. LMH).*

If we do not have a fit for partner's Major suit (meaning we have the other Major), but we have a distributional enough hand that we want to show our long minor suit, we do that in a "concealed" way. If Opener is interested in finding out our minor suit they can ask; if not, then we do not reveal this information to the opponents.

### Conclusion

When partner opens 1NT we want to have as many tools as possible for helping us reach the best contract. These auctions come up frequently, so having sophisticated bidding tools that require some memory work are worthwhile. Carmichael-Baze is one of these systems, requiring a bit of work, but a good improvement on even expert standard bidding methods. Work with your regular partner to continue to add sophisticated bidding tools to the parts of your system that come up frequently!