

PUPPET STAYMAN

You are North. What would you open with the following hands after the following auction.

North      East      South      West

Hand 1

♠ AKQ42

♥ J102

♦ A7

♣ AK8

2NT (20-22)

Hand 2

♠ AK53 ♠ Q8

♥ AQ32

♦ AJ75

♣ A

2NT (20-22)

Hand 3

♠ AK87

♥ AQ

♦ AJ7

♣ AKJ842

2NT (20-22)

Hand 4

♥ K4

♦ AKJ54

♣ AQ

2♣ followed by 2NT (23-24)

# So why am I advocating bidding or rebidding 2NT on all these hands?

- It expresses your overall strength to partner.
- It expresses the essentially balanced nature of your hand to partner.
- Strong 4-4-4-1 hands are notoriously difficult to bid, ones with a small singleton should probably just open at the one level and pray, but if you have a stiff A or K a 2NT opener is probably best but can come a cropper!
- Don't worry about bidding 2NT with a five or four card major, You will have the ability to find your 5-3 and 4-4 major suit fits using puppet stayman which I will come on to shortly.
- When you open a strong two or benji two partner will know you are unbalanced – it gives more definition to your strong two bids.

# PUPPET STAYMAN

Partner has opened 2NT (which could have a 5 card Major, 4 card Major or if you are me occasionally a 6 card minor!)

YOU HAVE POTENTIALLY THE VALUES FOR GAME IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING HANDS BUT YOU ARE NOT SURE OF THE BEST GAME (3NT, 4♥, 4♠).

What should you bid?

Hand 1

♠ KQ52  
♥ 10654  
♦ Q2  
♣ 987

3♣ Puppet  
Stayman

Hand 2

♠ A42  
♥ A432  
♦ 10952  
♣ 82

3♣ Puppet  
Stayman

Hand 3

♠ KQ53  
♥ K10982  
♦ 102  
♣ 103

3♦ transfer and  
then bid 3♠

Hand 4

♠ KJ5  
♥ Q87  
♦ 32  
♣ J10987

either 3NT or 3♣  
Puppet Stayman

Hand 5

♠ KQ532  
♥ K1098  
♦ 87  
♣ 56

3♠ which shows  
specifically 5♠ and 4♥

# PUPPET STAYMAN

You have opened or rebid 2NT and partner has bid 3♣  
So what are the responses?

North	East	South	West
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
?			

Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3	Hand 4
♠ AKQ42	♠ AK53	♠ Q8	♠ AK87
♥ J102	♥ AQ32	♥ AQ	♥ K4
♦ A7	♦ AJ75	♦ AJ7	♦ AKJ54
♣ AK8	♣ A	♣ AKJ842	♣ AQ

You need to ask yourself the following questions?

- 1) Have I got a 5 card Major if so bid it at the 3 Level.
- 2) Have I got 1 or more 4 card Majors if so bid 3♦, we will come on to the follow ups shortly.
- 3) If I have neither of the above bid 3NT.

So on the hands opposite – what do I bid?

Hand 1 - 3♠ (I have a 5 card Major).

Hand 2 - 3♦ (I have 1 or more 4 card majors).

Hand 3 - 3NT (I have neither a 5 or 4 card major).

Hand 4 - 3♦ (I have 1 or more 4 card majors).

# PUPPET STAYMAN

Going back to the following hands as South

Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3	Hand 4
♠ KQ52	♠ A42	♠ KJ5	♠ KJ54
♥ 10654	♥ A432	♥ Q87	♥ AJ32
♦ Q2	♦ 10952	♦ 32	♦ 3
♣ 987	♣ 82	♣ J10987	♣ KJ109

On Hand 1 - What do I do if partner responds

- a) 3♥/3♠ - Bid 4♥/4♠ respectively
- b) 3NT - Pass
- c) 3♦ - see next slide

On Hand 2 - What do I do if partner responds

- a) 3♥/3♠ - Bid 4♥/4♠ respectively
- b) 3NT - Pass
- c) 3♦ - see next slide

North	East	South	West
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
A response	Pass	?	

On Hand 3 - What do I do if partner responds

- a) 3♥/ 3♠ - Bid 4♥/4♠ respectively
- b) 3NT - Pass
- c) 3♦ - Bid 3NT

On Hand 4 - What do I do if partner responds

- a) 3♥/ 3♠ - Bid 4♣ cue or 4NT blackwood
- b) 3NT - Bid 6NT
- c) 3♦ - see next slide

# PUPPET STAYMAN

The bidding has gone

North	East	South	West
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	?	

So partner has responded 3♦ showing at least one 4 card major what do I do with these hands now?

Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3	Hand 4	Hand 5
♠ KQ52	♠ A42	♠ KJ54	♠ KJ54	♠ KJ54
♥ 10654	♥ A432	♥ A43	♥ AJ32	♥ AJ32
♦ Q2	♦ 10952	♦ 10952	♦ 3	♦ KJ109
♣ 987	♣ 82	♣ 82	♣ KJ109	♣ 3

On Hand 1 – bid 4♦ – showing both majors and a game only hand asking partner to choose. Partner can now place the contract.

On Hand 2 – bid 3♠ showing 4♥ i.e bid the major you do **not** have – the reason for this is so the strong hand plays the contract. Partner can now place the contract.

On hand 3 – bid 3♥ - showing 4♠ i.e bid the major you do **not** have – the reason for this is so the strong hand plays the contract. Partner can now place the contract.

On hand 4 – bid 4♣ - showing a slam going hand with both majors, partner is now in control of the auction.

On hand 5 – also bid 4♣ - showing a slam going hand with both majors, partner is now in control of the auction.

# PUPPET STAYMAN

In summary

- a) Open or rebid 2NT on hands that are essentially balanced and don't worry if they contain a five card major.
- b) Use Puppet Stayman to locate your 5-3, 5-4 and 4-4 major suit fits and the strong hand nearly always plays the contract.
- c) Combine with red suit transfers and a 3♠ bid showing precisely 5♠ and 4♥.