

Puppet Stayman

By Henry Jackson

Over 2NT Openings

Partner opens 2NT (20-21)

What do you do with this hand?

♠ JT3 ♥ A98 ♦ J9875 ♣ 75

Without Puppet you would just bid 3NT, but there is a way to possibly improve your contract!

2NT openings often contain 5-card suits.

Puppet allows you to ask if partner has a 5-card major as well as 4-card majors.

Puppet Over 2NT

Responder bids 3 ♣ to start Puppet

Opener does one of the following:

- Bids 5-Card major **Delayed Alert**
- Bids 3 ♦ if holding 1 or 2 4-card majors **Alert**
- Bids 3NT if holding no 4-card major **Alert**

Responder can raise Opener's major if he holds 3 or return to 3NT.

Responder can pass Opener's 3NT.

Puppet Over 2NT Continued

If Opener bid 3 ♦ showing 1 or 2 4-card majors,
Responder can

- Bid 3NT if holding no 4 card major **Alert**
- Bid 3 of the major he DOES NOT have **Alert**
(Smolen) so opener can bid other or 3NT.
- Bid 4 ♦ with both majors to get opener to pick one. **Alert**

Over 1NT Openings

Partner opens 1NT (15-17)

What do you do with this hand?

♠ KJ3 ♥ A98 ♦ J9875 ♣ J5

Without Puppet you would just bid 3NT, but again there is a way to possibly improve your contract!

1NT openings sometimes contain 5-card majors to avoid rebid problems.

Puppet allows you to ask if partner has a 5-card major as well as 4-card majors.

Puppet Over 1NT

Responder bids 2 ♣ to start Puppet

Opener does one of the following:

- Bids 5-Card major **Delayed Alert**
- Bids 2 ♦ if holding 1 or 2 4-card majors **Alert**
- Bids 2NT if holding no 4-card major **Alert**

Responder can raise Opener's 5-card major to 3 or 4 if he holds 3 or return to NT (2 or 3).

Responder must **GUESS** whether to pass or raise Opener's 2NT bid.

Puppet Over 1NT Continued

If Opener bid 2 ♦ showing 1 or 2 4-card majors,
Responder can

- Bid 2NT or 3NT if holding no 4 card major
Alert
- Bid 3 of the major he DOES NOT have **Alert**
(Smolen) so opener can bid other or 3NT.
- Bid 4 ♦ with both majors to get opener to pick one. **Alert**

Like your present form of Stayman?

- If you are playing a 4-point opening NT range and use Extended Stayman
- Or are not ready to give up on your old favorite
- Or really like using Garbage Stayman

There is a simplified version of Puppet Stayman that can be used with 10+ points and at least one 3-card major. Looks only for 5-card majors.

Simplified Puppet Over 1NT

Responder bids 3 ♣ to start Puppet

Opener does one of the following:

- Bids 5-Card major **Delayed Alert**
- Bids 3NT if holding no 5-card major **Alert**

Responder can raise Opener's 5-card major to 4 if he holds 3 or return to 3NT.

PUPPET STAYMAN

Henry Jackson

1. Over 2NT opening bid Responder bids 3 ♣ to start Puppet and Opener then does one of the following:

- a. Bids 5-Card major (**Delayed Alert**)
- b. Bids 3 ♦ if holding 1 or 2 4-card majors (**Alert**)
- c. Bids 3NT if holding no 4-card major (**Alert**)

Responder can raise Opener's major if he holds 3 or return to 3NT.

Responder can pass Opener's 3NT.

If Opener bid 3 ♦ showing 1 or 2 4-card majors, Responder can do one of the following:

- a. Bid 3NT if holding no 4 card major (**Alert**).
- b. Bid 3 of the major he DOES NOT have (Smolen-like) so opener can bid other or 3NT (**Alert**).
- c. Bid 4 ♦ with both majors to ask opener to pick one (**Alert**).

2. Over a 1NT opening, Responder bids 2 ♣ to start Puppet and Opener does one of the following:

- a. Bids 5-Card major (**Delayed Alert**)
- b. Bids 2 ♦ if holding 1 or 2 4-card majors (**Alert**)
- c. Bids 2NT if holding no 4-card major (**Alert**)

Responder can then

- a. Raise Opener's 5-card major to 3 or 4 if he holds 3
- b. Return to NT (2 or 3).
- c. Responder must **GUESS** whether to pass or raise Opener's 2NT.

3. Over a 1NT opening, Responder using Simplified Puppet Stayman bids 3 ♣ to start Puppet and Opener does one of the following:

- a. Bids 5-Card major (**Delayed Alert**)
- b. Bids 3NT if holding no 5-card major (**Alert**)

Responder can raise Opener's 5-card major to 4 if he holds 3 or return to 3NT.