

# Bids after 1NT and Stayman

By Neil H. Timm

(1) Your partner opens 1NT=15-17HCP holding the following hand: ♠AQJ7 ♥K765 ♦AQ2 ♣J2 and you bid Stayman with two 4-card majors and partner responds 2♦, what is your re-bid?

If you play Crawling Stayman bid 2♥\* which says partner pick your best major (i.e. pass or correct and be in a 4-3 or 4-4 card fit). Not playing this convention some always bid suits up the line, which is incorrect. You must bid 2♠, your strongest suit first, why? With your strongest suit known, it allows partner to pass.

**Tip: If you are not using the Crawling Stayman Convention, bid your strongest suit first if 4-4 in the majors.**

(2) What is your bid as the 1NT opener if the opponents X your partner's bid of 2♣?

- (a) Bid your 4-card major if you have one
- (b) Without a 4-card major, but with a club stopper – Pass
- (c) Without a 4-card major or a club stopper, bid 2♦
- (d) With 4 good clubs or 5 clubs, redouble (e.g. QJ987 – Rule of 9)

(3) Your partner opens 1NT=15-17HCP and you hold a 4-card major; **most bridge books recommend that one have 8HCP to use Stayman. Why? (a) Without a 4-4 fit, most require 23HCP to play in 2NT; (b) you should not look for game with less than 25HCP. This is a serious error, since it ignores his Length, Distribution, and Fit points!** Lets consider two hands:

♠A86 ♥AQ65 ♦K102 ♣A652 = 17HCP versus say:

- (a) ♠7 ♥K974 ♦QJ3 ♣10986 = 6HCP
- (b) ♠72 ♥K974 ♦QJ873 ♣109 = 6HCP

With hand (a) you missed your 4♥ games with hand (b) you missed 3NT!

**Tip: When responding to 1NT, responder/partner must evaluate his hand using HLD points defined called his Optimal Point Count (OPC) and then add "Fit" points.**

## HONOR POINTS (H)

Ace: 4½ pts    K: 3pts    Q w/A, K, J: 2 pts    Qxx: 1½ pts    Qx=1pt  
J w/A, K, Q: 1pt    Jxx: ½ pts    Jx=0 pts

Value of 10s vary: 10K=½, 10A=0, 10Q=1, 10J=1, 10Jx=2

**No Aces = -1 pt (Only Opener) No Q =-1 No K=-1 (all hands) with Max=-2**

**3Ks = +1 pt, 4Ks = +2pts, 4Qs = +1pt**

Singleton honor = -1pt      Honor doubletons = -1 pt for 2 honor doubletons

**3+ Honors in 6-card suit = +2 pts or in a 5-card suit= +1 pt**

### **LENGTH POINTS (L)**

5-card suit with at least a QJ/K = 1pt

6-card suit with at least QJ/K= 2 pts w/o a QJ/K= 1pt

7-card suit=2pts for each card for 7<sup>th</sup> on (even without an honor)

### **DISTRIBUTION POINTS (D)**

VOID = 4pts    Singleton= 2 points **ONE** doubleton= 0 pts **TWO** doubletons = 1pt

4333 = -1pt

Singleton in NT contract = -1pt

**Fit points are COUNTED for all suits and all contracts (Suit and NT):**

### **FIT POINTS (F):**

8-card Fit: +1 9-card Fit: +2 10-card Fit: +3 and also add +1 for honors in suits with a fit when honors are <4pts (if known)

Using the OPC Method, hand (a) must add 2D pts for the singleton spade and has 8HD pts allowing the responder to bid 2♣. This allows the partnership to find their 4-4 heart contract and bid their game.

Hand (b) has 8HLD points (1D pt for 2 doubletons) and must not pass! And finding your 9-card diamond fit his 10HL pts (+3 for the 9-card fit with QJ) will allow you to bid 3NT. Thus passing with 6H points or 7HL points would be incorrect.

(4) What if responder has 4-3-3-3 or 3-4-3-3 hand and less than 8HCP? Some recommend to NEVER playing in 3NT with this shape. Wrong! Again you must evaluate your hand using HLD points losing only -1 point for the “flat” distribution.

For a wide variety of 540 “Bridge Tips” see Edwin B. Kantar (2002), “A treasury of bridge tips”, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Griffin Publication.

Be careful when reading his tips since Kantar assumes the 4321 Goren-Works Hand Evaluation Method Not the OPC Method as I have suggested in this Tip!