

The Use of “Puppet Stayman” Over a 2-NT Opening

There are two main reasons to consider using **Puppet Stayman** as opposed to regular **Stayman**. Firstly, and most importantly, opposite any No-Trump opening, when Responder seeks a Major suit Golden Fit through the use of the standard **Stayman** System, almost 60% of the time, Opener has either no 4-card Major, else the opposite one sought by the Responder. As a result, the Partnership winds up in a final No-Trump contract with Opener’s (Declarer’s) hand, the supposed concealed hand, having disclosed the presence or absence of his/her Major suit holdings. *Puppet Stayman overcomes this to some extent by hiding Opener’s Major suit holding in most of its bidding sequences.*

Secondly, hands of 20-21-22 HCP’s (Subject to Partnership agreement), and holding a 5-card Major (Hearts or Spades), are too strong for a **1H** or **1S** opening, and not strong enough for a “**2C**” opening in standard bidding methods. Many Players, therefore, include them in the group of hands that open **2-NT**. *Thus, many Players use Puppet Stayman over a 2-NT opening, even though they might not use it over a 1-NT opening, so as to be able to uncover this, previously hidden 5-card Major suit, if present.*

This Modified “Puppet Stayman” system of bids is as follows:

<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
2-NT	Pass
3H	“3D” = A Transfer to Hearts (5 or more Hearts) “Pass,” (3-NT “Check Back”), else 4H – (Dependent upon Point Count and whether 6 or more Hearts)
3S	“3H” = A Transfer to Spades (5 or more Spades) “Pass,” (3-NT “Check Back”), else 4S – Dependent upon Point Count and whether 6 or more Spades)
	3-NT = To Play with no interest in Opener’s Major suit holding
	“3C” = Seeking info about Opener's Major suit holdings
	3-NT = Denying both 4- or 5-card Major
	or 3H = Showing a 5-card Heart suit
	4H = To Play, else 3-NT
	or 3S = Showing a 5-card Spade suit
	4S = To Play, else 3-NT
	“3C” = Seeking info about Opener's Major suit holdings
	“3D” = Holding one or two 4-card Majors, and denying any 5-card Major
	“3H” = Showing 4-Spades and fewer than 4-Hearts
	4S = Evidencing 4-Spades - to Play, else 3-NT
	or “3S” = Showing 4-Hearts and fewer than 4-Spades
	4H = Evidencing 4-Hearts - to Play, else 3-NT
	or “4C” = Showing both 4-Hearts and 4-Spades
4H or 4S	