



BY KEN MONZINGO

**T**he Stayman bid is used primarily to locate an 8-card major fit (4-4) between the notrump opener and responder. Stayman is a *response* of 2♣ to partner's 1 notrump (1NT) opening bid. The 2♣ bid is *artificial* and requests the opening notrump bidder to bid a 4-card major if he owns one. Opener's response of 2♦ says, "Partner I have no four-card major"☺. The response of 2♥ or 2♠ confirms four. Stayman is one of the truly invaluable (but often misused and misinterpreted) bids that you should discuss *in detail* before playing.

*Tip:* Treat the Stayman bid as the *question*: "Partner, do you have a four-card major?"

These are three common auctions when responder uses the Stayman convention:

1. As responder to partner's 1NT opening bid
2. As responder to partner's 2NT opening bid
3. As responder to a strong notrump *overcall* by partner

★ How Stayman works after partner opens a 16-18 hcp 1NT

(1) As a responder to 1NT with one or *both* four-card majors and 7-8 hcp bid 2♣ Stayman. If partner bids your four-card major raise to three of the major. If partner bids 2♦, or the major you don't hold ☺, bid 2NT. These are both **invitational** sequences inviting partner to bid game with a maximum (17-18) hand. Maximum by opener is *either* 17 or 18 hcp putting the combined strength of both hands at 24-26. Do the math!

(2) Bid 2♣ Stayman with 9-14 hcp and raise to game in your four-card major if partner bids it ☺. Bid 3NT over either a 2♦ response or over two of the major you don't hold.

(3) Holding a four-card major *and* a five-card major with 7-8 hcp major bid 2♣. If partner rebids 2♦ bid two of your 5-card major (invitational). With 10+ hcp and 5-4 in the majors **jump** to the three-level in your **five-card major** over a 2♦ response to Stayman. This is **game forcing**, showing a **five-card suit**. Opener will raise to four of the major with three-card support ☺ or bid 3NT with only two cards in that suit. With 10+ points, if partner responds to Stayman in a major you hold ☺, bid four of that major and relax - your work is done!

☞ **Remember, "He who Knows, Goes!"** ☞

**Do Not Invite** with **Game Forcing** hands!

*A Silly Little Extra Advantage!*

The Stayman convention is used with both *invitational* and *forcing* hands, however, in one rare case points are *not* a requirement to bid Stayman. Partner opens 1NT and you hold: ♠8642 ♥9753 ♦J8642 ♣ --. This hand, and others similar will take few or no tricks in notrump but may well take three or four tricks in a suit contract. Have some fun here, bid 2♣ Stayman and *pass* partner's response. Yes, that means even passing partner's 2♦!

*Tip:* Opener should *never* respond 2NT to Stayman. Or bid a suit at the three-level!