

vulnerable.

How to respond to 1NT with both majors in a weak hand. West opens 1NT, North passes, East holds:

♠ J9842  
♥ A10762  
♦ 9  
♣ 63

East's bid? To transfer to a major and next bid a new suit creates a game forcing auction. East is not strong enough to force to game so if they transfer to hearts they must pass 2♥. If East bids Stayman and West responds 2♦, a rebid of 2♥ shows a weak hand with both majors and asks West to choose a major. East's best plan is to bid 2♣ Stayman.

West does rebid 2♦, denying four cards in a major, so East rebids 2♥ showing a weak hand with length in both major suits. As West holds:

♠ AQ5  
♥ 84  
♦ AJ653  
♣ AJ7

with more spades than hearts West corrects 2♥ to 2♠ which becomes the final contract. By using Stayman and next rebidding 2♥, East was able to get West to choose their best major. If West had better hearts than spades they would pass 2♥.

This special use of Stayman is part of our standard bidding system. To help remember, if East had a good hand with hearts they would transfer and keep bidding, if East's only long suit was hearts they would transfer and then pass. So if East bids 2♣ and rebids 2♥ (over 2♦) they must have a second suit, and that suit must be spades. It has to be spades because over 2♣, West will bid 2♠ with four spades which East must pass if weak.

If West after opening 1NT had rebid 2♥ or 2♠ over East's 2♣ Stayman, with nine trumps East would raise the major to the three level. East is worth a game invitation if a nine-card trump fit is uncovered – "extra trumps = win extra tricks".

If South doubles East's 2♣ (Stayman) what does the double mean? It shows a hand that would have overcalled 2♣. All doubles by South show length and strength in the suit bid by East, when the bid suit is conventional.

North to lead against West's 2♠ from:

- ♠ 10763
- ♥ 95
- ♦ K10872
- ♣ Q2

Before leading always review the auction, as South doubled 2♣ saying they have a hand that would have overcalled 2♣. North should lead partner's suit, and choose ♣Q "top of a doubleton". However the club Norths missed South's helpful double and led ♦7.

The full hand:

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♠ AQ5</li> <li>♥ 84</li> <li>♦ AJ653</li> <li>♣ AJ7</li> </ul> | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> <p style="margin: 0;">N</p> <p style="margin: 0;">W      E</p> <p style="margin: 0;">S</p> </div> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♠ 10763</li> <li>♥ 95</li> <li>♦ K10872</li> <li>♣ Q2</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♠ J9842</li> <li>♥ A10762</li> <li>♦ 9</li> <li>♣ 63</li> </ul> |
|   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♠ K</li> <li>♥ KQJ3</li> <li>♦ Q4</li> <li>♣ K109854</li> </ul>  |  |

Club Results: The most successful Wests won ♦A and ducked a heart to South (key play), they won South's return and led to ♥A. Then ♠2, ♠K (surely a singleton), won by ♠A. Ruffed ♦3 with ♠4, ruffed ♥6 with ♠Q, ruffed ♦5 with ♠8, and led ♥7 ruffed with ♠5 and over-ruffed. These Wests finished with 10 tricks and a top.

Summary:

If you Stayman and rebid 2♥ after the 1NT opener rebids 2♦ (denying a four-card major), this shows a weak hand with both majors. The 1NT opener with better hearts than spades passes 2♥ otherwise they correct to 2♠. When an opponent Staymans or transfers after a 1NT opening bid, to double their artificial suit bid shows length and strength in the actual suit bid. For example: if they bid 2♦ as a transfer to hearts, a double of 2♦ shows length and strength in diamonds.